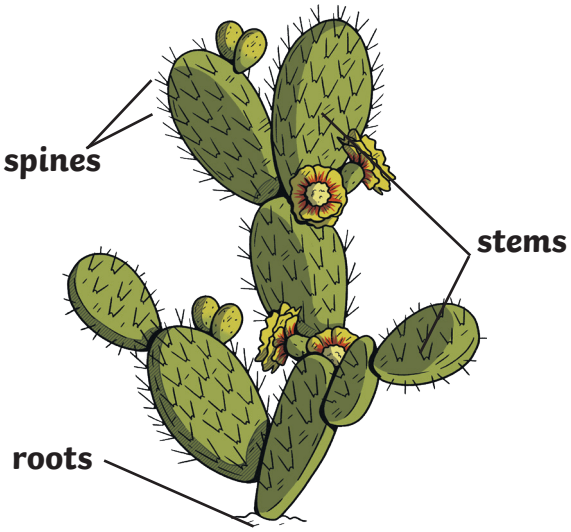
Cactus Adaptation

Read the information about how cactuses have adapted to suit their harsh environment and and fill in the missing words using vocabulary from the box.



shapes	**animals**	**cool**
fog	**deserts**	**rainfall**
photosynthesis		**water**
reflect	**store**	**absorb** **dew**

Cactuses are spiky plants, often found in extremely dry environments such as _____. They do not need much water to survive.

A cactus uses its thick stems to _____ water. The cactus expands or contracts, depending on how much water it holds. The stems create energy for the plant through _____.

Over time, they have evolved to grow in _____ with smaller surface areas which helps to reduce water loss.

A cactus' spines can _____ and _____ sunlight, which helps the cactus to keep _____. The spines also stop _____ from feeding on the plant. As well as helping to reduce water lost through evaporation, the spines collect water from other sources such as _____ and _____ and direct it straight to the plant's roots.

A cactus has long, fibrous roots which spread over a wide area and are shallow, so they can collect surface _____ immediately after any _____. Some cactuses send out taproots, which grow deep into the ground to reach water and help provide stability.

Cactus Adaptation **Answers**

Cactuses are spiky plants, often found in extremely dry environments such as **deserts**. They do not need much water to survive.

A cactus uses its thick stems to **store** water. The cactus expands or contracts, depending on how much water it holds. The stems create energy for the plant through **photosynthesis**.

Over time, they have evolved to grow in **shapes** with smaller surface areas which helps to reduce water loss.

A cactus' spines can **absorb** and **reflect** sunlight, which helps the cactus to keep **cool**. The spines also stop **animals** from feeding on the plant. As well as helping to reduce water lost through evaporation, the spines collect water from other sources such as **dew** and **fog** and direct it straight to the plant's roots.

A cactus has long, fibrous roots which spread over a wide area and are shallow, so they can collect surface **water** immediately after any **rainfall**. Some cactuses send out taproots, which grow deep into the ground to reach water and help provide stability.