What do you think it is like to live as a nomad in the desert? The Berbers and Bedouins are two groups of people who make their home in the deserts of Southwest Asia and North Africa. Some clans and families for all or part of the year, while other clans and families live in more permanent settlements. No matter what their traditions and lifestyles are like, all of these people have adapted to living in the dry desert conditions of the region. Imagine you are a Bedouin or Berber living in this area. How do you think living in the desert would affect your life? In this activity, you will write a diary entry about a day in your life from the perspective of either a Berber or Bedouin teenager. In your diary entry, you will describe ways in which the desert environment shapes your life and how you and your family have adapted to this region.

Berber Woman Hauling Water


I. Analyzing Berber and Bedouin Life

1. Choose one culture to explore further: Berber or Bedouin. Research information about how people in this group have adapted to their environment and how their environment affects their way of life. Think about how the ways these people live are related to living in the desert. In the space below, take notes on the images and videos as you examine them. Use the questions below to guide you:
   - What kinds of clothes do these people wear?
   - What do their homes look like?
   - How do these people get their food and water?
   - What kinds of unique traditions do these people have?
   - What animals, technologies, or tools do they use in their daily lives?
Berber People in North Africa:  
*Mountain Life*

Many Berbers live in villages in the Atlas Mountains of Morocco.

**Berbers in Tunisia**

Berber families balance many of their traditional practices with mainstream culture in Tunisia.

*Traveling with Berbers*

Some Berbers in Morocco travel across the Sahara in camel caravans.

**Life in an Oasis**

The Siwa Oasis in Egypt is home to a large Berber population.

**Date Palms in Siwa**

Berbers in the Siwa Oasis grow date palms.
The Bedouin People in the Middle East:

**Travel by Camel**

For some Bedouins, camels still provide the best way to move across the desert.

**There’s No Food Like My Food: Muhammad in Judea**

A young Bedouin helps his family prepare a special meal for guests.

**A Bedouin Doctor**

One Bedouin doctor in the Sinai Peninsula travels the desert to treat patients and make his medicines.

**Attending a Bedouin Wedding**

Weddings are important celebrations in Bedouin culture.

**Reading Passage: A Desert Life**

Learn more about a day in the life of a young Bedouin.

**Encyclopedia Entry: Bedouins**
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What kinds of clothes do these people wear?</td>
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</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. Look through your notes. Use the graphic organizer below to record information about the group you chose. An example has been completed using the Introduction image of a Berber woman hauling water.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Adaptation/Effect of environment</th>
<th>How does this relate to life in the desert?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Filling water from a well</td>
<td>There is no running water in the desert. This Berber woman must fill buckets with water to drink and use.</td>
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</table>
II. Writing Your Diary Entry

1. Imagine that you are a Berber or Bedouin teenager. Write your diary entry that describes a day in the life of a Berber or Bedouin teenager from this perspective. In your entry, include information about the following:
   - Who you are (Bedouin or Berber? Girl or boy?)
   - Where your water comes from
   - What tools or adaptations you use to get by in daily life
   - How you and your family live (what kinds of dwellings and communities you live in)
   - One or two details about clothing, chores or, duties and customs related to the area where you live