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Level 2

Sahara desert twice as old as we thought

22nd September, 2014

<http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1409/140922-sahara-desert-2.html>

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Please try Levels 0 and 1 (easier) and the 26–page Level 3 (harder).

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THE READING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1409/140922-sahara-desert-2.html>

The Sahara desert is twice as old as we thought. Science books say the Sahara is around three million years old. However, a new study from a centre for climate research says it could be seven million years old. Researchers used computers to calculate when parts of North Africa became desert. Their tests showed that global warming seven million years ago dried a lot of the land in what is today's Chad. A sea called the Tethys Sea started shrinking. This cut the number of summer monsoons, which helped make sand dunes in Chad. The scientists say this is how the Sahara started.

The Sahara is one of the best-known and largest deserts. It covers about 10 per cent of Africa. It is very big in Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Sudan and other nations. It stretches from the Atlantic Ocean in the west to the Red Sea in the east. Not everyone thinks the Sahara is seven million years old. A geologist in Germany says more evidence is needed to be sure. He said the new research is just based on numbers. He said: "Nothing you can find in the Sahara is older than 500,000 years old". Our knowledge of the Saharan climate starts from 10,000 years ago. That knowledge is "full of gaps".

Sources: <http://www.dailymail.co.uk/sciencetech/article-2761070/Is-Sahara-Desert-TWICE-old-thought-Climate-simulations-suggest-formed-7-million-years-ago.html#ixzz3Dq0L2vIo>
http://www.nature.com/news/climate-simulation-doubles-sahara-s-age-1.15954?WT.mc_id=TWT_NatureNews
<http://www.reportingclimatescience.com/news-stories/article/sahara-older-than-thought.html>

MATCHING

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1409/140922-sahara-desert-2.html>

PARAGRAPH ONE:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|-----------------------|
| 1. a centre for climate | a. shrinking |
| 2. Researchers used computers to | b. dunes |
| 3. global | c. land |
| 4. dried a lot of the | d. research |
| 5. the Tethys Sea started | e. the Sahara started |
| 6. summer | f. warming |
| 7. sand | g. monsoons |
| 8. scientists say this is how | h. calculate when |

PARAGRAPH TWO:

- | | |
|-------------------------------------|-------------------------------|
| 1. one of the best- | a. Atlantic Ocean in the west |
| 2. It covers about | b. evidence is needed |
| 3. It stretches from the | c. gaps |
| 4. A geologist in Germany says more | d. on numbers |
| 5. to be | e. known and largest deserts |
| 6. based | f. of the Saharan climate |
| 7. Our knowledge | g. 10 per cent of Africa |
| 8. full of | h. sure |

LISTEN AND FILL IN THE GAPS

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1409/140922-sahara-desert-2.html>

The Sahara desert is twice as old as we thought. Science books say the Sahara (1) _____ years old. However, a new study from a centre for (2) _____ says it could be seven million years old. Researchers used (3) _____ when parts of North Africa became desert. Their tests showed that global warming seven million years ago dried (4) _____ in what is today's Chad. A sea called the Tethys Sea started shrinking. This (5) _____ summer monsoons, which helped make sand dunes in Chad. The scientists (6) _____ Sahara started.

The Sahara is one (7) _____ and largest deserts. It covers about 10 per cent of Africa. It is very big in Algeria, Chad, Egypt, Sudan and other nations. (8) _____ the Atlantic Ocean (9) _____ Red Sea in the east. Not everyone thinks the Sahara is seven million years old. A geologist in Germany says more evidence is (10) _____. He said the new research is just (11) _____. He said: "Nothing you can find in the Sahara is older than 500,000 years old". Our knowledge of the Saharan climate starts from 10,000 years ago. That knowledge (12) _____.

PUT A SLASH (/) WHERE THE SPACES ARE

From <http://www.breakingnewsenglish.com/1409/140922-sahara-desert-2.html>

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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student A: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)

Sahara desert twice as old as we thought – 22nd September, 2014
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WRITE QUESTIONS & ASK YOUR PARTNER(S)

Student B: Do not show these to your speaking partner(s).

a)

b)

c)

d)

e)

f)

g)

h)
