

# The Road to Oz: The Deadly Desert

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

*L. Frank Baum wrote thirteen books about the Land of Oz, beginning with The Wonderful Wizard of Oz which was published in 1900. This passage is from The Road to Oz published in 1909. In this book, Dorothy meets new friends on her way to visit Oz again. The shaggy man is a wandering man that she and her dog, Toto, met in Kansas. Button-Bright is a little boy who often gets lost. Polychrome, or Polly for short, is the Rainbow's Daughter and has fallen off her father's rainbow.*

*In this passage, the group has arrived at the Deadly Desert, a desert that will turn all flesh that it touches into dust. A friend of the shaggy man has built a sand-boat for the group to sail across the desert safely.*

## Chapter 12. The Deadly Desert Crossed

They now looked more carefully at the sand-boat, and saw that the bottom was modeled with two sharp runners which would glide through the sand. The front of the sand-boat was pointed like the bow of a ship, and there was a rudder at the stern to steer by.

It had been built just at the edge of the desert, so that all its length lay upon the gray sand except the after part, which still rested on the strip of grass.

"Get in, my dears," said the shaggy man; "I'm sure I can manage this boat as well as any sailor. All you need do is sit still in your places."

Dorothy got in, Toto in her arms, and sat on the bottom of the boat just in front of the mast. Button-Bright sat in front of Dorothy, while Polly leaned over the bow. The shaggy man knelt behind the mast. When all were ready he raised the sail half-way. The wind caught it. At once the sand-boat started forward—slowly at first, then with added speed. The shaggy man pulled the sail way up, and they flew so fast over the Deadly Desert that every one held fast to the sides of the boat and scarcely dared to breathe.

The sand lay in billows, and was in places very uneven, so that the boat rocked dangerously from side to side; but it never quite tipped over, and the speed was so great that the shaggy man himself became frightened and began to wonder how he could make the ship go slower.

"If we're spilled in this sand, in the middle of the desert," Dorothy thought to herself, "we'll be nothing but dust in a few minutes, and that will be the end of us."

But they were not spilled, and by-and-by Polychrome, who was clinging to the bow and looking straight ahead, saw a dark line before them and wondered what it was. It grew plainer every second, until she discovered it to be a row of jagged rocks at the end of the desert, while high above these rocks she could see a tableland of green grass and beautiful trees.

"Look out!" she screamed to the shaggy man. "Go slowly, or we shall smash into the rocks."

He heard her, and tried to pull down the sail; but the wind would not let go of the broad canvas and the ropes had become tangled.



Nearer and nearer they drew to the great rocks, and the shaggy man was in despair because he could do nothing to stop the wild rush of the sand-boat.

They reached the edge of the desert and bumped squarely into the rocks. There was a crash as Dorothy, Button-Bright, Toto and Polly flew up in the air in a curve like a skyrocket's, one after another landing high upon the grass, where they rolled and tumbled for a time before they could stop themselves.

The shaggy man flew after them, head first, and lighted in a heap beside Toto, who, being much excited at the time, seized one of the donkey ears between his teeth and shook and worried it as hard as he could, growling angrily. The shaggy man made the little dog let go, and sat up to look around him.

Dorothy was feeling one of her front teeth, which was loosened by knocking against her knee as she fell. Polly was looking sorrowfully at a rent in her pretty gauze gown, and Button-Bright's fox head had stuck fast in a gopher hole and he was wiggling his little fat legs frantically in an effort to get free.

Otherwise they were unhurt by the adventure; so the shaggy man stood up and pulled Button-Bright out of the hole and went to the edge of the desert to look at the sand-boat. It was a mere mass of splinters now, crushed out of shape against the rocks. The wind had torn away the sail and carried it to the top of a tall tree, where the fragments of it fluttered like a white flag.

## Understanding The Road to Oz: The Deadly Desert

### I. Who Was It?

The passage has five characters: Dorothy, the shaggy man, Button-Bright, Polychrome and Toto. Write the the correct character for each event below.

1. \_\_\_\_\_ Managed the boat
2. \_\_\_\_\_ First saw the rocks
3. \_\_\_\_\_ Got stuck in a gopher hole.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ Loosened a tooth
5. \_\_\_\_\_ Shook one of the donkey ears.

### Part I. Short Answer

Answer each question below.

1. Who sat in the front of the sand-boat? \_\_\_\_\_
2. What was above the rocks? \_\_\_\_\_
3. What happened to the sail of the sand-boat after the crash? \_\_\_\_\_
4. Why did the sand-boat crash into the rocks? \_\_\_\_\_
5. Where did the group land? \_\_\_\_\_

# Vocabulary in The Road to Oz

## I. Vocabulary Match

Match each word in Column A with its meaning in Column B

### Column A

1. \_\_\_\_\_ rudder
2. \_\_\_\_\_ mast
3. \_\_\_\_\_ scarcely
4. \_\_\_\_\_ billows
5. \_\_\_\_\_ spilled
6. \_\_\_\_\_ jagged
7. \_\_\_\_\_ tableland
8. \_\_\_\_\_ despair
9. \_\_\_\_\_ gauze
10. \_\_\_\_\_ frantically

### Column B

- A. scattered or thrown
- B. hardly; barely
- C. high, flat land
- D. a piece of wood or metal used for steering a boat
- E. rough with sharp points
- F. quickly and excitedly
- G. fine, thin cloth
- H. tall post on a boat or ship
- I. sadness or without hope
- J. group of moving masses, like clouds or waves

## Part II. Which Meaning?

Below are phrases from the passage. Each underlined word has at least two meanings; circle the meaning for the word as it is used in the passage.

1. "the bottom was modeled with two sharp runners which would glide through the sand."

A. someone who moves quickly    B. a blade like on a skate or sled    C. stems of a plant

2. "The front of the sand-boat was pointed like the bow of a ship"

A. front of a boat    B. a wooded instrument with a string used with arrows    C. bending over in greeting or respect

3. "there was a rudder at the stern to steer by"

A. serious or firm    B. move around with a spoon    C. back of a boat

4. "The shaggy man flew after them, head first, and lighted in a heap beside Toto"

A. having no weight    B. set on fire    C. landed

5. "Polly was looking sorrowfully at a rent in her pretty gauze gown"

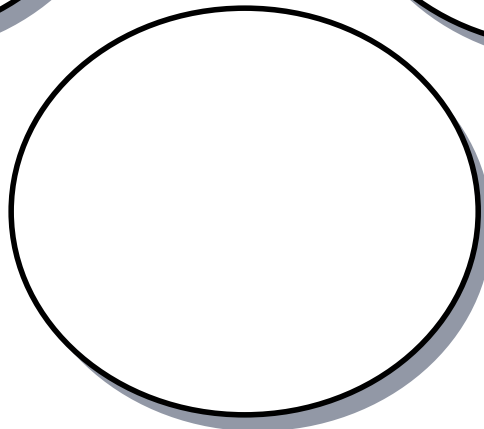
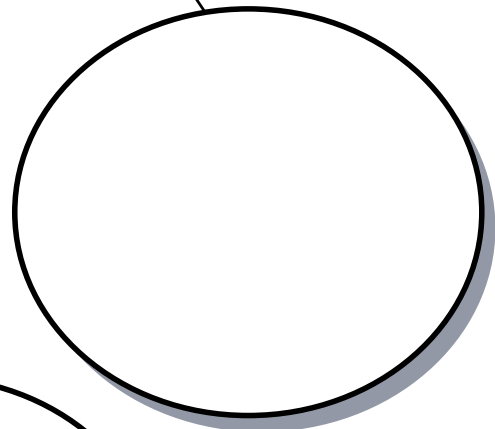
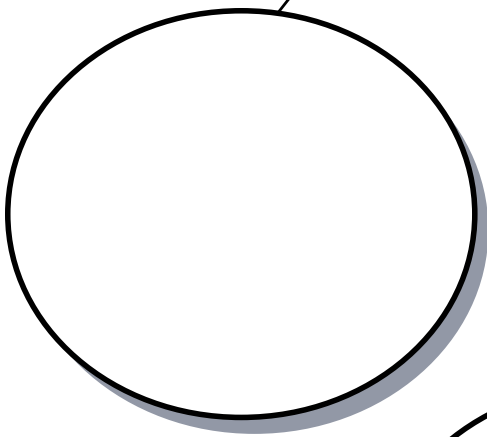
A. tear or cut    B. pay money to live in a place or use something    C. outside of a fruit



## The Road to Oz: Find the Supporting Evidence

Below is one of the main ideas of the passage. Write three quotations from the passage that support this main idea.

Crossing the Deadly Desert  
was dangerous.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Deadly Desert: How Else to Cross?

The Deadly Desert was almost impossible to cross. It was so hot that if you walked across the sand, you would burn up quickly. Dorothy and her group sailed safely across the sand in a boat. Dorothy had also crossed the desert before; once with a cyclone and another time with magic slippers. Think of another way the group could have safely crossed the desert. How would it work? What would it look like? Would they have to build it? How?

[illegible]

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## The Road to Oz Word Search

Circle each word from the list in the puzzle. The words can go in any direction.

Q	O	T	A	L	U	B	M	R	R	E	P	N	B	C
I	L	Z	E	T	I	O	R	D	O	R	A	B	W	D
P	U	D	E	S	E	R	T	Y	O	C	S	A	O	O
D	K	N	Z	A	V	C	T	K	H	E	K	A	Q	K
F	I	O	R	I	K	F	H	E	B	M	P	S	H	N
O	S	B	A	L	T	D	H	D	G	U	T	V	D	S
O	H	U	G	U	B	O	A	T	E	B	G	E	V	O
S	A	N	D	F	E	R	A	Q	I	M	D	O	R	E
J	G	R	F	I	A	O	E	T	W	T	O	T	O	U
D	G	Z	O	N	L	T	R	F	N	R	T	L	N	I
L	Y	C	N	H	O	H	O	W	D	E	A	D	L	Y
P	M	G	V	D	P	Y	W	H	C	L	S	C	K	K
L	E	F	H	C	G	I	M	T	P	E	N	A	R	M
Z	P	O	L	Y	C	H	R	O	M	E	N	J	U	A
R	Z	C	Q	K	T	R	Z	Q	F	O	N	F	M	J

BOAT  
DEADLY

DESERT  
DOROTHY

POLYCHROME  
ROCKS

SAIL  
SAND

SHAGGY  
TOTO

# The Road to Z: The Deadly Desert

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

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4. **Dorothy** Loosened a tooth
5. **Toto** Shook one of the donkey ears.

**Part I. Short Answer** Answer each question below. **Student's answers will vary.**  
**Example of correct answers:**

1. Who sat in the front of the sand-boat? **Polychrome**
2. What was above the rocks? **a tableland of grass and trees**
3. What happened to the sail of the sand-boat after the crash? **It landed in a high tree.**
4. Why did the sand-boat crash into the rocks? **It was going too fast for the shaggy man to control.**
5. Where did the group land? **On the grass**



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2. \_\_\_\_\_ **H** \_\_\_\_\_ mast
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5. \_\_\_\_\_ **A** \_\_\_\_\_ spilled
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8. \_\_\_\_\_ **I** \_\_\_\_\_ despair
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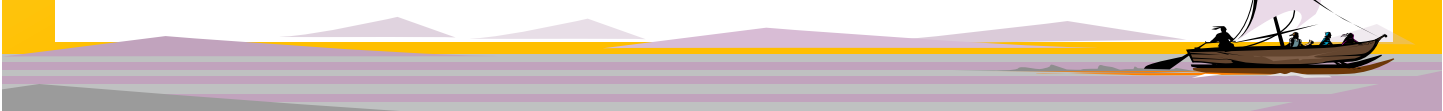
Crossing the Deadly Desert  
was dangerous.

Student's answers will vary. Example of correct answers:

"the boat rocked  
dangerously"

"If we're spilled in this  
sand, in the middle of  
the desert,' Dorothy  
thought to herself,  
'we'll be nothing  
but dust in a few  
minutes'"

"Go slowly, or we  
shall smash into the  
rocks."

[illegible]

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Circle each word from the list in the puzzle. The words can go in any direction.



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DEADLY

DESERT  
DOROTHY

POLYCHROME  
ROCKS

SAIL  
SAND

SHAGGY  
TOTO