

CREATION CLUES *For Kids!*

Exploring God's Creation

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White Sands

The howling dry wind whipped all around, making my hair go wild. The sand was so deep, it swallowed my feet more and more with every step. My sweaty skin felt sticky as it mixed with the pure white sand. Sometimes the wind was so strong in my face that I felt like I could barely get a breath. This is a little picture of what it was like on our mini adventure in White Sands National Monument in New Mexico. When I first visited this place, I had no idea how much fun

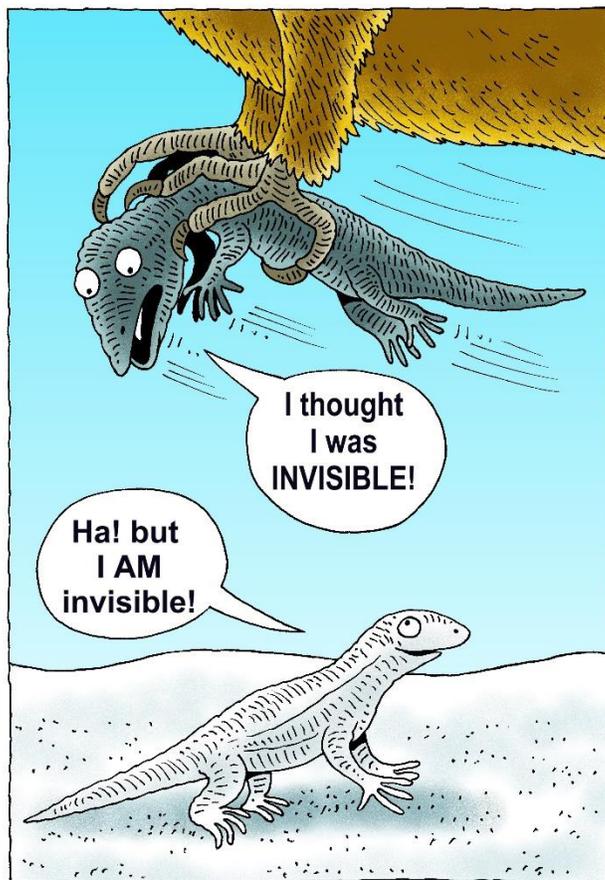
A sand dune (pronounced "doon") is a giant hill or pile of loose sand grains. They can be made by wind or flowing water. Dunes usually move slowly, but keep their shape while moving because the wind or water makes their shape.

it would be. We got to sled down the enormous sand dunes. It may have looked a little like snow sledding in that pure, white sand, but it was definitely not as cold as snow – even on a cold winter morning in this desert!

Odd Sand

White Sands is a desert, made up of some very special sand. This sand is made up of the mineral called **gypsum** (pronounced "jip-some"). Unlike other types of sand, gypsum can partly dissolve in water. It acts a little like salt. Gypsum sand like this would not last long on a beach.

Did you know? There are lots of different kinds & colors of sand – white sand, black sand, regular tan sand, and even green sand! These colors are made of different minerals. What makes them all sand is the size of their little sand grains.



White Rock

Why is this white sand so special? Normally, gypsum is solid like rock or a crystal – it isn't usually found as sand. Gypsum is very "soft" for a mineral. It's so soft you can scratch it with just your fingernail! Since it is so soft, but still hard like a rock, gypsum gets used in many different ways. Artists use it to make sculptures. Builders use it to make walls in houses. Farmers use it in soil to help crops grow. Doctors use it to make

Minerals are made up of chemicals designed to go together in a special way by God. Minerals can form into beautiful crystals. Rocks are made up of minerals.

casts around broken bones. If you have ever done a craft project with plaster of Paris, it is also made of gypsum. You can even find gypsum in your toothpaste and some food!

Flood

Where did all this white gypsum sand come from? Well, this white sand actually points back to Noah's flood that we read about in the Bible. The Flood created many of the rock layers we have all over the world. This includes layers of gypsum. We can't know for sure how exactly the science of everything happened, since we weren't there to see it. But, many scientists have used the Bible to make some good models of how this could have happened. The gypsum mineral probably came from Noah's Flood. The Bible says that during the Flood, the "fountains of the great deep" broke up. This probably meant underwater volcanic eruptions and much more. Super-hot, extra-salty salt water probably mixed in with the lava coming from underground. Some of that "salt" in the salt water would be gypsum that would get buried with other mud layers in the Flood. The mountains rose up at the end of the Flood and for a while after. Water probably carried gypsum from rock layers down into a low place between mountains – a place called



Yucca Plant in White Sands

the "Tularosa Basin" (pronounced "Too-lah-rho-sa"). Being stuck between mountains, with nowhere to go, most water just had to evaporate in the hot sun, leaving the gypsum behind. Today we have mounds and mounds of white gypsum sand in the Tularosa Basin – White Sands, New Mexico.

Desert Plants

Even though White Sands is a desert that doesn't get as much rain as other places, it still has a bunch of amazing plants and animals! Since the ground is made of sand dunes that move slowly in the wind, only special types of plants can survive the moving sand around them as they grow. Yucca plants grow very tall so that even when sand moves over them, they aren't completely covered. Plants trap water at their roots, making the gypsum sand stick close to the roots. This creates a chunk of almost solid ground underneath the plant, even when the rest of the sand has moved away. These plants show God's amazing design in their ability to live well even in a desert.

White Critters

Do you like lizards? Did you know that there are white lizards, white mice, white spiders, and white moths all living in White Sands? These white creatures blend in with the sand, making them more "invisible" to the creatures who would like to have them for lunch. Some of these special types of white creatures can only be found living in White Sands. These creatures got to White Sands and adjusted to the harsh desert environment using their special God-designed abilities.

Desert Creatures

Living in the desert can be hard, and not all creatures are up for the challenge. But, there are some creatures who have learned how to live here and have adjusted to the desert environment around them. God created animals with the special ability to adjust themselves to different environments. This is why many of the creatures in White Sands can survive. God made creatures to be able to adjust because He loves variety – he loves putting different colors and shapes in His creation. Of course, not all creatures can adjust to the harsh desert environment. God made creatures with the ability to adjust themselves to fit different environments, but there is only so far that a creature can adjust.

Warning!

*Don't get adjusting confused with evolution! Creatures can adjust themselves a little, but they never turn into other types of creatures, no matter how long they adjust. Lizards can adjust their color, shape & size, but **they will always be lizards – not any other type of creature!***

Adjusting

Just like the creatures in White Sands, sometimes God puts each of us in different environments and sometimes we have to adjust. God has given you everything you need to adjust, if needed. Sometimes we need to be flexible when change comes and learn to do things differently than we used to do. But remember to always stay true to the special person God created you to be. Don't let other people try to over adjust you into someone

God did not want you to become. Like the creatures at White Sands, you were not made to evolve into something else!

Video

We made a video to teach you more about White Sands and show you how it looks! With an adult, check it out on YouTube – it's called "White Sands | Creation Clues | Episode 1" on the "Creation Clues" YouTube channel. Scan this QR code to go directly to the video.



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About Creation Clues for Kids

CCK is written by Sara J. Mikkelson. Many thanks to Richard Gunther for sharing his cartoon! Special thanks to Dr. Andrew Snelling for geology review. If you have a question, comment, cartoon, or drawing about God's creation that you would like to share, please write to Sara at: CreationCluesForKids@gmail.com