

## Changes Due to Drought – Student Activity

### We live in the world's driest habitable continent

Drought can cause an area to lose lots of soil and broken rock material (sediments) as the plants that hold these in place die off. When the plants are gone, soil and sediments can be blown away in the wind (by erosion). When it starts to rain again, the water can wash soil and sediment away. Droughts also cause dams and waterways to dry up, often leaving behind more salty water.

### Wind



Wind can cause some really interesting landscapes to form.

The World Heritage listed Willandra Lakes Region of New South Wales has impressive examples of this in Lake Mungo.

Winds blowing from the same direction for millions of years have blown in sediments and sculpted them to form dunes and the famous lunettes (shown in the photo at left).

Wind erosion has also uncovered many artefacts from more than 40 000 years of Aboriginal settlement in the area.

### Observing How Damp Soil is More Resistant to Wind than Dry Soil

#### Materials

- Moist and dry sand
- Drinking straws
- Sandpit

#### Method

1. Make two “sandcastles”- both the same size, but one with dry sand and the other with moist (not wet) sand.
2. Predict what you think will happen if the wind blows across dry sand and wet sand.
3. Blow through the straw for 10 seconds on each type of sand.
4. Compare what happened to your two sandcastles.

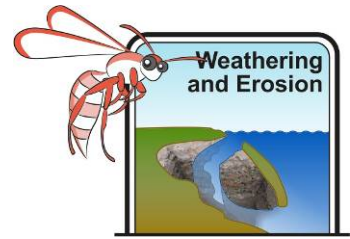
**My Prediction** \_\_\_\_\_

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#### Observations

What stayed the **same** during your experiment? \_\_\_\_\_

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What changed (or was **different**) during your experiment? \_\_\_\_\_

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### Discussion

What changes to the landscape do you predict will happen if wind blows across a drought-stricken landscape?

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