

The Land of Frankincense: student sheet

Starter – a commodity

Discuss

Discuss the picture below then answer the questions.



Image Source: © [ayublab](https://www.ayublab.com)

What does it show? What are its uses around the world?



What geographical features can you identify in the picture, and how might they influence the cultivation of frankincense in Oman?

How does the landscape in the picture reflect the climate of the region where frankincense is produced?

Describe the traditional harvesting methods of frankincense depicted in this picture.

What challenges might farmers face in this region when cultivating and harvesting frankincense?

Card sort

On the next page, there are 15 cards on frankincense. Follow the steps below to complete the activity.

Firstly, sort them into two piles, one for 'I did not know that' and the other for 'I knew it'.

Next, sort the cards into two groups, under the headings: description, and uses.

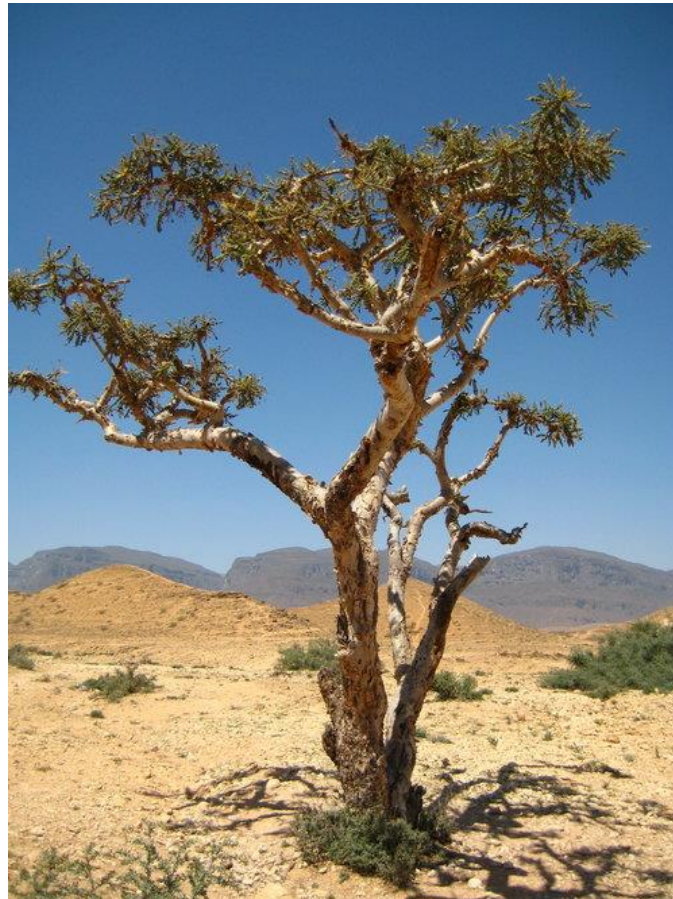
Challenge: are there any card which you cannot sort into these sections? What additional category would you add?



Frankincense is an iconic commodity harvested from wild Boswellia trees	Frankincense trees are found in the Dhofar region of Oman, particularly in the Wadi Dawkah area	Frankincense is used in essential oils for its calming properties
Traditional Chinese medicine believes it has health benefits	Skincare products use frankincense for anti-inflammation and anti-aging	The Land of Frankincense is a UNESCO World Heritage
It is a unique scent used in perfumes	In many religious and spiritual practices incense is burnt	Overharvesting and habitat loss have led to a decline in frankincense tree populations
Frankincense is commonly used in meditation practises	It has healing properties of cleansing and enlightenment	Burning Frankincense is a key aspect of hospitality, and drives off flying insects
It is known as the desert tears	The desert these trees grow in is called Rub' al Khali	It has been used for over 5,000 years, famously given to Jesus by the Magi (the Three Wise Men)

The frankincense tree

Using the relevant slides in the PowerPoint, annotate the image of the frankincense tree with the information about the physical characteristics and plant adaptations.



Source: Boswellia Sacra Tree @ [ayublab](#)



The Khareef

Asia’s hottest and driest mountains are found on the Arabian Peninsula, in Oman. Each year an incredible transformation takes place as fog sweeps inland transforming the rocky slopes into lush green meadows.

Watch episode 2 of Asia on BBC iPlayer, titled Above the Clouds.

What lies in the far south of Oman? 19:10

How hot can temperatures reach? 19:20

In the summer, what happens as moist tropical air meets the surface of the sea? 20:00

What is the Khareef? 20:30

What is Arabia’s best adapted desert animals? 22:15

What dwindles as summer ends? 22:55



ArcGIS

For online map work, ArcGIS is a great platform to use to produce GIS work. The Geography Visualiser is a tool to which allows users to explore the world with maps and data.

Follow the steps on the PowerPoint to create an online ArcGIS map on temperature and precipitation in Oman.

The layers you will add to your ArcGIS map are:

- Global Temperature 1981-2010
- Global Rainfall 1981-2010

You will need to click on Map layers then the Legend icon to understand the colour coding.

Using your ArcGIS map (with the above layers added), describe the environment where the Frankincense trees grow.

The impacts

Open the [WWF Risk Filter Suite](#) and select the Water Availability from the drop-down options.

Describe the physical abundance or lack of freshwater resources for the region.

Zoom in on the Sea of Oman, where the majority of the population live. What level of water risk is present along this populated coastline?

Read the following [article](#) and use it to identify other impacts of climate change in Oman.



Extension: the land of frankincense vs. wild frankincense in Ethiopia

Read the article How the west’s wellness industry is driving Ethiopia’s frankincense trees towards extinction. Answer the 4 questions below.

How has the increased demand for frankincense in the wellness industry impacted natural habitats across Ethiopia and Arabia?

What are some of the ethical concerns surrounding the trade of frankincense resin, especially in relation to the local communities?

How do the prices of frankincense products in western markets compare to the earnings of those who collect the resin?

What steps can be taken to ensure the sustainable harvesting of frankincense and protect it from extinction?
