



Cactus Queen

Written by Lori Alexander

Illustrated by Jenn Ely

Grades K-5

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Reading Guide by Helen Ramirez, L.A. Conservancy Volunteer

Discussion Questions

1. On page 8 it says that “words had power, and ideas could make a difference.” What do you think this means? Can words or ideas make change in the world?
2. Minerva helped museums create displays about the desert. Have you ever seen a desert display in a museum? What did you notice about it?
3. Describe Ella and her personality. Even though Minerva didn’t want plants taken from the desert, her mission was still important. How did showing the desert plants to people help her protect the desert?
4. People wrote lots of letters to help Minerva, and it made the National Park Service take action. Do you think writing letters or speaking up can still make a difference today? Why or why not?
5. Why do you think Assistant Director Harold C. Bryant agreed that the desert was worth saving and the other Assistant Director didn’t?
6. When Minerva needed a break from the city, she would drive to the Mojave Desert. Where do you or your family go when you want quiet time or a break from busy places?
7. Minerva found beauty in the desert, can you list things that make the desert beautiful?
8. Do you think parks and natural places should be protected or saved? Why is this important?
9. Have you ever seen a Joshua Tree? Or have you been to Joshua Tree National Park?
10. If you could save or protect something important to you—like a place, plant, or special spot—what would it be, and why would you choose it?



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