You and your best friend, you know the one that always gets you into trouble, are taking a trip to California. Your friend planned out the drive and decided to go through the Mojave Desert. You are excited about seeing the desert especially after spending a year in Mr. Martin’s Earth Science class learning all about wind energy. The wind mill farms are close to the top of your to do list. At the same time you hope that you are not stuck in a sandstorm caused by the prevailing winds. As you are riding in the car, you think back to something you read on the US Geologic Survey’s website. “For every bucket of sand that migrates into the Kelso Dunes, an undetermined volume of dust is generated that disappears into the wind. Dust storms in the Mojave region can be quite intense, and a hazard when dust concentrations are high enough to cause white-out conditions. Windblown dust can be harmful to people breathing it. Dust may contain toxic compounds and it can carry pathogens such as the virus that causes Valley Fever; it also carries away valuable topsoil. On the other hand, dust that settles into stony soils of the desert provides improved retention of moisture and adds nutrients. Thus, dust can be both beneficial and destructive” (USGS publications, 2009).

Sitting deep in thought about the desert outside of your window as the odometer count the number of endless miles, you are startled by a spurting sound coming from the engine. It is your imagination so you tell yourself. But the sound happens again and again. Suddenly your best friend screams out in terror. As you quickly turn to see what is going on, you realize her eyes are wide with fear and staring directly at the fuel gauge. The car rolls to a stop in the middle of the Mojave Desert. The only thing you see for miles and miles and maybe forever are the sands of the desert.

After your panic attack and complete breakdown subside, your brain begins to function once again and you take inventory of your belongings. The first thing you try to do is call 911 then your mommy, but there is no cell service in the middle of the desert, and you do not have a satellite phone. After an agonizing moment the severity of the situation sinks in…

1. You are alone with your “best friend” in the middle of the Mojave Desert.
2. You have a couple of gallons of water each.
3. A first aid kit with gauze, band aids, rubbing alcohol, medical tape, an ace bandage, and tweezers.
4. You each have a blanket because your mom insisted that you bring them, and she packed them in the car when you accidently left them in the house. Thank you, mommy!
5. You have snacks, but just the usual road trip foods – chips, M&M’s, peanut butter crackers, sweet tarts, skittles, and beef jerky. You had a king cake, but that is long gone.
6. You have your suitcase of clothes for your California trip – shorts, shirts, shoes of all colors and varieties. You never know what you may need on a trip.

Now it is up to you to survive!

You have your background story. You need to figure out how to survive in the desert.

Research questions:

For each question you are responsible for the following:

• A bibliographic citation (made using easybib)

• A direct quotation from the source

• The same quotation paraphrased

• At least a 50-60 word response using the quotation and your research to answer the question

1. Where is the Mojave Desert?
2. What is the best color clothing to wear in a desert?
3. What is the best type of clothing to wear in a desert?
4. How much water do you need to drink each day to survive in the desert?
5. What types of food can you find in the desert?
6. How can you get/find water in a desert?
7. What is the temperature of the Mojave Desert in the day and in the night during the summer?
8. What type of shelter do you need to survive in the desert?
9. How do you protect yourself from sandstorms, and the temperature?
10. What animals live in the Mojave Desert and are they edible?