



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA

**ARIZONA
STATE MUSEUM**

Muse2You! O'odham Virtual Exhibit Tour Vocabulary List

(Words are listed in order they are introduced in the video presentation.)

O'odham – people in O'odham

Tohono – desert in O'odham

Akimel – river in O'odham

Nawait – saguaro wine, part of the O'odham rain ceremony

Elder Brother – told the people that the world would burn without rain, also known as I'toi

Hummingbird – the messenger who found Wind and Rain

Monsoon – a season of rain in the summer

Cactus picker – made from saguaro ribs and used to harvest saguaro fruit

Plaited basket – used like a strainer to separate the pulp and seeds from saguaro syrup

Calendar stick – a tool made from a saguaro rib that is used to record a family's or community's history

Burden basket – used by O'odham woman to carry large, heavy loads

Cactus boot – the scab a saguaro forms around holes made by birds

Adobe – mixture of clay and sand formed into bricks used for building

Ak-chin farming – a type of farming using flood waters to water crops in the desert

Irrigation canal – a pathway dug to divert river water to crops (called arroyo in Spanish)

Tepary – a bean plant that can survive with little water in extreme temperatures

Cholla – a cactus with edible buds that are high in calcium

Mesquite – a tree whose bean can be ground into a sweet, nutty flour

Chia – a seed that forms a gel when soaked in water and used to thicken food and make pudding

Beargrass – a tall grass gathered in bunches used to weave baskets that is green but turns yellow as it dries

Yucca – used to make baskets, it looks like beargrass but is flimsy and not as stiff

Devil's Claw – a green plant with purple flowers and edible fruit, the stems on the fruit pods are used to make baskets

Water – the most important resource for the O'odham, and anyone surviving in a desert environment

Florence Canal – used by American settlers to divert water from the Gila river and devastated Akimel O'odham farming

CAP – Central Arizona Project draws water from the Colorado River to supply communities in central and southern Arizona

Court battles – through several court cases the O'odham won their rights to water from the Central Arizona Project