

Primary 3 · English · Advanced English Practice

Comprehension: a river legend

Time **35 min** Marks **10** Questions **10**

Answers are printed in red after each question, with the working where it matters. Marks in brackets show how a marker would split them.

Comprehension

5 marks

Questions 1 to 5 carry 1 mark each.

Suraya and the wind spirit

Adapted from a folk tale

Suraya, who ruled the wind, and Gempa, who ruled the stone, fought without rest over the valley of Lembah. Whenever Suraya won, the roofs of the huts were torn away. Whenever Gempa won, the paths cracked and no cart could pass.

At last they agreed on one last contest. The winner would rule the valley for good. Gempa had been born from three boulders, so he could strike from three sides at once. He sent slabs of rock rolling at Suraya. She was beaten flat against the hillside, but each time she gathered herself and rose again, spinning above the trees. Gempa did not give up. He hurled still heavier rocks. The two were so closely matched that the contest looked as if it would last forever.

Near evening, a grey dust began to fall, yet Suraya's gusts still reached the hilltops. The cascades of loose stone that Gempa kept sending down threatened to bury the rice fields. With the help of the birds, the farmers tipped a ridge of earth across the slope to hold the rocks back, and that ridge became the embankment of Lembah. In the end Gempa was pinned under his own stones and one by one his arms stopped moving. Even so, he broke free and fled to the caves of Gua Dalam. One of Suraya's daughters followed and kept watch, in case he ever came back for revenge.

Suraya had beaten Gempa at last, but her victory was not complete. She still had to face his brother, whose footsteps shook the ground just as hard. That fight was harder than she expected. Again and again her strongest gusts did almost nothing.

Suddenly Gempa's brother flung a boulder at the wing of one of Suraya's daughters. She drove him off with a blast of wind so fierce that it carried him all the way to the coast. Her daughter was badly hurt and knew she would never fly again. She asked to stay by the sea and watch for Gempa's brother, so that he could never return. Suraya agreed, and told the farmers of that shore to bring her daughter a basket of rice and a bundle of dried fish each week. They were glad to do it, because the brother's footsteps had split their fields and toppled their stores.

Whenever the ground shook after that, the farmers hurried to leave offerings, hoping to calm the fury of the spirit. Then they stood beneath a tall waringin tree, whose leaves whispered the voice of Suraya.

1 Suraya and Gempa were fighting over [1]

- (1) a cave
- (2) a rice field
- (3) which of them was faster
- (4) ✓ who would rule Lembah

2 At the end of the last contest, Suraya Gempa. [1]

- (1) made peace with
- (2) was defeated by
- (3) ✓ won against
- (4) ran away from

He was pinned under his own stones and fled. She won.

3 During the contest, suffered the most. [1]

- (1) ✓ the farmers
- (2) Suraya
- (3) Gempa's brother
- (4) Gempa

The loose stone threatened to bury their rice fields. Both spirits fought on.

4 Suraya's daughter became [1]

- (1) ✓ unable to fly after the fight
- (2) the guard of Gempa and his brother
- (3) one of the farmers of Lembah
- (4) a waringin tree in Gua Dalam

One daughter watched the caves. The one who was hurt stayed by the sea because she could never fly again. Option 2 names both brothers, so it does not fit.

5 The word "spirit" in the last paragraph refers to [1]

(1) Suraya

(2) Gempa

(3) ✓ Gempa's brother

(4) Suraya's daughters

The farmers leave offerings when the ground shakes, which is the brother's sign. The tree whispers Suraya, who is named separately.

Words from the story

5 marks

Questions 6 to 10 carry 1 mark each. Match each word with its meaning in the story.

6-10 Write the letter of the meaning in the answer box. [5]

	Word	Answer		Meaning
6.	slab	b	a.	noun. a steep rush of loose rock or water down a slope
7.	cascade	a	b.	noun. a broad, flat, thick piece of stone
8.	hurl	c	c.	verb. throw something with great force
9.	pin	e	d.	verb. force an attacker to go back
10.	drive off	d	e.	verb. hold someone down so that he cannot move

Award 1 mark for each correct letter.

Marking notes

- The words tested in the table are the ones that carry the story: slab, cascade, hurl, pin and drive off.
- For question 4, do not accept option 2. The daughter by the sea watched only the brother, and the daughter at the caves watched only Gempa.

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