

Read through the Folk Tale below, answer the questions on the following page and mark your answers which are on the page after that.

The Baobab Tree

Baobab trees are common in Africa. They are known as 'upside down trees' because their branches look like roots sticking up in the air.

A long, long, long, time ago the gods made the world. They made the land and the sea. They made the animals and plants. One day, they even made a talking tree.

At first, they were delighted with it. They watered it with showers of rain. They sent the sun to warm its leaves. And they called it the Baobab tree. The Baobab tree talked and talked and talked. But it didn't talk about the gentle rain or the shining sun.

Instead, the Baobab tree moaned and groaned all day long — and all night too.

The Baobab tree could always find something to be unhappy about.

And it wouldn't let the gods get on with their work in peace.

When they grew a forest of thick, tall trees, the Baobab really complained.

"Not fair!" it whined. "I want to be taller. Make me taller."

By now, the gods were furious.

So they flew down to see the Baobab tree. "Stop moaning or else," they warned.

The gods sighed and went back to work, making wonderful fruit trees that grew juicy, ripe fruit.

"I want fruit," bellowed the Baobab tree. "Can you hear me? I demand to have some fruit!"

"Stop!" cried the gods. "We can't bear it any more. Stop talking! We'll make you stop!"

They grabbed the Baobab tree and turned it upside down. Then they made a hole and thrust the tree into the ground... head first.

The Baobab tree was completely silent for the first time in its life. Its mouth was so full of earth, it couldn't make a sound.

No one has ever heard the Baobab tree say another word.



Remember to write your answers in full sentences where possible.

1 Write the number 1, 2 or 3 next to these events from the story to put them in the right order.

The Baobab tree demands to have fruit.

The Baobab tree wants to be taller.

The gods make the Baobab tree.

3 marks

2 The Baobab tree “bellowed” to the gods. Why do you think the author chose the word “bellowed” instead of “said”?

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1 mark

3 Explain how the gods’ feelings towards the Baobab tree change during the story.

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2 marks

4 In your own words, explain what happens to the Baobab tree at the end of the story.

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2 marks

5 Folk tales sometimes explain why things look a certain way or why something happens. What do you think this folk tale explains?

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2 marks

Total
out of 10

Mark your answers and correct any mistakes you've made by rereading the text.

Answers

1. The gods make the Baobab tree.
2. The Baobab tree wants to be taller.
3. The Baobab tree demands to have fruit.
2. E.g. To show that the tree was shouting loudly.
3. E.g. At first they are pleased with the tree but then they get angry with it because it shouts and complains so much.
4. E.g. It is buried upside down in the ground so that it can't speak any more.
5. E.g. Why the Baobab tree looks like it is growing upside down.

