

MAADAI-KARA

5c Maadai-Kara

Kai is a special type of singing that people in the Altai Mountains of Kazakhstan use to tell epic stories. Aleksej Grigorevič Kalkin (1925-1998) was one of the last masters of *Kai* and he learnt the great epic tales from his father and grandfather, who were also *Kai* singers. One of the most famous of these tales is called *Maadai-Kara*. It is an epic tale – Kalkin's version had 7,738 verses!

- 1 What is *Kai*? What do people in the Altai Mountains use it for? Read the text to find out.

Reading & Listening

- 2 Who was *Maadai-Kara*? How are the people in the pictures related to him?
🔊 Listen and read to find out.



Maadai-Kara

A long time ago on the Kazakh steppe, the great Bayterek tree grew. This special tree was called the World Tree and it united the upper, middle and lower worlds. Its branches reached into the heavens of the upper world, where two birds called out the number of days **remaining** until the end of the world. Its trunk belonged to the middle, or human world, ruled by *Maadai-Kara*, and its roots went deep into the underworld where the god, *Erlık*, ruled.

Maadai-Kara had a glorious **reign** but as he grew old, he lost his power. One day, he fell asleep and his sleep lasted for sixty days. When he finally woke up, his enemies were close. He knew that when they approached even closer there would be a terrible war. *Maadai-Kara* had a baby son, *Kögüdei Mergen*. To keep him safe, he decided to take *Kögüdei Mergen* to the Black Mountain and leave him there, where a poor woman of Altai found him. *Maadai-Kara* returned to fight the battle, but he lost and the new ruler, *Kara-Kula*, made all of *Maadai-Kara*'s people slaves.

On the Black Mountain, the poor woman of Altai took care of *Kögüdei Mergen* until he was ready to live his life on his own. When he was old enough, *Kögüdei Mergen* left the Black Mountain on his horse and rode across the land. He crossed a poisonous sea, made it through the moving mountains, and faced many monsters on his way until he reached the home of *Kara-Kula* and **defeated** him in **battle**.


Kögüdei Mergen set all his people free from being slaves. He became the new ruler and with the help of seven *kaans*, he married the beautiful *Altyn Kүskү*. But still, his quest was not over. He **descended** into the underworld, to the land where the dead **dwel**. There, he fought *Erlık*, the lord of the underworld and won. *Kögüdei Mergen* **released** all the good souls from the underworld, leaving behind only those who were guilty of **committing terrible** acts in life. *Kögüdei Mergen* and his wife, *Altyn Kүskү*, ruled the land in peace and harmony for many years, bringing about a new golden age in the human








Maadai-Kara



Altyn

3 Read the text again and answer the questions. 

- 1 Who was Erlik? 
- 2 Why did Maadai-Kara leave his son on the Black Mountain? 
- 3 What did Kara-Kula do after he beat Maadai-Kara in battle? 
- 4 What did Kögüdei Mergen do in the underworld? 
- 5 According to the legend, where is Kögüdei Mergen now? 

5 Complete the sentences. Use: ...

grew

lost


fought

took

rode

faced

- 1 Maadai-Kara and Kara-Kula a great battle. ...
- 2 Kögüdei Mergen many dangers on his journey from the Black Mountain. ...
- 3 A poor woman care of the baby Kögüdei Mergen. ...
- 4 Kara-Kula waited until Maadai-Kara old before he attacked. ...
- 5 Kögüdei Mergen his horse all the way to the home of Kara-Kula. ...
- 6 Maadai-Kara was once a great ruler, but he his power. ...

6 Match the words in bold in the text to their definitions. 
Click on the words in bold in the SHOW TEXT for help.

remaining

reign

defeated

battle


descended

dwell


released

committed terrible acts

• done bad things



• live



• the time he ruled the kingdom



• beat him in a fight



• set free




• went down



• left



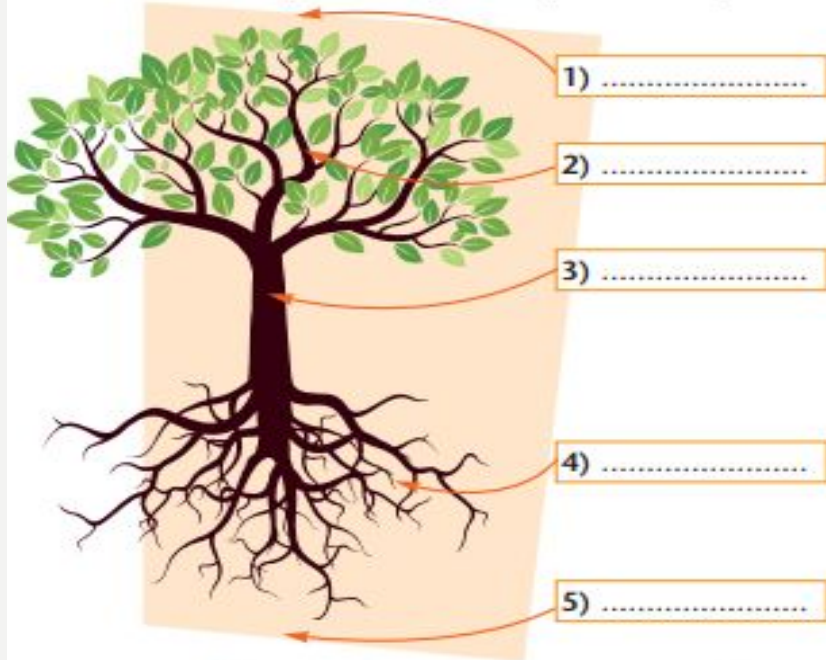
• fight between two armies



5c

• *Maadai-Kara*

- 1 ★ **Label the mythical World Tree with: roots, branches, heaven, underworld, trunk.**



- 2 ★ **Complete the sentences. Use: ride, lose, dwell, face, defeat, grow, take, fall in the correct form.**

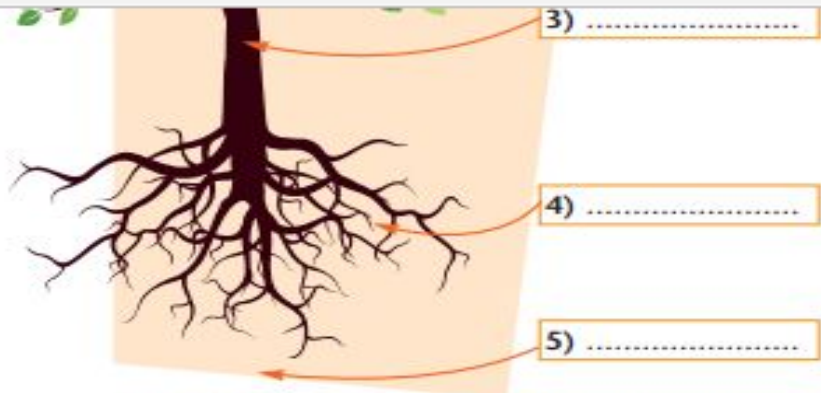
- 1 Alexander the Great built a huge empire, but he never old because he died when he was just 32.
- 2 Voldemort his powers after he attacked Harry Potter and he became very weak.
- 3 I'm so tired! I can't watch a film now – I think

- 3 ★ **Fill in: reign, enemies, slaves, ruler, age.**

- 1 Ancient kings and queens had that worked but didn't get paid.
- 2 People call the time between 500 and 300 BCE 'the golden of Greece' because there were so many good ideas and beautiful artworks and buildings at this time.
- 3 Elizabeth I was the Queen of England and her lasted 45 years.
- 4 Cleopatra was the last of ancient Egypt.
- 5 Genghis Khan had many who wanted to hurt him.



- 4 ★★ **Replace the words in bold with their antonyms: peace, clear, glorious, new, lost, poor.**



2 ★ Complete the sentences. Use: ride, lose, dwell, face, defeat, grow, take, fall in the correct form.

- 1 Alexander the Great built a huge empire, but he never old because he died when he was just 32.
- 2 Voldemort his powers after he attacked Harry Potter and he became very weak.
- 3 I'm so tired! I can't watch a film now – I think I asleep.
- 4 Please can you care of my cat while I'm on holiday?
- 5 The heroes in legends have to many dangers.
- 6 The Athenians the Persians at the Battle of Marathon in 490 BCE.
- 7 We our horses to the river so that they could have a drink.
- 8 In the story, people in houses underground.

ancient Egypt.

- 5 Genghis Khan had many who wanted to hurt him.



4 ★★ Replace the words in bold with their antonyms: peace, clear, glorious, new, lost, poor.

- 1 The King's reign was **disastrous**.
- 2 As he got older and weaker, he **gained** power.
- 3 The baby was found by a **wealthy** woman on the Black Mountain.
- 4 Kögüdei was the **previous** ruler of the kingdom.
- 5 Under Kögüdei and Altyn, the steppe became a place of **war**.
- 6 Tonight the skies are **cloudy**.