

## S2 ENGLISH HOLIDAY WORK

The two ridges lay side by side. One has Kamenno, the other was Mukuyu. Between them was a valley. It was called the valley of life. Behind Kamenno and Mukuyu were many more valleys and ridges, lying without any discernible plan. They were like many sleeping lions which never woke. They just slept the big deep sleep of their Creator.

A river flowed through the valley of life. If there had been no bush and no forest trees covering the slopes, you could have seen the river when you stood on top of either Kamenno or Mukuyu. Now you had to come down. Even then you could not see the whole extent of the river as it gracefully, and without any apparent haste, wound its way down the valley, like a snake.

The river was called Honia, which meant cure, or bring back-to-life. Honia River never dried: it seemed to possess a strong will to live, scorning droughts and weather changes. And it went on in the same way, never hurrying, never hesitating. People saw this and were happy.

Honia was the soul of Kamenno and Mukuyu. It joined them. And men, cattle, wild beasts and trees, were all united by this- stream. When you stood in the valley, the two ridges ceased to be sleeping lions united by their common source of life. They became antagonists. You could tell this, not by anything tangible but by the way they faced each other, like two rivals ready to come to blows in a life and death struggle for the leadership of this isolated region.

It began long ago. A man rose in Makuyu. He claimed that Gikuyu and Mumbi sojourned there with Murungu on their way to Mukuruwe wa Gathanga. As a result of that stay, he said leadership had been left to Makuyu. Not all the people believed him. For had it always been whispered and rumoured that Gikuyu and Mumbi had stopped at Kamenno? And had not a small hill grown out of the soil on which they stood south of Kamenno? And Murungu had told them:

‘This land I give to you. O man and woman. It is yours to rule and till, you and your posterity.’

The land was fertile. It was the whole of Gikuyu country from one horizon embracing the heavens to the other hidden in the clouds. So the story ran in Kamenno. Spiritual superiority and leadership had then been left there.

Kameno had a good record to bear out this story. A sacred grove had sprung out of the place where Gikuyu and Mumbi stood; people still paid homage to it. It could also be seen, by any who cared to count, that Kameno threw up more heroes and leaders than any other ridge. Mugo wa Kibiro, that great Gikuyu seer of old, had been born there. And he had grown up, seeing visions of the future and speaking them to the many people who came to see and hear him. They called him an impostor. Then one night, when people were asleep, he vanished from the hills. He was soon heard of in the country. And he still spoke aloud his message and cried.

“There shall come a people with clothes like butterflies’.

*Adopted from The River Between*

### Questions

1. The river could not be seen because, it was.....
  - a) in valley
  - b) to far
  - c) the bush and forest covered the slopes
  - d) it slept
  
2. Not all people believed what leadership had been left to Makuyu because
  - a) a man rose in Makuyu
  - b) Gikuyu and Mumbi had stopped at kameno
  - c) Kameno threw out more leaders and heroes than any other ridges.
  - d) Makuyu was small.
  
3. According to the passage, Mugo wa kibiro was;
  - a) a great leader at Makuyu
  - b) a born of Kameno and a great seer
  - c) A born of Kameno and great Gikuyu seer
  - d) an imposter
  
4. When Mugo wa Kibiro vanished, he was heard in;
  - a) Nyeri Kiambu and Makuyu
  - b) Nyeri, Kameno and Muranga
  - c) Kiambu, Nyeri and Muranga
  - d) Kiambu, Nyeri, Makuyu, Kameno and Gikuyu

5. Write the meaning of the following words as used in the passage.

- i) Like a snake
- ii) Soul
- iii) Antagonists
- iv) Seer