

Zhou Chou and the Three Beasts

A legend from China retold by Kate Ruttle

- 1 Everyone in the village feared and hated the bully, Zhou Chou.
- 2 One day, the priest asked him, “Why do you squander your time worrying us little people? A man with your talents should be battling ferocious beasts, not frightening small children.”
- 5 Zhou Chou glowered. “What beasts?” he asked.
- 6 “Three beasts live nearby. They are the scourge of our town,” exclaimed the priest. “Why don’t you scare them away? Or are you worried that they are too powerful for you?”
- 9 “Nothing is too powerful for me!” declared Zhou Chou.
- 10 “The first beast terrorises the people and steals their children. It is a wild tiger,” said the priest. “Can you help us with it?”
- 12 “Consider it done!,” smirked Zhou Chou, displaying the bulging muscles in his arms.
- 14 Taking his weapons, he hurried to the tiger’s lair. The tiger was sharpening its claws on a rocky outcrop. Zhou Chou fired a swarm of fierce, fast arrows at it.
- 16 “That was well done,” said the priest when Zhou Chou returned to the town wearing the tiger skin as a cape. “Now can you defeat the second beast – a water dragon that terrifies the fishermen and keeps them from their shoals?”
- 19 Zhou Chou found a boat and rowed out onto the lake. For three days, he teased and pestered the dragon until it became frustrated and drew closer, intending to incinerate him. As it drew in a breath, Zhou Chou struck it with his axe.
- 22 “Congratulations,” said the priest when Zhou Chou appeared wearing a tunic of dragon hide. “Your biggest challenge, however, is yet to come. You must tame the fiercest of all the beasts.”
- 26 “It doesn’t stand a chance against me!” boasted Zhou Chou. “Where is it?”
- 28 “I am looking at him now,” said the priest.
- 29 Zhou Chou staggered back. For the first time in his life he felt inadequate.
- 31 Ashamed, he slunk away from the town and enlisted in the army. In time, and under the guidance of their greatest warriors, he became a skilled general, admired and beloved by his people.



Name:	Class:	Date:
--------------	---------------	--------------

1 Look at paragraph 2, beginning “*One day, the priest asked him ...*”.

Which of the following words is closest in meaning to “*little*”? Tick **one**.

poor small unimportant young

2a

1 mark

2 *Zhou Chou glowered*. “*What beasts?*” he asked.

Why did the author use the word “*glowered*”?

2g

1 mark

3 **Find** and **copy** the question the priest asks, which he knows will make Zhou Chou want to fight the beasts.

2d

1 mark

4 What did Zhou Chou do to show the priest that he was strong enough to fight the tiger?

2b

1 mark

5 How did the priest know that Zhou Chou had defeated the water dragon?

2d

1 mark

6 The priest identifies three beasts.

Which sentence is true for **all** of the beasts? Tick **one**.

They frighten people.

They have sharp teeth.

They incinerate people.

They kill people.

2c

1 mark

7 What impression do we get about the character of Zhou Chou *before* his third task?

Give **two** things, using evidence from the text to support your answer.

2d

3 marks

8 Which event in the text makes Zhou Chou want to change his ways?

2f

1 mark

9 Explain why people react differently to Zhou Chou at the beginning and end of the story.

2h

2 marks