



An Aboriginal myth

The Aboriginal people of Australia have stories about thunder and lightning. Read the two myths below about thunderstorms and answer the questions that follow.



Thunderstorms

On Melville Island it is a woman, *Bamerali*, who strikes the ground with her stone axes mounted on long flexible handles. These are the lightning flashes which destroy the trees and sometimes the Aborigines.

The Arnhem Land Aborigines believe that the thunder-man, *Jambawal*, travels from place to place on the large cumulus clouds of the wet season, shedding the life-giving rain on the earth beneath. These thunder clouds are also the home of tiny spirit children, the *yattas*, who travel on the raindrops to descend to earth and find a human mother.

From *Primitive Myths*, pp. 4 and 51 J. K. Braxton



How does *Bamerali* make lightning?

Who is *Jambawal*?

What are the *yattas*?
