

The Semong (The Tsunami)

On the island of Simeulue in Indonesia, an old woman was telling a story to her grandchildren. "Once upon a time," she began, "there was a little girl named Kiro. Kiro lived in our village a long time ago—before you were born, before your parents were born, even before I was born. One day Kiro was in her house, helping her mother in the kitchen. Suddenly the ground began to shake. It shook and shook. It shook so hard that Kiro and her mother couldn't stand up, and they fell to the floor. All around them, dishes and pots were falling from the shelves and crashing to the floor. Finally, the shaking stopped. Kiro and her mother got up and walked out of their house."

"Then what happened, Grandma?" the children asked, although they knew what happened next. They had heard the story many times before.

"Kiro looked toward the beach," the grandmother continued, "and she saw something she had never seen before. All the water was leaving the beach. It was going out toward the sea. Where there once had been a narrow beach, there was a wide beach. Beautiful, colorful fish were lying all over the beach. Some people were picking up the fish and putting them in baskets. Other people were standing on the beach looking out at the water. But Kiro remembered the story her grandmother had told her. So she yelled to the people."

Here the grandmother paused. "Do you remember what Kiro yelled?" she asked her grandchildren.

"Run!" the children answered.

"That's right. Kiro yelled, 'Run! *Semong!*' Do you remember what a *semong* is?"

"A big wave!" the children answered.

"Yes," the old woman said. "A very big wave. Bigger than a boy. Bigger than a girl. Bigger than a house. Bigger than a palm tree."

She continued the story.

"'Run! *Semong!*' Kiro yelled. People put down their baskets of fish. They picked up their children. They ran to the hills behind our village. Then the *semong* came. A wall of water

came toward the village. The water covered the beach and covered the houses and covered the trees. But all the people were safe because they were standing on the hills. And that is the story of Kiro and the *semong*."

Why was the old woman telling her grandchildren this story? She was warning them. In 1907, a tsunami—a giant wave—had hit their island, and many people had died. She wanted the children to be ready if another tsunami came.

Another tsunami did come to Simeulue. On the morning of December 26, 2004, an earthquake in the Indian Ocean created huge waves. The waves came first to Simeulue, the island closest to the earthquake.

A 33-year-old man named Suhardin, who lives on the coast of Simeulue, told a reporter about his experience. He said his grandmother had told him stories about the *semong*. But he didn't think about his grandmother's stories when he felt the earthquake. Nothing had happened after an earthquake three years ago. Why would there be a *semong* after this earthquake? But then a man ran past him yelling, "*Semong! Semong!*" Suhardin thought about his grandmother and decided to climb one of the hills behind his village.

When he got to the top of the hill, hundreds of people were already there, and more people were climbing the steep hill. Some were helping old people up the hill, and some were carrying small children. Before long, everyone in the village was on top of the hill, looking out toward the sea. For thirty minutes, nothing happened. Then, just as Suhardin was thinking about walking back down the hill, the water along the coast rushed out to the sea. After that, the first wave came: A wall of water 10 meters high crashed on the shore below. Suhardin watched the water take his whole village out to sea.

The tsunami of 2004 hit fourteen countries, and more than 280,000 people died. But on the island of Simeulue, with 75,000 people, only 7 died. Why did so many people on Simeulue survive?

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They survived for two reasons. First, they survived because Simeulue's hills are close to the coast. When the tsunami came, people could run to safety. People in other places were not so lucky; they had no nearby hills to run to. Second, they survived because they remembered the stories the old people told

about the *semong*, stories that warned them to run to the hills after an earthquake.

The people of Simeulue hope another tsunami never comes to their island. But just in case, they will tell their grandchildren the story of the *semong*. Someday the story could save their grandchildren's lives, just as the story saved theirs.

2. VOCABULARY

◆ LOOKING AT THE STORY

Complete the sentences with the words in the box. Write the correct words on the lines.

coast

island

survived

whole

crashed

paused

village

wide

huge

steep

warn

yelled

1. There is water all around Simeulue. It is an island.
2. Only 500 people lived in Kiro's _____.
3. The dishes and pots made a loud noise when they _____ to the floor.
4. The beach near Kiro's village was narrow, but after the water left, it was _____.
5. Kiro's grandmother stopped in her story because she wanted to be sure the children understood the word *semong*. She _____ for a minute and asked them, "Do you remember what a *semong* is?"
6. Everyone on the beach heard Kiro because she spoke loudly. "Run!" she _____.
7. The grandmother wanted the children to be ready if another dangerous tsunami came. She wanted to _____ them.
8. The first wave was over 10 meters high. It was _____.
9. Suhardin didn't live in the center of the island; he lived close to the water, on the _____.
10. It was difficult for old people and children to climb the hill behind Suhardin's village because the hill was _____.

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11. The water covered everything in Suhardin's village—houses and shops, bicycles and cars. The water took the _____ village out to sea.
12. Simeulue had 75,000 people. Seven people died, and 74,993 _____.

◆ **LOOKING AT A NEW CONTEXT**

A. Choose five words from the list of words on page 14 that you want to remember. Use each word in your own sentence. Write your sentences on the lines below. Here, for example, is a sentence one student wrote using the word *huge*.

I saw a huge bear at the zoo.

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____

If you would like to test your memory of the new words, try this: Cross out the five words so that you can't read them. For example:

I saw a ~~huge~~ bear at the zoo.

When you are finished with the exercises in this unit, come back to this exercise. Can you remember the words you crossed out?

B. Sometimes you can write a word in a way that helps you remember it. For example, you can write the word *wide* this way:

W I D E

Think about these words from the story: *crash, huge, island, pause, steep*. Choose one of the words. In the space below, write it in a way that helps you remember it. If you would like to, write the word on the board and share your idea with the class.

Top Travel Trends in 2021

Travel is evolving. Some emerging travel trends in 2021 reflect the new reality of the current age. For example, remote work makes it possible for people to travel and stay longer in an area. They may opt for local accommodations over a busy hotel and blend work with travel.

Other travel trends, like wellness travel, aren't necessarily new but will continue to be at the forefront of travel. It's no surprise that people want to feel better when they return home.

2021 travel is shaping up differently by age group. According to the SAP Concur study, 38% of millennials want to take an international bucket list trip in 2021. Older travelers 55+ are more interested in staying closer to home.

Broad travel themes include:

- **Reassurance** - Highlighting cleaning protocols, social distancing, and staying up-to-date with entry restrictions border regulations will continue to be necessary. Digital Health Passports and Contactless technologies will help.
- **Flexibility** - Delta, American, and many other airline carriers have all eliminated change fees to help travelers feel more comfortable booking tickets. In case a proposed destination becomes a hot spot, people will likely want to wait or choose a new location.
- **Familiarity** - Whether it's returning to a place where people have traveled before or comes as a recommendation from family and friends, travel destinations can highlight this in their marketing. One way is by keeping travelers apprised of the area's health and safety measures.
- **Sustainability** - The skies and oceans are cleaner, and wildlife has returned to areas where it'd dwindled. There's no doubt that the lockdown has benefited the environment. A PhocusWire article states, "The pandemic has effectively hit the pause button on emissions, which are projected to be 8% less in 2020 than they were in 2019."



Specifically, those travel trends 2021 show up in the preferences of business travelers, the pandemic has only accelerated them:

1. Bleisure

The blend of business travel and leisure continues being a travel trend. While leisure travelers are pausing to ask probing questions of themselves about future travel like:

- Where do I want to go?
- What do I want to experience?
- What do I want to discover?

More people want to travel slower and get to know local communities where they do travel. Part of this impetus is with remote work and schooling. It's much easier to book a more extended trip and blend work/school life by exploring a new area. Plus, it's appealing to head to a sunnier, warmer climate with less COVID infections.

According to a [Phocuswire article](#), Triplt data shows people are booking for longer trips and often choosing a short-term rental where they can feel comfortable. Short-term rentals like, for instance, AirBnB, Vrbo, and other providers offer the opportunity to keep closer tabs on your surroundings and those in them than a busy hotel. Plus, they give you the chance to live more like a local.

2. Self-Booking

Business travelers want to have a human back up in case of complex travel issues. However, for the initial booking, they're likely to do it themselves. According to [Business Travel Trends](#), 63% of travelers prefer to book their own travel. Likely, this reflects a general shift as millennials now represent roughly 50% of the workforce.

This also fits into the desire for more flexible corporate travel policies. For years, a percentage of business travelers have ignored policies and chosen to do their own thing. This is a chance to review those policies and bring them up-to-date.

3. Contactless Technologies

Another travel trend in 2021: [Contactless technologies](#), which are here to stay. Now that everyone has hand washing and germs on their minds, keyless entries and digital menus have found a place in the travel eco-system. The pandemic has only accelerated the adoption of these across the travel industry.

4. AI and Virtual Assistants

Artificial intelligence (AI) uses data to predict things based on past behavior. It's the reason why companies like Amazon, Spotify, and Netflix can offer you personalized entertainment choices.

It can also suggest appropriate entertainment choices in destinations and provide other personalized recommendations. Additionally, virtual assistants like Siri can provide itinerary updates.

5. On-Demand Testing

From home test kits to on-site testing at hotels and airports, rapid COVID testing (results in 15 minutes) may be vital to reducing both virus and quarantine worries.

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opt for, trend, blend, highlight, hot spot, appeal, keep tabs on, roughly, itinerary

What questions do you ask yourself before you pick a destination?

Would you prefer to take a package tour or do your own thing?

What kind of tourist destinations appeal to you? What doesn't appeal to you?

How is 2021 shaping up for you? How are things shaping up for Generation Z?

What's a hot spot near you? What are some of the hot spots in Daejeon?

Once it is safe to travel, where would you like to go? Why do you want to go there? How long would you like to spend there?

Does the idea of blending work and travel appeal to you?

When you travel in Korea, where do you usually stay? Why do you choose those accommodations?

Do you think online learning is a trend or will students opt for offline learning once it is safe to enter campus?

What has been your best/worst travel experience?