

5.19 Māui and the Sun

Topic: Weather

Subtopic: Climate

Activity type/skill: Ask and answer

Literacy focus: Reading

Genre: Explanations

Objective

- Demonstrate a high level of understanding of text.
- Recognise cause and effect in a narrative.
- Develop skills in summarising ideas.
- Develop skills in retelling ideas fluently.

What you need

- Student worksheet (see next page)

What to do

1. Talk about traditional stories and the way they were used to explain natural phenomena until they were replaced by scientific explanations. (Māui and the Sun is a traditional Māori story told to explain the origin of the length of the days.
2. Ask students if they know any stories from their own cultures that explain weather or related phenomena.
3. Look at the first three pages of the student worksheet and read the text with the students and discuss any new words or ideas. Use the pictures to help them gain a high level of understanding of the story.
4. Look at the fourth page of the student worksheet. Working in pairs, have one student ask the questions from the final page of the activity. The other student should not look at the questions while they answer them.
5. Have students change roles and ask and answer the questions again. When they are confident they can ask and answer fluently, they retell the story for the larger group.

Extending the activity

- Have students write the answers to the questions to form a written summary of the story for homework.

Maui and the Sun

Long, long ago the sun travelled very quickly across the sky each day. The days were short and the nights were very long.

People were unhappy. They did not have enough time to hunt and fish and do all the things they wanted to do. Everyone wanted longer days, but they did not know what to do about it.

A young man called Maui heard the people complaining. He took no notice of them. He thought, "If the days were longer, I would have to work harder."

One day Maui said to his wife, "Light the fire and cook me some food." She lit the fire, but the sun went down before the food was ready. Maui had to eat his food in the dark.

"That sun goes too fast," said Maui. He called his four brothers. "You must help me make that sun go more slowly."





Maui's brothers laughed at him. "That is impossible," they said. "The sun is too hot."

Maui told his brothers, "I have a plan. We'll make strong ropes of green flax and we'll catch the sun where it rises, in the east." Maui and his brothers cut the flax and made the ropes.

When the ropes were ready, Maui and his brothers set off to find the hole in the east where the sun came out each day. The brothers carried the ropes and Maui carried his magic weapon. They travelled during the long nights so the sun would not see them.

At last they reached the huge black hole where the sun slept. They placed the ropes across the hole. Then they hid and waited for the sun to rise.

Activity nineteen

The sun came slowly up, out of its hole. Maui shouted, "Pull!" The brothers pulled hard on their ropes and the sun shouted "Let me go! Let me go!" The brothers pulled harder.

The sun struggled to get free, but Maui hit the sun again and again with his magic weapon. The sun could not get free. He could not burn the strong green ropes and he could not burn Maui. Maui was protected by his magic weapon.

When the sun was very tired, the brothers let go of the ropes. The sun rose slowly in the sky.

After that day, the sun moved very slowly through the sky every day. The days were much longer and Maui had time to eat his dinner before the sun went down!





What is the title of the story?

When did the events in the story happen?

Why were the days short and the nights long?

Why were the people unhappy?

What did the people do?

Why didn't Maui do anything at first?

Why did Maui change his mind?

What did Maui and his brothers make?

What did they do when they had made the ropes?

Why did they travel towards the east?

Why did they travel at night?

What did they do with the ropes?

What did they do when the sun started to rise?

Why couldn't the sun get free?

When did the brothers let go of the ropes?

What did the sun do after the brothers let go of the ropes?

Why was Maui happy?

