

Taming the Sun by Gavin Bishop

Teacher Notes by Raymond Huber

Maui and the Sun

1. Art: Colour (Year 1-3)

What colours does Gavin Bishop use to show sun and fire?

Yellow, red, orange and gold are called the 'hot colours'.

* Create a picture using only the hot colours. Choose a hot place such as a volcano or a forest fire. The bright colours of pastels are good for making the picture glow with heat.

2. Art- Collage (year 3-4)

Aim: To make a collage picture to illustrate the text . Children could work in small groups. Enlarge the text from page 10 to use with pictures.

* Make a collage picture to show the action on page 10. Create the sun first, making the sun's rays with reflecting material such as foil or cellophane. Use string, flax or wool to construct the net over the sun. The human figures could be black paper silhouettes. When completed, display the picture with a bright light shining on it.

3. Visual Language: Comic book (Years 5-6)

Aim: To retell the myth in comic style using the conventions of cartoons.

* Create a comic strip of the myth. Comics always focus on the action, so include all the most exciting scenes. Remember that cartoon drawing uses the following features:

- frames
- speech and thought bubbles
- capital letters for dialogue
- sound effects in bold lettering

.4. Reading : Hero Myths (Year 6-8)

Aim: To recognise the universal pattern of 'The Hero' in myths and legends. Collect a variety of Maui myths and other hero stories.

Most myths and legends have a hero or heroine who is clever and brave. The life story of a hero follows this pattern:

1. a special birth
2. a journey or quest
3. difficult tasks or tests
4. bringing back gifts to the people
5. a major weakness
6. a special death

For example, in this story, Maui's difficult task is to slow the sun, and the longer day is a gift to his people.

* Read a variety of Maui stories and find examples to illustrate each stage of the hero pattern above.

5. Art- Line (year 8)

Line helps create a picture by making patterns, textures and shading.

Line also suggests movement, horizons, and can lead the eye to

important parts of a composition. Gavin Bishop makes bold use of line, especially in the sun character.

*List the different uses of line in this story.

* Create your own line-drawing to show the sun racing across the sky. Vary the thickness of lines, and show movement and texture.

Kahu and the Taniwha

1. Art- Shadows (year 1-2)

Aim: To explore the use of shadow outlines in creating mood.

Sometimes a shadow can be more frightening than the real thing. Look at the shadow picture on pages 22 and 23. Create shadows using a strong light source such as a projector, lamp or the sun. Have a partner spread their arms like a giant bat. Draw around the outline of the shadows. Add a tail or monster head to the picture. Shade with black pastel.

2. English- Story Structure (year 3-5)

Aim: To map the elements of story structure: setting, character and plot.

The **setting** of this myth is a mountain with two tracks leading around the sides (one short, one long).

The **characters** are Kahu and Pukaka who live in Waikato, and Koka who lives in Rotorua. The Taniwha lives in caves on the mountain.

* Draw a story map showing the characters and where they live. Draw the main events of the **plot** onto the map.

3. Art- Composition(Years 5-6)

Aim: To show how illustrators use variation in lines to suggest movement or feelings (eg. thick jagged lines for danger or strength.)

* What kind of lines and brush strokes has Gavin Bishop used for his taniwha? Sharp or round? Thick or thin? Why?

* What two colours has he used for the taniwha? Why?

(He also uses yellow to attract your attention on page 18)

* Why has he cut his monster into three parts?

* Groups of 3 students draw a 3 part monster: one person draws the head, another the body, and the other draws the tail. Make sure the neck and tail are designed to fit the ends of the body. Use lines and colours that suit a monster.

4. Visual Language- Movie Poster (years 6-8)

Aim: To portray myth creatures using monster movie cliches. View samples of movie posters.

Mythical heroes have to fight against evil in the form of monsters.

*Research mythical monsters such as cyclops, hydra, Gorgon, chimera and Grendel.

* Design and publish a poster advertising a mythological monster movie. Use the conventions of movie posters : bold lettering and colour, action pictures of a hero or monster. Invent a sensational title (such as Terror of the Taniwha), names for actors, director and a censor's rating.

5. Writing-Poetry (Year 8)

Pukaka and the Taniwha seem to be perfectly matched. She is lazy and dirty while he is a cannibalistic reptilian monster.

*Write a poem describing Pukaka and Taniwha. Use similes and metaphors to make comparisons with other messy, disgusting and creepy things.

Maui and the Big Fish

1. Art- The Sea (year 1-3)

Aim: to create a sea picture using cool colours (blues, greens, purples).

Look at Gavin Bishop's seascapes, especially on p.33. Discuss cold colours, the koru shape of waves, and the shift to darker tones in deeper sea.

*What colours does Gavin Bishop use to show the sea?

*What shapes has he drawn the waves? How has he made bubbles?

* Create a 3-D sea picture: Draw the outline of waves with white crayon. Add blue and green dye with a brush but don't mix them too much. Add droplets of purple dye for bubbles. On separate paper, draw a variety of fish shapes. Glue a piece of cardboard or cork to the back of each fish and glue them onto the sea background.

2. Visual Language- Illustrating Text (Year 3-5)

Aim: To explore the choices made by an illustrator. Read the children page 33 without showing them the picture. Brainstorm ways of illustrating the action.

* How would you illustrate this part of the story? You need to make choices about the characters, the canoe and the fish. How big should each be? What colours would you use?

* Draw a sketch of the scene. When finished, look at Gavin Bishop's picture. What has he chosen to include? How has he shown sizes and what colours has worked well? Did you make the same choices as him?

3. Writing- Reporting (Year 5-6)

Aim: To use newspaper conventions and language to summarize the myth.

* Design the front page of a newspaper - The Daily Myth- that features this story. The main news item is about Maui and the Fish. Present it using the newspaper style, including headlines, pictures and columns. Also report comments by Maui, his brothers and scientists.

Include other news items using myths. For example, Rona could be in the missing persons' column.

4. Reading- Creation Myths (year 6-7)

Aim: To understand how myths are a cultural explanation for the origins of life. Have a range of creation myths for students to browse.

This story explains how New Zealand was formed. Every culture around the world has its own creation myths. For example, in China, a myth tells how a giant carved the mountains and oceans.

*Research 4 different creation myths and make a chart like this on a large piece of paper. Illustrate the border with examples. *

5. Science- Geology of NZ (Year 8)

Aim: To show how myth and science provide parallel explanations.

* Where did NZ come from? The myth tells us the land was formed by
-the brothers raising the fish, then cutting and hacking it,
-the fish twisting and wrinkling and swelling.

What geological/ tectonic processes are similar to these actions?

* Research how the NZ landscape was formed over millions of years.

* Draw diagrams to show at least 3 major changes in the land.

Rona and the Moon

1. Construction- Masks (Year 1-2)

Look at Gavin Bishop's picture of moon face on page 41. Make this face into a moon mask using thick card or a paper plate. Paint the mask silver and paint on eyes and mouth in dark blue. Cut holes for eyes. Sprinkle silver glitter on the mask.

2. Maori Language (Year 3-4)

* Match the Maori words to the English meanings:

** How many Maori words can you find in the other stories?

3. Literature: 'Why' Stories (Year 5/6)

Aim: To emphasise the universal function of myths as a way of explaining the world.

Every culture has myths that explain why things happen in the natural world. For example: Why the Moon has a Face, Why there are Rainbows, and Why Kiwi Cannot Fly.

*Write a 'Why Story' to explain one of these natural features:

- Why Bees Make Honey
- Why it Rains
- Why Cats Hate Dogs
- Why Volcanoes Erupt

4. Writing- Dialogue (Year 6-7)

* Rewrite this story as a play for 4 characters: Narrator, Rona, Husband, Moon. How will you portray the Moon? You might use a voice off-stage, or a person behind a large cut-out moon.

Use Gavin Bishop's words and invent some dialogue. Perform the play for an audience.

5. Science- The Moon (years 7-8)

*What faces or figures can you see in the moon? Is Rona's figure obvious?

*Research the surface of the moon. Find out what makes craters, their size and age, and some of the names of the larger ones. Draw a moon map and label it with this information.