

Focus Question:

What makes Maui a hero?

Book Summary

Text Type: Fiction/Myth

Myths are a fun and exciting way for students to learn about different cultures around the world. The myths surrounding the demigod Maui come from Polynesia and are the focus of *The Hero Maui*. Colorful illustrations and entertaining stories will keep students engaged in this lesson. The book can be used to teach students how to analyze characters as well as retell to better understand a story.

The book and lesson are also available for levels W and Z.



Lesson Essentials

Instructional Focus

- ☐ Retell to understand text
- ☐ Analyze characters
- ☐ Describe information provided by a glossary
- ☐ Identify and use adverbs
- ☐ Recognize and use open compound words

Materials

- ☐ Book: *The Hero Maui* (copy for each student)
- ☐ Analyze character, adverbs, open compound words worksheets
- ☐ Discussion cards
- ☐ Book quiz
- ☐ Retelling rubric

Vocabulary

Boldface vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on VocabularyA-Z.com.

• Words to Know

Story critical: *cunning* (n.), *demigod* (n.), *immortality* (n.), *mythical* (adj.), *Polynesians* (n.), *snare* (v.)

Enrichment: *canoe* (n.), *devour* (v.), *generation* (n.)

- **Academic vocabulary:** *common* (adj.), *problem* (n.), *prove* (v.), *remember* (v.), *request* (v.), *underneath* (prep.)

Guiding the Reading

Before Reading

Build Background

- Point out the Polynesian Islands on a map of the world. Ask students what they know about any of these islands and invite them to share their prior knowledge with the class.
- Display on the board pictures depicting ancient Polynesia, including the people, canoes, villages, and so on. Engage students in a discussion about what life was like for the people of Polynesia. Explain that although each island has its own culture, traditions, and history, all the islands have some things in common, such as stories about the mythical demigod named Maui.

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of *The Hero Maui*. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, authors' names, illustrator's name).

Introduce the Reading Strategy: Retell

Explain to students that engaged readers stop now and then while they are reading to *retell* in their mind what has happened so far in the story. Discuss how stopping to retell the events of the story helps readers understand and remember what they read. Explain that when retelling a story or event, it is important that the details are explained in the correct sequence. Point out that order words, such as *first*, *next*, *then*, *last*, and *finally*, are used when sequencing a retelling. Explain that in *The Hero Maui*, students will read several myths about Maui and will retell each myth individually.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill:

Analyze characters

- Explain to students that when reading a story, it is important to learn about and understand

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

the characters. Write the word *Analyze* on the board and read it aloud with students. Point out that when readers analyze a character, they are considering the character's words, actions, thoughts, and effect on others. Create four columns on the board with the headings *Words*, *Actions*, *Thoughts*, and *Effect on Others*. Explain to students that as they read the story, they should consider the characters' words, actions, thoughts, and effect on others, which will aid in analyzing the characters and better understanding the story.

- Read pages 5 and 6 aloud to students as they follow along. Invite them to use information from these pages to identify the main character, Maui. Then, have students think about Maui's words, thoughts, actions, and effect on others in this myth. Have them share their ideas with a partner.

Vocabulary

Have students turn to the "Words to Know" box on the copyright page. Discuss each word with students. Then, have students turn to the glossary on page 16. Explain that the glossary provides definitions for the vocabulary words in the book. Point out the use of each content word and academic vocabulary word in the book and then use each word in a different model sentence. Have students work in groups to create posters for these words. Have them include on each poster the word, its part of speech, the definition, the word in an example sentence, and a picture illustrating the meaning of the word.

Set the Purpose

- Have students read to find out more about the hero Maui. Write the Focus Question on the board. Invite students to look for evidence in the book to support their answer to the question.
- Have students make a small question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. These can be addressed in a future discussion.

During Reading

Text-Dependent Questions

As students read the book, monitor their understanding with the following questions. Encourage students to support their answers by citing evidence from the book.

- *Who are the Polynesians?* (level 1) page 4
- *What caused Maui to push up the sky?* (level 1) page 5
- *How did Maui's mother and grandmother impact the creation of the seasons?* (level 2) pages 7–10
- *Why did Maui's brothers refuse to take him fishing?* (level 1) page 11

- *How was Maui defeated? What does this reveal about him?* (level 3) page 15
- *What one word best describes Maui? Why?* (level 3) multiple pages
- *Why do Polynesians have myths explaining things like the creation of the sky, the seasons, and the islands?* (level 3) multiple pages

Text Features: Glossary

Explain that a glossary helps readers define unknown words that are in the book. Place students into small groups and give each group the words from the glossary written on individual note cards. Ask students to work together to arrange the words in alphabetical order, which is how they are presented in the glossary. Then ask students to find the glossary words in the story and write the page number on the note card on which each word first appears in the book. Afterward, students can work together to create a definition of each word on the back of the note card using their prior knowledge and the context of the story. Students can check their definitions with the glossary on page 16 when they are finished. Remind students that a book's glossary is an important tool to help them clarify the meanings of unknown words and should be referred to while reading a story.

Skill Review

- Stop after each individual myth and have students practice retelling the myth to a partner. Encourage students to use order words in their retellings. Invite a volunteer to retell each myth to the class.
- Draw students' attention back to the four-column chart on the board and remind them that it's important to look at a character's words, actions, thoughts, and effect on others in order to better understand a story. Ask students to think of other ways they can describe Maui on the basis of what they have read so far. Add this information to the chart on the board.
- Model analyzing a character.
Think-aloud: *After reading the first myth, "Maui Pushes Up the Sky," I began analyzing Maui on the basis of his words, actions, thoughts, and effect on others. In this myth, Maui does not speak, so I cannot analyze his words. In addition, the author does not include Maui's thoughts, so I cannot analyze those. However, I can analyze his actions and his effect on others to better understand the story. In this myth, Maui works with Ru to push up the sky and separate the sky from the land. He does this so people don't have to crawl around anymore. On the basis of this, I can conclude that Maui is very strong and powerful, and that he is willing to do things to help other people. Pushing up the sky affected the people because they no longer had to crawl from place to place, and plants and animals could grow and move around more freely.*

Guiding the Reading (cont.)

Therefore, Maui had a very positive effect on the other people and the entire world around him because of his actions.

- Add this information to the chart on the board. Model how to complete the **analyze character worksheet**. Remind students to use specific examples and details from the text to describe Maui's words, actions, thoughts, and effect on others.

After Reading

Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Skill Review

Graphic Organizer: **Analyze character**

Review the analyze character worksheet that students completed. Invite volunteers to share their examples with the class. Remind students that analyzing characters is one way to better understand and learn more about the characters in a story.

Comprehension Extension

Discussion cards covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided to be used for extension activities.

Response to Focus Question

Have students cite specific evidence from the book to answer the Focus Question. (Answers will vary. Sample: *Maui is a hero because he is strong and powerful. He is willing to do things for others, including separating the sky from the earth and snaring the Sun. He is even willing to give his life to help humans.*)

Comprehension Checks

- **Book quiz**
- **Retelling rubric**

Book Extension Activities

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Adverbs**

- Review or explain to students that *adverbs* are describing words that provide details about verbs by telling *how*, *when*, or *where* an action occurs. Point out that many, but not all, adverbs end in *-ly*. Explain that writers often use adverbs to make their writing more accurate and factual.
- Write the following sentence on the board: *Maui decided to lift the sky into the heavens so humans could move freely.* Have students work with a partner to identify the adverb (*freely*) and the verb being described (*move*) in this sentence.

Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class. Repeat with other adverb-verb pairs in sentences from the book.

- **Check for understanding:** Have students work in small groups to look through the book to circle the adverbs and underline the verb that each adverb describes. Ask them to share whether each adverb describes *how*, *when*, or *where* an action occurred.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **adverbs worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Word Work: **Open compound words**

- Write the word *Pacific Ocean* on the board. Ask students which two words are joined together in the word *Pacific Ocean*. Ask students to offer a definition of the word on the basis of its components. Explain that this word is called a *closed compound word*. Point out that it is made up of two words that together create one meaning and that the definitions of the two words can help students figure out the meaning of the bigger word.
- Write the word *ice cream* on the board. Explain that this compound word is called an *open compound word* since the two words are separated by a space, but they create a new meaning when they are read together. Ask students to work with a partner to generate other open compound words, such as *rocking chair* and *police officer*. Invite volunteers to share their answers with the class.
- **Check for understanding:** Write the following open compound words on the board: *post office*, *video game*, *North America*, *science fiction*. Have students work with a partner to create sentences using each open compound word and then have them create two more sentences using each word separately. Have volunteers share their sentences with the class. Remind students that when two (or more) words are combined in an open compound word, the open compound word has a different meaning from the individual words.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the **open-compound-words worksheet**. If time allows, discuss their answers.

Connections

- See the back of the book for cross-curricular extension ideas.