

Bakunawa

A myth from the Philippines

Recommended Key Stage: KS1 and 2

Synopsis: A deity called Bathala creates seven moons to light up the night sky and the people are happy. But the dragon Bakunawa, with his horned nose and looped tail, doesn't want to share the light of the moons, so each night he flies up eats one. Eventually there is only one moon left. Bakunawa bites it and the sky goes black, and the people shout for him to return their moon. Bakunawa is so scared of the noise that he spits it out and flies away. The people realise that Bakunawa fears noise, they get pots and pans and instruments and make noises to scare him away each time he appears. And this continues to this day whenever there is a lunar eclipse.

Part 1: Share the Story

Tell the story of Bakunawa to the students.

Top storytelling tips:

- Learn the story beforehand so that you can be expressive and maintain eye contact with the students.
- Use actions and sound effects and encourage the students to join in.
- For younger children use a toy dragon or other props to bring the story to life.

Find one or two moments in the story to stop and ask the students to predict what is going to happen next, or how they would feel if they were the characters

Part 2: Discuss the story

Use the questions below to begin a discussion about the story

KS1 questions	KS2 questions
• What did you think of the story? • Have you heard any other dragon stories like this? How were the dragons different? How were the • Was Bakunawa wrong to eat the moons? • Should the people have talked to Bakunawa? What could they have said? • If you have no musical instruments in your house, what could you use to make the most noise to scare away a dragon?	• What different dragons and dragon legends do you know from around the world? • This is a story about a lunar eclipse. What is a lunar eclipse? Have you seen one? • Imagine looking at the night sky and seeing seven moons, how different would it be? Describe what different sizes and colours these moons could be? • What would you say to Bakunawa to stop him from stealing the people's moons? • How would you make the people feel less afraid as their world got darker?

Part 3: Play the Story

KS1 Activities	KS2 Activities
Story Walk - Students stand in their own space around the room. - Tell the story slowly using Resource A - As you tell it, the students use the space to mime it while staying in their space. The people, the moons, the dragon emerging from the sea. Eating the moons. Students use arms for action and faces for emotions - Try doing this with no sounds, just expressions	Character presentations - Imagine you are one of the people from the story. Imagine you are writing in a diary or talking to a family member who slept through it all - On the 1st night, describe what happened, what you saw come out of the sea, how you felt. - On the 4th night, halfway through describe how things have gotten worse. How you feel about Bakunawa the dragon? - On the 7th night describe what happened, what did you do? How did it feel? - What will you do now?
Story Retelling - Sound and vision - Break up students into pairs. Throughout this activity announce "switch!" so each student gets a turn - In pairs, students try to retell the story using only facial expressions and actions, while the other student can translate these into the story - One student can try and tell the story entirely in sounds and sound effects, while the other students has to narrate from this.	Storyboarding - Students take a piece of paper and make 9 panels. - Students try to tell the story of Bakunawa from beginning to end in just those 9 panels. - Plan what will happen in each panel before you start to draw it, so you don't use too many or too few. - Use words and pictures in each. Create sound effects - When drawing, make sure you show how characters feel throughout. Show Bakunawa scared and the people happy.

Part 4: Story Stimulus

KS1	KS2
Dragon creation - Try to create your own dragon, different from Bakunawa. Give them their own nose, wings, legs, tail. - Where does your dragon live? - What does your dragon eat? - How can they be defeated? What is their weakness (like Bakunawa was afraid of noise) - As an extra challenge, can you think of way to defeat your dragon that won't hurt them, but will scare them away?	Dragon creation and descriptions - Create your own dragon. Make it different from Bakunawa. Think about its face and body, whether it has wings or horns or a tail or other appendages - Think about descriptions for each of its features, (scaly skin, sharp teeth) Try and find good adjectives for each distinct part of its body - Where does your dragon live? - Personality: What is your dragon like? Is it a friendly or fierce dragon? - What does your dragon want? What does it eat/like to do? - Tell a story, like Bakunawa, about your dragon wanting something belonging to people. What happens? Do the people stop the dragon or help it? How do they do this?
Dragon solutions - In groups, pairs, or independently, can you come up with other ways to defeat Bakunawa, the dragon who eats moons and is afraid of noise? Can you think of a way that would be easier for the people than banging things together - Could you imagine creating a machine they could use, that would know when Bakunawa was coming near the moon and stop him. How would it work? - Can you think of a way of doing it without hurting the dragon?	
New Endings - In groups, pairs, or independently students can create a new ending or new version of the story - Work out where in the story you will make the change Here are some suggestions for ingredients -What would happen if Bakunawa had eaten all the moons? What would the people have done? -What would happen if the people had fought Bakunawa? -What would happen if they'd won? Or if they'd lost? -What would happen if the people had tried speaking to Bakunawa instead? What could they have said to stop him	

Part 5: Taking it Further

Similar Stories

The Seven Dragonflies (Persia)

Stan Bolovan (Europe)

Saint Carantoc (UK)

Ryujin, Dragon King of the Sea (Asia)

The Dragon and the Pearl (Asia)

Wider Curriculum Links

KS1 PSHE

- about what is kind and unkind behaviour, and how this can affect others
- to recognise the ways in which they are the same and different to others

KS2 PSHE

- to listen and respond respectfully to a wide range of people, including those whose traditions, beliefs and lifestyle are different to their own
- about diversity: what it means; the benefits of living in a diverse community; about valuing diversity within communities

Bakunawa the Dragon and the Seven Moons

Resource A: Story Walk Prompts

There was an ancient deity called Bathala who created seven moons to illuminate the Earth during its darkest hours. One moon for each day of the week.

Thanks to the seven moons the nights were bright and beautiful and all on earth were happy.

The moons were so bright and beautiful that they shone all the way down to the ocean floor where Bakunawa the Dragon rested.

Bakunawa looked up at the night sky and decided that he didn't want to share their beauty with the earth and wanted the moons for himself.

So, one-night Bakunawa the Dragon rose from the depths of the ocean, high into the night sky and swallowed one of the moons.

Each night Bakunawa would rise from the ocean floor and fly into the sky to devour a moon until there was only one left.

On the seventh night the people of earth watched in despair as Bakunawa flew into the night sky and took the last moon into his mouth.

As the earth plunged into darkness the people screamed out to the dragon in unison "Return our Moon, Return our Moon!"

Bakunawa was so startled that he opened his mouth and the moon returned to the night sky.

The people of Earth saw that Bakunawa feared the noise they had made, so they quickly ran to gather objects that would make a loud noise like pots and pans and instruments, banging their objects together, stamping their feet and shouting to the Dragon "Return Our Moon, Return Our Moon!"

Finally, Bakunawa spat out the moon and fled back to the safety of the ocean's depths.

Every so often that sneaky dragon returns to try and eat the last moon, so remember if you see a lunar eclipse you need to make lots of noise, stamp your feet and shout out to the night sky "Return Our Moon, Return Our Moon!" and send Bakunawa the Dragon back to the ocean floor.