

Workshop 7: Bullying and NZ curriculum

Different stories about the Moon: Rona me te Mārama

Levels: 3-4

NoS achievement aims: Understanding about science

Contextual strands: Planet Earth and beyond

Topic: Space

Rationale

The appearance of the moon is a result of geological features (mountains, craters and plains). Exploring different explanations for the appearance of the moon helps students appreciate that science is one way of explaining the world, and that there are other ways.

What you need

- *Rona me te Mārama*, a play by M. Wairama; School Journal, Part 2 Number 4, 1993, p.42.
- An ability to observe the full Moon by actual observation, for example, at a school camp, or by reference, for example, in books or via Internet websites.

Focus

- Apart from the fact that it is disc-shaped, what does the full Moon look like? What are some words you might use to describe how it looks?
- Why are there so many stories about the Moon?
- Do you know any stories or poems about the appearance of the full Moon?
- How is your view of the Moon affected by travelling to the northern hemisphere?
- What did the Apollo spacecraft trips to the Moon tell us about the surface of the Moon?

Exploration

- Get students to look at, and draw, a full Moon.
- What types of patterns can we see in the Moon's appearance?
- With the students, read (and perhaps perform) the play *Rona me te Mārama*.
- Discuss the story of Rona and any traditional stories that students know from other cultures for explaining the shapes seen in the Moon's appearance.
- Ask students to find out the science explanations for the shapes in the Moon's appearance.

Reflection

- Why might different people have different stories about the patterns they see in the Moon?
- Why have people developed so many stories about the Moon? (For example, because of its observability; because of its association with growing seasons and fishing times.)
- Why are current science ideas about the Moon different to traditional stories about the Moon?

Activity resources

Wairama, M. (1993). *Rona me te Mārama*, School Journal, Part 2, Number 4. Wellington: Learning Media.

<http://scienceonline.tki.org.nz/Natureofscience/NatureofScienceTeachingActivities/DifferentstoriesabouttheMoonRonameteMarama>