

# Māori Myths & Legends — Knowledge Organiser

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## Key facts

- Māori have a rich tradition of myths and legends, passed down by storytelling.
- A famous legend tells how the demigod Māui fished up the North Island from the sea.
- In the story, the South Island is Māui's waka (canoe), and the North Island is his great fish.
- Legends explain the land, the sky, and how things came to be.

## Key vocabulary

- Legend — a traditional story, often about heroes or how things began.
- Māui — a clever demigod in many Māori and Polynesian legends.
- Demigod — a hero with special, god-like powers.
- Pūrākau — Māori storytelling and traditional stories.

## Stories that map the land

Many Māori legends are tied to real places — mountains, rivers and islands — so that the stories also help map and explain the landscape. The North Island is still sometimes called Te Ika-a-Māui, 'the fish of Māui'.

## Living culture

These stories are not just from the past — they remain an important part of Māori identity and are still told and celebrated today.