Teacher's notes and answer key

Amaterasu – the Day the Sun Disappeared

Subjects: English · History · Religious Studies | recommended from age 12 (B1) | Video: 9:22 min

Answers B

1. Amaterasu got heaven, Tsukuyomi the night and Susanoo the sea.

2. He destroyed the dykes of her rice fields, blocked the irrigation ditches, defiled the sacred hall and threw a flayed horse through the roof of the weaving hall; a weaver died.

3. The world fell into darkness: birds went silent, fields dried up, evil spirits roamed, even the gods lost their sense of right and wrong.

4. A mirror, jewels and white and blue cloth.

5. Roosters faked the dawn, Uzume danced on a tub, the gods laughed loudly. Curious, Amaterasu opened the cave a crack, saw her reflection, and Ame-no-Tajikarao pulled her out.

Answer C

Correct numbers from top to bottom: 4 – 7 – 1 – 6 – 2 – 8 – 3 – 5

Notes on D and E

E: Mirror → Yata no Kagami, one of the three imperial regalia (with the sword Kusanagi and the jewels); rope → shimenawa, marks sacred places; dance → origin of kagura, ritual dance at shrines; descendants → the imperial family traces its line back to Amaterasu through Ninigi; main shrine at Ise, rebuilt every 20 years.

Extra: unlike Ra (Egypt) or Helios (Greece), the highest sun deity here is female.

Content note and age

Recommended from age 12. The video mentions Izanami's decaying body, a flayed horse, the death of a weaver and an “uninhibited” half-naked dance. Please preview the video.

Sources of the retelling: Kojiki (712) and Nihon Shoki (720).

The narrator's voice and the illustrations in the video are AI-generated; the script follows the established tradition. You are welcome to copy and share this worksheet for classroom use.

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