Teacher's notes and answer key

Pachamama – Mother Earth of the Andes

Subjects: English · Religious Studies · Geography | recommended from age 13 (B1) | Video: 9:03 min

Answers B

1. “Pacha” means the world, space, even time. Pachamama was mostly ritual, not narrative; people prayed to the earth itself. The best-known tale was only written down in 20th-century Peru; its age is disputed.

2. Pachacamac is the maker of the world and Pachamama's husband; Wilka (boy) and Illa (girl) are their twins. When Pachacamac vanishes into the sea, the light goes out and the world sinks into darkness.

3. Cold and starving, they see a glow from a cave; a kind-seeming man offers warmth and food. Pachamama is exhausted and the children need shelter. The stranger is Wakon in another shape.

4. The huaychau bird warns the children; the añas (skunk) hides them and blocks Wakon, who falls into a chasm. From the peak they climb a rope sent by their father into the sky: Wilka becomes the sun, Illa the moon.

5. Ch'alla: pouring the first drops of chicha or liquor onto the ground. In August, before planting, the earth is said to be hungry and open and receives offerings (coca leaves, sweets, llama fat, seeds).

Answer C

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

Notes on C, D and E

C follows the video. Discussion point: the legend is younger than the ritual it explains.

D1: Ayni = reciprocity (neighbours helping with the harvest; ch'alla and offerings for the earth). If the earth is Pachamama's body, people take from her every day. D2: Open opinion question; Ecuador 2008 (constitution), Bolivia 2010 (law). Arguments e.g. protection against overexploitation vs. balancing human needs, enforceability.

E: Wakon lures Pachamama into his cave, kills her and hunts the children → they must flee. Huaychau warns them → they escape in time. Añas hides them and blocks Wakon → he falls, the twins reach the rope.

Content note and age

Recommended from age 13. Wakon kills Pachamama when she rejects him; pressure is implied, not shown. Please do not go into this or ask detailed questions. Pachamama is still honoured today; please treat the rituals with respect.

Background: Peruvian folk legend (20th c.), Spanish chroniclers (16th c.), the sanctuary of Pachacamac near Lima, Mary as the silver mountain (Potosí, 18th c.).

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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