Pachamama – Mother Earth of the Andes

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



Watch the video
youtu.be/2tej8Abczv0

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

A · Before watching

1. What do you take from the earth every day (food, water, raw materials)? Do you ever give anything back?

B · While watching

1. What does the word “pacha” mean, and why are there so few stories about Pachamama even though so many people prayed to her?

2. Who are Pachacamac, Wilka and Illa? What happens to the world when Pachacamac vanishes?

3. How do Pachamama and her children end up in Wakon's cave, and why does she have hardly any choice?

4. Which two animals help the twins, and how? How do Wilka and Illa finally reach the sky?

5. What is the ch'alla, and why is the earth “fed” above all in August?

Useful words

reciprocity	Gegenseitigkeit	chasm	Abgrund, Schlucht
to lure	locken	offering	Opfergabe
cave	Höhle	to plough	pflügen
skunk	Stinktier	chronicler	Chronist, Chronistin

C · Put the story in order

Number the events from 1 to 8 in the order they happen in the video.

	Wakon sends the twins out into the dark to fetch water.
	Wilka and Illa climb a rope into the sky and become the sun and the moon.
	Pachacamac and Pachamama rule together, and their twins Wilka and Illa are born.
	The añas hides the twins, and Wakon plunges into a chasm.
	Pachacamac vanishes into the sea, and the world sinks into darkness.
	In 2008, Ecuador writes the rights of nature into its constitution.
	Pachamama and the children see a light in a cave on a mountainside.
	The huaychau bird whispers the truth to the children.

D · Think and discuss

1. “Whoever takes has to give something back.” Explain the principle of ayni with one example between neighbours and one between people and the earth. Why does the story of Pachamama's body fit this principle?

2. Missionaries tried to stamp out the belief in Pachamama; today she appears in laws. Should nature have rights of its own, like a person? Give your opinion with at least two arguments.

E · Who decides the twins' fate?

For each figure, write down what it does in the story and what happens as a result.

	What does it do in the story?	What happens as a result?
Wakon, the fire god		
The huaychau bird		
The añas (skunk)		

F · Get creative

1. A child from the Andes explains to a friend from Europe why the family pours the first sip onto the ground. Write the conversation in your exercise book (about 8–10 sentences). Include Pachamama, her story and the principle of ayni.