The Hero Twins of the Popol Vuh

Subjects: English · History · Religious Studies | recommended from age 12 (B1) | Video: 8:31 min



Watch the video
youtu.be/GEYcPpaWuqg

Name: _____ Class: _____ Date: _____

A · Before watching

1. How do you imagine an underworld? Describe it in three key words.

B · While watching

1. What is the Popol Vuh, and how has it survived?

2. Why were the father and later his sons invited to Xibalba?

3. How did the twins pass the test in the Dark House?

4. How did they save Hunahpú after Camazotz tore off his head?

5. What became of Hunahpú and Xbalanqué in the end?

Useful words

underworld	Unterwelt	firefly	Glühwürmchen
twins	Zwillinge	to sacrifice	opfern
ballgame	Ballspiel	gourd	Kürbis
trap	Falle	to outwit	überlisten

C · Put the story in order

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

	The twins spot the wooden dummies and avoid the hot throne.
	A rabbit distracts everyone, and the real head is swapped back.
	Hun Hunahpú and his brother are sacrificed in Xibalba.
	Camazotz tears off Hunahpú's head.
	Xquic becomes pregnant from the skull in the tree.
	The twins rise up and become the sun and the moon.
	The jealous half-brothers are turned into monkeys.
	In the Dark House they fake fire with fireflies.

D · Think and discuss

1. What did the twins do differently from their father? What can we learn from that?

2. For the Maya, death was not an end but part of a cycle – like maize. Where does the story show this?

E · Two generations in Xibalba

Compare the father's journey with his sons'.

	Hun Hunahpú and his brother	Hunahpú and Xbalanqué
Why are they invited?		
How do they deal with the traps?		
How does it end for them?		
What does their story change?		

F · Get creative

1. In your exercise book, invent a seventh house in Xibalba with its own trap – and describe how the twins outwit it (8–10 sentences).