

Book review

Māui – Sun Catcher

Category: Book Reviews / Children & Youth

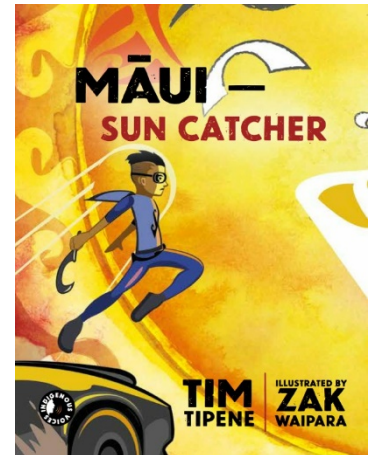
Author: Tim Tipene, translated by Rob Ruha

Year: 2016

Publisher: Oratia, NZ

Audience: For Youth

Summary: An illustrated children's book that retells the story of Māui in English and te reo Māori



In support of Māori Language Week (11–17 September), Constable Bryan and Bobby from the New Zealand Police read Māui – Sun Catcher to the kids from the Red Beach School library reading group. The book is written in English and Māori, with Māori translations by Rob Ruha, and was selected as a Storylines Notable Book for 2017.

We read *Māui – Sun Catcher* to a group of kids (aged 5–10), none of whom knew who Māui was or what his legend was. So this modern retelling of Māui's story was both timely and remains important for every New Zealand child, we believe.

With each turn of the page of Tipene's book, words started to be muttered by the kids such as, "he is being brave", "Māui has a goal" and our favourite, "he has no fear". Waipara's amazing art added new flavour to the story and lots of the kids liked the style of the book, saying it was like a comic book.

Book sparks interesting discussion

When we got to the dramatic conclusion, we closed the book before the ending and asked the kids if they thought that Māui would stop the sun and if his whānau would help him. It started a great conversation about why you would stop the sun, what would happen, and if you needed help who were the people you could ask for help. When we got to the end of the book many kids then figured out the day/night angle of the story and how we could all have a day that was a little longer. The discussion then flowed to making a stand when you knew things weren't right and believing in yourself regardless of what people said about you and your goals.

We asked the kids to give us the Bryan and Bobby world famous book rating system we use at our reading groups – thumbs up or thumbs down. Over 90% gave *Māui – Sun Catcher* a BIG thumbs up. The real vote of awesomeness for Tipene's book was the fact that many kids raced to go and find more books on Māui in the school library straight after our reading. One boy proudly stated to us: "Did you know he was a fisherman as well as a sun catcher?" No we didn't and we wonder what he caught.

Reviewed by Constable Bryan and Bobby from the New Zealand Police

The Mental Health Foundation's Resource and Information Service brings you book reviews fortnightly. To view more go to www.mentalhealth.org.nz/books

Phone: 09 623 4810 | www.mentalhealth.org.nz
Units 109-110, Zone 23, 23 Edwin Street, Mt Eden, Auckland
PO Box 10051, Dominion Road, Auckland 1446