

# Songs of the Sea

*Waiata O Te Moana*

**Teachers  
Resource  
ECC  
2017**



# Introduction

Capital E National Theatre for Children tours its productions to theatre venues nationally.

**Songs of the Sea** is a story of creation, written by Peter Wilson with delightful music composed by Stephen Gallagher.

*“New Zealand is surrounded by the sea. We can not help but notice it,” says Peter. “In summer we play by the sea, sometimes we explore the rock pools left by the high tide. In the winter we often go walking by the sea. Since time began, people have told stories about the sea, about fish, about boats.”*



Peter's story uses simple elements which children recognise to create all the creatures in the sea. To start, the sea is a giant mirror reflecting the sun, moon and stars - thus creating the sunfish, moonfish and starfish - all found in New Zealand waters.

*“When we see shooting stars in the night sky, it is like they are falling into the sea to become starfish. The milky way is like a giant sea of stars in the night sky, I used this sea of stars to invent the shaper in his magical sky boat traveling from planet to planet.”*



“I had fantastic fun using my imagination to create all the songs or stories of the sea. When you next go swimming in the sea, walk along the beach or play in a rock pool I am sure you can make up your own stories.”

The three main characters in **Songs of the Sea** are the three actors who tell us the story or sing us the songs. They play three children who discover a large conch shell while playing in a rock pool by the sea. Holding the shell up to their ears, each of them can hear the sound of the sea caught inside the shell. The sea tells them each a story:

- The story of how the moonfish, sunfish and starfish were made.
- The story of where shellfish come from.
- The story of how the fish in the sea got their magnificent colours.
- The story of how all the strange creatures in the sea came into being – the crabs, the seahorse and the crayfish.

**Songs of the Sea** Early Childhood Activities Resource is particularly ideal for in-centre activities for the two-and-a-half to five years age group. Centres and communities attending the show will be able to readily adapt the suggested ideas of this resource to create activities that are appealing, meaningful and culturally appropriate for their own whanau/families. Five focus areas have been presented, each of which links closely to at least one of the Te Whariki Strands.

# The Learning Journey

## Step 1

Curriculum strands covered in the classroom before and after the visit. Capital E provides a teaching resource with curriculum links and information to assist with unit planning.

## Step 2

Explore ideas and themes related to ‘Songs of the Sea’ using this resource as a guide.

## Step 3

Experience a professional theatre show that is musical, fun and educational.

## Step 4

Return to class happy and full of fun ideas to learn more.

# The five foci and possible Te Whariki links are:

**Sea & Fish Information** (Strand 2:Belonging-Mana Whenua, Strand 4: Communication-Mana Reo)

**Fish Facts** (Strand 2: Belonging- Mana Whenua, Strand 3:Contribution-Mana Tangata)

**Fishing** (Strand 1:Well-being -Mana Atua, Strand 4:Communication-Mana Reo)

**Myths** (Strand 4:Communication-Mana Reo, Strand 3:Contribution-Mana Tangata)

**Exploring Further** (Strand 5:Exploration-Mana Aoturoa)

## Sea & Fish Information

**Te Whariki Links:** Belonging-Mana Whenua, Communication-Mana Reo.

### Potential Learning Objectives:

Children will or may:

1. Be involved in discussions about the sea as a whole. (Communication, Goal 2).
2. Be involved in discussions about fish and other sea animals in the ocean. (Belonging, Goal 1).
3. Be encouraged to participate in art activities relating to their contribution (Contribution, Goal 1).
4. Be invited to provide a snapshot into their life through illustration, photo sharing, verbal or written communication (Belonging, Goal 1).

### Focus/thinking questions about the sea:

- What do we use the sea for?
- What types of fish do we eat?
- What other type of sea animals do we eat?
- How many fish can we catch out of the sea?
- What would happen if we were to eat too many fish out of the sea?

### Initial Ideas and Activities

1. Ask the children to close their eyes and imagine the sea. What do they think of? What do they see? Record their ideas. Show the children some pictures of the sea and ask them about it. What was the difference between their ideas and the pictures?
2. Ask the children about fish and sea animals. Make a list of all the fish they know including colours, shapes etc. Again use images to guide.

# Fish Facts

**Te Whariki Links:** Belonging- Mana Whenua, Contribution-Mana Tangata.

## Potential Learning Objectives:

Children will or may:

1. Be involved in discussions about the two main fish characters in Songs of the Sea; Sunfish - Te Ika Ra (Mola) and Moon fish - Te Ika Marama. (Communication, Goal 2).
2. Experience a visit to a supermarket, fish shop or Fish and Chip shop to see how they collect, store, cook and sell fish. (Belonging, Goal 1).

## Focus/thinking questions about fish:

- What do fish do all day?
- What do they eat?
- What/who eats fish?
- What would happen if we took all of the fish out of the water?
- Why do fish need water?
- How do fish move through the water?
- Do fish have bones?
- What does a fish feel like to touch?
- How old do you think fish live to be?

## Initial Ideas and Activities

1. Introduce the Sunfish - Te Ika Ra (Mola) and Moon fish - Te Ika Marama to the children through images provided. Discuss why children think they are named accordingly, record ideas next to images. Provide children with opportunity to draw their own sunfish and moonfish.
2. Plan a visit to a place which deals with fish (as suggested). Encourage children to be involved with questions and discussions.

Possible question starters are:

- Where do they buy the fish from?
- How do they store it to keep it fresh?
- How much fish are they allowed to buy/sell?
- How do they prepare fish for selling to people?



## Sunfish – Te Ika Ra (Mola)

### *Character in the show:*

The sunfish in Songs of the Sea is the father of all fish. The sunfish is a very large yellow fish, he is almost one metre across and one metre long. He is flat with hardly any tail, so that when people first saw him they thought he was a sun floating in the sea.

### **Did you know...**

- The sunfish (also called the mola) is a large ocean fish found in warm and temperate oceans.
- It has an almost circular, flattened body.
- This unusual fish swims by flapping its long pectoral and dorsal fins; the caudal fin is used as a rudder (for steering).
- Some sunfish have been seen floating on their sides at the top of the sea; they may be using the sun to heat themselves up.

### **Facts:**

- The sunfish grows to be about 3 m (10 ft) long, but some up to 4 m (13 ft) have been seen.
- It weighs up to 2 tons.
- The head is almost a third of the total body length. The small mouth has large fused teeth in the front.
- The sunfish is a carnivore (meat-eater) that eats jellyfish, comb-jellies, and some crustaceans.

## Moonfish - Te Ika Marama

### *Character in the show:*

Moonfish in the Songs of the Sea is the mother of all fish. The moonfish is also a very large fish but not as big as the sunfish. The moonfish displays all the colours of the sky from silver through to a dash of red and blue. When swimming in the sea, she looks like a crescent moon, which is why she was called a moonfish.

### **Did you know...**

- Moonfish have a very deep, thin, sharp-edged body.
- They are essentially blue and green in colour, with silver spots, red fins and jaws.
- Average size 80-120cm.
- They like to live in warm seas off the east coast of America from Uruguay to Cape Cod, straying to Nova Scotia and can be commonly found from Chesapeake Bay southward.
- Fish are animals that live in water and breathe using gills. Water goes in through the mouth and out through the gills, which take oxygen from the water. Most fish swim by moving their tail (also called the caudal fin) left and right.
- There are many kinds of fish; some have bones but others, like sharks and rays have no bones, only cartilage.
- The biggest fish in the world is the whale shark; it is a shark but not a whale. The whale shark is up to 14 m (46 feet) long and weighs up to 15 tons.

## Scavenger Hunt

Search your local rock pools for the following items.  
(Remember not to move or take the items!)

Neptune's Necklace	A piece of paua	Finger sponge	Something manmade
Sea lettuce	A shell with a hole	Cushion star fish	Kelp
Shell of a dead kina	Pipi	Ram's horn	Something smoothed by the sea
Turret shell	Cat's eye shell	Limpet	Mussel
Shell of a dead crab	Signs of seagulls		

## Bubble Play for Sensory Fun and Printing

### FILL A LARGE CONTAINER WITH:

- 1/3 cup of water
- 1/3 cup of kid friendly dish soap
- 1 Tbsp corn flour (this makes the bubbles last longer)
- A couple of drops of colouring

Mix these ingredients together with a hand held whisk until light and fluffy!

Hide some plastic and fabric fishy friends in the foam and let the kids explore!



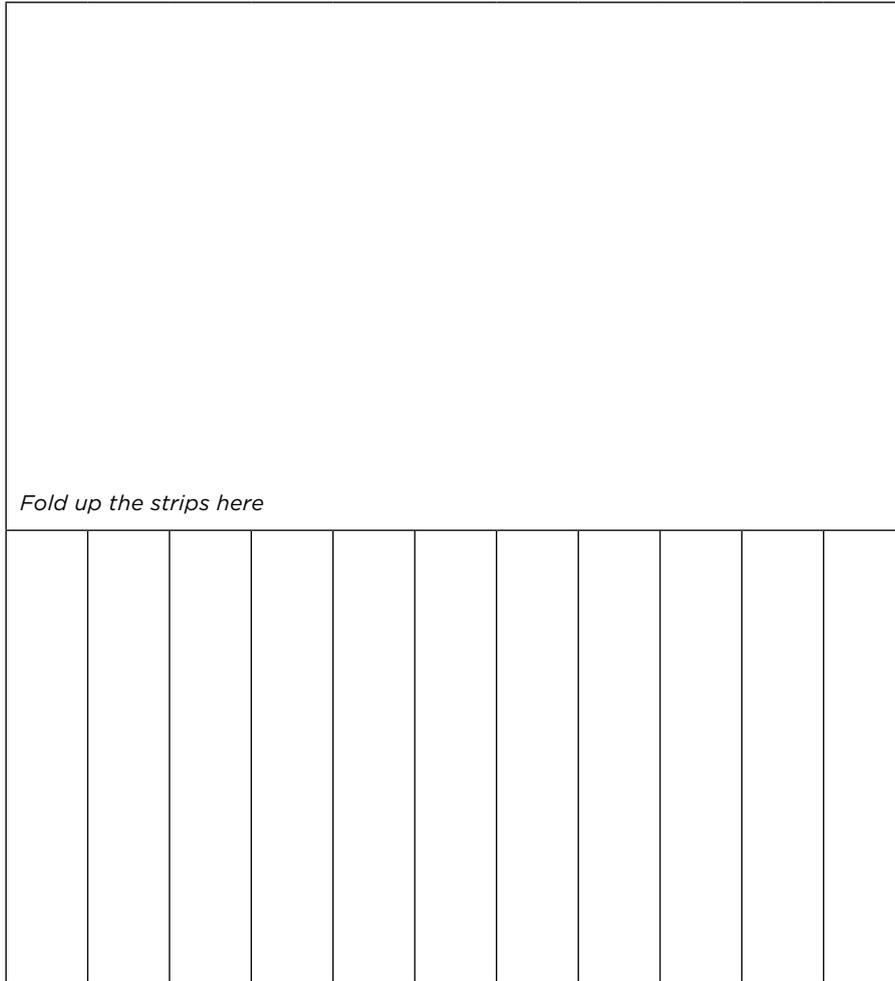
(NB: these photos were taken after a LOT of play, the bubbles, we promise, were more substantial!)

Let the children get creative with swishing pieces of paper over the bubbles to make bubble prints.



# Hide the Fish

- Draw your own fish and crabs in the top box
- Then cut along the vertical dotted lines
- Fold up the strips to cover the fish
- Colour the strips brown and green to make seaweed to hide our fishy friends!



✂ *Cut along the vertical lines*

## Gleaming Tinfoil fish

### YOU WILL NEED:

- Tin foil
- A fish shape (use our template or create your own) in cardboard
- Colouring pencils and pens

1. Place the fish shape in the middle of a piece of tin foil.
2. Gently fold the tinfoil around the fish shape.



3. Smooth the tin foil around the cardboard so you can see the fish shape. Both sides of the fish should be covered with tinfoil.
4. Draw details on your fish such as scales, fins and eyes.



5. Attach a piece of sting or ribbon to the fish and hang it in the window or somewhere that catches the light.



## 3D Ocean

### YOU WILL NEED:

- Blue A4 card
- Various other coloured card or paper
- Scissors
- Glue stick

1. Fold the blue A4 card in half.



2. Using scissors carefully cut lines through the card, from the folded edge up. Leave at least 1cm at the top.



3. Open up the card and gently ease the lines apart. Pull one forward and push one back until all are slightly spread apart.



4. Draw and cut out small fish, pieces of seaweed and other creatures of the ocean using the other coloured card and paper. You could get creative with bits of tinsel and cellophane.



5. Glue the sea creatures to the back of your blue card. They should peep through the cracks of the card.



## Peg fish

### CREATE A FISH THAT CAN OPEN AND CLOSE ITS MOUTH!

1. Either use the template provided or draw your own fish. She has to be slightly larger than a normal clothes peg.
2. Cut your little fish out and colour it in however you fancy.



3. Cut your fish in half length ways.
4. With the help of an adult glue a plastic peg on the back of your fish. Make sure the middle of the peg is lined up with the middle edges of your cut fish.



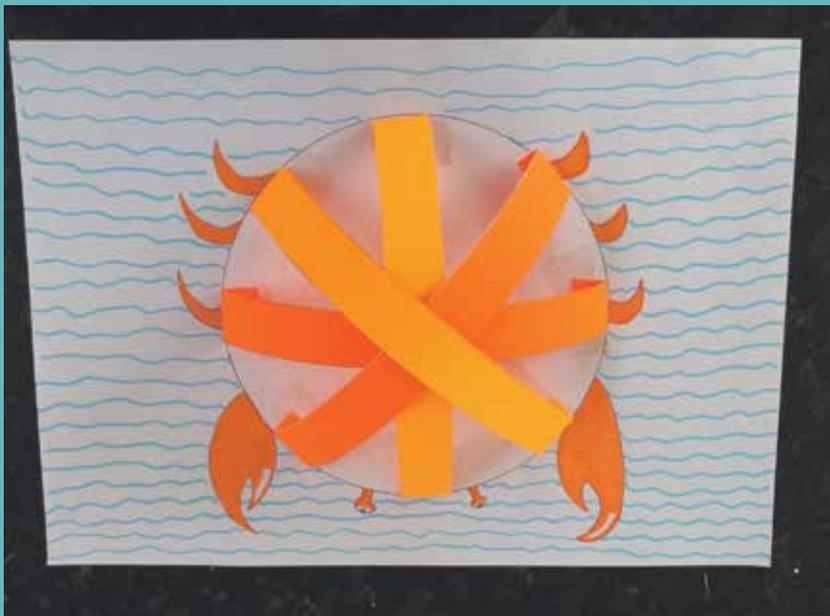
5. Once the glue is dried open and close the peg to make your fish open and close its mouth.



## 3D Crab

### YOU WILL NEED:

- Our crab template
  - Strips of coloured card (21cm by 2cm or use our template)
  - Sticky tape or a glue stick
  - coloured pencils
1. Either draw your own crab or use our template. Colour in the crab's legs and claws. Colour in the background to show where you would find a crab.
  2. Cut the strips of coloured card or colour in the template strips.
  3. Carefully glue or stick the end of one of the strips to one side of the crab's shell, then glue the other end to the opposite side.
  4. Work your way around the crab so his shell is complete.



# Fish Scales

## CREATE BEAUTIFUL COLOURED FISH WITH INDIVIDUAL SCALES.

1. Find lots of different coloured papers, either from your craft box or ripped out of magazines and newspapers.
2. Rip or cut the fish scales into small pieces. (about 1cm by 1cm).



3. Use the template provided or draw your own outline of a fish.
4. Using a glue stick or pva, glue the fish's scales onto his body. Try to glue them on in vertical lines and mix up the paper so he is bright and colourful.



5. Colour in the fish's face!



# Fishing

**Te Whariki Links:** Well-being – Mana Atua, Communication – Mana Reo.

## Potential Learning Objectives:

Children will or may:

1. Be involved in discussions about fishing, what it is and why we do it. (Well Being, Goal 2).
2. Be involved in discussions about different ways to fish including cultural differences (Contribution, Goal 1).
3. Experience a visit from a fisherman or family/whanau member who enjoys fishing (Communication, Goal 3).

## Focus/thinking questions about fishing:

- Do you think it hurts the fish?
- Why do the fish swallow the hook?
- What equipment do you need to catch fish?
- What happens to fish after people catch it?
- Can you catch as many fish as you want?
- What should you do with small fish or fish you don't want?
- What other things get caught on fishing lines?
- What safety equipment should you take with you on a boat?

## Initial Ideas and Activities

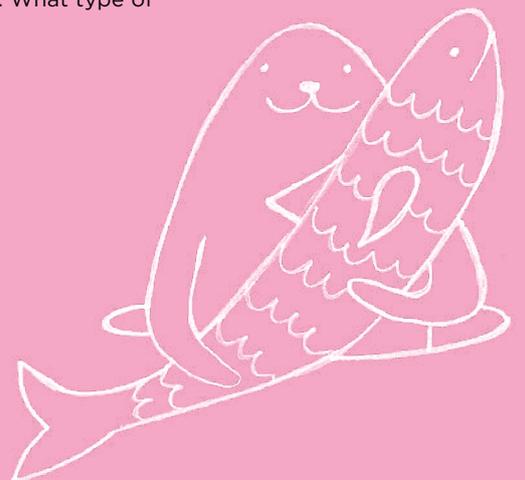
1. Discuss why people like to go fishing. Find out how many children have been fishing, what type of fish they caught, what equipment they used.
2. Discuss with parents and caregivers about where people in the community go fishing and record this on a large map of your area. Record what type of fish you have available. Plan a visit to the local beach, wharf or river to discuss how you fish.
3. Discuss different types of fishing: off a boat, off the wharf, casting from the beach into the ocean, collecting shellfish from sand/rocks etc.

## Possible follow-up activities might include:

Invite a family/whanau member to come and talk to the children about the type of fishing they do. Ask them to bring in their fishing gear and explain about the equipment they use to catch different fish.

Make a simple fishing line using a stick for the rods, string and a cotton reel for the anchor weight.

Discuss safety in the ocean and fishing safety with the children. What type of equipment do you need when fishing to be safe?

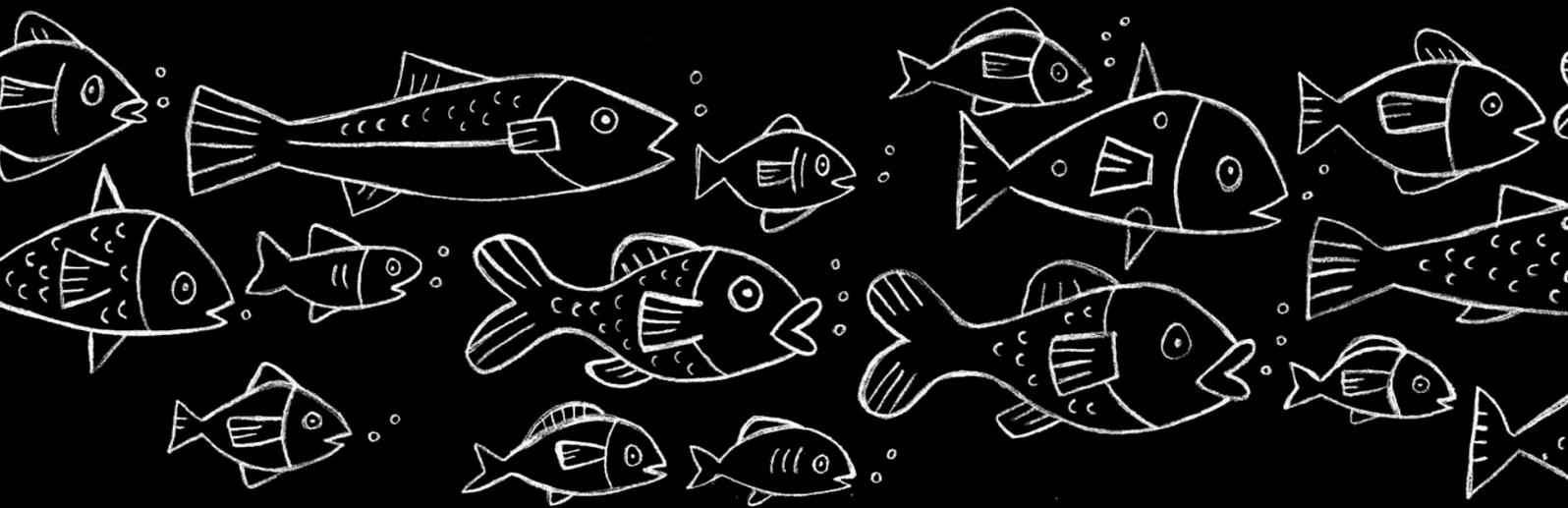


**SAFE FISHING FROM A BOAT**

You need to take the following things when you are fishing off a boat to keep yourselves safe, and to catch fish:

- First aid kit
- Radio
- Life jackets
- Catch net and/or gaff
- Food
- Drink
- Warm clothes
- Waterproof clothes
- Fishing rods
- Handlines
- Fishing tackle
- Flares
- Spare petrol
- Oars
- Navigation charts
- Bailer

We must make sure we look after our oceans by keeping our beaches and waters clean.



## Sorting the Rubbish

Not only does our manmade rubbish ruin our land, it also pollutes our oceans and seas.

Create a seascape where you can fish out the rubbish and sort it into its correct disposal areas.

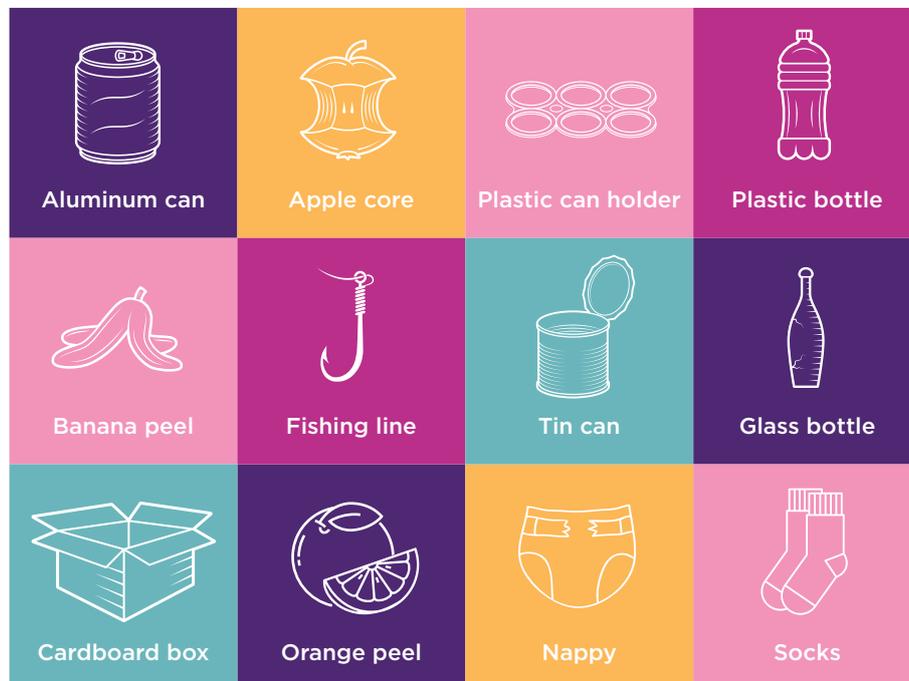
### WHAT YOU NEED:

- A big container or bowl
- Ripped up blue tissue paper
- Toy fish or boats
- Paper clips
- A small stick with a string and a magnet (like a fishing rod for the fishing game)
- Cut outs of the items of rubbish listed below
- Three small containers. One marked with the recycling symbol, one with the biodegradable food waste symbol and the third with rubbish for the landfill. (Symbols below)

### WHAT TO DO:

- Fill the large container with ripped up tissue paper. This is the ocean
- Place the boats and fish in the ocean
- Cut out the items of rubbish listed below
- Place a paper clip on each item of rubbish
- Place the items of rubbish around the ocean scene

Students “fish” for the rubbish and put them into the correct container.



Use the below symbols to label the disposal containers



## Oil Spills

Oil spills can cause a great amount of damage to our oceans. What is the best way to clean them up?

What is an oil spill?

Oil spills are caused by accidents involving large boats such as tankers and barges, or pipelines and drilling rigs out in the ocean.

Spills can be caused by:

- people making mistakes or being careless.
- equipment breaking down.
- natural disasters such as hurricanes.
- deliberate acts by vandals, or illegal dumpers.

Experiment title: How can we clean up our oceans from rubbish and oil spills?

Create a small ocean in your classroom using a large container filled with water.

Add to your ocean:

- Boat toys
- Fish toys
- Ripped up newspaper
- Small pieces of plastic (bread bag tags work well)
- And a generous squirt of cooking oil

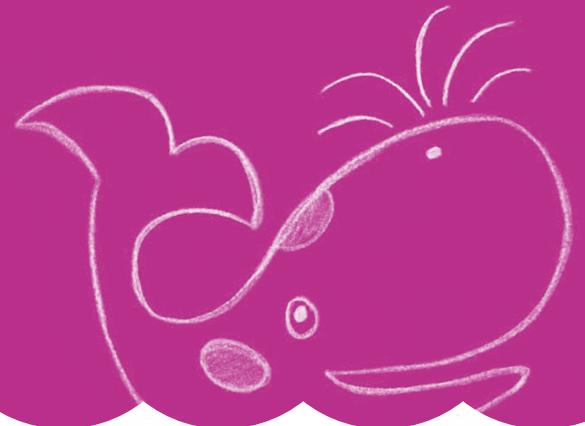
Students need to work out how to clean the ocean up. Use the following template to create a scientific document of their discoveries.

Let the students think of different techniques to clean up the water. For example scooping out the solid rubbish and trying to mop up the oil. Can they get the water completely clean?

Let the students feel the toys, are they clean or oily? What does that mean for the fish in the ocean?

Some may think of using dish washing liquid, discuss how that makes the oil split into smaller drops but doesn't remove it all.

Give the students feathers to swish through the water. What happens to the feathers? What do they think that means for the bird life?



Experiment title:
Purpose: (I wonder)
Hypothesis: (I think)
Procedure: (How I tested my ideas)
Materials: (I used)
Results: (I found out)
Conclusion: (I learned that)

# Myths

**Te Whariki Links:** Communication-Mana Reo, Contribution-Mana Tangata.

## Potential Learning Objectives:

Children will or may:

1. Be involved in learning about myths and legends through story telling (Communication, Goal 3)
2. Be involved in learning about the many legends of Maui (Communication, Goal 3).
3. Be involved with a visit from a mythical story teller or the Shaper (willing community member dressed up) (Belonging, Goal 1).

## The Myths of Songs of the Sea

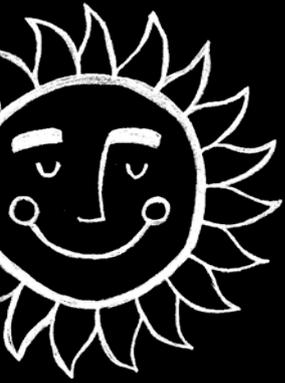
As explained by the writer Peter Wilson:

*“None of the myths created for Songs of the Sea are based on existing myths, it may be that one hears many stories in one’s life and indirectly you may draw upon those experiences whilst writing.”*



## The Sun and The Moon

“There are many stories, myths, and legends about the moon and the sun and as far as I know I have invented this one. I once saw a moonfish and a sunfish in a museum display. I remembered them when I began writing **Songs of the Sea**. Quite often we see the reflections of moons and suns in the sea. The idea of the wind rippling the sea and the reflection floating away came easily, and that is how the sunfish and moonfish were born.”



*“I love star gazing, and if I lived two thousand years ago and saw a star falling out of the sky into the sea would I think it might turn into a fish – a starfish? In my imagination it all seems possible. So starfish are made from falling stars, especially those stars that fall into the sea.”*

“Looking at the sky on a clear night, it is very easy to imagine that the milky way is a great river in the sky, so it was easy to imagine someone in a magic sky boat to sail this river from planet to planet across the universe. In some myths there is a mythical character called the ‘Shaper’. He carved the trees and mountains of Norway with his adze (axe). I borrowed the name of this mythical character, mixed him up with ‘Shapos’, a sun goddess who wanders the corners of the universe in western semetic cultures and created the ‘Shaper’ and his sky-boat who visits new worlds and makes and shapes new things. In the Songs of the Sea he makes the Seashells.”



The other small myths and stories in Songs of the Sea were inspired by the elements of the wind and rain.

The Shaper is a magical character. Peter Wilson based him on a mythological creature. This shaper is as old as time itself, which makes him very old indeed. In his magnificent sky boat he travels through the night on the great sea of stars that make up the Milky Way. Traveling from one planet to another he makes and shapes things that might be missing from that world. In our story **Songs of the Sea**, he comes to earth, to New Zealand and discovers that there are no sea shells. He puts down his anchor and with his great adze, his magic shaping axe, begins to make all the seashells we now find along our seashore. When he has made enough and he is happy with his work, he pulls up his anchor and sails off to other worlds and other lands.

The Sun, Moon, Wind, Rain, Rainbow and Clouds are all important characters in our story. These big elements which we are all so familiar with, help create many of the sea creatures, their shapes and colours and help us all sing the great Song of the Sea.

### Initial Ideas and Activities

1. Introduce children to common myths and legends (using Maui legends as an introduction).
2. Discuss the idea of a shaper who can shape and create things on earth. What else could he have made? Record children's ideas.
3. Think about other sea myths like taniwha. What do they look like, where do they come from? Encourage children to make their own taniwha.

#### Possible follow-up activities might include:

- Encourage children to draw their own imaginary sea creature and record their story about it. Encourage their ideas by asking: what type of creature is it? Where does it live? Where did it come from? What is it called?
- Invite a willing community member to visit as the shaper or some other mythical being to read to the children. Encourage the children to ask them questions.

# Songs of the Sea

Waiata O Te Moana