

BLM 1 – *How Maui Fished up the North Island*

Maui's brothers refused to take him out fishing, so he hid under the boards of the canoe. When they were a long way out to sea, Maui showed himself. His brothers were cross and wanted to put him back on shore, but they were too far out from land. They started to fish and gradually the canoe was filled with their catch. In the meantime, Maui fashioned his own hook from paua shell and, using a piece of his grandmother's jawbone, created a barb. However, his brothers would not give him any bait; so the resourceful Maui punched his nose and covered the hook with his blood. He lowered the line and chanted a karakia, calling on the north-east and south-east winds to assist him to pull up the world.

Before long, Maui pulled up an enormous fish. He left the vessel to seek out a priest who could conduct the ritual for making an offering of thanks to the gods. He warned his brothers not to touch the fish until the appropriate ritual had been carried out. But, as soon as he left, the siblings started to scale the fish, cut pieces off it, and began eating. The gods became angry and made the fish of Maui thrash about and writhe in pain. As the sun rose, the fish became solid and could not be smoothed out. This explains why much of Aotearoa is rough and mountainous. If the brothers had not touched the fish, the terrain would have been smooth, and more land could have been utilised.

According to story, the fish of Maui is the North Island of New Zealand, which is shaped like a fish. Some tribes believe that the South Island is Maui's canoe and his hook is the cape at Heretaunga (Cape Kidnappers) on the east coast. The cape was once called Te matau a Maui, or Maui's Fishhook.



Image from: New Zealand's National Education Monitoring Project's 2001 Place and Environment Social Studies Assessment
nemp.otago.ac.nz/social_studies/2001/media/shape.jpg

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Paragraph 1 Key Words

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Paragraph 2 Key Words

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Paragraph 3 Key Words

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