

CHINESE FOLKTALES

夸父追日

Kuāfù Chases The Sun

夸父追日 Kuāfù Chases The Sun, is a Chinese folktale well known to many Chinese children. Let's learn this story together. We hope you will be inspired by his determination and perseverance.



Long long ago, there was a tribe of giants living in inner China. The giants were led by a strong and brave man called Kuafu. Kuafu had a pair of huge ears, from which he hung snakes which he had caught, as earrings. He also had pythons wrapped around his arms and strong legs which ran very fast. Kuafu was well respected amongst his tribe for his kindness and generosity towards his people.

One year, the incredibly hot weather damaged the tribe's plants and crops. Lots of people had been suffering badly from the heat and lack of food. Kuafu felt deeply for them and decided he must do something to help. He vowed to take the sun down from the sky and tame it so the heat wouldn't be a problem for the tribe anymore.

The next day Kuafu started to chase after the sun. He ran like a gust of wind without rest and chased it over the mountains and rivers for days and nights. It was said that he finally caught up with the sun but by then he was extremely thirsty and tired. He rushed to the rivers and lakes, swallowing up all of the water, but it wasn't enough. He sprinted towards the Yellow River and the Wei River for more water but somehow Kuafu's thirst was still not fulfilled, so he had to go and search for even more sources of water. Just before he was able to reach them, he suddenly had no strength to go on. Kuafu collapsed in despair and passed away. Kuafu's body then transformed into a huge mountain range. The wooden club he had carried during his chase grew into a peach forest which flourished all year round and provided shade and sweet juicy peaches for passers-by to relieve their thirst.

Challenge:

1. *If you were Kuafu, would you do what he did for his tribe?*
2. *Some people think Kuafu is the Chinese version of the Greek Titans, Prometheus, who tried to steal fire from heaven and bring it down to men. Do you know any other cultures that also have folktales or legends involving the sun and attempts to capture it?*
3. *What do you think Kuafu might look like? Draw a picture of Kuafu in your mind and send it to Confucius.institute@adelaide.edu.au*



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