

## TITAN'S SONG by Lawrence Nault

### Teacher's Resource Guide

*Recommended for Grades 7-12*

#### Overview

"Titan's Song" offers rich opportunities for cross-curricular learning, combining environmental science, cultural studies, music, and literature. This guide provides resources for engaging students with the text's themes while meeting educational standards.

#### Curriculum Connections

- **Science:** Environmental systems, planetary science, ecosystems
- **Social Studies:** Cultural preservation, leadership, governance
- **Music:** Harmonics, sound waves, cultural music traditions
- **Language Arts:** Narrative structure, character development, symbolism
- **Environmental Studies:** Conservation, sustainability, human impact
- **Technology:** Balance of progress and preservation

#### Pre-Reading Activities

##### 1. Building Background Knowledge

- Research Saturn's moon Titan
- Study Earth's environmental challenges
- Explore Easter Island's history and Moai
- Investigate sound waves and harmonics

##### 2. Discussion Starters

- What makes a family strong?
- How do humans impact their environment?
- What's the relationship between progress and preservation?
- How do different cultures approach environmental protection?

##### 3. Vocabulary Preparation

*Key Terms:*

- Environmental
- Harmony/Discord
- Ecosystem
- Cultural preservation

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- Methane
- Indigenous
- Sustainability
- Technology
- Balance
- Frequency

### Chapter-by-Chapter Teaching Guide

#### *Prologue & Chapter 1*

- **Focus:** World-building and character introduction
- **Activities:**
  - Create character maps for the MacIver siblings
  - Compare/contrast Earth and Titan environments
  - Analyze descriptive language

#### *Chapters 2-5*

- **Focus:** Environmental crisis and cultural context
- **Activities:**
  - Track environmental problems and their causes
  - Analyze leadership styles
  - Study Rapa Nui governance structure

#### *Chapters 6-10*

- **Focus:** Technology and tradition
- **Activities:**
  - Debate technology's role in society
  - Study sound waves and harmonics
  - Create alien creature designs

#### *Chapters 11-15*

- **Focus:** Action and consequences
- **Activities:**
  - Track cause and effect
  - Analyze character motivations
  - Study ecosystem interdependence

#### *Chapters 16-20*

- **Focus:** Resolution and harmony
- **Activities:**
  - Analyze solution development

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- Study environmental restoration
- Examine cultural preservation methods

### Class Projects

#### 1. *Environmental Science*

- Design sustainable ecosystems
- Study local environmental issues
- Create food web diagrams
- Monitor school environmental impact

#### 2. *Music and Sound*

- Experiment with harmonics
- Create musical instruments
- Study cultural music traditions
- Analyze sound wave patterns

#### 3. *Creative Writing*

- Write character journals
- Create alien species profiles
- Develop alternative endings
- Write newspaper articles from Aha Nui

#### 4. *Visual Arts*

- Design alien creatures
- Create Moai interpretations
- Draw Saturn's view from Titan
- Design environmental infographics

#### 5. *Technology*

- Research clean energy solutions
- Design eco-friendly inventions
- Create digital presentations
- Develop conservation apps

### Assessment Ideas

#### 1. *Writing Assignments*

- Compare/contrast essay on Earth/Titan environments
- Character analysis papers
- Environmental solution proposals
- Creative stories from different perspectives

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### *2. Project-Based Assessments*

- Environmental action plans
- Musical harmony demonstrations
- Cultural preservation presentations
- Ecosystem models

### *3. Group Projects*

- Environmental campaign designs
- Family dynamics presentations
- Cultural tradition research
- Technology impact studies

## **Extension Activities**

### *1. Science Extensions*

- Study local ecosystems
- Monitor school energy use
- Research alternative energy
- Study sound wave physics

### *2. Social Studies Extensions*

- Research indigenous cultures
- Study environmental policies
- Analyze leadership styles
- Explore cultural preservation

### *3. Arts Extensions*

- Create environmental art
- Compose harmonic music
- Design protest posters
- Create digital stories

## **Differentiation Strategies**

### *For Advanced Learners*

- Independent research projects
- Advanced scientific concepts
- Leadership role in group projects
- Complex writing assignments

### *For Struggling Readers*

- Guided reading questions
- Vocabulary support
- Visual aids and graphic organizers

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- Modified writing assignments

### *ESL/ELL Support*

- Key vocabulary lists
- Visual supports
- Partner reading
- Native language resources

### **Resources**

#### *Websites*

- NASA's Titan information
- Environmental education sites
- Cultural preservation organizations
- Sound wave educational resources

#### *Videos*

- Saturn and Titan documentaries
- Environmental crisis documentaries
- Sound wave demonstrations
- Cultural preservation films

#### *Books*

- Environmental science texts
- Cultural studies resources
- Sound and music physics books
- Young adult environmental fiction

### **Content Advisory**

#### *Primary Concerns*

##### **1. Death/Violence**

- Death of Rongo (described but not gratuitously)
- Kelly's injury from a knife attack
- References to deaths of Methalodons
- Historical violence against the Rapa Nui people
- Description of Kikua creatures killing prey

##### **2. Family/Loss Themes**

- Adoption and identity issues
- Separation from family (Brad's relationship)
- References to loss of parents
- Displacement of peoples

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- Cultural loss and trauma

### 3. Environmental Crisis

- Death of creatures/species
- Environmental destruction
- Resource exploitation
- Ecosystem collapse
- Discussion of extinction

### 4. Political/Social Issues

- Colonization themes
- Cultural suppression
- Power abuse
- Class/social inequity
- Manipulation of populations

### 5. Emotional Content

- Trauma and grief
- Fear and anxiety
- Identity struggles
- Family separation
- Personal sacrifice

## Teaching Considerations

### 1. Class Discussion Guidelines

- Establish respectful discussion parameters
- Create safe space for personal connections
- Be sensitive to adopted students
- Acknowledge environmental anxiety
- Consider cultural perspectives

### 2. Student Support

*Be aware of students who:* \* Are adopted or in foster care \* Have experienced loss \* Have anxiety about environmental issues \* Come from displaced cultures \* Have experienced trauma

### 3. Parent Communication

- Inform about sensitive content
- Provide opt-out alternatives
- Share discussion frameworks
- Offer resource lists
- Encourage family discussions

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### 4. Additional Resources

- Grief counseling contacts
- Environmental action resources
- Cultural support organizations
- Family support services
- Mental health resources

### 5. Alternative Assignments

- Provide options for sensitive topics
- Allow student choice in projects
- Create flexible discussion groups
- Offer different perspectives
- Enable private reflection options

*Note: While these topics are handled appropriately for the target age group, teachers should:*

- Preview content
- Know their students' backgrounds
- Prepare for emotional responses
- Have support resources ready
- Create inclusive discussions
- Allow for personal boundaries
- Maintain open communication with families