

Polynesian Wayfinding - TEDEd

Watch "[How did Polynesian wayfinders navigate the Pacific Ocean?](#)" on Youtube, then respond to the questions below (work portion can also be found on TEDEd [here](#) (sections used are from: Watch, Think, and Dig Deeper)).

1. Which item was not used by ancient Polynesian navigators?

- a) Sunset
- b) Star compass
- c) Spyglass
- d) Flight patterns of birds

2. Early Polynesian voyages took place from approximately:¹

- a) 2500 BC – 800 AD
- b) 2000 BC – 1000 AD
- c) 1500 BC – 1300 AD
- d) 1000 BC – 1800 AD

3. Which is a good indicator of the proximity of land?

- a) Zenith stars
- b) Types of fish caught
- c) Ocean currents
- d) Temperature

¹ Common practice is now to use BCE (Before Common Era) and CE (Common Era), but we are using BC and AD here to align with the TEDEd video

4. What was the most valued aspect in canoe building?

- a) Enforcing the secrecy of building techniques
- b) The season of year when construction began
- c) Waterproofing the wood and materials
- d) The bringing together of the community

5. How do we know that these ancient methods of wayfinding worked?

- a) Written observations and oral traditions
- b) Remnants of star compasses
- c) Computer models and simulations
- d) Ancient methods are purely speculative

6. How did the navigator use ocean swells to determine direction?

7. Explain how the star compass works. What would be some of the hinderances to using this tool?

8. Some voyages lasted up to 30 days! What would be some things to consider before setting sail.