

DATE: _____
CLASS: _____
PERIOD: _____

Loawnu and the Patched Silk Sky

Ancient Story (2000 B.C.E.)

On a warm spring day, in **Xia times**, some children went out in the fields to play. The people in the village had already dug and repaired the long skinny canals in the earth that were used each season to channel the rushing spring waters that would be flowing down from the hills. The children loved to play in the fields. There was always something to do. Today, they planned to race each other down the long canals, while they were still empty. The waters would be coming soon, though. It was important that the waters come. They were needed to feed the fields, once the spring seeds were planted.

Alarmed at what they saw in the fields, the children ran up the hill to Loawnu's house. In those days, if you had a problem you went to see the local wise woman. In this village, the wise woman's name was Loawnu.

"Loawnu," they shouted. "The sky is falling down!"

Loawnu smiled at the children. "Don't be worried. Find all the pieces of sky that have fallen, and bring them to me. I'll sew them together again in time for the festival."

The **spring festival** was nearing. This was a time when the young people gathered from many villages to meet one another and to find husbands and wives. The children's village had been honored this year as the meeting village. Everyone had worked hard all winter, getting ready to host the spring festival. Some of the people had made wonderful pots on potting wheels. Some had sewn silk banners and robes. Some had painted dragon designs on village gates, to guard the safety of all the expected guests at the festival. It would be a horrible time for the sky to fall down. The village would be disgraced!

Off the children ran to pick up the pieces. But some were missing! "Loawnu!" cried the children, as they tore up the hill, breathing heavily. Loawnu only smiled.

The next day, the children ran outside and looked up. The sky looked as it always looked on a warm spring day, clean and fresh and blue. They were so happy. That night, they were amazed! The sky had always been dark at night. That night, it was filled with light! Loawnu had patched the missing pieces of sky with bright twinkling light! How beautiful! How clever! We shall have the happiest spring festival in all the land! How lucky we are to know Loawnu! The entire village agreed.