

Kōrero pūrākau o Matariki

Matariki teaching resource 2016

Part 1: A tradition of storytelling

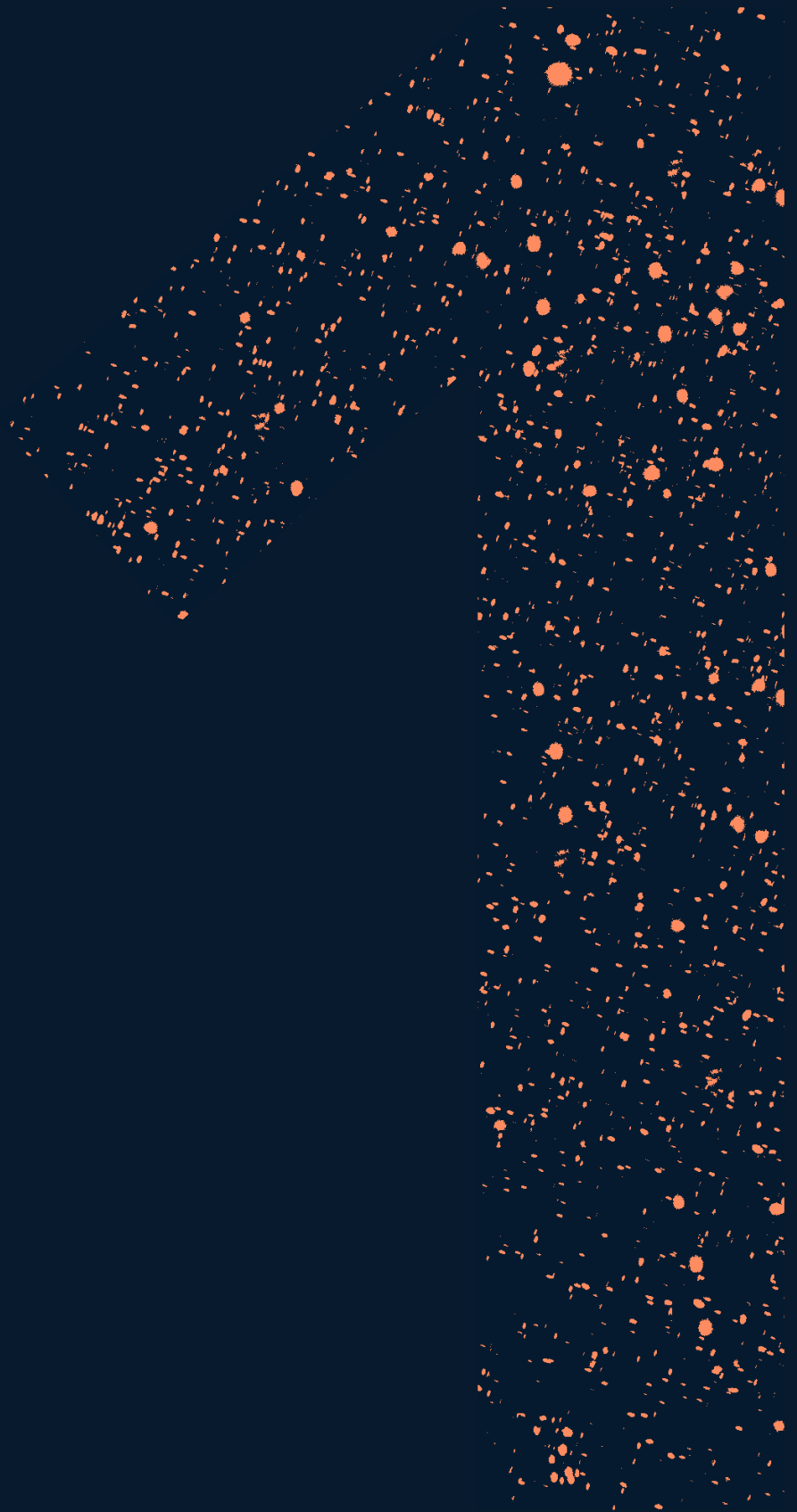
Suitable for early childhood,
primary, and keen storytellers
of any age.

This is the first installment of
our Matariki resource for 2016.

Blog links

[Part 2: Storytelling through dance](#)

[Part 3: Storytelling through sand art](#)



Right

Tirama, tirama
tamariki mā
performance taking
place in the Te
Marae space at
Te Papa, 2015.
Photograph by Kate
Whitley. Te Papa.



Celebrate Matariki, the Māori New Year, by learning about te whare tapere (the traditional Māori house of entertainment) and the role of kōrero pūrākau (storytelling). Plus, pick up some activity ideas for use in your classroom.

Overview

This resource helps you access elements of Te Papa's Matariki [education programmes](#), no matter where you are in Aotearoa New Zealand.

In this blog post

- Introducing our 2016 theme
- Matariki: A time for rest and reflection
- Te whare tapere | The house of entertainment
- Kōrero pūrākau | Storytelling
- Activities: Bring te whare tapere into your classroom

Right

Matariki star cluster
with star names.

Photograph by
Rebecca Browne.
Te Papa



Introducing our 2016 theme

Let the Words Flow

Tukuna ngā Kupu kia Rere

Let the Words Flow

The above theme was gifted to Te Papa by our iwi (tribe) in residence, Ngāti Toa Rangatira. It relates to the long-standing tradition of *kōrero pūrākau* (storytelling) during Matariki. It recognises the strength of Ngāti Toa storytellers today and encourages the emerging storytellers of tomorrow.

Matariki

A time for rest and reflection

Traditionally, the reappearance of the Matariki star cluster (the Pleiades or Seven Sisters) – or of Puanga (Rigel) for some western and southern iwi (tribes) – coincided with the end of the harvest season. Winter food stocks were plentiful, and less work was needed in the gardens. As people had time to apply their energies to other activities, a time of renewal began.

People spent time with *whānau* (family), reflected on the year that had been, and made plans for the future. It was a time for *wānanga* (deeper learning) – coming together to pass on *mātauranga* (knowledge). It was also a time for leisure and entertainment.

Te whare tapare

The house of entertainment

Te whare tapare was a special institution for entertainment on the pā (settlement). Many leisure activities happened there, including:

- ngā waiata (song)
- ngā haka (dance)
- ngā taonga puoro (music)
- ngā tākarō (games)
- ngā taonga-o-wharawhara (dressing up, or adornment)
- ngā kōrero (storytelling)

Use these teaching resources to learn more about te whare tapare:

- [Engaging Creatively with Locality: Te Whare Tapare](#), from the Education Outside the Classroom section of Te Kete Ipurangi (TKI).
- [‘The origins and history of Whare Tapare’ – Part 1](#), by TVNZ’s Waka Huia. In te reo Māori with English subtitles. Note: mature themes arise during the telling of the legend of Tinirau and Kae.
- [‘The origins and history of Whare Tapare’ – Part 2](#), by TVNZ’s Waka Huia. In te reo Māori with English subtitles.

The role of te whare tapare in Māori society fell into disuse in the 19th century, but it has been revived in recent years – particularly through the work of Professor Te Ahukaramū Charles Royal with initiatives such as [Ōrotokare](#).

Kōrero pūrākau

Storytelling

Different types of stories were shared in te whare tapare during Matariki. Like today, each storyteller would have had genres (types of stories) they specialised in – for example, histories or comedies. Some stories would have been very old, passed down through the generations. Others would be newly imagined, perhaps especially for that occasion.

Storytelling was dynamic and lively, involving embellishing elements such as whakameremere (theatrics), waiata (songs), and haka (dance). These same elements can be experienced in formal and informal storytelling on marae (communal meeting places) today.

Unlike some Māori traditions, kōrero pūrākau has continued to be practised to the present day. It’s up to all of us – kaiako (educators), whānau, and tamariki – to nurture this vibrant and powerful custom for the generations to come.

Right

Kōrero pūrākau (storytelling) in Te Huka ā Tai Discovery Centre. Photograph by Kate Whitley. Te Papa



Right

Children create a performance area with the Travelling Tuataras, 2001. Photograph by Michael Hall. Te Papa



If you don't have room for a dedicated space, you could create a temporary where tapere by positioning bodies

Activities: Bring te where tapere into your classroom

You can make your classroom or community space into a house of entertainment by developing an area for performance. Provide materials to help inspire imaginative responses, such as dress-ups, props, performance equipment, musical instruments, and puppets.

If you don't have room for a dedicated space, you could create a temporary where tapere by positioning bodies, as in the picture above.

Activity ideas

Retell

Work with tamariki to put together dramatic retellings of their favourite Māori myths, legends, and contemporary stories. Then perform them for friends and whānau. For story inspiration, see:

- reliable online sources, such as the Mātauranga Māori section of TKI: [Māori Myths, Legends and Contemporary Stories](#)
- children's Māori story books, such as those listed on the [McLeods Booksellers website](#).

Explore

Learn about some of the other activities that accompanied kōrero pūrākau (storytelling) in the whare tapere, such as:

- [te whai a Māui \(string games\)](#)
- [taonga puoro \(Māori musical instruments\)](#)
- [tā pōtaka \(spinning tops\)](#)
- [poutoti \(stilts\)](#)
- [karetao \(puppetry\)](#)

Create

Encourage children to create new stories that showcase Matariki as a time for renewal. We recommend the following themes.

Reflection

Invite students to reflect on the past year – what they did and what they learned. Then ask them to craft a story that will preserve these important memories for the future.

Celebration

Matariki is a great time to acknowledge the people and places that matter to us. Encourage students to create a story that acknowledges the best qualities possessed by their friends and loved ones. They could even create one about themselves! Have them share why their special places have significance to them and to their whānau. Whānau includes extended family, so people and places important to your class, centre, or school could apply.

Forward planning

Ask students to consider how they could plan to enjoy more of the things they value in the year ahead. Then ask them to make a story about how these plans might unfold, including the possible outcomes of their actions. For example, the Manaia class (Years 3 and 4) from Mount Cook School created a story about activities for their next school picnic.

Right

Young visitors participate in retelling a story during Ngāti Toa Weekend, 2015. Photograph by Norm Heke. Te Papa.



Next up...

Thank you to Charles Royal,
Te Papa's Director Ngā Manu Atarau,
for your help with this content.

In Part 2, we explore movement and
dance in kōrero pūrākau (storytelling).

And in Part 3, we look at sand art in
kōrero pūrākau (storytelling).

Matariki at Te Papa
Events: Matariki 2016

