

Three Days at Te Awapatiki

by Kiwa Hammond

School Journal
Part 4 Number 3 2010
Noun frequency level: 9.5–10.5
Years 7–8



Overview

Using a graphic text format, “Three Days at Te Awapatiki” tells the story of the arrival of Māori tribes on Rēkohu in 1835. The vocabulary and language features, together with the strongly supportive illustrations, mean that it is not a difficult read for most students at years 7 and 8. However, it contains complex themes that some students may need support to understand. Students need to read critically to understand the dilemma that faced the peace-loving Moriori when invaders with different values took over their islands. The text provides rich opportunities for

working on social sciences curriculum objectives. Students can use the text to explore themes of colonisation, pacifism, traditions, conflicting values, and governance.

You will need to be aware of, and sensitive to, students’ experiences of war. Some refugee students may have had recent war experiences that were traumatic and that need to be addressed outside the classroom.

Journals related by theme

School Journal Part 2 Number 2, 2010

| *School Journal* Part 3 Number 3, 2010

Text characteristics from the year 7 and 8 reading standards

sentences that vary in length, including long, complex sentences that contain a lot of information

elements that require interpretation, such as complex plots, sophisticated themes, and abstract ideas

Even though our people had been living a peaceful existence, many of the young men were still strong and adept in our traditional forms of single combat. They knew how to fight, although for hundreds of years Moriori had chosen not to – at least not to kill. That was the law.

The invaders were armed, but they were still few in number, and the young men argued that while our people would suffer casualties, we would prevail because we were many. The young men wanted to repeat the **matā hore**. They wanted to fight!

However, the younger men argued that the Law of Nanuku was meant to protect us from destroying each other. Now we were under threat from outsiders – and to do nothing would be disastrous.

Me rangataua! Me hōkongara!

** Our only choice is to go to battle and destroy them!*

Īhakoā patu, Īhakoā ēhi – tīe ētiki anohi a matau.*

** Although there are weapons and there is fire – we have the upper hand.*

The talking lasted well into the night ...

... and throughout the following day, with many voices adding to the discussion.

But the Owenga elders, Tapata and Torea, reminded them that warfare was not our way. Our tohu was one of peace, as decreed by our **tangata hou rongo**, the great leader Numuku-whenua.

Ē kino tch patu.**

*** Killing is evil.*

During this time, two unexpected visitors – Meremere and Nga Pe, chiefs of the invaders – arrived at Te Awapatiki.

More than ever, the younger men argued for war, especially since Meremere and Nga Pe now knew what the gathering was about.

metaphor, analogy, and connotative language that is open to interpretation

Reading standards: by the end of years 7 and 8

Possible curriculum contexts

SOCIAL SCIENCES

LEVEL 4 – Understand how formal and informal groups make decisions that impact on communities.

ENGLISH (Reading)

LEVEL 4 – Structure: Show an increasing understanding of text structures.

ENGLISH (Writing)

LEVEL 4 – Purposes and audiences: Show an increasing understanding of how to shape texts for different purposes and audiences.

Possible reading purposes

- To find out about the history of the Moriori
- To explore the decisions that the Moriori took and the impact this had on them
- To explore the concept of pacifism and its possible consequences.

Possible writing purposes

- To research and describe the way one particular group made a decision that affected an entire community
- To write a fictional first-person account of a moment in history where one particular group made a decision that affected a community.

See [Instructional focus – Reading](#) for illustrations of some of these reading purposes.

See [Instructional focus – Writing](#) for illustrations of some of these writing purposes.

Text and language challenges

VOCABULARY:

- Words and concepts that may be unfamiliar to some students, including “sacred”, “flounder”, “according”, “custom”, “encountered”, “slaves”, “resist”, “newcomers”, “elders”, “council”, “existence”, “adept”, “combat”, “decreed”, “invaders”, “prevailed”, “Nevertheless”, “remain true”, “met their fate”
- Moriori words and terms (all explained in the glossary)
- Formalised and figurative language, including “the path of the flounder”, “like the hokoairi on our kopi trees”, “walking the land”, “It is said...”, “Now was such a time.”
- Collocations: “peaceful existence”, “met their fate”.

Possible supporting strategies

Prepare students for the Moriori words by using the glossary and information on page 28. It may be helpful to do this through a shared reading approach, making a chart of the page to use as a display while students read this and other related stories.

To preview some of the vocabulary and to help students make connections to their prior knowledge, you could give pairs or groups of students a page without the text. Have them label everything they can and describe what they think is happening. Go around the pairs or groups, helping with vocabulary, and provide dictionaries (including bilingual dictionaries) when needed. It may be useful to put students who share a language other than English into the same pair or group so that they can discuss their ideas in their shared language. (It’s also important that these students are in mixed groups sometimes). When they have finished their task, have them present their vocabulary and ideas to the other groups or pairs.

The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.

ESOL Online has examples of strategies and approaches for focusing on vocabulary, under [Pedagogy](#)

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED:

- Some familiarity with the history of the Moriori
- Some familiarity with true stories of conflict from history
- Some familiarity with the concepts of treachery, duplicity, invasion, slavery, and pacifism
- Understanding of the ways that adhering strictly to customs and traditions can lead to unexpected outcomes.

Possible supporting strategies

If students need support to develop background understandings, share related articles from SJ 3.3.10 with them.

Initiate group or class discussions about different values and the ways in which customs and laws develop, for example, those of different states in the US, some of which have the death penalty.

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE:

- Illustrated story in the style of a graphic novel
- Condensed text in caption boxes
- Use of two speech bubbles (in Moriori and English language) within the illustrations
- Information carried through the images as well as the text, including body language and facial expressions to convey feelings
- Story told in the first-person plural and past tense.

Possible supporting strategies

Discuss and share examples of graphic novels or comic books the students are already familiar with. Introduce more complex examples, including those that tell serious and/or factual stories.

Check that students know to read this kind of text using the same left-to-right, return-sweep direction they use for normal reading.



Instructional focus – Reading

Social Sciences (Level 4 – Understand how formal and informal groups make decisions that impact on communities.)

Text excerpts from “Three Days at Te Awapatiki”

Students (what they might do)

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

The sea also brought others. The ko re kau o paorangi came on their ships for our seals and to trade. We welcomed them and lived together in peace according to our toho.

Students **make connections** between what they know about early trade and settlement and the events in the story so far. They use the glossary to find the meanings for the Moriori words. They use the words and their understanding of “custom” (toho) to **infer** that Moriori valued peace and manaakitanga.

The visitors began “walking the land”, taking possession of everything they encountered. They said we were now their slaves. At first, we did not resist. We did not know what we should do.

Students use their prior knowledge of language features to follow the action. They **make connections** with what they know about duplicity to **visualise** how the inhabitants feel. They **ask and answer questions** to try to understand why the people behave in the ways they do.

But the Owenga elders, Tapata and Torea, reminded them that warfare was not our way. Our toho was one of peace, as decreed by our tangata hou rongo, the great leader Nunuku-whenua.

Students **ask questions** of the text to consider how the ideas behind “our way”, “toho” and “decreed” are connected and predict what the implications will be. Students **make connections** to other texts in this Journal (or those in SJ 3.3.10) and integrate what they already know about Nunuku’s law.

Therefore, the men returned to the villages – and together with the women and children, they met their fate. You may wonder: why did we still not fight back? Because in time, when all the wars have been fought and there is no one left to fight, peace does prevail. Me rongo.

Students **synthesise** the ideas in the text, drawing on their own knowledge of law-making to draw conclusions, for example, that the decision not to fight had an impact upon more than just those who made the decision. They **evaluate** the question and answer in the light of information they have gained elsewhere about the fate of the Moriori.

MODEL the reading of a graphic text.

- When I read a graphic text such as this, I focus on the illustrations as much as the text itself. I look closely at the positions of the characters in the pictures, at the looks on their faces, how they are standing, and what they are doing. These can give me clues to aspects of the story and add to my understanding of the text.

PROMPT students to read critically.

- What is implied by the actions of the visitors?
- From what you know about the Moriori and their way of life, how do you think they will react?
- What questions are you thinking about as you read?

Refer the students back to the words in the text to support their hypotheses. For example, you could prompt the students to notice that “At first” tells us there is going to be something different later on.

EXPLAIN the background of Nunuku’s Law if students do not already know this (see page 4 of this Journal).

TELL students that asking questions of the text as they read is a strategy that readers use to clarify meaning or to speculate about what might happen next.

ASK QUESTIONS if necessary to support students as they synthesise and evaluate information and ideas. You could use some questions as prompts with more independent students.

- How did the people come to the decision not to fight? What were their reasons? Was their decision a wise one? Why do you think that?
- What can others learn from the Moriori people and the way they see the world?

As suggested above, explore how words and phrases in the text help the reader to make connections between ideas and between different parts of the text. In this example, “Therefore” signals that what follows is a result of what is just before it.

Some students may need support to help them participate in sharing opinions. This could include use of a speaking frame. First model a sentence giving your opinion, then give the students the frame with some parts left out for them to fill in (see the example below). Provide more or less of the content, depending on the needs of your students. For example, you could provide a table like the one below but with the right-hand column completely blank.


Opinion	I think people should/shouldn’t fight
Reason	because _____
Reason	If people fight, _____.
Opinion	Therefore, I think people should/shouldn’t fight.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- Your responses tell me that you’ve given the ideas in this text some serious thought. You’ve expressed your opinions clearly and given sound reasons for them.
- You’ve found several pieces of information to provide a good summary of the arguments for and against fighting. Now think about your own opinions and how this might apply in other situations.

METACOGNITION

- What strategies helped you to think critically about the events in the story? How did they help you?
- Explain to a partner how the illustrations supported your thinking: were some particularly useful or powerful?
- What did you have to do to evaluate the final decision?

 Reading standards: by the end of years 7 and 8

 The Literacy Learning Progressions

 Assessment Resource Banks

Instructional focus – Writing

English (Level 4 – Purposes and audiences: Show an increasing understanding of how to shape texts for different purposes and audiences.)

Text excerpts from “Three Days at Te Awapatiki”

Examples of text characteristics

Teacher

(possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Our people called this meeting place Te Awapatiki. It is tchap – sacred to our karapuna.

VOICE

Writers select a voice that matches their purpose and audience.

PROMPT students to consider the “voice” they use when they write.

- Voice is the way your words “sound” on the page. How do you want your audience to “hear” you?
- Will you be serious and formal or friendly and chatty?
- If you’re speaking through a character, how will that person “sound”?
- How will the voice you choose affect the words and sentences you use?

Note that this can be a challenging area for students who are new to New Zealand and/or to English. Help them to explore “voice” in contexts and/or languages they are familiar with first. Then also expect to give more guidance and explanation.

They called themselves Ngāti Tama, and with their carved faces like the hokoairo on our kopi trees, they showed no fear. Not that they had need to fear us. And then yet more visitors arrived: Ngāti Mutunga.

SENTENCE STRUCTURE

The length of a sentence and the order of words, phrases, and clauses can affect the way the sentence is read and therefore the “feeling” a reader gains from it. For example, inserting a relative clause can slow down a sentence, making the reader take more notice of implied meaning.

MODEL the ways in which sentence structures can change the emotional impact of a sentence. Using this extract, rewrite it to use less dramatic structures. For example: “The visitors were called Ngāti Tama. They had carved faces and they did not appear afraid. They did not have any reason to be afraid of us. Then more visitors arrived. They were called Ngāti Mutunga.”

Read the two versions aloud to emphasise the different impact each one has. Discuss the extra impact of the original, pointing out the way in which the insertion of a simile draws out the image for the reader. Discuss the inferences a reader can make from “they showed no fear. Not that they had need to fear us.”

Point out the ominous sense of threat conveyed by “And then yet more ...”, compared with the simpler use “Then more ...”.

Ask the students to look over places in their own writing where they can use sentence structure to build atmosphere and emotional impact.

More than ever, the younger men argued for war, especially since Meremere and Nga Pe now knew what the gathering was about.

VISUAL IMAGES/SUPPORT

Using images brings a text to life. Powerful images add drama and allow the reader to understand (by visualising and inferring) more than the words say.

ASK QUESTIONS if necessary to help students consider text structure.

- Think about your purpose and your audience. What are some of the ways you could structure the text?
- What level of detail will your audience need or be able to understand?
- If you intend to illustrate your writing, how will you do that? How will you ensure the illustrations match the audience’s ages and interests?

But the elders would not allow the chiefs to be harmed, and so Meremere and Nga Pe continued on their way.

COMPARE AND CONTRAST

Writers help their readers to compare and contrast different opinions or features by showing what each side involves. This helps readers to consider their own opinions.

EXPLAIN how an author can show different points of view and allow a reader to make up their own mind. Encourage the students to think about how the text structure might help them to show different points of view or opinions.

- What are the big ideas you want your audience to think about? How can the text structure help you convey these ideas in a way that makes the reader think deeply about the ideas?

The talk continued for one more night, and by the next day, the elders had prevailed.



GIVE FEEDBACK

- This really made me think. The structure you’ve used showed me the arguments for and against the decision very clearly.
- The changes you’ve made will help your readers to feel the emotions that people have about this issue.
- Using the voice of ... gave me as a reader an interesting insight into how hard it can be to make good laws.

METACOGNITION

ASK QUESTIONS to prompt students to consider the impact of their writing choices.

- At what stage of planning do you stop to really think about your audience?
- How do you make decisions about the structures and language that will best suit your audience?
- When you’re revising and editing your writing, how do you check that you’ve kept to your original purpose? If you find you haven’t, what do you do? Why?

 Writing standards: by the end of years 7 and 8
 The Literacy Learning Progressions