

Namu and Waeroa

retold by Ross Calman

School Journal
Level 2, May 2012
Year 4

School
Journal
May 2012

LEVEL
2

Overview

“Namu and Waeroa” is a pakiwaitara – a traditional Māori story that offers an explanation for natural phenomena or for why something is the way it is. Some pakiwaitara are located in more than one different iwi, but they often have subtle differences that reflect their local environments. As well as explaining natural phenomena, they also often impart tikanga or cultural understandings, and they may also warn about the consequences of not adhering to tikanga.

Many Māori view elements within the world as being part of their whakapapa (genealogy). According to the Māori creation story, all things in the world – humans, animals, plants – are descended from Ranginui and Papatūānuku. Tūmatauenga, the Atua of Humans and War, is one of their sons. In some whakapapa, humans are descended from Tūmatauenga, and in others from Tāne Mahuta. Insects, including sandflies and mosquitoes, are descended from Haumiatiketike (also known as Haumietiketike),

another son of Rangi and Papa. In the beginning, when the world was still young, Tūmatauenga fought against his brothers and sisters. This gives an explanation for why people continue to come into conflict with other creatures, the descendants of other Atua such as Tāne Mahuta (Atua of the Forest), Tangaroa (Atua of the Sea), and Tāwhirimatea (Atua of the Winds).

This text provides opportunities for all students to be exposed to and engage with a traditional Māori pakiwaitara. The language of the text reflects the strong oral tradition pakiwaitara come from, including the use of humour and poetic language.

There is an audio version of the text on the 2012 *School Journal* and *School Journal Story Library Audio CD* as well as on an MP3 file at www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz

Texts related by theme

“Te Namu – the Nuisance Fly” SJ L2 May 2012 | “Rahi and the Patupaiarehe” SJ 2.3.10 |
“Tāne me Te Whānau Marama” SJ 2.2.03



Text characteristics from the year 4 reading standard

a straightforward text structure, such as a structure that follows a recognisable and clear text form

some abstract ideas that are clearly supported by concrete examples in the text or easily linked to the students' prior knowledge

Namu and Waeroa
a pakiwaitara from Aotearoa
retold by Ross Calman

Let me tell you why sandflies and mosquitoes are always attacking people. It all started when Namuiria, the leader of the sandflies, stole the hā from Tūmatauenga. In his anger, Tūmatauenga killed Namuiria with a great slap.

Everyone knows that Tūmatauenga is the **Atua** of War, but he is also the Atua of People. Because of what Tūmatauenga had done, the tribes of Namu, the sandfly, and Waeroa, the mosquito, joined forces and declared war on all humans.

Namu said to Waeroa, “**E hoa**, let us go and attack the children of Tūmatauenga and avenge the death of Namuiria!”

“**Kāo**, it is too early in the day,” Waeroa replied. “Let us wait until night comes. Then we can creep up on them without being seen.”

Namu shook his head. “If we go now, we can beat them because there are so many of us. If we wait until night, the smoke from their fires will choke us.”

18 19

some compound and complex sentences, which may consist of two or three clauses

figurative language, such as metaphors, similes, or personification



Reading standard: by the end of year 4

Possible curriculum contexts

SOCIAL SCIENCES (Social studies)

Level 2 – Understand how cultural practices reflect and express people's customs, traditions, and values.

ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 2 – Purposes and audiences: Show some understanding of how texts are shaped for different purposes and audiences.

ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 2 – Purposes and audiences: Show some understanding of how to shape texts for different purposes and audiences.

Possible reading purposes

- To learn about pakiwaitara
- To explore the cultural concepts within the story
- To enjoy a lively story and the rich poetic language it uses.

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

Possible writing purposes

- To retell another pakiwaitara
- To rewrite the story in reo Māori
- To use the structure of the story as a model for writing
- To create a graphic text based on “Namu and Waeroa”.

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



Text and language challenges

VOCABULARY:

- Possible unfamiliar words and phrases, including “sandflies”, “mosquitoes”, “slap”, “tribes”, “choke”, “foolish”, “settled”, “slapping”, “took no notice”, “fled”, “bravely”, “drifting”, “mournful”, “lament”, “spilled”, “high-pitched”, “raged”, “swollen”, “avenge”, “goddess”, “protect”, “smoky”, “remain”, “armies”
- The use of te reo Māori, including names of Atua and insect leaders and words that are translated in the short glossary
- The vocabulary related to war, including “attacking”, “killed”, “war”, “joined forces”, “declared war”, “battle raged”, “attacks”
- The idiomatic expressions “I told you so”, “in a sorry state”.

Possible supporting strategies

Spend time familiarising yourself with the Māori words and terms that are new to you. Depending on the knowledge of your students, provide accurate support for pronunciation and meanings. You could use the Ngata dictionary (www.learningmedia.co.nz/ngata). This may be an opportunity to engage with your school community or local iwi.

Before reading, preview any words that you think will be unfamiliar to your students. Prepare a vocabulary list of key words in this text. For each word, include a simple definition in English and/or a picture, and a simple example sentence. Have students use this list with pre-reading tasks that focus on building prior knowledge. For students who have some knowledge of this vocabulary, you could cut up the words, definitions, and example sentences and have the students work in pairs or groups to match them. *The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED:

- Some familiarity with tikanga Māori, in particular that associated with the telling of pakiwaitara
- Some understanding of the importance of whakapapa, including the Māori cultural context, “Whakapapa allows people to locate themselves in the world, both figuratively and in relation to their ancestors. It links them to ancestors whose experiences played out on the land and invested it with meaning.” [Source: teara.govt.nz]
- Familiarity with stories that explain natural phenomena
- Some knowledge of the features of stories that are told orally.

Possible supporting strategies

Use the background information provided on page 1 of this TSM. You may also wish to seek further information (for example, about understandings or views of this pakiwaitara) from your local rohe (tribal area) or iwi.

Review the students' knowledge of cultural concepts covered in the story. Activate or build their background knowledge but keep in mind that they may be unaware of the knowledge they already have. Ensure that students feel comfortable to share any knowledge they may have with the class if they choose to do so.

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE:

- The retelling, in written form, of a pakiwaitara that explains a natural phenomenon
- The direct address to the audience: “Let me tell you”
- The assumption that the audience knows the context for the story: “Everyone knows that”
- The use of dialogue between two insects
- The story's message about the relationship between people and insects and about the Atua that protect them
- Use of time-honoured formulaic expressions about war that come from a long oral tradition: “There were many of us, and we fought bravely”, “Where once there were many sandflies, now there are just the drifting waters and the mournful wind”, “What does death matter when we have spilled human blood?”
- The use of metaphor to describe a defeat in battle: “just the drifting waters and the mournful wind”
- The glossary, with translations of te reo used in the story.

Possible supporting strategies

Refer to the suggestions above for supporting students to gain, or activate prior knowledge about, pakiwaitara.

Chart the main characters in the story with the students, including the parts of the whakapapa that help explain the enmity between the sandflies and mosquitoes (led by Namu and Waeroa, children of the Atua Haumiatiketike) and the people (children of the Atua Tūmatauenga).

Review the structure of stories that are told and retold orally or in writing. Discuss the formulaic expressions that occur in many stories, such as “Long, long ago”, “In the beginning”, “And there they remain to this day”.

Discuss the use of metaphor to describe an unpleasant or unhappy event.

The students can reread the article as they listen to the audio version on the *2012 School Journal and School Journal Story Library Audio CD* or MP3 file. Audio versions also provide English language learners with good models of pronunciation, intonation, and expression.



Sounds and Words

Instructional focus – Reading

Social Sciences (Social Studies – level 2: Understand how cultural practices reflect and express people's customs, traditions, and values.)

English (Level 2 – Purposes and audiences: Show some understanding of how texts are shaped for different purposes and audiences.)

Text excerpts from "Namu and Waeroa"	Students (what they might do)	Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)
<p>Everyone knows that Tūmatauenga is the Atua of War, but he is also the Atua of People. Because of what Tūmatauenga had done, the tribes of Namu, the sandfly, and Waeroa, the mosquito, joined forces and declared war on all humans.</p>	<p><i>Students make connections between the text and other stories they have heard or read to infer that the writer's audience is familiar with stories from te ao Māori and knows about the different Atua.</i></p> <p><i>Students ask and answer questions about what they know. They make connections with their prior knowledge about Atua (who are all children of Rangi and Papa) to infer the deeper reasons that the tribes of Namu and Waeroa joined forces against people. They visualise the war to come and make predictions about its outcome.</i></p>	<p>Before reading "Namu and Waeroa", either provide brief background information (using the background notes on page 1 of this TSM) or ask students to think, pair, and share what they know about pakiwaitara.</p> <p>PROMPT the students to think about the audience and to make connections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Who do you think the storyteller is telling this story to?Why do you think he says "Everyone knows"?What do you already know about Māori Atua and how they get along with each other?Explain in your own words why the tribes of Namu and Waeroa seek revenge on all people.What helped you work this out?What do you predict will happen in this war?
<p>Namu fled with his brothers and sisters. "There were many of us, and we fought bravely," he said. "But we were no match for the children of Tūmatauenga. Where once there were many sandflies, now there are just the drifting waters and the mournful wind."</p>	<p><i>Students make connections between this and the preceding paragraph to understand that although Namu survived, many sandflies were killed. They use their knowledge of pakiwaitara to identify a familiar way of describing a defeat in battle. Students use their understanding of metaphorical language to visualise the greatly reduced number of sandflies.</i></p>	<p>EXPLAIN (if necessary) that traditional stories often use metaphors to describe events.</p> <p>MODEL and explain the way you make meaning in this extract.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">In this extract, Namu's words show me his and his people's courage ("we fought bravely") and their respect for their enemies ("we were no match for the children of Tūmatauenga"). Namu uses expressions that I've heard before to describe a defeat in battle: in many pakiwaitara, the storyteller uses a poetic-sounding metaphor to express that many have died. The metaphor "the drifting waters and the mournful wind" helps me to build a picture in my mind of the sad and lonely survivors after so many of their tribe had been killed. By using these words, the writer helps me make links to similar stories I've heard. <p>If appropriate, prompt students who share a first language other than English to discuss together the use of metaphor in traditional stories in their language.</p>
<p>Mahuika, the goddess of fire, helps to protect the children of Tūmatauenga. When they sit close to her smoky fires, they remain safe from attack by the armies of Namu and Waeroa.</p>	<p><i>Students make connections between the text, their knowledge about Atua, and their own experiences of sitting by a fire to understand the way in which people protect themselves from mosquitoes and sandflies. Students make further connections between the text and the article "Te Namu – the Nuisance Fly" to infer that people have always been bitten by insects. With support, students integrate information from the story and article to make inferences about our role or place in the environment.</i></p>	<p>PROMPT the students to share with a partner or the whole group as they make connections and think critically.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">What do you know about Mahuika?Why do you think Mahuika would protect the children of Tūmatauenga?Have you ever sat around a smoky fire? Did it give you some protection from mosquitoes and sandflies?What connections can you make between this extract and things you learnt in "Te Namu – the Nuisance Fly"? <p>GIVE FEEDBACK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">Some of you know a lot about pakiwaitara. Thank you for sharing your knowledge: it has helped all of us to understand this story better.You compared this pakiwaitara to others you have heard. These connections helped you to understand the context for the story.Thinking critically about the bigger meaning or purpose of this story gave you a deeper insight into the relationships we all have with nature.

METACOGNITION

- What strategies did you use to help work out the characters' actions in "Namu and Waeroa"? Which strategy was most helpful?
- Show me a place where experiences of your own helped you to make a connection with this story.
- How did you work out what "in a sorry state" meant?

 **Reading standard: by the end of year 4**

 **The Literacy Learning Progressions**

 **Assessment Resource Banks**

Instructional focus – Writing

Social Sciences (Social Studies – level 2: Understand how cultural practices reflect and express people's customs, traditions, and values.)

English (Level 2 – Purposes and audiences: Show some understanding of how to shape texts for different purposes and audiences.)

Text excerpts from "Namu and Waeroa"	Examples of text characteristics	Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)
<p>Let me tell you why sandflies and mosquitoes are always attacking people. It all started when Namuiria, the leader of the sandflies, stole the hā from Tūmatauenga.</p>	<p>AUDIENCE <i>In pakiwaitara and traditional stories from other cultures, the writer (or speaker) addresses the audience directly. This is often done using formulaic language to let the audience know that a story is coming.</i></p>	<p>ASK QUESTIONS to help the students form intentions for writing.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What is your purpose?• Who do you want to read your story?• What kind of writing will best meet the needs of your audience?• How will you let your audience know what kind of story you're telling?
<p>"Don't be foolish," said Waeroa. "If we wait until dark, they will not be able to see us. They will hear us singing and think we have settled on them. They will try to kill us, but they will only end up slapping themselves instead."</p>	<p>DIALOGUE <i>Anthropomorphism (using animals that talk) is common in pakiwaitara. The animals allow the storyteller to convey messages about important relationships, values, and other concepts.</i></p> <p>FORMAL LANGUAGE <i>The use of formal language in pakiwaitara suggests the serious purpose behind a story. The effect is of a timeless (rather than contemporary) telling, to show respect for the knowledge shared in the story.</i></p>	<p>EXPLAIN to the students that dialogue is a good way for an author to convey a message.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• If the animals in your story talk, think about your reasons why they do this. What is their role in the story? How will they talk?• How can the words you give your characters help your readers to understand the important ideas in the story? <p>PROMPT the students to notice differences in language usage.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• "Foolish" is a rather old-fashioned word. Is it a word you would use? Why do you think it's used here?• What do you notice about the way the insects talk?• When you're talking or writing dialogue, will you use contractions like "he's", "I'll", or "we'd"? Or will you use the more formal full forms, like "he is", "I will", "we should"? Why? Think about the effect you want and how the language you use can help you to achieve this.
<p>Through the long night, the battle raged. Before daylight the mosquitoes returned home.</p>	<p>LINKING WORDS <i>These examples of linking words (there are many different types) give the reader a clear idea of the sequence of events.</i></p>	<p>Students who are English language learners may need explicit direction and explanations about the tone and register of different types of English language, as well as many examples and the opportunity to practise identifying them before using them.</p> <p>PROMPT the students to think about sequence and connections.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• How will you show your readers the sequence of events?• Which words or phrases will be most effective? For example, can you avoid saying "next" or "then" more than once?
<p>And so Namu and Waeroa continue to avenge the death of Namuiria to the present day. Namu attacks people in the daytime, while Waeroa attacks only at night.</p>	<p>THE ENDING <i>A good ending clarifies or emphasises the purpose for writing. It can also summarise important ideas or give the reader something to think about.</i> <i>Pakiwaitara, like many traditional stories, often use specific phrases (such as "And so" and "to the present day") to help indicate the end of a story and to reflect the timeless message the story conveys.</i></p>	<p>PROMPT the students to think about how they will end their story.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• What message do you want to stress for your readers when they reach the end? How will the readers know it's the end?• Use your responses to these two questions to guide the way you write your final sentences. <p>GIVE FEEDBACK</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You've used many of the features of pakiwaitara in this story. It sounds a lot like the stories my koro told us.• Turning the story into a graphic text is a good way to engage your audience. Using speech bubbles for the dialogue has worked well.
<p>METACOGNITION</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• You explained your purpose and audience to your partner before you started writing. How did that help you? Is this a strategy you would use again?• What helped you to make decisions about the kind of language to use? How is the language different from other writing you've done?• What was the hardest part about writing this? What was easiest? Why?		<p> Writing standard: by the end of year 4</p> <p> The Literacy Learning Progressions</p>