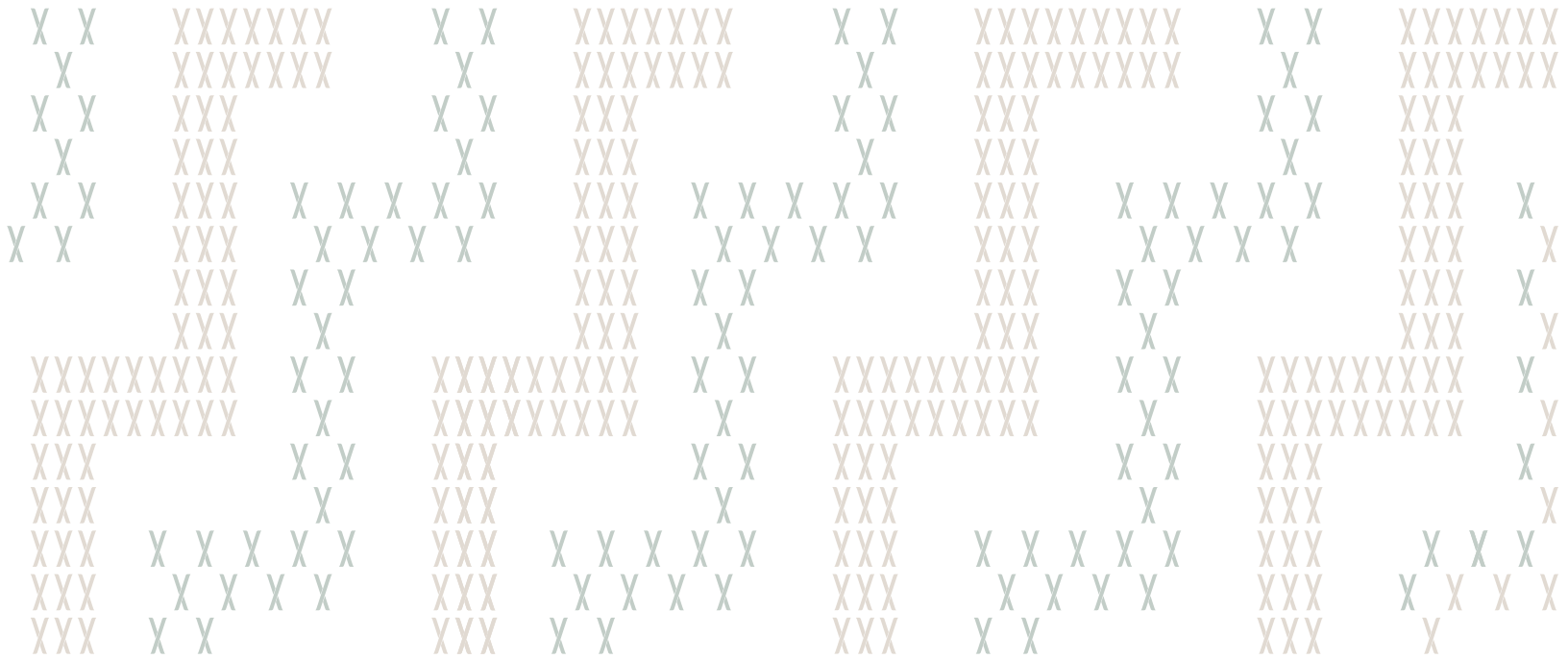




KO AU TE TAIAO

Recognising we are nature through
Te Papa's Collections Online





Cover design

The cover is inspired by Tāne Mahuta and embodies the concept of 'Ko au te taiao – I am nature'. It was created by artist Pirika Hoani (Te Arawa) in collaboration with Tuatahi Creatives. The cover draws inspiration from the artwork *Tāne – Lord of Life* (1986) by Hinerangi to Ariari (Winifred Belcher) (Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāti Rangiteaorere, Ngāti Uenukukōpako, Ngāti Whakaue, and Te Arawa,) which was a key inspiration for the resource as a whole.

Central to the design is the tiki, which some believe was the 'first man' and was created by the atua Tāne Mahuta. The tiki symbolises humanity's connection to the atua and to the taiao (natural world).

The poutama pattern, deeply connected to Tāne, represents his ascent through the heavens to retrieve ngā kete o te wānanga (the three baskets of knowledge), essential for human development and spiritual enlightenment. Each step in the poutama reflects the journey towards wisdom and the pursuit of knowledge and understanding.

The colours green and blue are integral to the design, representing the whenua and ngahere (land and forests) as well as awa and moana (rivers and seas), respectively. These colours visually evoke the whakatauki 'Toitū te marae a Tāne Mahuta, toitū te marae a Tangaroa, toitū te tangata,' emphasising that the wellbeing of the land and sea is essential for the people to thrive.



Io - Creator making life on earth, 1984,
by Hinerangi to Ariari (Winifred Belcher) (Ngāti Pikiao,
Ngāti Rangiteaorere, Ngāti Uenukukōpako,
Ngāti Whakaue, and Te Arawa), acrylic on board.
Te Papa (2002-0033-1)



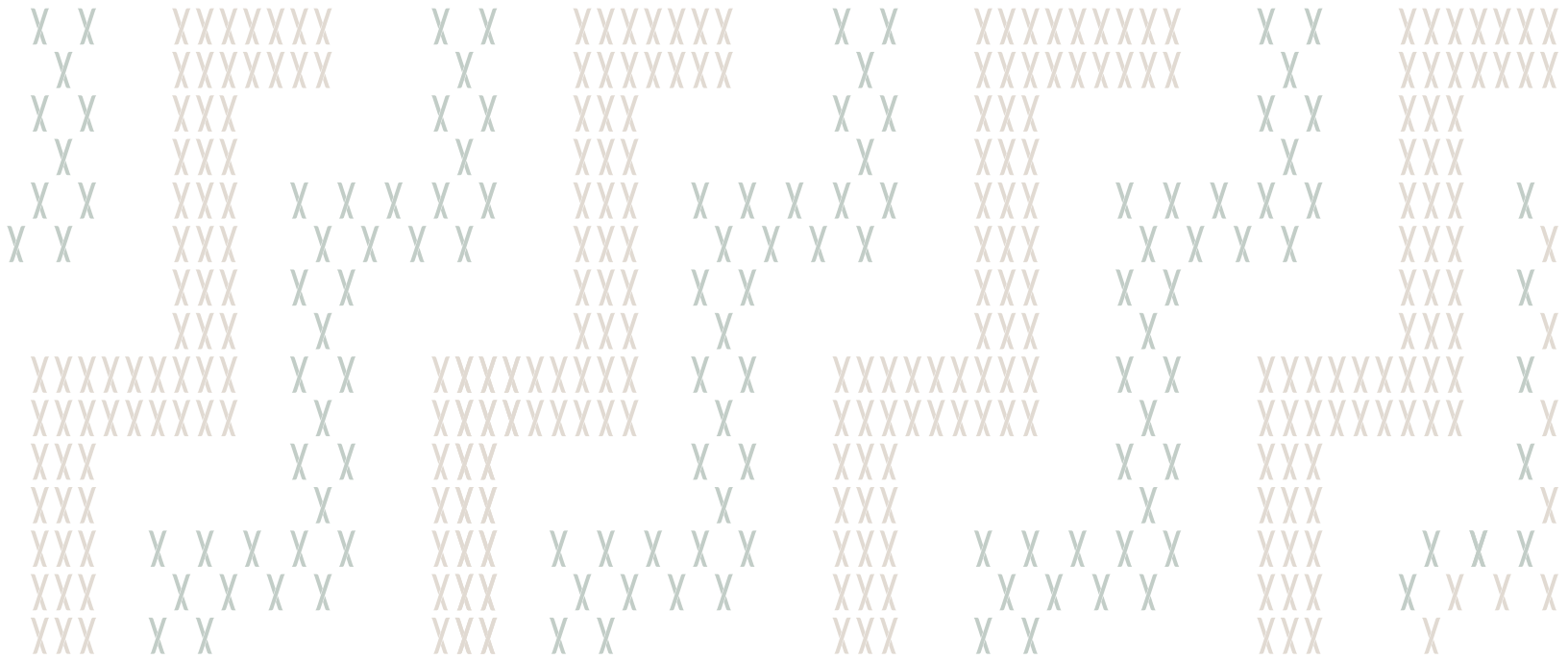
Whiro - Lord of Destruction, 1986-87,
by Hinerangi to Ariari (Winifred Belcher) (Ngāti Pikiao,
Ngāti Rangiteaorere, Ngāti Uenukukōpako,
Ngāti Whakaue, and Te Arawa), acrylic on board.
Te Papa (2002-0033-2)



Nga Wha - The Flowering, 1987-88, by Hinerangi Ariari (Winifred Belcher)
(Ngāti Pikiāo, Ngāti Rangiteāore, Ngāti Uenukūopako, Ngāti Whakaue, and
Te Arawa), acrylic on board. Te Papa (2002-0033-3)



Tāne - Lord of Life, 1986, by Hinerangi to Ariari (Winifred Belcher)
(Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāti Rangiteaorere, Ngāti Uenukukōpako,
Ngāti Whakaue, and Te Arawa), acrylic on board.
Te Papa (2002-0033-4)



Ko Au Te Taiao

This teaching and learning resource examines our relationships to te taiao here in Aotearoa. Through suggested activities, kaiako and ākonga are encouraged to explore the mātauranga of this land, and the wisdom and insights these hold for thriving collective futures.

Ko Au te Taiao – centres some of the values that come from mātauranga, through the incredible collections that Te Papa cares for. It is designed to encourage us all to observe te taiao, engage with our shared histories, and consider the wisdom of indigenous ways of knowing.

There is no real way that mātauranga Māori can be learnt from a resource, as mātauranga Māori does not live in isolation of practice. It is a way of life for Māori, rather than what we can study. *Ko Au te Taiao* encourages all who call Aotearoa home to lean into our own cultural stories and truths, and to imagine a thriving future together. The resource helps us all to form robust understandings of who we are – as both descendants and future ancestor – in living relationship with this beautiful land.

To learn more about this resource, and to view many more teaching and learning activities, please go to tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiao



UNDERPINNING PRINCIPLES

Ko Au te Taiao is underpinned by four principles that support the *New Zealand Curriculum* and **Te Rautaki o Te Papa (Te Papa Strategy)**.



We are in active relationship with Papatūānuku

Ko Au te Taiao encourages learners to expand their own understandings of the interconnectedness of life. *Ko Au te Taiao* empowers teachers and learners to care for, protect, and restore our environment and biodiversity through encouraging nature connection, active citizenship, and participation for a better world.

We are connected to each other and where we are

Ko Au te Taiao suggests ways the collections of Te Papa can be brought to life within a learner's own world. It emphasises the importance of place-based stories to develop authentic understandings of who we are.

We enact Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Ko Au te Taiao draws on the incredible collections that Te Papa cares for, to celebrate some of the values that underpin Māori ways of knowing. It acknowledges hapū and iwi Māori as holders of this mātauranga.

Ko au te taiao recognises that tino rangatiratanga is fundamental to a Tiriti-centric Aotearoa. We respect hapū and iwi assertion, and the Waitangi Tribunal's finding, that sovereignty was not ceded on the signing of Te Tiriti o Waitangi.

Ko Au te Taiao examines the impact of colonisation and its associated values on us all, particularly tangata whenua. The activities imagine a thriving future in which active devotion to each other and te taiao leads to collective healing.

We provide accessible and engaging resources

Ko Au te Taiao is inclusive by design, providing a smorgasbord of activities that are non-prescriptive. There are no fixed or linear learning outcomes, and any section can be picked up in any order, at any time. There are many ways to engage with the content, many ways knowledge is represented, and many ways ākonga can express their understanding.



SUPPORTING ROBUST INQUIRY

Ko Au te Taiao – Recognising we are nature through Te Papa’s Collections Online is designed in two sections: to support robust inquiry in your setting.

Explore

What are the big ideas?

Explore some of the traditional mātauranga that has developed from a living relationship with te taiao. This section is focused on expanding understanding, and links to the rich collections in Te Papa’s Collections Online.

The Explore section emphasises the importance of knowledge acquisition so that meaningful, contextual responses can take place in the Create section.

Create

How can I respond in ways that are relevant to me?

In the Create section of the resource, learners create and grow their own relationship to te taiao. This section is focused on learner participation and action in response to the Explore section.

Ko Au te Taiao touches on a wide range of learning areas. You can see all the curriculum links in the online resource, tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoCurriculumLinks





EXPLORE

Consider some of the mātauranga that connects tangata whenua to te taiao in Aotearoa.

Check out a sample of teaching and learning activities that unpack these big questions. For the full activities, visit tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoExplore



1

What is our connection to te taiao?

Explore the web of life that connects across time and space through pūrākau, whakapapa, and art.

2

How do we live in harmony with te taiao?

Consider how indigenous knowledges provide signposts for the future.

3

What is the current state of te taiao?

Investigate how colonisation, and its values, has influenced present day relationships with landscape.

4

How is te taiao expressed in toi Māori?

Ponder the ways toi Māori reflect an entwined relationship with the environment.

| A collection of whenua (earth) pigments by Kauae Raro Research Collective, 2023. Te Papa



CREATE

Grow relationships with yourself, others, and this beautiful earth.

Visit tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoCreate to view exciting teaching and learning resources unpacking these big questions.



1

How do we tune into the environment?

Develop your own living relationship with the taiao that surrounds you.

2

Who are our ancestors and what are their stories?

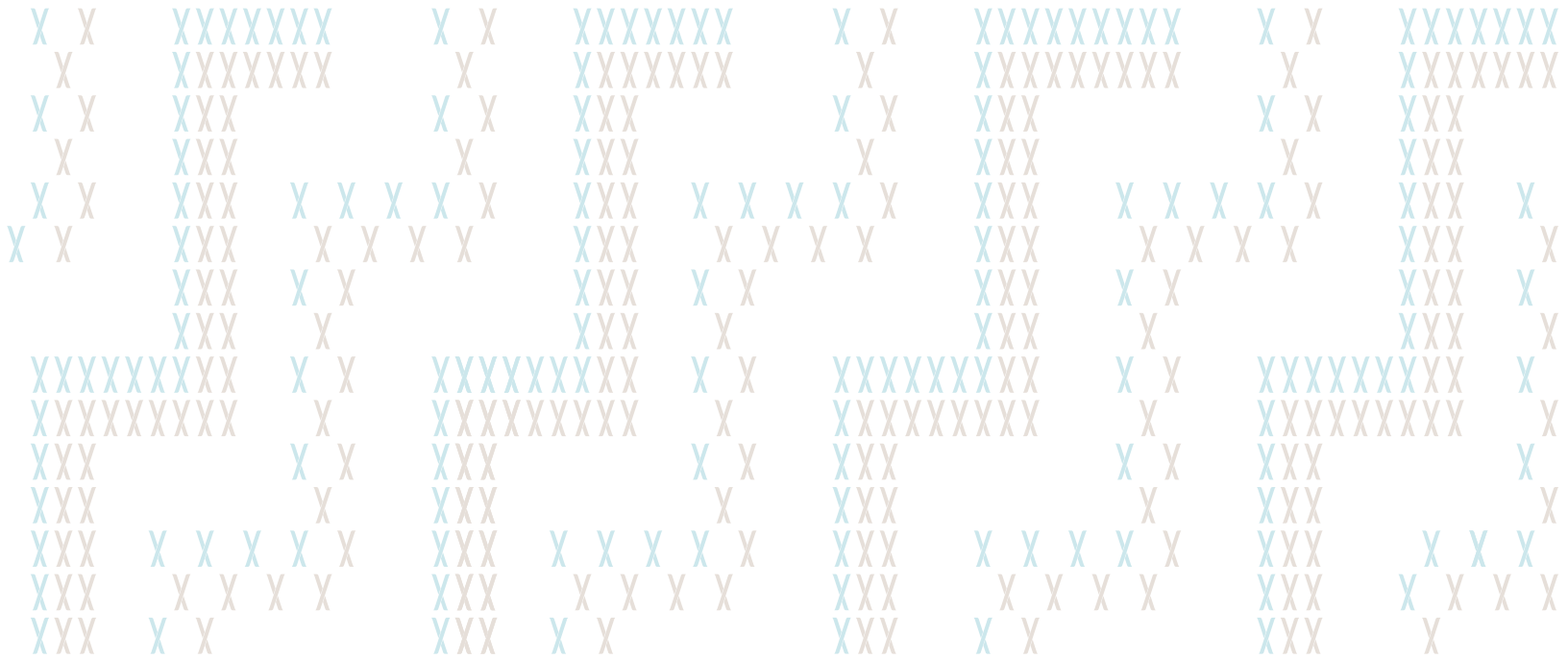
Dive deep into your own ancestral story to understand your relationship to this land.

What does a better world look like?

Imagine a thriving Aotearoa.

3

| *Whakapapa*, 2021, by Stevei Houkāmau (Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau-a-Āpanui). Te Papa (ME024669)

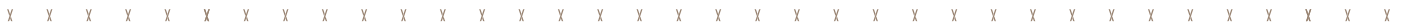


1

WHAT ARE OUR CONNECTIONS TO TE TAIAO?

Explore the web of life that connects across time and space through pūrākau, whakapapa, and art.

Mō tātou, ā, mō ngā uri ā muri ake nei. For us and our children after us.



Introduction

The Māori concept of whakapapa is a mighty big concept. Whakapapa connects Māori not only to their ancestors but even further to the origins of life. Whakapapa is intrinsically about connections to our natural world.

When understanding what it is to be human in relationship with te taiao, whakapapa is a great place to start. It links the human and more than human world together in an interconnected web, organising us into the living systems of ecology that surround us across space and time.

For even more exciting and engaging teaching and learning activities, as well as extra links for the extra curious, please go to the online version of this resource, tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoWhatIsOurConnection





Q What are our connections to te taiao?

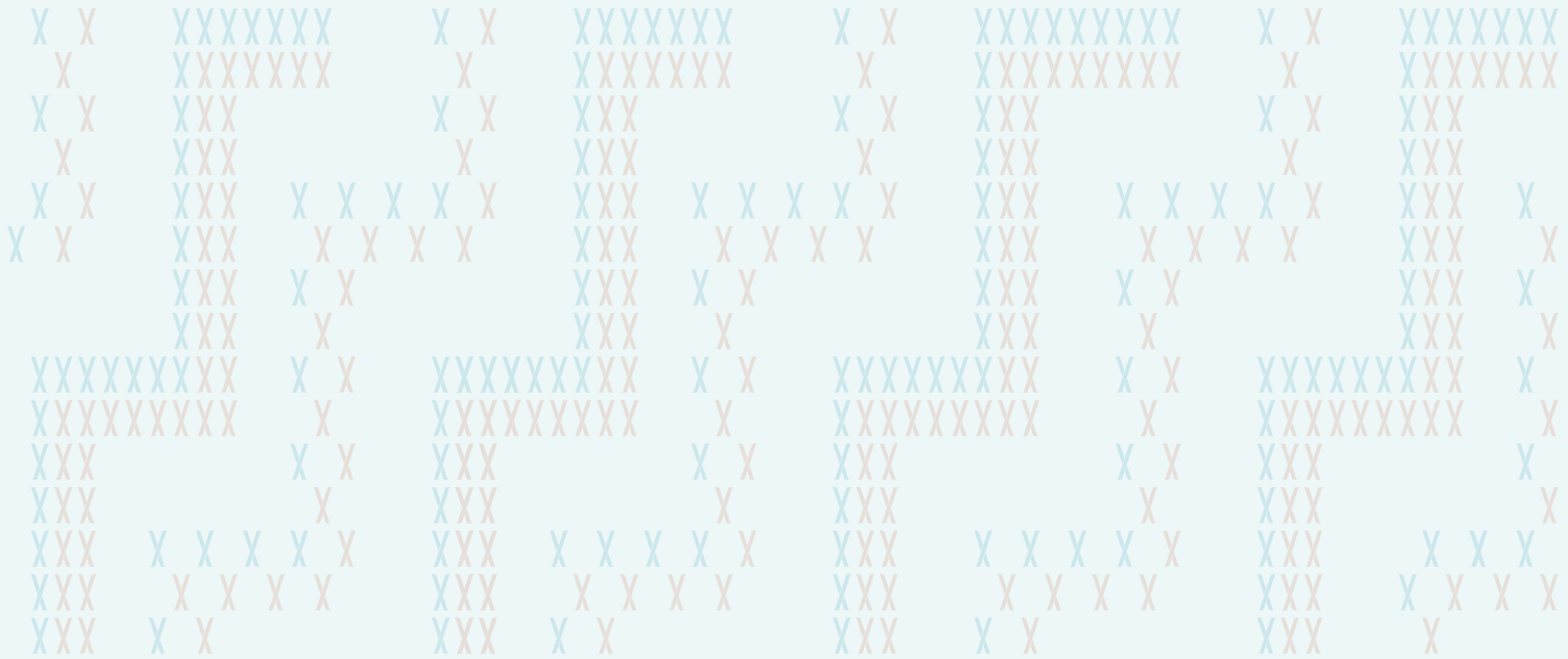
ACTIVITY A

TIHEI MAURI ORA!

Explore the beginning of time in Aotearoa through pūrākau.

Begin to understand the depth of knowledge that exists within whakapapa through pūrākau (ancient legends and stories).

| Photo by Lucas K on Unsplash



He pitopito kōrero

'Creation traditions are the most sacred of all traditions because they lay down fundamental beliefs about the nature of reality. Creation genealogies are the foundation from which all other whakapapa derive.'

Dr Rawiri Taonui (Te Hikutū, Ngāti Korokoro, Te Kapotai, Ngāti Paeahi, Ngāti Rora, Ngāti Whēru, Ngāti Te Taonui)

To begin to understand whakapapa, it is important to start at the beginning.

Pūrākau – about Te Kore, Te Pō, and Te Ao Mārama, Papatūānuku and Ranginui – and all the foundational narratives of atua, are powerful tools to help us think about who we are and how we fit, as humans, into the order of things.

Ātua are all the ancient ones who continue to be present in the natural world. Within mātauranga Māori, atua are all around us every day, manifested within te taiao.

Pūrākau teach us ways to interact with te taiao, and each other, in ways that respect ngā atua Māori. There are many pūrākau and these differ for hapū and iwi Māori. If possible, engage with the stories that are reflective of the landscape around you.

We have also linked to some excellent pūrākau in the **Extra links for the extra curious** section.





There is more in Te Kore. 1986–87, by Kura Te Waru Rewiri (Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Kahu, Ngāti Rangī, Ngāti Raukawa ki Kauwhata). Purchased 1987 with Ellen Eames Collection funds. Te Papa (1987-0050)

Explore the power of storytelling

Choose a pūrākau to read with a friend or with your class.



Discuss

- X What are the big plot points of the pūrākau?
- X How would you retell this pūrākau to someone that hadn't heard it?
- X How does this pūrākau provide us with guidance for living in balance with each other and with the land?

Many artists in Te Papa's Collections Online, such as **Robyn Kahukiwa**, **Kura Te Waru Rewiri**, **Hinerangi to Ariari Winifred Belcher**, and **Lisa Reihana**, have powerfully imagined some of the atua within pūrākau.

You can explore images at tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoTiheiMauriOra



After exploring these artworks, you may like to:

- X **research** an atua of your choice and then brainstorm what you think they might look like and where their domains might be.
- X **design** and draw your own version using a digital collage tool. Layer up elements such as costume, setting, and props to help tell the story of your chosen atua.
- X **imagine** the colour and symbols that could represent an atua in te taiao. What symbols could represent the energy of Tāne Mahuta, or the energy of Tangaroa, for example? Using coloured chalk, draw the symbols of each atua on the ground. See if others can guess the atua you are describing.
- X **expand** your understanding of atua wāhine, exploring the pūrākau of Hine Pūkohurangi and Hine Raukatauri, for example.

- X **write** a poem about each atua, without using their name. See if others can guess the atua you are describing through words or lines.
- X **draw** and cut out paper silhouettes to reflect the characters in the pūrākau. Then imagine and write a speech they would say about their home, their feelings, their conflicts, their worries and hopes.

Consider other origin traditions

Discuss

- X What are the cultures and heritages of the people around you?
- X What are the origin pūrākau that come from those identities, cultures, and stories?



Pūrākau are dramatic and exciting. **Research** pūrākau from your own cultural traditions. There are many ways in which you can use drama and dance to explore them. You may like to:

- X take one pūrākau and, in a small group, retell the story. One person may choose to be the narrator, or provide a voice-over, or you may choose to all act it out. Either way, use a variety of dramatic conventions, such as freeze-frame or slow motion.
- X take one pūrākau and simplify the story into some simple choreographed dance moves. Ask the audience when you are performing it to look out for some of the moves (for example, the pulling up of the island or the preparation of the fishhook).
- X identify the main plot points of each pūrākau. Devise freeze-frames to communicate the story. Take photographs of each scene, and caption each one to create a short story.

Te Po Papatuanuku, 1983, by Robyn Kahukiwa (Ngāti Porou, Te Aitanga-a-Hauiti, Ngāti Hau, Ngāti Konohi, Te Whānau-a-Ruataupare). Purchased 1983 with New Zealand Lottery Board funds. Te Papa (1983-0020-1)

Choose one origin story that is relevant to you and your ancestors.

Divide a large piece of portrait paper, such as A2, into three even segments, for sky, land, and foreground. **Design** a visual image that will communicate your origin story into these segments. Line your image up alongside others that have been made.



Discuss



X Are there commonalities that you notice across them?

X What are the differences?



This artwork by John Pule, *Shark, Angel, Bird, Ladder*, connects the artist's culture in Niue with his dreamscape, presenting symbols from Niue alongside other narratives that are important to this artist. If you would like to learn more about this interesting work, have a look at the description on [Te Papa Collections Online](#).



| *Shark, Angel, Bird, Ladder*, 2008, by John Pule. Te Papa (2010-0034-1/A-B to B-B)



This sculpture in Te Papa's collection, *Seven Days* by Baye Riddell (Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau-a-Ruataupare), presents Māori pūrākau alongside other narratives that are important to this artist. If you would like to learn more about this stunning work, have a look at the description on [Te Papa's Collections Online](#).

How might you create your own sculpture or artwork to reflect a story from your cultural tradition? What material might you use and why? What are the symbols and shapes you might use to convey the messages from the stories of your people?

For even more exciting and engaging teaching and learning activities, as well as extra links for the extra curious, please go to the online version of this resource, tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoWhatIsOurConnection



| *Seven Days*, 2012, by Baye Riddell (Ngāti Porou, Te Whānau-a-Ruataupare). Te Papa (ME024174)



Q What are our connections to te taiao?

ACTIVITY B

THE CHILDREN OF TĀNE

Explore the magical connections that exist in whakapapa and imagine the place for human beings inside a thriving web of life.

| Photo by Yathursan Gunaratnam on Unsplash



He pitopito kōrero

Whakapapa is far more than genealogy. It is a type of cosmology that makes connections between all the parts of te taiao.

Whakapapa is a cosmoscape for the living ecosystems of Aotearoa. It records how things relate to each other and has developed from a deep observation of te taiao. From soaring kārearea to bustling bees, every living creature has its place in whakapapa.

In whakapapa, Māori are descendants of Tāne. Tuakana-teina is an important concept that recognises the reciprocal learning that happens between people of different ages and experiences. Humans, as the youngest child of Tāne, are not the master but are called on to be in humble service to all the older children of Tāne. In tikanga, this is both a responsibility and an obligation.

Whakapapa shows us that:

X relationships extend across history and space

- X relationships from the past inform the present
- X the life cycle of a being can be encoded inside a story
- X story can be used to inform and guide tikanga
- X these 'cosmoscapes' provide a mindmap of an ecosystem and differ from place to place.

Sometimes connections seem surprising because whakapapa notices the relationships between species, rather than the species groups themselves. For some, the whale and kūmara are family, as they are both considered high-value food sources and descend from the atua Rongo. For others, the tuatara and shark are family as they are both considered fearful. The kōura (freshwater crayfish) and river stones are family as they both have hard outer layers and dwell in freshwater. There are thousands of stories that detail how everything in te taiao is connected and related.

Bradford Haami and Mere Roberts

Discover whakapapa around you


Explore the pūrākau that explain te taiao around your neighborhood, kura, or community. 


If the pūrākau are about toroa, go to the sea. If the pūrākau are about ake and mānuka, go to habitats in which they are growing. Spend time in te taiao, whilst listening to these pūrākau.

Discuss



- X What have you learnt about whakapapa that you did not know before?
- X How does whakapapa to other living things help us to understand ourselves?
- X How do these pūrākau provide guidance or help you to understand te taiao?

Discuss with a friend the connections that exist in the natural ecosystems that are around you. 

Take a camera or digital device into te taiao and try to **capture** close-up photos of different parts of te taiao that rely on, or are connected, to each other. Play around with zooming in and really noticing the fine details of what is alive around you and the ways they are reliant on each other. 



| Aphid feeding on a carnation leaf, 27 June 1967, by Steve Rumsey. Te Papa (O.027672)



Print and display your ecosystem prints in a collage.

You may like to add string between the photos, with annotations to explain the connections and how they are related to each other.

Alternatively, do this activity with a pencil and paper, and draw the elements of te taiao that are in relationship with each other. Really try to zoom in on the patterns and features of te taiao. You might want to create simple woodblock prints of patterns that you see.

Connecting your lived world to atua

These days we are able to buy any food at any time at the supermarket, but back in the day you had to plant and gather these foods yourself.

Imagine the ways in which you are reliant on living things around you. If you were to draw lines of connections between you and all that you need to thrive, what would you include in a mindmap?



Begin by **discussing** the importance of te taiao and the way that you are reliant on its wellbeing.



Draw a mindmap of these connections, using images and symbols. **Compare** your mindmap with someone else who has done the same.



Discuss

X What do you have in common across your mindmaps?

X What are some of the differences?

Using collage elements from magazines, or a digital collage tool, **develop** this visual map of the way you relate to the living world around you further. Try to go back as far as you can.

For example, if you have identified a reliance on supermarkets, delve further back into the chain of connections to the cultivated gardens, oceans, soils, and farms. Once you have a visual mindmap back to te taiao, then **connect** these dots back to atua, and their pūrākau.

Understanding ourselves in a woven relationship with te taiao is an integral part of mātauranga Māori. Many whakataukī capture this in many ways.

Research whakataukī that communicate our reliance upon a thriving taiao. Collate a set of whakataukī that inspire and motivate you. Write the whakataukī, with their translations and a description of how they can help you to live in balance.

Design a set of cards with these whakataukī on them that you can read and visit daily as affirmation cards.



Discuss



- X What are the connections we have with atua through our everyday lives?
- X In what ways is our own wellbeing braided into the wellbeing of atua?



For even more exciting and engaging teaching and learning activities, as well as extra links for the extra curious, please go to the online version of this resource, **tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoWhatIsOurConnection**



| Photo by Sarah Hopkinson. Te Papa



This is just a sample!

For even more exciting and engaging teaching and learning activities, as well as extra links for the extra curious, please go to the online version of this resource, [tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoChildrenOfTāne](https://tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoChildrenOfTane)



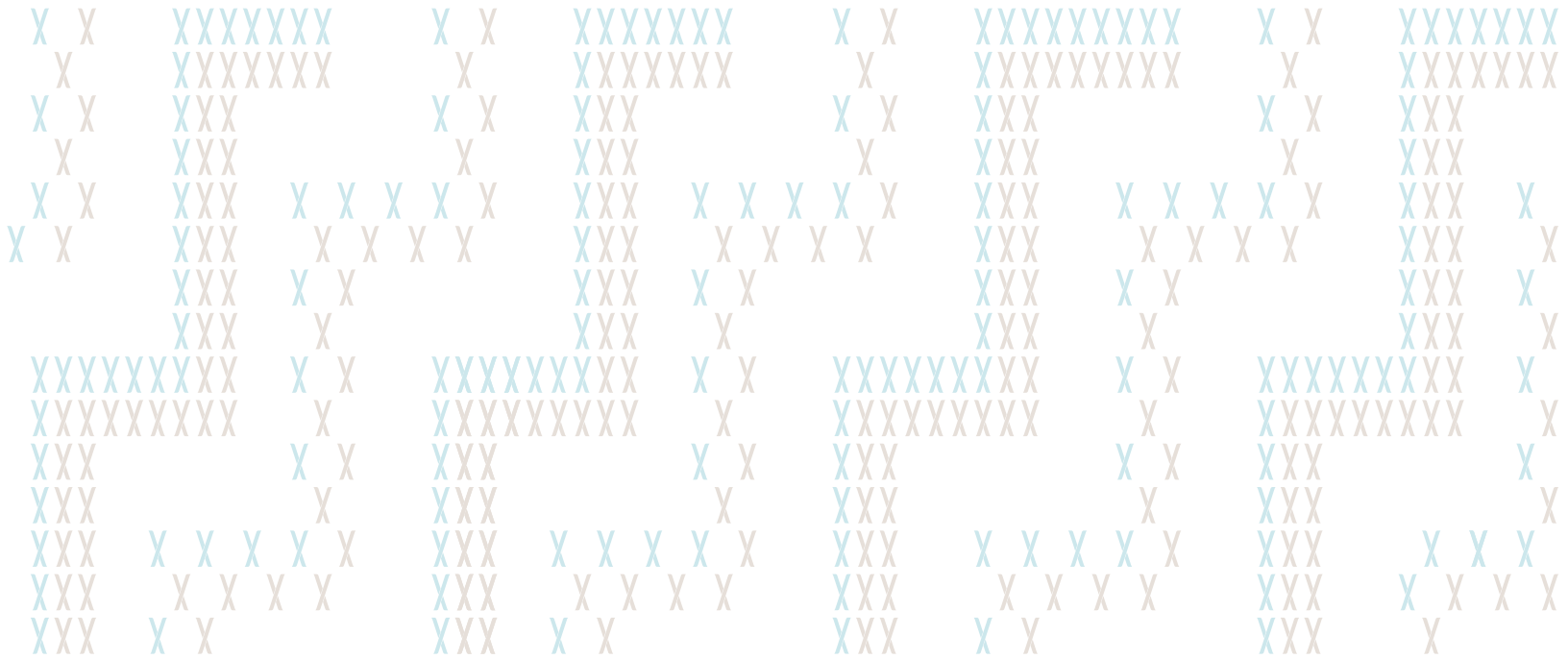
ACTIVITY C

We are all stars

ACTIVITY D

Extra links for the extra curious

Tāne - Lord of Life, 1986, by Hinerangi to Ariari (Winifred Belcher) (Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāti Rangiteaorere, Ngāti Uenukukōpako, Ngāti Whakaue, and Te Arawa), acrylic on board. Te Papa (2002-0033-4)



2

How Do We Live IN HARMONY WITH Te TAIAO?

Indigenous knowledges provide signposts for the future.

Whatungarongaro te tangata, toitū te whenua.

As man disappears from sight, land remains.



Introduction

Mātauranga Māori has developed through a practised relationship with the land here in Aotearoa. It has evolved from the ancient traditions of the Pacific navigators who made their way here, and from a deep, reciprocal relationship with te taiao.

Mātauranga Māori is not something that can be read about, and understood, as it is knowledge that develops from practice.

Explore some of the mātauranga Māori that has developed from embodied relationships with the environment.

For even more exciting and engaging teaching and learning activities, as well as extra links for the extra curious, please go to the online version of this resource, **tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoLiveInHarmony**





Q How do we live in harmony with te taiao?

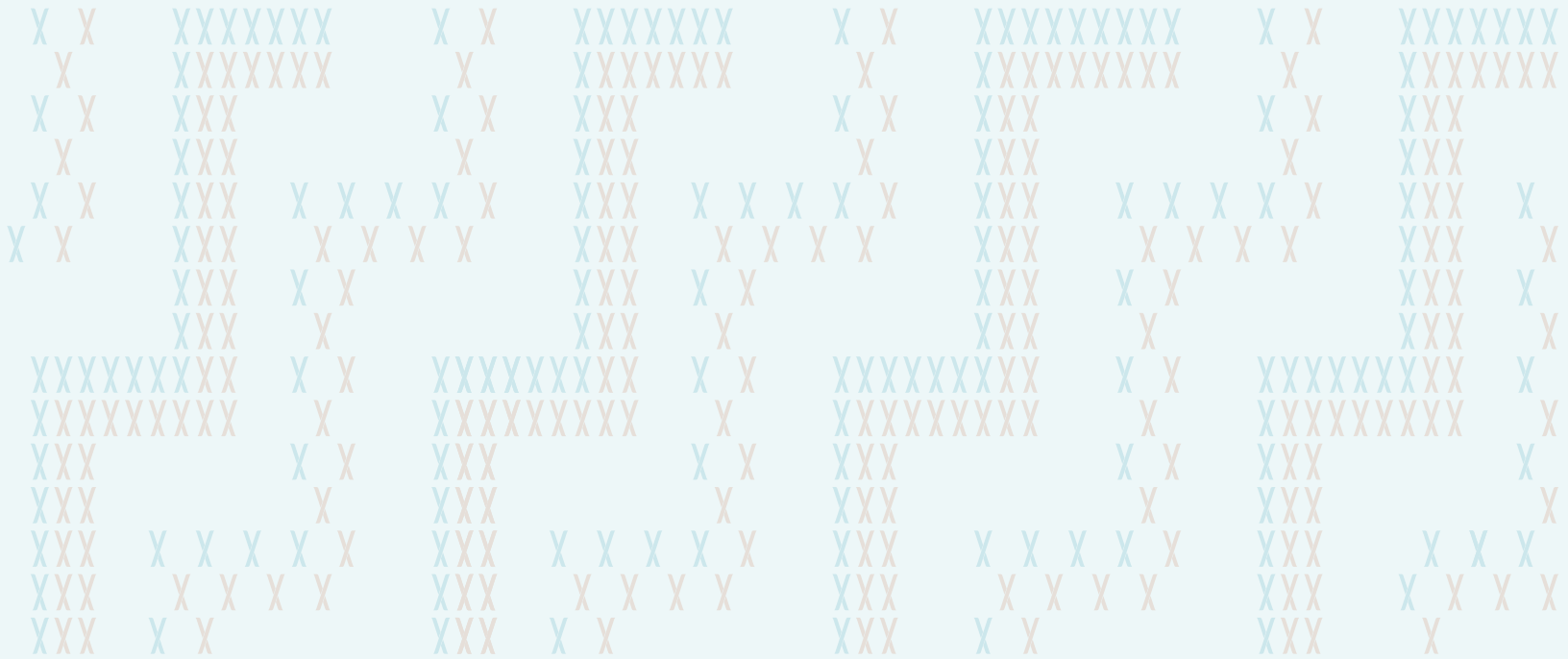
ACTIVITY A

THE RHYTHMS OF TE TAI AO

Observe the passing of time using environmental indicators.

An understanding of te taiao in Aotearoa has developed from long periods of observation and place-based interaction with the species, ecosystems, and processes that surround us.

| Photo by Arno Retief on Unsplash



He pitopito kōrero

Indigenous knowledges of hapū and iwi developed in relationship with local ecosystems. The vitality of hapū and iwi prior to colonisation was reliant on a deep, woven understanding of the environment and so mātauranga Māori is, by its nature, local knowledge.

Across the motu, hapū and iwi have observed tohu within the environment and developed practices that sustained their people and responded to the health of the ecosystem. Local indicators predicted the life cycles and stages of animals, as well as the movement of tides and weather conditions. Hapū and iwi developed practices for favourable hunting and fishing periods through this intense observation.

This means that mātauranga Māori, tikanga Māori, and te reo Māori differ widely around the motu as they reflect the hapū and iwi relationship to whenua and te taiao. Some people even consider the differences in the rhythm of te reo Māori, te mita o te reo, reflect the differences in the environment. This is because te reo grew out of te taiao and so reflects the whenua from which it came.



Slow down and notice

Brainstorm the big shifts that happen in te taiao across a year of time in your neighbourhood, kura, or community, from Matariki last year to Matariki this year.

It might help to zoom in on just one natural feature near your school environment, such as the local awa or a local regenerating piece of bush.

Research the small, tiny changes that you would expect to see over a year. You could create a **simple flipbook** to show these changes.



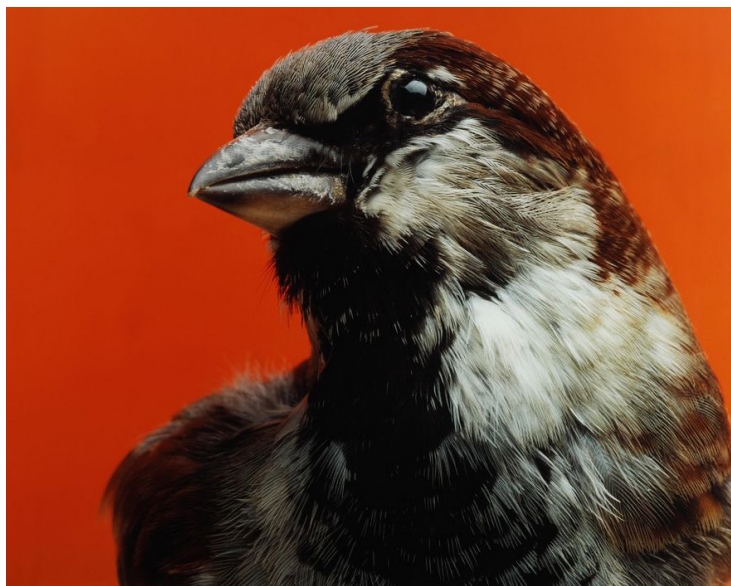
Take a pencil and paper, a camera, or a tablet outside and see if you can **record** any seasonal changes that are taking place in the natural environment right now. What is the more-than-human world busy focusing on at the moment?



| Photo by Agathe on Unsplash

Te taiao is shifting and flexing, growing and retracting, all the time in many small, but special ways. To notice these, we have to go slower and observe.

This portrait of the common introduced sparrow, *Ed Brown* by Michael Parekowhai (Ngāti Whakarongo, Ngāriki Rotoawe,) is a stunning example of how the ordinary can become spectacular when we slow down and notice.



Discuss



- X What might be some of the changes we would see in society as a whole, if we were to take our cues from ngā tohu o te taiao rather than our diaries?
- X What descriptive words could we use for this part of the year? How is the energy different in May, June, and July compared to December, January, and February?
- X If you were going to choose something to observe across the course of a year in te taiao, what would you choose and why?

Identify values and perspectives

Connect with someone who has an active relationship to the seasons in your area (for example, people who are involved in non-commercial fishing, foraging, or māra kai growing).

Go out into te taiao with them, to notice and **observe** seasonal changes together. **Listen** to the wealth of knowledge they will have about the way te taiao has an ebb and flow each and every year.



The healing power of plants

Herbal Mixture II by Areta Wilkinson (Ngāi Tahu, Kāti Māmoe, Waitaha) explores ideas about tohu that provide, protect, and heal. In the work, Wilkinson looks to Western herbal medicine and rongoā Māori by presenting leaves inside medicine bottles.

It's a reminder of the physical and spiritual sustenance we can receive both from te taiao and from the act of creativity itself.

Herbal Mixture II is based on the herbal mixture Areta Wilkinson took after she was diagnosed with a life-threatening illness.

'This work was part of participating in my healing and gaining a sense of control. Herbal Mixture II represents medicinal plants from the ingredients in the herbal mixture I took. They are [both] amulets for healing and a botanical collection,' she says.

The silver amulets are based on the mixture's ingredients:

- X barberry (*Berberis vulgaris*) for the digestive system and liver
- X astragalus (*Astragalus sp.*) for the immune system, dandelion (*Taraxacum officinale*) for the kidneys and liver
- X liquorice (*Glycyrrhiza glabra*) to balance the other herbal properties and give flavour
- X red matipo or māpou (*Myrsine australis*), a rākau tapu or sacred tree used in rongoā or Māori medicine.

Rongoā is traditional Māori healing – a system of knowledge and practice that is passed on orally. You may want to talk with a rongoā Māori practitioner in your area and be led by their whakaaro about the healing properties of the ngahere. They may have some really interesting ways to explain the spiritual and physical connections that exist between ourselves and te taiao.

You may like to watch this Waka Huia documentary, which explores the impact of colonisation on rongoā, and the modern-day efforts to reclaim traditional knowledge and practices.



WAKA HUIA - RONGOĀ FULL EPISODE
Watch on Youtube [here](#)



You may want to listen to **Donna Kerridge (Ngāti Tahinga, Ngāti Mahuta,) a rongoā practitioner from Waikato, talk about fostering indigeneity through rongoā Māori.** As you listen to this interview, you might like to journal or draw some of the ideas that resonate with you.



Explore healing traditions in your own community.

What do people in your own family do when you have a cold, a toothache, a rash or an insect bite, or a bee sting besides using Western medicine? What are the natural healing remedies that exist in the cultural traditions of the people around you?

Go slowly and alongside experts in this space to make sure that you stay safe. With careful consent and research, you may be able to create some simple herbal remedies.



DESIGN: TRACE HODGSON AUGUST 1985 SCREENPRINTED BY WELLINGTON MEDIA COLLECTIVE (EDITION OF 500)

This is just a sample!

For even more exciting and engaging teaching and learning activities, as well as extra links for the extra curious, please go to the online version of this resource, tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoLiveInHarmony



ACTIVITY B

Once Were Gardeners

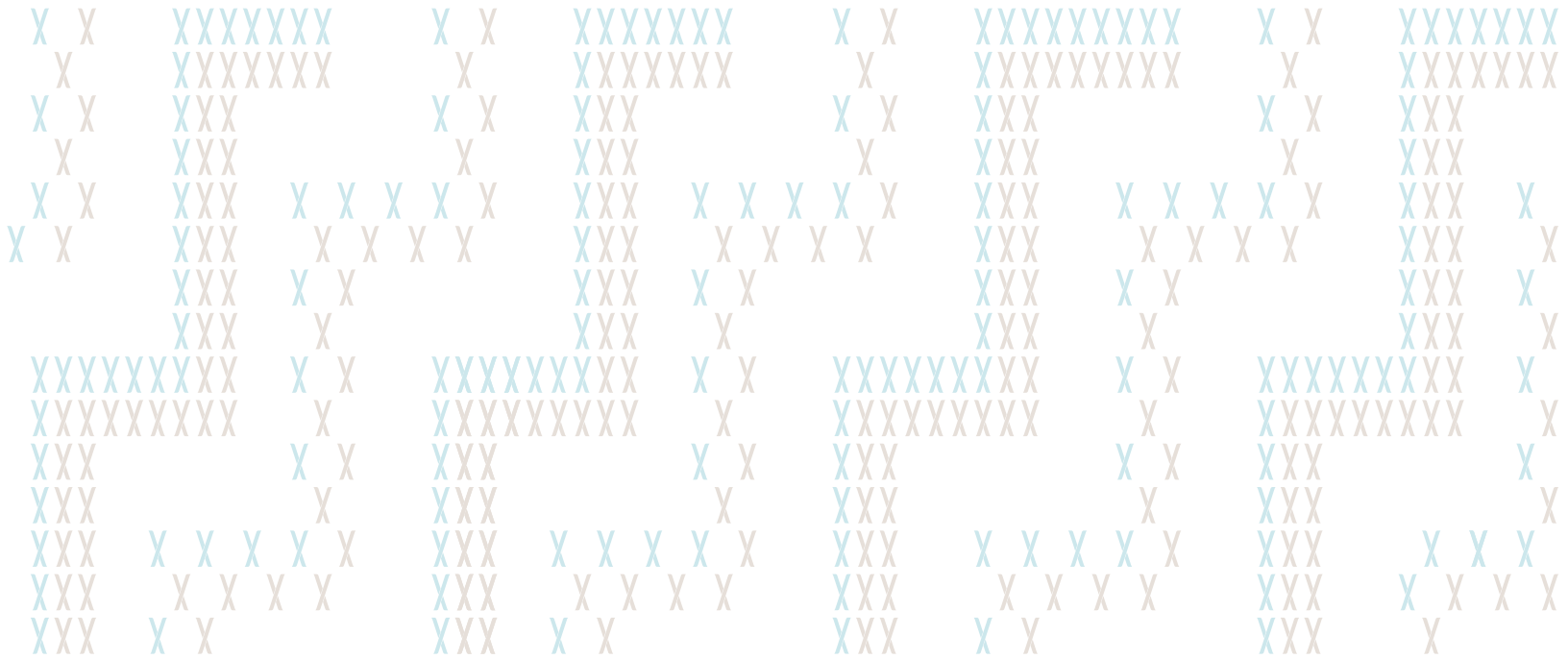
ACTIVITY C

Developing understandings of kaitiaki

ACTIVITY D

How do we live in harmony with te taiao?

'When the earth is sick' poster, August 1985, by Wellington Media Collective, Trace Hodgson and Greenpeace. Te Papa (GH024655)



3

WHAT IS THE CURRENT STATE OF TE TAIAO?

Investigate how colonisation, and its values, has influenced present day relationships with landscape.

Kia whakatōmuri te haere whakamua. I walk backwards with my eyes fixed on my past.



Introduction

Around many of us, the mauri, or life force, of te taiao is in sharp decline. Aotearoa now has some of the fastest declining biodiversity in the world because of the way land is used, invasive species, current levels of pollution, and now, climate change. Mātauranga Māori, and the values that are associated with it, are rongoā for this hurting world.

In this section, consider the impact of colonisation on te taiao and how we can walk into the future inspired by indigenous knowledge systems.



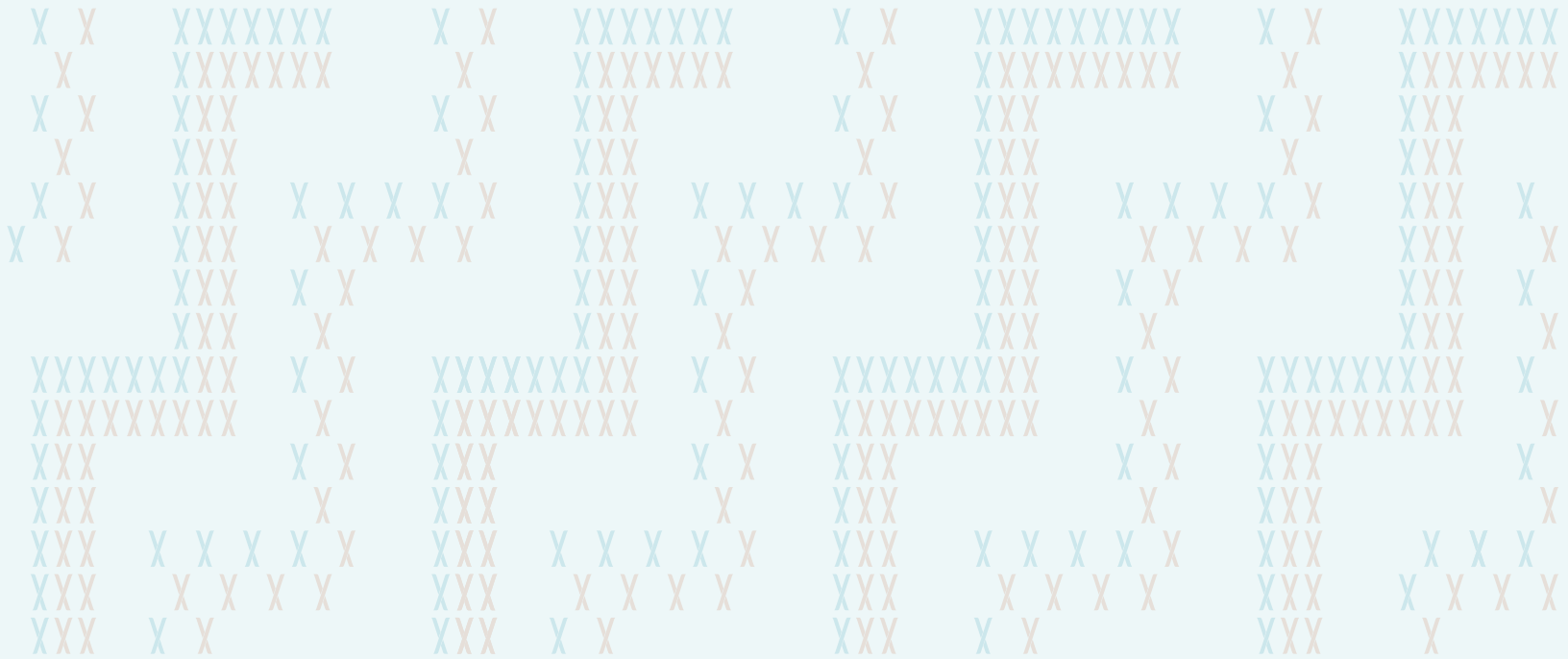
Q What is the current state of te taiao?

ACTIVITY A

NOTICE THE IMPACT OF COLONISATION ON WHENUA

Consider the impact of colonisation upon ecosystems of Aotearoa.

| Photo by James Coleman on Unsplash



He pitopito kōrero

Over the course of time, people have changed and been changed by the environment of Aotearoa.

Colonisation brought to Aotearoa the idea that the environment can be exploited as a resource. Settlers saw land as something that could be parcelled up as property – something that could be owned, bought and sold. This resulted in the widespread dispossession of whenua from hapū and iwi by Crown and settlers. This seriously disrupted the intergenerational relationship that tangata whenua were practicing with whenua.

Mauri, (a concept often described as life force), has been diminished across te taiao in Aotearoa because of the impact of colonisation on tangata whenua and the ecosystem.

A decline in the mauri of te taiao manifests in the endangerment and eventual extinction of species. The restoration of a thriving taiao requires recognising much wider cosmic connections than what is considered in Western science.

The impact of seeing ourselves as separate to nature can be seen all around us, in biodiversity loss and environmental degradation. The climate crisis could be seen as the natural born grandchild of this great forgetting, which we see the world over.

The place-based histories of where we live are compelling points from which we can understand not only the environmental history but also the part we play in the future.



Landscape with settlers by the Messenger sisters in 1857 captures vividly the impact that settler families had on te taiao in Taranaki. **Study** the painting carefully by zooming in on the **details online**. In what ways do you think the arrival of settlers impacted on the land? The father of the artists was **William Bazire Messenger**, who invaded Parihaka and commanded the military redoubt at Pukearuhe in northern Taranaki for many years.



What does this extra layer of information provide for your understanding of this painting? What other symbols could be added to reflect the broader impact of colonisation on the region of Taranaki?

Brainstorm everything that you already know about the history of the area where you live. Perhaps draw a timeline on the wall, and place the pieces of knowledge you hold along the timeline.



Landscape with settlers, about 1857, by Messenger Sisters. Purchased 1999 with New Zealand Lottery Grants Board funds. Te Papa (1999-0003-1)

What was happening here 20, 50, 100, 200, or 1,000 years ago? This is your prior knowledge, that you can expand through engagement with historical stories around you.

Invite a local historian to speak to the class, **visit** a local museum or library, or take a walking tour around the neighbourhood with a local history expert. Notice the stories that have been told, the places and events that are celebrated, the names of landmarks and street signs.

Whose experiences of life are reflected in these local histories? Whose voices from the community might be missing?

In a way that is appropriate to the relationship you have with mana whenua, **discover** as much as possible about the local environment and social systems in pre-colonial days. Seek to find the pūrākau to explain features of the living landscape, the history of ecosystems, the ways in which the land was engaged with in pre-colonial times, as well as the natural state of the whenua. You may be able to engage with iwi , their management plans or other documentation that reflect iwi aspirations for te taiao today. What are the connections between these contemporary hopes and the impact of colonisation?

Gather insights from both these processes and expand the information that you started with on the local history timeline.

Discuss



X How have you found out about the story of the land on which you stand?

X What state does the land under your feet yearn to return to?

X What species used to thrive in your local ecosystem?

X What does the local ecosystem need to thrive once more?

X How is history communicated in local artefacts such as street names, statues, parks, and plaques? What physical taonga also reflect your local history?

X Whose history is told through these? What does this reflect to us?
In what ways could we approach this differently?



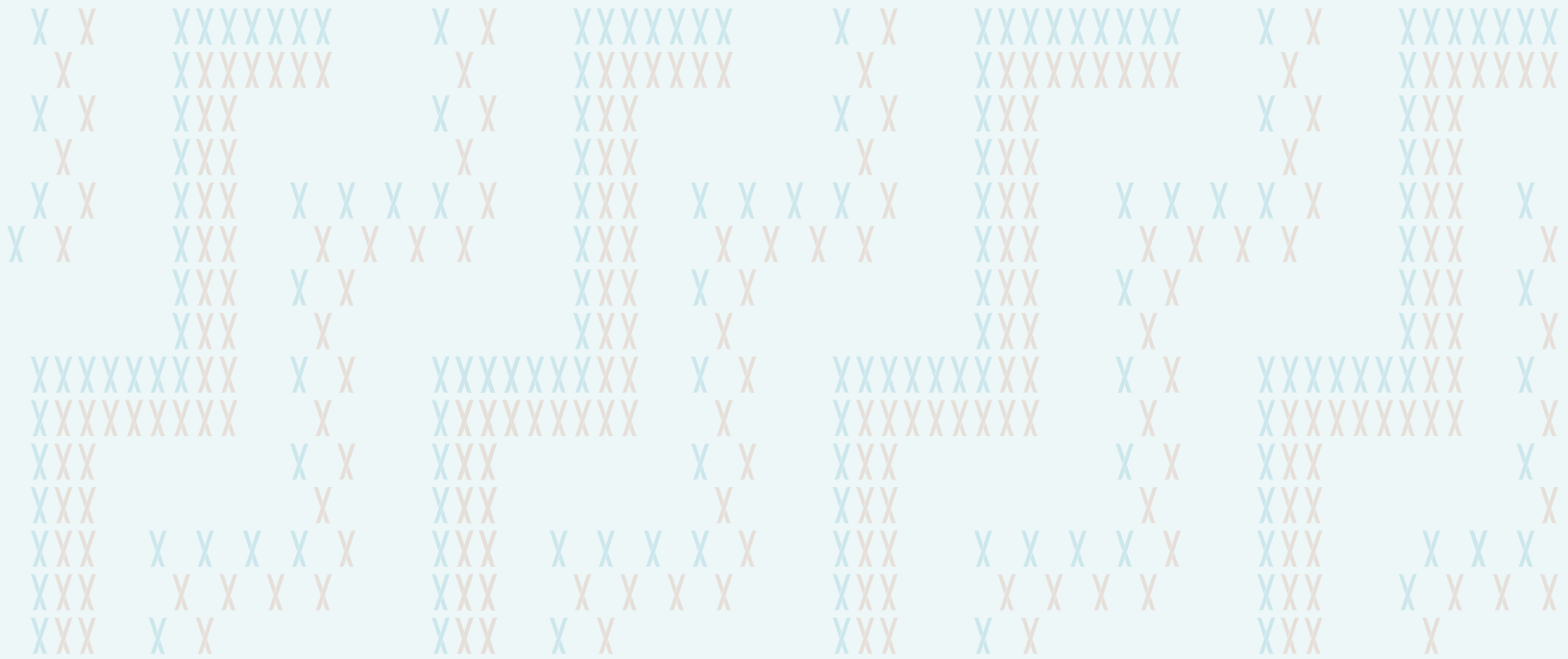
Q What is the current state of te taiao?

ACTIVITY B

WHAT WAS, WHAT IS, AND WHAT COULD BE

The health of te taiao reflects the values we hold.

| Photo by Gulfside Mike on Unsplash



He pitopito kōrero

'The indigenous biodiversity of Aotearoa is fundamental to Māori culture. Nature and people are entwined through whakapapa (genealogy), te reo (the Māori language), tikanga (custom), toi (the arts), kai (food), rongoā (medicines), and taha wairua (spirituality).

'This relationship is reciprocal: the people are kaitiaki of the natural world, and the natural world is kaitiaki of the people. Consequently, the loss of biodiversity and the growing distance between the people and what biodiversity remains are undermining relationships, responsibilities, and practices.'

(Waitangi Tribunal 2011 *as quoted in* **Biodiversity in Aotearoa - An overview of state, trends and pressures** [2020].)



The state of te taiao in Aotearoa New Zealand reflects a history of colonisation that has centred Pākehā values. Noticing these values, and the practices that they currently inform, will help us all to imagine ways we can address imbalances and return landscapes and people to peace and harmony.



Shane Cotton (Ngāpuhi) often explores and comments on the impacts of colonisation through his art. In *Whakapiri Atū te Whenua*, Cotton explores loss of land, the pursuit of tino rangatiratanga, and the impact of colonisation on te taiao. The title, which loosely translates to 'retain the land', refers to the land wars of the 1860s and 1870s and to Te Kooti's campaigns to halt the appropriation of Māori land.

| *Whakapiri Atū te Whenua*, 1993, by Shane Cotton (Ngāpuhi). Purchased 1993 with New Zealand Lottery Grants Board funds. Te Papa (1993-0020-1)

In *Whakapiri Atu te Whenua*, the dying plants in the base of the central pot represent the effects of the buying of land as property. The pole, pā palisades, flags, and flagpoles, as well as the decapitated plant all speak of land ownership, colonisation, and Māori resistance.

How could you **create** a painting, like Shane Cotton, that uses symbolism to speak about big, complex problems? With the knowledge you have of the area that you live in, what symbols could you draw to **communicate** what was, what is, and what could be?

Visit an area of your community where the local taiao is regenerating – it might be sand dunes, ngahere, or awa. Sit, feel and observe the evidence of life around you.

What do you feel like, being in this environment?

Repeat this task in an area of your community where the wellbeing of te taiao has been forgotten. Sit, feel and **observe** the evidence of life around you.

What do you feel like being in this environment?

You may want to measure a metre square in each space and see how much life you can observe in that space, or you may simply be able to observe, and feel, the energetic difference.

Engage with mana whenua through iwi management plans available online, and/or local experts to find out:

What are the most significant changes or most urgent environmental issues around us today?

What are the efforts that are currently being made to revive habitats and species?

How can we be in service to these efforts?

Interview different people around you who have different cultural worldviews about their relationship to te taiao. Use the same questions with each person so that it is easy to notice some of the differences and similarities that might exist in the values, attitudes, and beliefs about how we see ourselves in relation to nature.

Richard Lewer is a New Zealand-born artist, now based in Australia, who explores colonisation and identity powerfully through their work. In *Blackboards*, Lewer presents symbols and slogans of protest, history, and appropriation alongside each other.



Using this artwork as an inspiration, **create** a visual record of the ideas that you have gathered from your research and interviewing process so far.



This is just a sample!

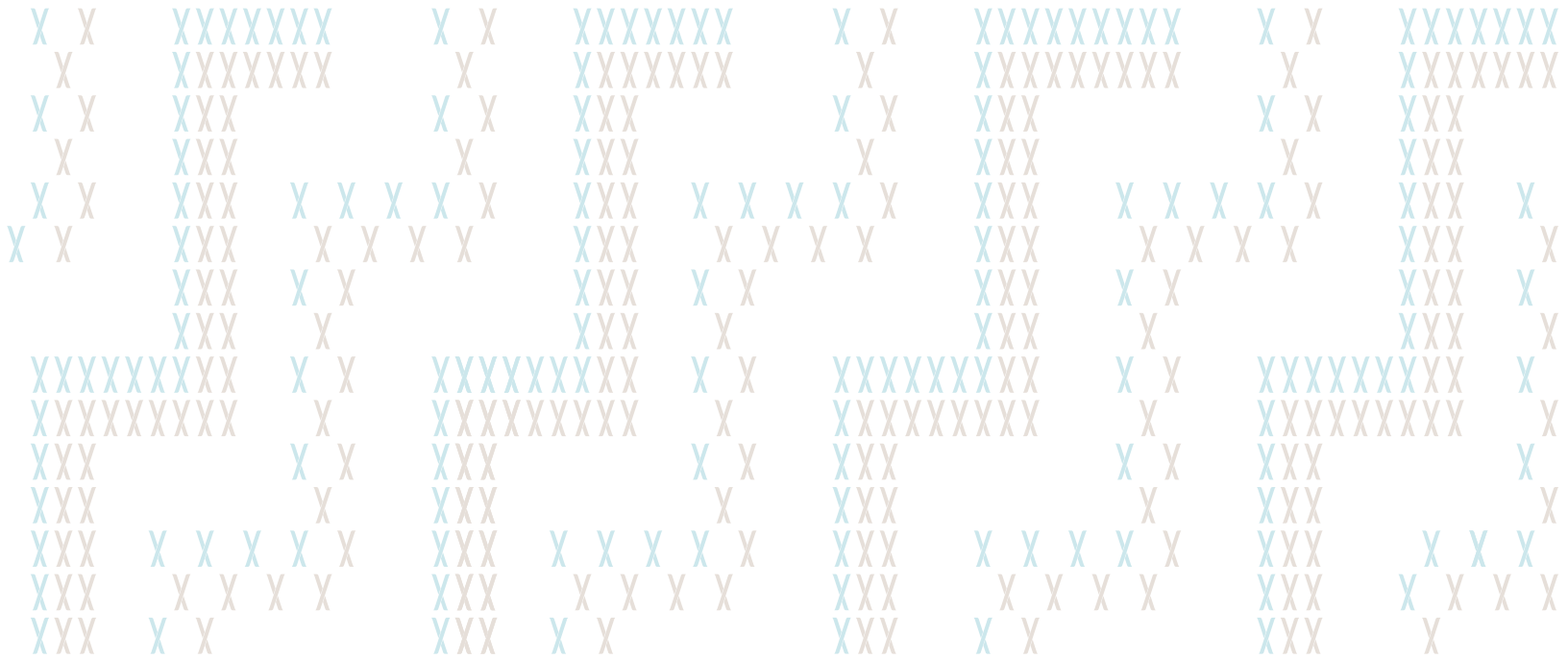
For even more exciting and engaging teaching and learning activities, as well as extra links for the extra curious, please go to the online version of this resource, tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoCurrentState



ACTIVITY C

Te Papa, museology and te taiao

Kaitaka aronui (cloak), maker unknown.
Gift of Mrs T S Adams. (ME003788)



4

HOW IS TE TAIAO REFLECTED IN TOI MĀORI?

Ponder the ways toi Māori reflects an entwined relationship with the environment.

Mā tāu rourou, mā tāku rourou ka ora te iwi.

With your contributions and my contributions the collective will flourish.



Introduction

Whanaungatanga between tangata whenua and te taiao is evident across te ao Māori. The connections that exist between human beings, land, water, flora, and fauna, and the metaphysical world are reflected throughout art, music, and language.

In this section, explore how connections to te taiao are expressed through creative art forms such as kōwhaiwhai, raranga, and taonga puoro.



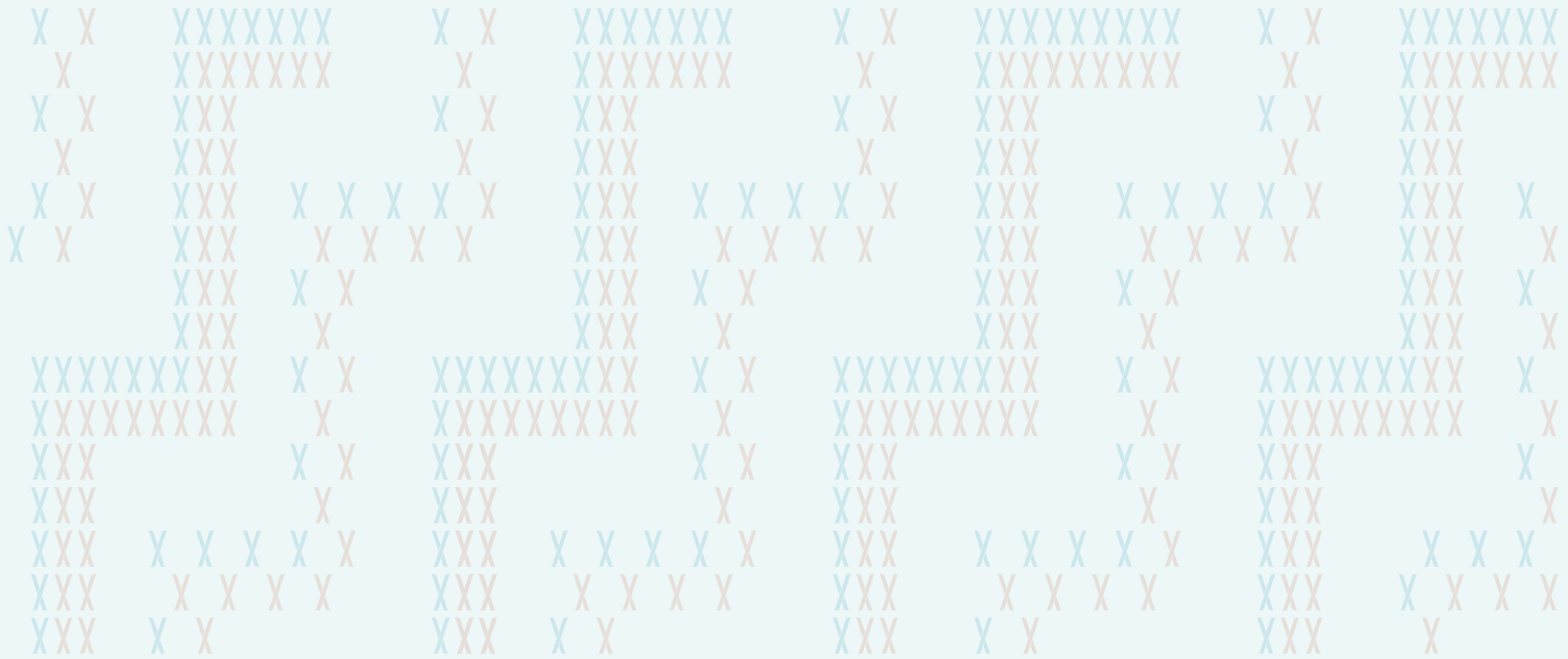
Q How is te taiao reflected in toi Māori?

ACTIVITY A

REFLECTING TE TAI AO IN THE ARTS

Uncover some of the many connections with te taiao that are recorded through ngā toi.

| Preparing flax for weaving, 1921. Photo by James McDonald. Te Papa (MU000523/005/0353)



He pitopito kōrero

Throughout traditional practices, such as kōwhaiwhai, whakairo, tukutuku, and raranga, the natural world of Aotearoa has been the provider of both practical materials and of deep inspiration.

Place-based art traditions reflect the ecosystem that surrounds hapū and iwi Māori. This is evident in both the selection of materials, such as pounamu, tōtara, or kauri, and in the shapes of abstract pattern – which often reflect the surrounding landscape.

While the materials and art forms may have sometimes changed, contemporary Māori artists continue to express a deep and reciprocal relationship to place.



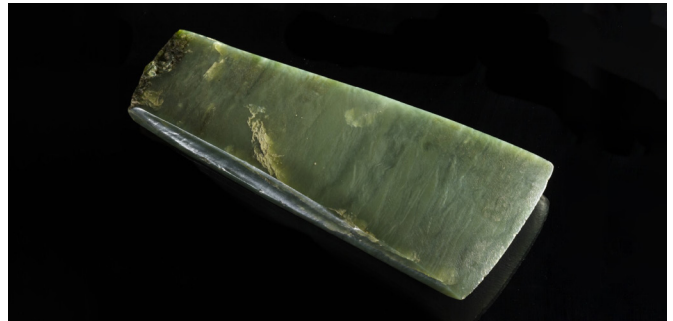
Connecting to whenua

Kohatu, stone of many kinds from around the country (such as sandstone, obsidian, greywacke, pounamu, and flint), have all been incredibly important to hapū and iwi. Many kōhatu are used in the creation of jewellery and adornment, others are used as tools.

Can you guess the kōhatu and the function of the taonga pictured on this page?

Visit your local museum and notice the ways that kōhatu were shaped and used by mana whenua where you live.

What are the stone types that are commonly found in your area? What are the practices that are still ongoing and what practices have changed?



Bottom left to right: Hei tiki (pendant in human form), maker unknown. Te Papa (ME002969). Round pumice float. maker unknown. Te Papa (ME014936). Mahe (sinker), maker unknown. Te Papa (OL000564/2). Slate knife pendant, maker unknown. Te Papa (ME000668).

Top left to right: Patu muka (flax fibre pounder), maker unknown. Gift of Alexander Turnbull, 1910. Te Papa (ME001946). Toki pounamu (nephrite adze blade), maker unknown. Te Papa (WE000160).



Many contemporary artists who whakapapa Māori continue to explore relationship to whenua, place, and taiao. Selwyn Muru (Ngāti Kuri, Te Aupōuri) was the very first contemporary Māori artist to have a work in Te Papa's Collections. This painting, *Kohatu*, from 1965, refers to the rock art of the South Island's Waitaha people, the oldest art form known in Aotearoa. Built up from thickly textured layers of ochre paint, the surface of *Kohatu* is evocative of a cave interior.

Earth pigments, from all across Aotearoa, have been an important artistic medium for hapū and iwi, and the reclamation of these materials in recent years has resulted in a great deal of exciting work from a number of artists.

If you are non-Māori, take time to understand your role as manuhiri in relationship to the whenua you are on before engaging with earth pigments. Sian Montgomery-Neutze (Ngāi Tara, Muaūpoko) has written **advice for non-Māori** about this.





For those that are ready to begin a journey with earth pigments, this set of pātai from Merenia Sawrey at the **Kauae Raro Research Collective** are a great place to start an investigation.



**He whakapapa ōu ki tēnei whenua? Kōrerotia mai.
He manuhiri koe, he mokopuna rānei koe?**

Do you have a connection to this whenua? Describe it in a couple of sentences. Are you entering as a guest, or a descendent?

.....

He aha ngā mahara i puāwai i a koe i kōnei?

What memories come to you when you are here?

.....

Kua kitea te aha e te whenua nei?

What do you think this whenua might have seen over time?

.....

Ko wai te hau kāinga, te ahi kā rānei o tēnei wāhi?

Who are/were the indigenous people that live/cultivate/harvest/hunt/fish/look after here?

.....

Urupounamu atu ki te whenua, he aha rā tāna e pīrangī nā, e wawata nā?

Take a moment to ask this place, what might your hopes or needs be for the pigment you have collected?

.....

He aha pea tō koha atu ki te whenua mō tāu i tango ai?

What might your koha be to this place in return for what you have taken?

Once you have considered place, history, and your relationship to it, begin by **exploring** the whenua where you stand, at school or at home. Take a walk and use your senses to notice differences in the types of earth pigments that are found in the whenua. **Observe** the hillsides, banks, and cliffs. **Take photos** of the different colours up close and record where each photo was taken.

When you get back to school, you might like to print them out and arrange them in tonal order. Make sure you keep the location recorded with each of the images, to respect whenua. **Consider** how tonal differences reflect the composition of the soil, and the ecosystem it supports.



Interview with Maraea Timutimu on *He kāwai whenua He kāwai whakapapa*
Watch on Youtube [here](#)



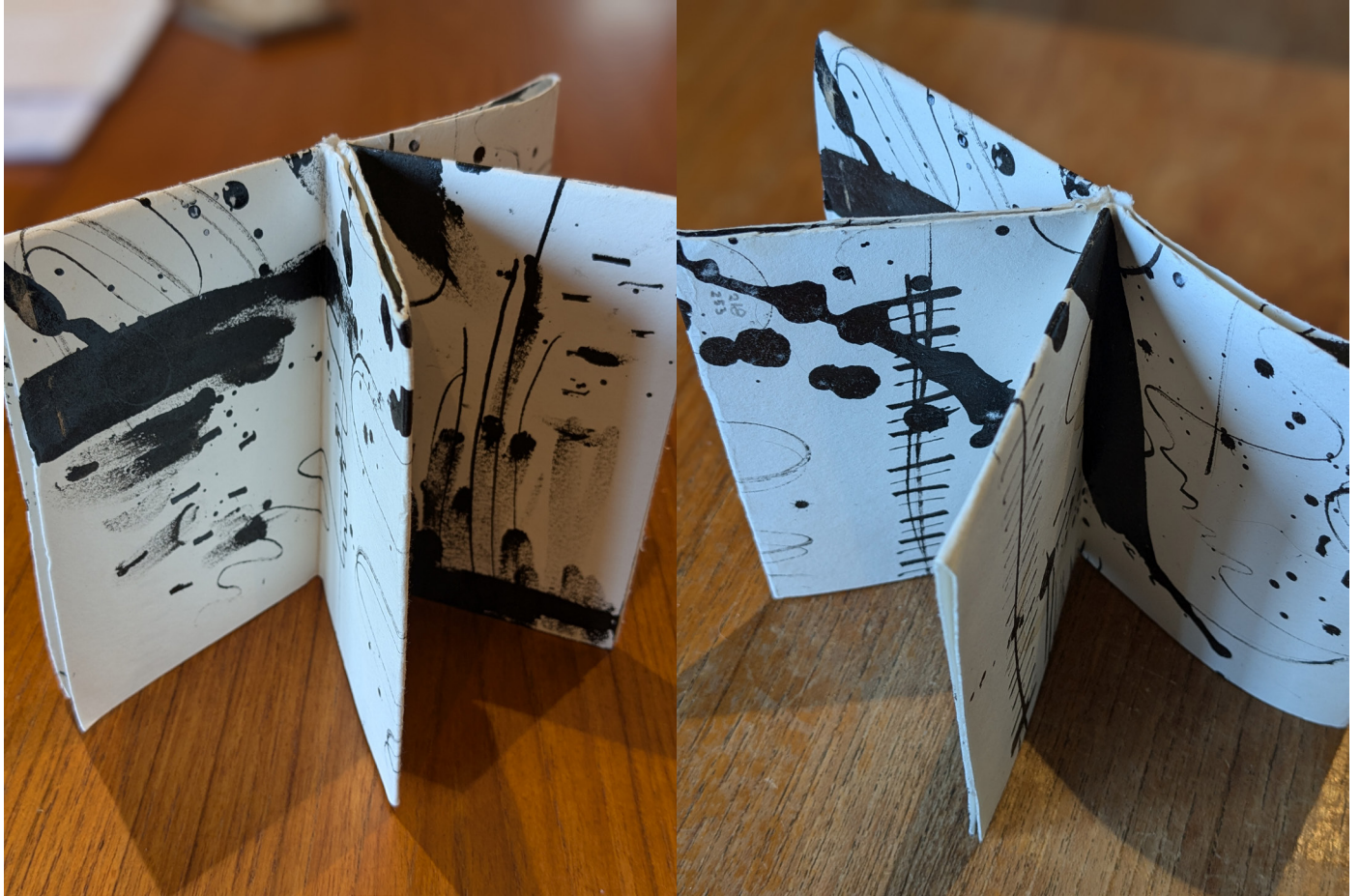
Watch and listen to Maraea Timutimu talk about creating self portraiture through photography and kōhatu. **Discuss** together how she describes the way that she is of the land and the land is of her.





Saffronn Te Ratana (Ngāi Tūhoe) was influenced by customary Māori artforms in her work. In *PW1 (Tiki remix)*, Te Ratana arranges painted panels to form a human body. In the top panel, she layered vibrant colours that were scratched into the surface and then drawn over with fibre-tipped pens or markers. These images were protected beneath layers of oil on board. Te Ratana then overpainted a white mass as an energising hinengaro, or mind. This area also contains threads of red where a tiny manaia (spiritual or supernatural guardian) appears. Te Ratana ‘remixes’ or ‘samples’ elements of tiki (Māori human form) – shape, texture, tā moko (skin marking) elements, and colour – to create a contemporary take on tiki and self-identity.

| *PW1 (Tiki remix)*, 2001, by Saffronn Te Ratana (Ngāi Tūhoe). Te Papa (2001-0031-1)



What might you be inspired by in te taiao to define yourself?

Take some A4 paper and charcoal, Indian ink, or crayon out into nature. Find a space to work on your own, and take note of what is happening. Try to record not only what you can see, but also what you can hear, and your feelings that are running through your body.

What mark could you mark to reflect the sound of running water?

What might represent the rhythm of your beating heart?

The sight of dappled light through the tree branches above you?

Use up the whole sheet as fully as you can.

You might like to fold your paper up into quarters, and choose one window of your mark marking to enlarge into an abstract portrait of yourself. Consider the patterns, symbols, and textiles of the places that your ancestors called home. Play around with dye and crayon, Indian ink, and scratching to create layered surfaces like Saffronn Te Ratana has done in *PW1*.



Photo by Sarah Hopkinson. Te Papa



Nature as an abstract art form

Kōwhaiwhai are abstract visual motifs that represent, and tell, stories. The patterns vary around the country and reflect the place in which they were made. **Te Papa's Collections Online** shows some of the variety of beautiful kōwhaiwhai forms and patterns that exist.

Scroll through the collections online of kōwhaiwhai, draw out the abstract patterns, and consider where some of the forms may have come from in te taiao.

Top to bottom: Patterns A to R: Kōwhaiwhai, about 1886, maker unknown. Te Papa (MU000049/023/0001/0006). Kōwhaiwhai, about 1886, maker unknown. Te Papa (MU000049/023/0001/0015). Kōwhaiwhai, about 1886, maker unknown. Te Papa (MU000049/023/0001/0012)

In this **useful video from The Dowse Art Museum** in Te Awakairangi, some of the simple forms of kōwhaiwhai are explained, along with their connections to te taiao.



Watch the video, **write** the name of each of the kōwhaiwhai forms, and practise drawing each one.



Ngataiharuru Taepa (Te Arawa, Te Āti Awa) is a contemporary artist playing with kōwhaiwhai form and colour palette, sometimes using such colours as mint, purple, and lemon.

‘The works I have created give visual form to karakia (incantations and prayers used to invoke spiritual guidance and protection). I have selected a part of the karakia that describes the universe as a cosmic garden with infinite potential.

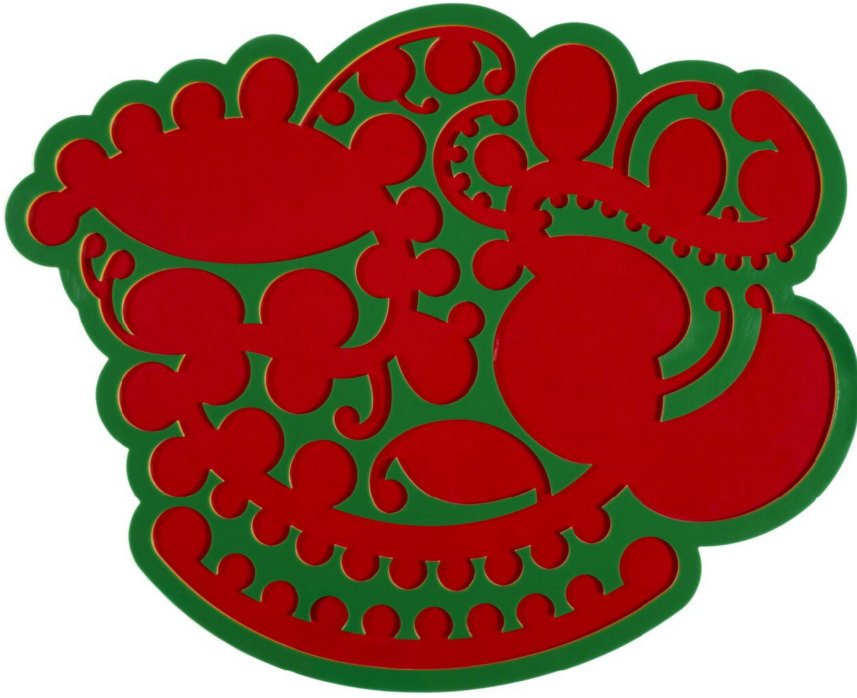
‘In nature, moments of balance, rhythm and complexity inspire me — in our culture we are considered a part of nature connected through genealogy. These works suggest that we are a part of a cosmic garden filled with infinite potential.’

Ngataiharuru Taepa (Te Arawa, Te Āti Awa)

To **design** your own abstract pattern, fold an A4 in half lengthways and then divide it into equal parts. **Focus** on reflecting and repeating forms. Choose a limited palette of colour to provide contrast and definition.



| *Maunga titohea*, 2017, by Ngataiharuru Taepa (Te Arawa, Te Āti Awa). Commissioned 2017 by Te Papa (2018-0002-1)



In the work above, *Manawarangi #1*, Taepa uses technological tools to make perfectly edged replicas of his initial drawings. His work explores the journey of knowledge that has led to producing customary kōwhaiwhai art forms, through very different means.

Manawarangi #1 is built up in layers of acrylic laminates. At first glance they appear to contain only two vibrant colours, one used to describe the negative space and one used to describe the positive space. When viewed from the side, however, one can see that it is built up with layer upon layer of brightly coloured acrylic.

The works encourage the viewer to think about the space between things, and the relationship between the seen and unseen worlds.

Experiment with cutting your own abstract art pattern out of card, or thin balsa wood, and layering over a contrasting substrate. Consider the use of colour for symbolising meaning. What are the differences in effect and method when we begin to design abstract art form as separate layers?





This is just a sample!

For even more exciting and engaging teaching and learning activities, as well as extra links for the extra curious, please go to the online version of this resource, tepapa.nz/KoAuTeTaiaoToiMāori



ACTIVITY B

The wonder of harakeke

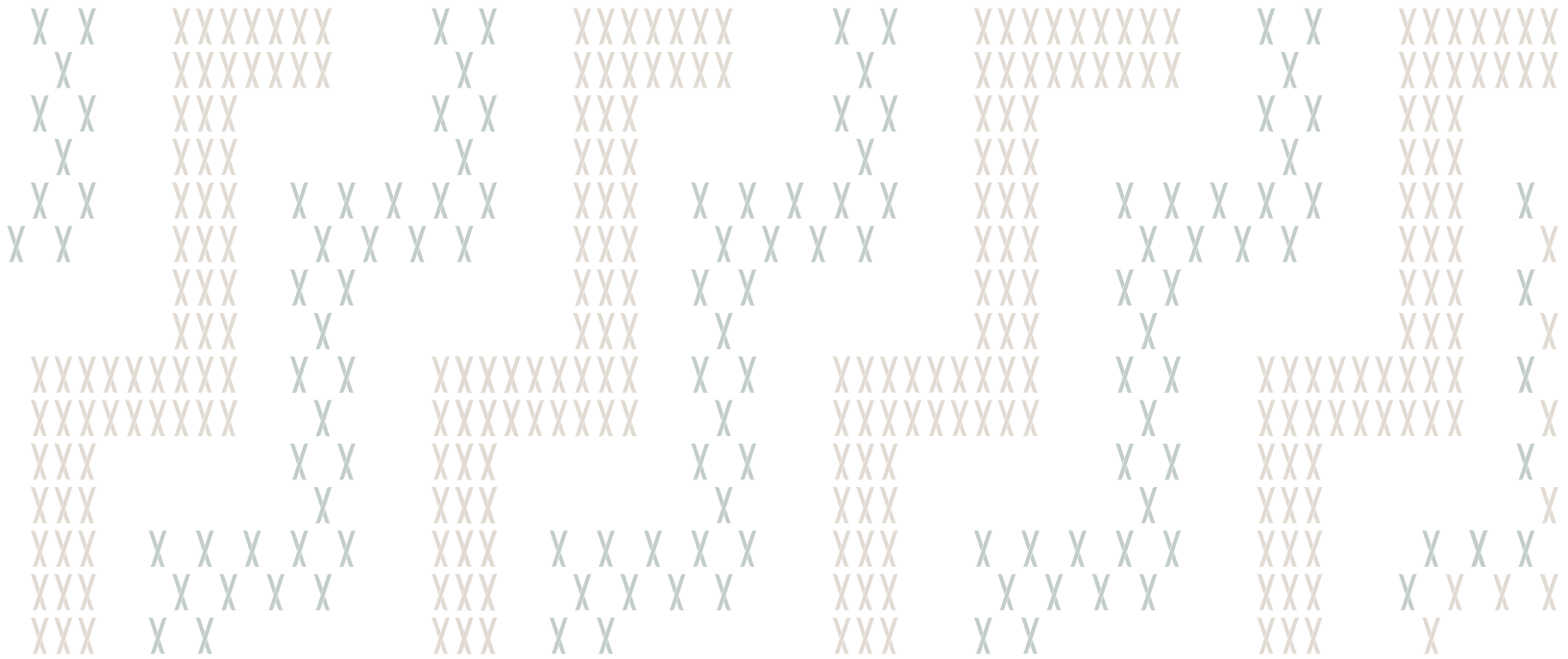
ACTIVITY C

The sounds of this whenua

ACTIVITY D

How is te taiao reflected in toi Māori?

A collection of whenua (earth) pigments
by Kauae Raro Research Collective, 2023.



ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

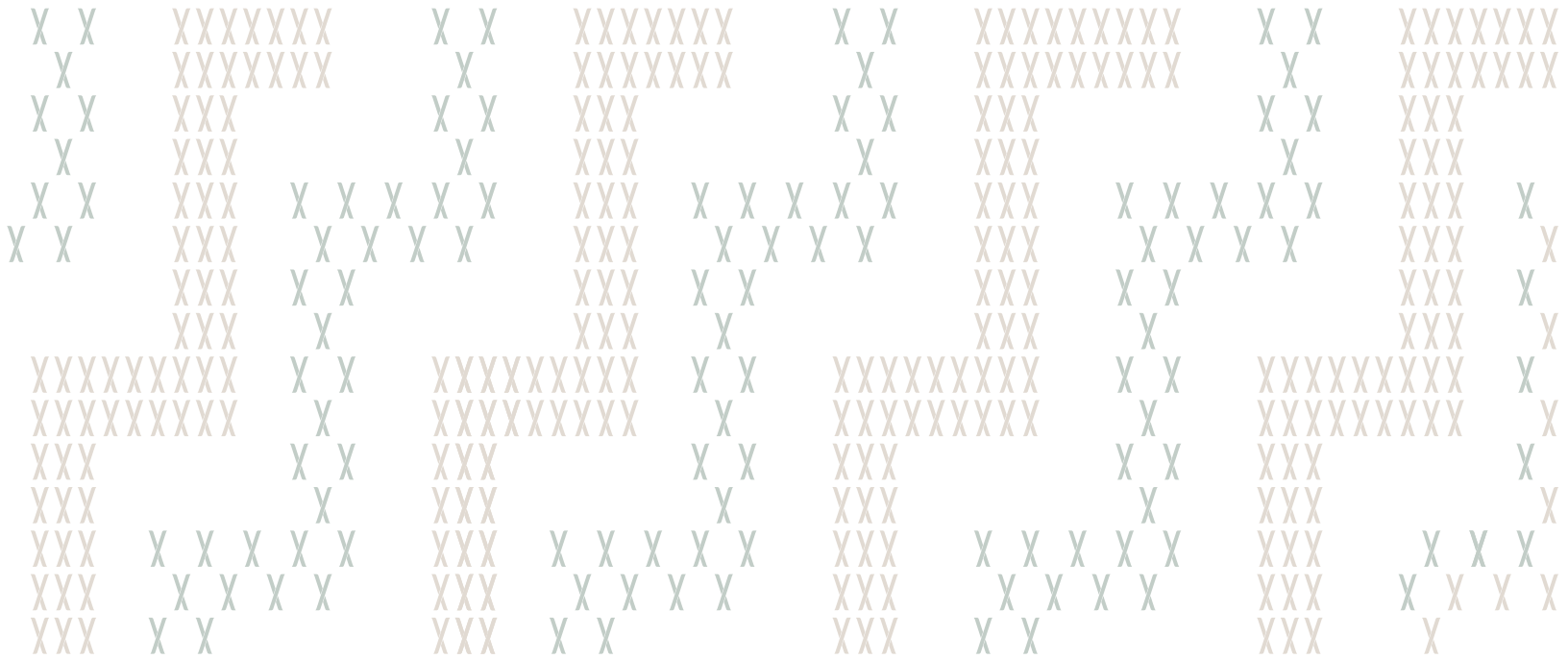
E rere nei ngā tai o mihi ki a koutou e tūhura ana i tēnei rauemi a tātou, e kīia ana, 'Ko Au te Taiao'. Eke rā ia te kōrero, 'ko au te taiao, ko te taiao ko au'.

To the artists, the makers, the crafters, both known and unknown, to the whānau, hapū, and iwi of each taonga, tēnā rawa atu koutou. We are so privileged to be informed inspired and influenced by you and your mahi. Your taonga and artworks allow us to ask the big questions, to provoke, to challenge, and to broaden our understandings of our connection to our environment – mei kore ake koutou i rangatira ai tā tātou rauemi.

Ki ngā taonga Māori me ō kāwai whakapapa e whakamana ana i tēnei kaupapa, nā koutou te ihi, te wehi, me te wana i whakatōngia ki roto i tēnei kaupapa kia whai hua ai te marea i ngā kōrero tuku iho i a koutou.

To the artworks, the taonga, and all parts of the collection from which we have drawn inspiration to create this resource, we recognise and thank you. It has been a privilege to connect with each of you. The meaning that each taonga has brought to this kaupapa is immeasurable.

Thank you also to those who helped immeasurably in framing the big questions that are presented in this resource and in the review process – Tara McAllister (Te Aitanga ā Māhaki, Ngāti Porou – Kairangahau Matua at Te Wānanga o Aotearoa), Lani Rotzler-Purewa (Ngāi Tūhoe, Schwarzwald – Advocate for mana motuhake of seed, soil, and whenua,) and Sarah Smuts-Kennedy (Energy field artist and syntropic food grower).

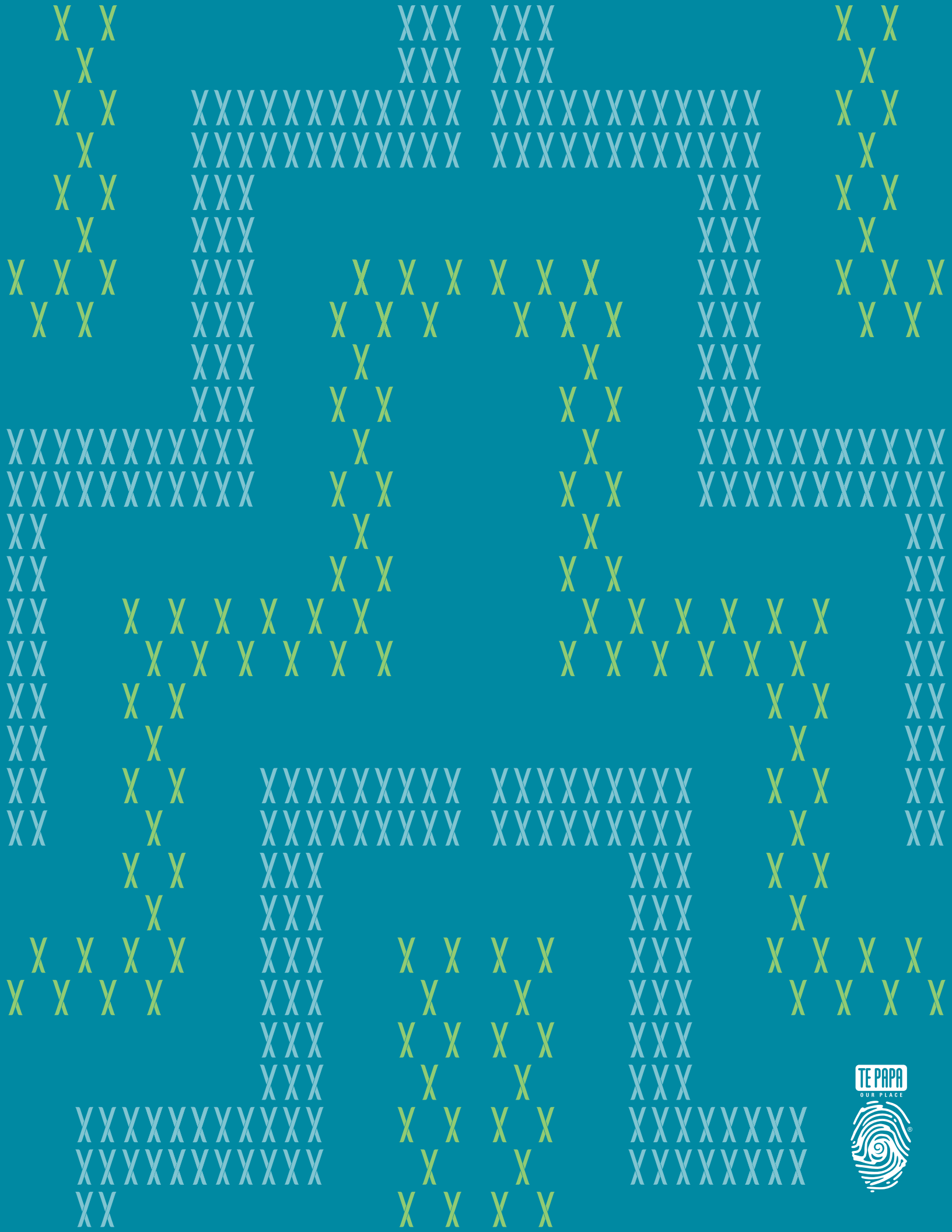


We would also like to specifically acknowledge two important guides. Firstly, Bradford Haami (Ngāti Awa, Ngāti Kahungunu, Kāi Tahu, Tūwharetoa) for the mātauranga he has gifted to this resource, through, 'A Mātauranga Māori walkthrough of te Taiao' (unpublished) and subsequent conversation.

And finally, to Winifred Belcher Hinerangi To Ariari, the artist who painted *Tāne: Lord of Life*. This painting formed the foundation for this resource, which guided us towards the other three panels, and the artist herself. Our relationship with the artist and her whakaaro have been hugely influential. They have inspired us to see the collections as active contributors to the mauri of te taiao and Papatūānuku.

Ka mihi te awa kōrero kua whiria ki te whakapapa o tēnei taonga, o *Ko Au te Taiao*. Ki ngā kōrero tuku iho, ngā mātauranga ā-iwi, ki ngā kāinga maha o te motu. He rauemi tēnei e manakohia i ngā wawata i whakatōngia e rātou mā hei painga mō te whenua, otirā mō tātou katoa.

We mihi to the whakapapa of this taonga, Ko Au te Taiao. To the histories we have inherited, the places we have called home, and to this moment in time. We hope that this resource supports teachers and learners across the country to heal and reconnect with ourselves, each other, and to Papatūānuku.



TE PAPA
OUR PLACE

