

INSPIRE



In this series:

Education for a Sustainable Future

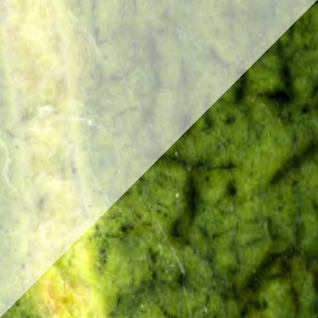
CULTURAL STORIES

CARING FOR OUR
RESOURCES

USE OF OUR RESOURCES

Series 1, Issue 1: 2016





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COMMENT

Rachelle Hulbert, Teacher Educator, welcomes you to the first issue of our **INSPIRE** series.

Welcome to the first issue in a series of three Education for a Sustainable Future learning and teaching resources published by BTI.

This series of journals represents the work undertaken by student teachers during their third year of study in the Bachelor of Education (Teaching) programme at Bethlehem Tertiary Institute (BTI) and is the result of work submitted for one of the assignments for the course, Education for a Sustainable Future.

The focus of this series of resources is to provide educational articles for students, teachers and schools related to educating children for a sustainable future. It includes consideration of the socio-cultural, historical and political values and practices that underlie living sustainably. In keeping with BTI's special character, it recognises the biblical commitment towards stewardship, justice and love.

We hope that you find these articles thought-provoking, engaging and useful in classroom learning and teaching.



Matariki: Celebrating and Sustaining Culture

By Hannah Harward

How would you describe your own culture? Is your culture shown by the clothes you wear, the food you eat, your traditions, or maybe the way you celebrate special occasions? Culture includes all these things. It shapes who we are - our identity.

Culture shows a lot about people's customs, traditions and values. People pass on and sustain their culture and heritage in different ways, for example through storytelling and celebrations.



By learning about other cultures, we can better understand our own culture and values, and why we live the way we do.

We can learn to respect the differences that make us unique, and value the cultural diversity of Aotearoa, New Zealand. We can also learn what it means to love other people and live at peace with each other, now and in the future together.

Culture and Living Sustainably

Every culture has something to contribute towards looking after the environment and creating a more sustainable future. By learning about other cultures as well as our own, we can discover new ways of living more sustainably within the environment and with each other.

Matariki - The Māori New Year

Matariki is the Māori name for the small cluster of stars which appears in the north-eastern skies of New Zealand near the end of May or early June each year. The rising of Matariki in the dawn sky is a sign that the Māori New Year will begin.



Taurus

Matariki is part of the star constellation called Taurus. There are nearly 500 stars in the group, but only a small cluster can be seen without a telescope. There are seven major stars in this constellation, also known to ancient Greeks as Pleiades, or the Seven Sisters.



Matariki in the Taurus constellation

A Time for Everything

“There is a time for everything, and a season for every activity under the heavens: a time to be born and a time to die, a time to plant and a time to uproot... a time to weep and a time to laugh, a time to mourn and a time to dance.”

*Ecclesiastes 3:1-4
New International Version
(NIV)*

A Time to Remember

Matariki is traditionally a time for remembering the past and people who have passed away. In times long ago, some Māori would honour this tradition by waking up before the stars rose to make a **hāngi**. When they saw the stars, they would cry out to Matariki and say the names of their loved ones who had passed away since Matariki was last seen in the sky. It was also thought that the scent of the food would rise to the stars and strengthen them, as they were cold and weak.



Hāngi is a special way to cook food under the ground using red hot rocks and steam.

A Time for Planting

Traditionally, Māori would look to Matariki to predict the coming weather and how plentiful the harvest of next season's crops would be. Planting would depend on how bright and clear the stars appeared. It is believed that if the stars were clear and bright, the weather would be warmer and a more productive season ahead it would be. Planting would then begin in September. If the stars appeared hazy, it is thought that the weather would be cooler, and so planting would be put off until later in October.



Harvested Kumara



19th Century drawing of a Māori kite by Charles Barraud

A Time of Celebration

Matariki is also a time of celebration and feasting. It would take place at the end of the harvest season, when there was plenty of food such as kumara and other crops, as well as birds and fish. To celebrate the change in season and new beginnings, there would be singing and dancing. Often traditional Māori kites, called pākau, would be flown in the sky close to the stars to welcome Matariki and the New Year.



Traditional Māori costume and dance

Kaitiakitanga — Guardianship and Protection

Care for the environment is important in celebrating Matariki. The Māori worldview sees people as being closely connected to the land and nature, and as guardians or kaitiaki of the land. The traditional practices that Māori followed when hunting, fishing, and growing or harvesting food helped them to look after and care for the environment. These included:

- hunting and fishing only for food, not for sport
- taking only what was needed
- not hunting in the same areas too often

Māori culture values the protection of the land and environment for us now and in the future. Our responsibility as kaitiaki is to steward and care for the land and environment, so that future generations can benefit from it and look after them too.

Legends of the Stars

There are many stories which are used to explain the stars. Matariki means 'eyes of god' (mata ariki), or 'little eyes' (mata riki). It is said that the stars are the eyes of Tāwhirimātea, the god of the winds, who threw them into the heavens when Ranginui, the sky father, and Papatūānuku, the earth mother, were separated by their children.

Another story tells of Matariki as being a mother and her six daughters who help the sun, Te Rā, along his journey across the sky.

Matariki Today

Think! How do you celebrate New Year?
How is this similar or different to the ways
Matariki is celebrated?

Matariki is celebrated in different ways all across New Zealand. In June, you may see celebrations with feasting, kite festivals, or fireworks. Whānau (family) and community gatherings with dancing, singing and food bring people together to celebrate Māori culture at this special time of year. Celebrating Matariki is one way for us to pass on the knowledge and traditions that have shaped Aotearoa, New Zealand and its people.

How might you be able to participate in Matariki celebrations this year?

Glossary

cluster – a small group of similar things that are close together

culture – the language, ideas and customs of a particular group of people

customs – ways of behaving that are usual or accepted for a social or cultural group

diversity – having variety

hāngi – a traditional Māori way to cook food under the ground using red hot rocks and steam

heritage – something one believes, thinks or does that comes from their family or ethnic background

kaitiakitanga – guardianship or protection of the land

pākau – a Māori kite

steward – to care for and use wisely

sustain – to keep something going or existing



By Steven Polglase

Be a Hero: Tell a Story!

Learn how telling stories is not only a good way to pass on history, but can save a culture and show that you care.

But what is culture?

Culture is the ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.

Ever since time began, people have been leaving their mark. Whether they realise it or not, they have been leaving things for us to remember them by. Some people go to a lot of trouble to be remembered or to remember what happened in the past:

But why?

BC/AD

Holidays:
Do you know what is important and remembered in the listed holidays?

When we record or remember history we are showing that it is important and we value who or what has gone before us. Most New Zealand holidays are to remember important events like ANZAC Day, Waitangi Day, and especially Christmas and Easter.

By choosing to remember the reason for each public holiday, you are choosing to recognise them as important, showing that you care and value the people and their culture. This is surprisingly special, as it protects the culture from being forgotten and dying out. In a way, we help sustain the culture by remembering and learning about its history.

Sustain
What does the word sustain mean?

To keep up or keep going.

ANSWER:

Different ways to record history:

Google didn't always exist, and writing things down wasn't always as easy as you might think. There are lots of different ways in which groups of people record their history and culture.

Some cultures use art forms like dance, drum beating or carvings to help remember and express their culture. Others use pictures or symbols like the Egyptians with their famous hieroglyphics, carved into stone to retell the stories of their culture. Today a lot of people use books and digital media like videos and the Internet.

Some groups of people, like the indigenous people of Australia, the Māori, and the indigenous people of South America told stories, myths and legends from generation to generation to explain their culture and remember the past.

Interestingly, because stories were told in groups it helped the people to form tight communities and strong identities as a culture. It also helped build good relationships between the older and younger generations.



Māori: Stories, Myths and Legends

One of the main reasons that the Māori stories, myths and legends are so important to Māori is because before the European settlers came they didn't have a written form of language.

The easiest and most commonly used way to pass on cultural ways and history was through the telling of stories. People used the stories or myths to try and explain things such as how the world was created, and make sense of what they saw around them (land, hills, lakes). Stories were also used to help pass on cultural things like history, values, religion and family trees.

The myths and legends were not 'just' stories; they helped provide understanding of their ancestors, their culture and enabled them to form a strong sense of identity.

By learning, telling and remembering some of the Māori myths and legends we show that we care, and might just help keep the Māori culture alive for the future.

Most of the myths are very interesting and describe things such as how Maui fished up the North Island, how the sun travels in the sky and how Kupe fought an octopus creating the landscape of the top of the South Island.



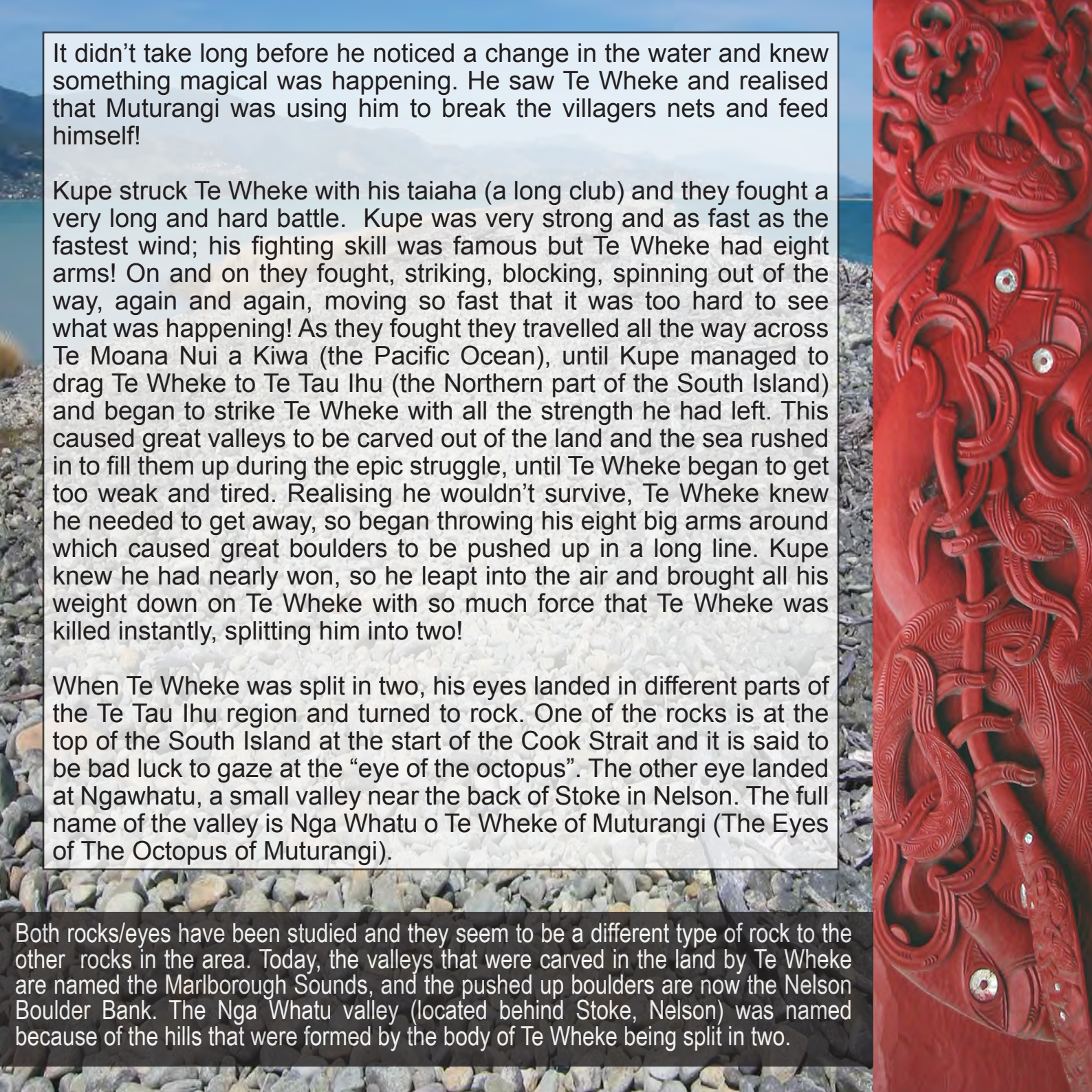
The Story of Kupe and Te Wheke

A long time ago, a magic man named Muturangi was angry and sat thinking of how he could have revenge on the villagers who had banished him to the far and lonely side of the island. One day Muturangi was down by the water when he came across Te Wheke (octopus) feeding in the shallows. He began to use his powers to charm Te Wheke so he could control him.

Muturangi would send Te Wheke out to catch fish and bring them back for him to eat. One day he had a sneaky idea and told Te Wheke, "Go to where the villagers are fishing with their nets, and take the fish that they are catching, it will be easier than having to catch the fish yourself". But even with plenty of food, and revenge on the villagers, Muturangi was still angry and wanted even more revenge.

Not only did the fishermen return to the village without any fish but their nets were also broken. Some were so bad they couldn't be fixed. "Who is taking our fish?" cried one fisherman. "My net, it's ruined," another said sadly. The fishermen didn't know why it was happening so they went to find Kupe, a very respected Māori warrior, to ask him what it meant. "I will go fishing and see what is breaking our nets and taking our fish," decided Kupe. He set out in his waka and arrived where the villagers normally went fishing as Te Rā, the sun, slowly rose to start the new day. Putting out his net, Kupe began to quietly wait.





It didn't take long before he noticed a change in the water and knew something magical was happening. He saw Te Wheke and realised that Maturangi was using him to break the villagers nets and feed himself!

Kupe struck Te Wheke with his taiaha (a long club) and they fought a very long and hard battle. Kupe was very strong and as fast as the fastest wind; his fighting skill was famous but Te Wheke had eight arms! On and on they fought, striking, blocking, spinning out of the way, again and again, moving so fast that it was too hard to see what was happening! As they fought they travelled all the way across Te Moana Nui a Kiwa (the Pacific Ocean), until Kupe managed to drag Te Wheke to Te Tau Ihu (the Northern part of the South Island) and began to strike Te Wheke with all the strength he had left. This caused great valleys to be carved out of the land and the sea rushed in to fill them up during the epic struggle, until Te Wheke began to get too weak and tired. Realising he wouldn't survive, Te Wheke knew he needed to get away, so began throwing his eight big arms around which caused great boulders to be pushed up in a long line. Kupe knew he had nearly won, so he leapt into the air and brought all his weight down on Te Wheke with so much force that Te Wheke was killed instantly, splitting him into two!

When Te Wheke was split in two, his eyes landed in different parts of the Te Tau Ihu region and turned to rock. One of the rocks is at the top of the South Island at the start of the Cook Strait and it is said to be bad luck to gaze at the "eye of the octopus". The other eye landed at Ngawhatu, a small valley near the back of Stoke in Nelson. The full name of the valley is Nga Whatu o Te Wheke of Maturangi (The Eyes of The Octopus of Maturangi).

Both rocks/eyes have been studied and they seem to be a different type of rock to the other rocks in the area. Today, the valleys that were carved in the land by Te Wheke are named the Marlborough Sounds, and the pushed up boulders are now the Nelson Boulder Bank. The Nga Whatu valley (located behind Stoke, Nelson) was named because of the hills that were formed by the body of Te Wheke being split in two.



Follow up Activities:

- Write a family story that retells something about your family history.
- Write a mythical story that explains how something came about e.g. Classroom door, your lunch box, a can of Coke, your favourite place to visit.
- Use the 'Sock Puppets' app (iPad) to tell a Māori legend you know or one you can find in a library book.
- Use 'Comic Life' on a computer to tell a Māori legend you already know or one you can find in a library book.
- Find a Māori legend (Ask the teacher or use a library book), learn it off by heart, and then tell a friend in the class.

Whanaungatanga

*What my class learned from a princess
and a roll of toilet paper*



By Kayla Norris

It was a Tuesday morning in Term 1 when it all changed for us, and it started with a question. A really embarrassing one, by yours truly, but Miss Symons didn't seem to mind. The question just popped out of my mouth and landed on the Monkey's reading group table for everyone to hear. If Miss Symons was surprised, she didn't show it. She just calmly pointed to the word *whanaungatanga* on the open page of our School Journal, and the rest is history for Room 20.



“Good morning, Kadhiroli...”

“Good morning, Miss Symons.”

“Morena, Ahuwera?”

“Here, Miss Symons. Ata mārie!”

“Aloha, Sarah...”

“Oh! Aloha Miss Symons...”

Even though Kadhiroli, Ahuwera, and I were right next to each other on the roll, we never talked to each other. I don't know why. We just didn't. As I was thinking, Miss Symons told the Monkey group to come to the teacher table. I grabbed my pencil and book bag and shuffled in my chair.

“Today's story is about *sustainability of culture*. Now, that's a bit of a mouthful. Can someone start by telling me what ***culture*** means?”

Ahuwera's hand shot up. “It means like a group of people who share ideas or... umm, share a language, like te reo?”

“Excellent! That's exactly what culture means, and we each have different cultures, even in this classroom.” Miss Symons smiled. “So, ***sustainability*** is kind of like ‘keeping it up’. So what might keeping up or continuing our culture look like?”

All of a sudden, a runner appeared in the doorway. “Can I have all of Mrs. Martin's students?”



Kadhiroli pushed her chair out. Like every Tuesday morning, six students from our class disappeared to Mrs. Martin's room. That was all I knew. Yet there was something the same about those six classmates that I noticed. After they had left, I blurted out, "Why do so many *brown-skinned* people go with Mrs. Martin?"

I felt embarrassed as soon as I asked it. Ahuwera, Sam, and Isaac all looked surprised, too. Then I noticed Miss Symons put her finger on *whanaungatanga*. Instead of explaining, she asked *me* a question. “Can you imagine what it would be like to have to learn a new language, other than English, and then go to a school where they only spoke that new language?”

“Oh, that’d be hard, Miss,” Ahuwera said quickly. “It’d be kinda like when I go to the marae and all my grandparents are speaking Māori, and I can’t understand it all.”

“Something to think about...” replied Miss Symons, and started explaining ‘*predicting*’ in our reading, instead of those two funny words: *sustainability* and *whanaungatanga*. Just before morning tea time, Kadhiroli came back with the other girls. When the bell rang, we all ran outside in different directions, each to our own spot.

On Wednesday morning, roll went as normal, me after Kadhiroli and Ahuwera in alphabetical order. But instead of going onto reading time, Miss Symons pulled out something more surprising than yesterday’s question: a toilet paper roll! “We’re going to do something a little different this morning, so I would like you to all get in a circle here on the mat.” There was shuffling for a few seconds, then everyone looked up expectantly. She ripped off a few pieces of toilet paper and handed the roll to Sam. “Take what you need,” she smiled, “And just hold the pieces in your lap until everyone gets what they need.”

Everyone was a little confused. I laughed when Isaac pulled at least ten pieces out. Some of my classmates only grabbed one section. Unsure, I grabbed three, just like Kadhiroli and Ahuwera before me. When the roll had been passed around, Miss Symons explained...



“For every piece you have, you’re going to say something about yourself.” Isaac put his hand over his mouth in surprise, and we laughed. “This is so we can get to know each other a little more. I expect you all to use your key competency of *participating and contributing*- because we’re all different, but we have some things the same, too. We can only find out these things if we all take part.”

Miss Symons started pulling her five pieces apart. I found out that her first name was actually Elizabeth, just like my middle name, and that she liked cats and her favourite princess was Cinderella. I didn’t know teachers *had* favourite princesses! She continued by saying she moved here to the Bay of Plenty from America and even though they speak English, it sounds a bit different.

Next thing I know, I hear the name “Belle” and Kadhiroli is telling everyone that’s who her favourite princess is, tearing off her second piece of toilet paper.

“That’s mine, too!” Ahuwera smiled. Kadhiroli continued by saying she moved to the Bay of Plenty all the way from India. She pointed to it on the map - it looked far away from New Zealand, farther than Australia! “They speak another language there, and it sounds a lot different,” she said shyly. “Mrs. Martin helps me and my friends learn English so we can understand better.” Some of the boys chipped in that their parents were born in India, but they were born in New Zealand so they could speak *two* languages really well. I was amazed. I can only say some greetings in Te Reo! As we all tore that toilet paper apart, I realised something.

It wasn't just a skin colour that made up a culture, but it was also a language, where you were born, your family. That's what made Room 20 so exciting. Yet even though all of us were very different, we had some things the same, too!

“My favourite princess is... Belle,” I said shyly, too, looking at Ahuwera and Kadhiroli. Their faces lit up- I had found two new friends with saying one sentence.

“That sounds like we found a connection!” Miss Symons exclaimed, looking directly at me. “and that's exactly what the Māori word *whanaungatanga* means... a family connection where everyone *belongs*, even if we're different.”

I had another question, but this time it was because I *knew* something.

“So does that mean if we can have wh-wa-nau-nga-tanga, we can *sustain* and ‘keep up’ our different cultures?”

“Exactly,” was her answer. The rest was history, all because of some toilet paper and a princess we all hoped to be like.



Glossary

culture - shared ideas and actions found in a group of people

sustainability - when a person or groups of people think and act in a way that helps them keep up (sustain) what they have, and pass it on to future generations

whanaungatanga - relationship or feeling of family connection that happens when we share experiences and work together; *belonging*

Activity

Try the toilet paper activity with your reading group or class! Going further, you can “take what you need” for the person next to you. This challenges you to think about your classmates. Don’t just say, “She’s a girl” or “He’s in Room 18”, but think about their culture and what you know about him or her!

“How good and pleasant it is when God’s people live together in unity!”

~Psalm 133:1

Look deeper: Find what the blessing God gives when we live together with kotahitanga (unity) in Psalm 133.

Who are you?

The stories that shape us.

by Kristy Hitchens

Many cultures tell stories to teach their children about life- who they are, where they have come from, what is right and what is wrong. By passing on these stories, cultures can continue through generations. This makes the culture sustainable.

The stories told by a culture can help us to understand their perspectives, helping us to treat them justly and with love.

Here in New Zealand, Māori culture tells many of these types of stories. The story of Poutini and the Pounamu is one example.

Poutini was a **taniwha** who used to swim up and down the banks of the West Coast of the South Island of New Zealand, protecting the **Māori** of the **pounamu**. Sometimes he would venture further afield. On his travels one day he saw a beautiful woman bathing near Tuhua (Mayor Island). Her name was Waitaiki. Poutini fell in love with Waitaiki as soon as he saw her. He kidnapped her and headed for the mainland. Waitaiki's husband, Tamaahua was a powerful chief. Finding his wife gone, he threw a magical dart in the air. When it landed, it pointed in her direction. Tamaahua chased the taniwha and his wife, desperate to save her from the clutches of the taniwha.

The taniwha occasionally stopped to take a break, lighting fire to warm his hostage. He stopped at Tahanga on the Coromandel Peninsula, at Whangamata, at Lake Taupo, at D'Urville Island, at Farewell Spit, then on to Pahuatara on the West Coast. The stones in these places are still stained by the fires that Poutini lit. When Poutini reached the Milford Sound, Waitaiki begged him to turn around. He reluctantly agreed, and made a U-turn, heading back towards the Arahura river.

Poutini's Travels



Questions to ponder

Have you been to any of the places that Poutini travelled to?

What does the story mean when it says that the stones are “stained by the fires that Poutini lit”?

What do you think this part of the story teaches children about the diversity of New Zealand's environment?

Why do you think Poutini listened when Waitaiki asked him to turn around?

Look closely at the map. Poutini stopped in lots of places. Which stop is the closest to where you live?

Questions to ponder

Do you know what **Bowenite** is? Do a quick Internet search to find out.

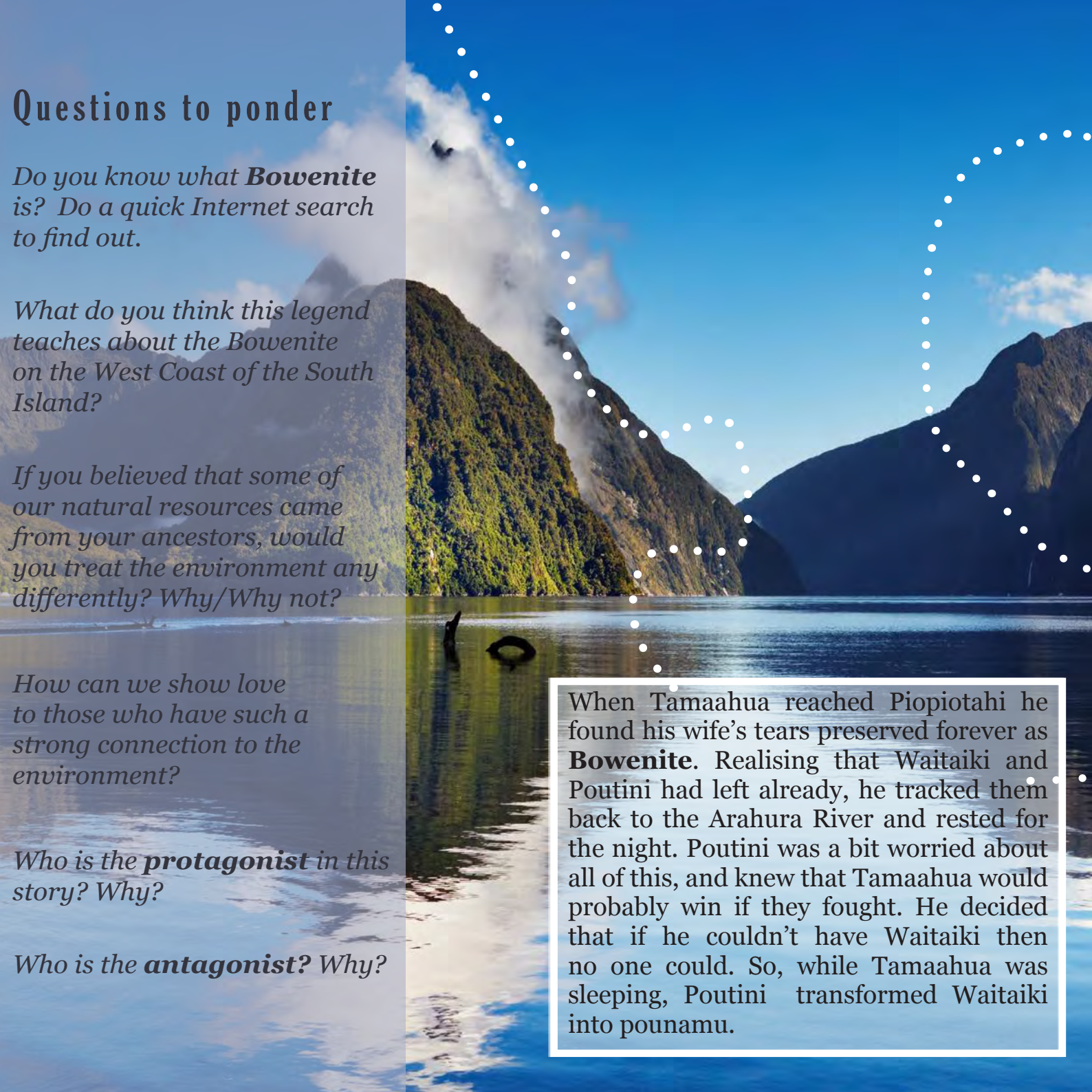
What do you think this legend teaches about the Bowenite on the West Coast of the South Island?

If you believed that some of our natural resources came from your ancestors, would you treat the environment any differently? Why/Why not?

How can we show love to those who have such a strong connection to the environment?

Who is the **protagonist** in this story? Why?

Who is the **antagonist**? Why?



When Tamaahua reached Piopiotahi he found his wife's tears preserved forever as **Bowenite**. Realising that Waitaiki and Poutini had left already, he tracked them back to the Arahura River and rested for the night. Poutini was a bit worried about all of this, and knew that Tamaahua would probably win if they fought. He decided that if he couldn't have Waitaiki then no one could. So, while Tamaahua was sleeping, Poutini transformed Waitaiki into pounamu.

He then left her in the river and snuck past Tamaahua before he woke up. When Tamaahua woke up, he found Waitaiki on the river bed, made entirely of pounamu. His **tangi** is still heard, echoing around the Southern Alps. Waitaiki is the mother of pounamu and the small fragments of jade found in the Arahura River and along the west coast are her children.

Questions to ponder

What does this story teach us about Māori culture?

What does this story teach Māori about the environment?

How does understanding this story help to preserve the Māori culture?

*How can we **steward** (look after) the resources given to us? Does your answer change if you think of cultural diversity as a resource?*

Can you think of something that is precious in your culture? Why is it precious?

Glossary

Taniwha

Water spirit, monster.

Mauri

Spiritual Essence

Pounamu

Greenstone

Bowenite

A semi-precious gem stone used for tools, weapons and jewellery by the Māori

Tangi

To cry, mourn, weep

So what?

Discussion questions

In a pair or small group, work through these questions. You could use the Popplet iPad app to record your thinking.



Like all stories, the story of Poutini and the Pounamu teaches us something. It does this in two ways. Firstly, by telling us a story. The story of Poutini teaches us about the origin of greenstone according to Māori legend. Every story communicates ideas.

How is it different to the stories that you grew up with? How is it similar?

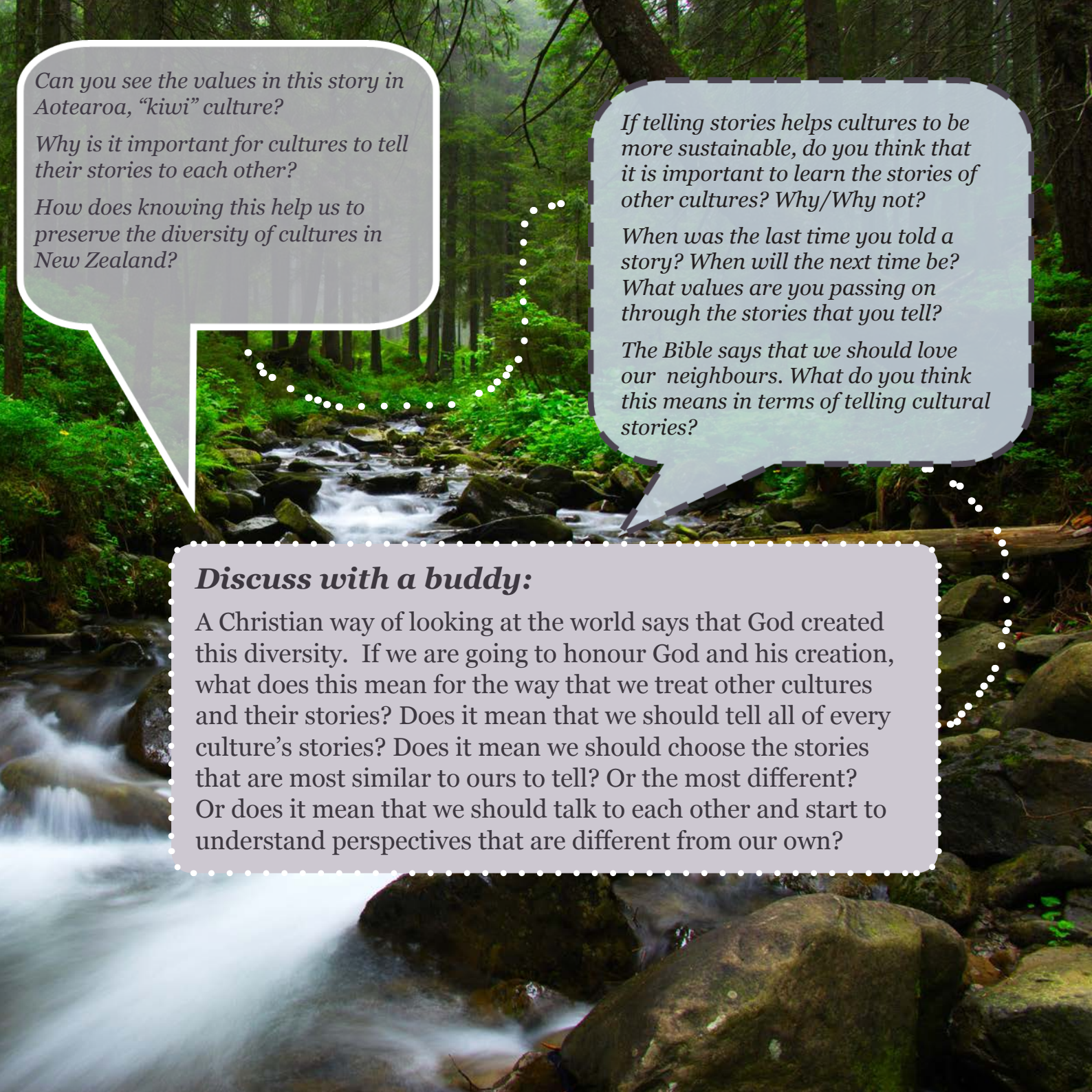
How many cultures do you know stories from?

What can you learn from Cultural Stories?

Secondly, and perhaps more importantly, every story teaches us something about culture.

What do you think this story teaches us about Māori culture?

Who do our stories say we are?



Can you see the values in this story in Aotearoa, “kiwi” culture?

Why is it important for cultures to tell their stories to each other?

How does knowing this help us to preserve the diversity of cultures in New Zealand?

If telling stories helps cultures to be more sustainable, do you think that it is important to learn the stories of other cultures? Why/Why not?

When was the last time you told a story? When will the next time be? What values are you passing on through the stories that you tell?

The Bible says that we should love our neighbours. What do you think this means in terms of telling cultural stories?

Discuss with a buddy:

A Christian way of looking at the world says that God created this diversity. If we are going to honour God and his creation, what does this mean for the way that we treat other cultures and their stories? Does it mean that we should tell all of every culture’s stories? Does it mean we should choose the stories that are most similar to ours to tell? Or the most different? Or does it mean that we should talk to each other and start to understand perspectives that are different from our own?

Final Thoughts

Questions to ponder

Talk to a buddy about a story you can remember being told to you when you were little. Maybe a fairytale, or a children's book. What can you tell about your own culture from that story? What does it show that your culture values?

We are Kiwi kids, and we try to treat others how we would like to be treated. We try to be fair, and kind, and to value each other. Can you think of three ways that we can do that with stories?

Write a brand new fairytale to teach a younger class about something that is important to you. Present it using the Sock Puppets iPad app.

By listening to and telling stories of our own and other cultures, we learn more about each other. We help to preserve these cultures, passing values, beliefs and identity on through the generations. These stories preserve our own culture but they also give new ideas and outlooks on life to others who hear them. They help us to look after the amazing cultural diversity that God has created. By understanding these stories we become much more capable of building relationships across cultures while showing compassion and love for each other. While different cultures may act in different ways, stories help us to see the similarities in who we are, what we are trying to do, and where we are trying to go. We are all children of God and have a shared purpose in furthering his Kingdom. Every culture has stories. Every individual has been influenced and shaped by the stories told to them. What stories do your classmates know? What is your story?



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