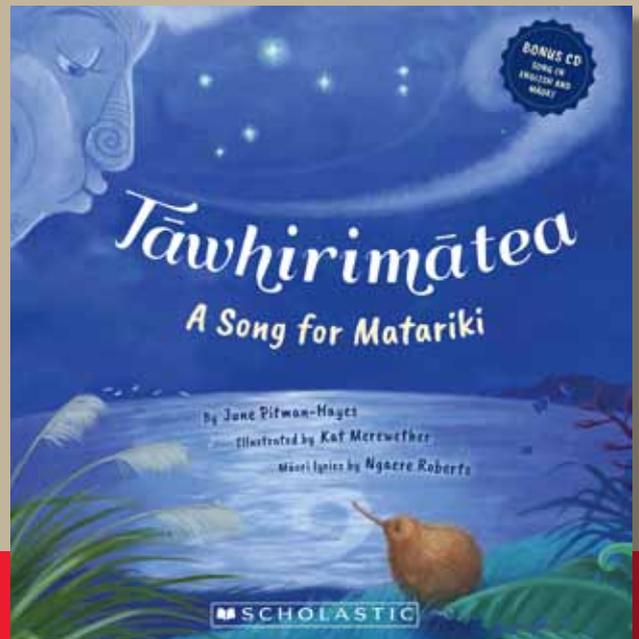


Tāwhirimātea A Song for Matariki

Song by June Pitman-Hayes

Illustrations by Kat Merewether

Māori lyrics by Ngaere Roberts



- Art • Reading • Writing • Science
- Mathematics • Music • Te Reo Māori
- Our Natural World and Planet Earth and Beyond

Synopsis

Tāwhirimātea: A Song for Matariki is a song and a picture book based around Tāwhirimātea, the god of weather. It meditates on the seasons and the magic of the universe – the wind, rain, sun, planting of seeds in the earth (Papatūānuku), the sky (Ranginui), the tides, family (whānau), sharing of food from the land and sea, storytelling, and the passing of time (day into night) as represented by the Matariki star sisters that light up the sky each night. The song culminates in the lines, “our universe is an amazing nature show” (repeated three times). The song is sung first in English and then in te reo Māori. It is a reflection on the wonder of the universe, as witnessed at the time of Matariki, when the star cluster can be seen during the summer months in Aotearoa.

About the Author

June Pitman-Hayes is a creative writer, singer-songwriter, lyricist and poet of Ngāpuhi, Ngāti Wai, Ngāti Pūkenga and Ngāti Maniapoto descent. Brought up on the shores of Tamaterau, a tiny settlement that hugs the Whangarei Heads Coast Road east of Whangarei, June was the youngest of three mokopuna raised largely by her maternal Māori grandmother, Tiria. It was her mother, however, who encouraged her daughter’s natural ability for music and song. June is one of Aotearoa’s well-known jazz singers, having performed at many events and festivals throughout the country. June also recently recorded the music to Joy Cowley’s *Hush: A Kiwi Lullaby* book & CD combination for Scholastic NZ. Until recently, June lived near Wainui, Auckland, where she taught singing to the children of Meraki Montessori School.

Kat Merewether is the ‘quintessentially Kiwi’ author-illustrator of the bestselling *Kuwi the Kiwi* series (*Kuwi’s First Egg*, *Kuwi’s Huhu Hunt*, *Kuwi’s Very Shiny Bum*). Kat started out in 2002 as a self-employed graphic designer and illustrator. She has illustrated material for the Te Wananga o Aotearoa, Te Ara Reo, Mahi Ora and Mauri Ora programmes, and has published around 20 of her own children’s picture books. She is the ambassador for Kiwis for Kiwi, a charity raising awareness for kiwi conservation, and illustrates out of her award-winning educational design studio, Design on Q. Her passion for all things to do with children’s books and illustration is apparent in her quirky illustration style. Kat lives in rural Waikato with her husband and three cheeky daughters.

Ngaere Roberts, who descends from Ngāti Porou, Hapū Ngāti Rangi, has worked with the NZ Ministry of Education in the development of Māori oral language proficiency in schools. She enjoys the challenge of translating playful texts such as *Tāwhirimātea* for whānau to enjoy and sing along to.

Writing Style

This story was written as a song in simple, gentle rhyme. Listening to the music in the accompanying CD while reading the book can help with the rhythm, and breathes new life to the story. The content reveals themes of the natural world, duality and Te Ao Māori. *Tāwhirimātea: A Song for Matariki* doesn't tell the story of Matariki as such, but is a celebration of life, the seasons, and the 'amazing nature show' that is our universe, represented by the Matariki star sisters that light up the sky. The themes covered in the text lend themselves to Literacy, Te Reo Māori, Science, Social Studies, Health, Music and Art. Students and teachers alike will find themselves humming the music long after the lesson. The beautiful and thoughtful illustrations tell as much of the story as the text and are well worth exploring with the students.

Shared Learning and Discussion Points

ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

- Listen to the song together and then introduce the book.
- Show the cover and read the title. Does anyone know what Matariki is? Has anyone attended a Matariki celebration? Does anyone celebrate Matariki in their home?
- Reinforce the pronunciation of the a and i vowel as found in the word Matariki. Point out the macron above the a in Tāwhirimātea. Does anyone know what it's called? How does the macron change the sound of the letter? Practise saying the words 'Tāwhirimātea' and 'Matariki' together. Ask the children to predict what Tāwhirimātea means.
- Read pp 2–3 to the group. Practise saying 'Tāwhirimātea' and 'Rā' together. How would you say Rā without the macron? Would it change the meaning of the word?
- Read pp 4–5 to the group. Reinforce the pronunciation of the u vowel as found in Papatūānuku and ua. How does the sound change when two vowels are placed together in te reo Māori? What does 'helps new life come through' mean? How does the rain help new life come through?
- Read pp 6–7 to the group. Practise saying 'Ranginui' together. Can the children suggest another name for Ranginui from another language or culture? What is the bird in the illustration? Has anyone seen one up close?
- Read pp 8–9 to the group. Reinforce the pronunciation of the e vowel as found in Tāne. Has anyone heard of a legend that has Tāne in it? What's special about Tāne? Point out the word 'māwhero'. Tell the children that 'mā' is white and 'whero' is red. So what colour do they think 'māwhero' might be? Ask them to turn to their neighbour and whisper something that is māwhero.

- Read pp 10–11 to the group. Practise saying 'moana' together. Reinforce the pronunciation of the o vowel as found in 'moana'. What does 'ebb and flow' mean? What is Tangaroa? Ask the children to keep their bottoms on the floor/chair and feet still and use their hands and upper body to show the way Tangaroa brings the waves in and out and swirls the seaweed in the rockpools.
- Read pp 12–13 to the group. Practise saying 'tamariki' together. Remind the students about syllables and clap the syllables in ta-ma-ri-ki. Ask them to clap the syllables in their own names to their neighbour. Practise saying 'haere mai' together, reinforcing the pronunciation of vowels when they are placed together in te reo. Do the students know what 'kaimoana' means? Break 'kaimoana' into 'kai' and 'moana', do the students remember what 'moana' means from earlier in the book? Do they know what 'kai' means? So what do they think 'kaimoana' might mean? Have they ever had any? Or caught any? What food does their family like to share? Ask them to whisper their favourite kai to their neighbour.
- Read pp 14–15 to the group. Practise saying 'te whānau' together. Do the students have songs that are special to their family?
- Read pp 16–17 to the group. Does anyone know what 'matua' means? Do they have special names for their grandparents? What is 'tūpuna'? Share a story from your own family or childhood with the students.
- Read page 18–19 to the group. Practise saying 'I te pō' and 'ruru' together. Can they make an owl sound? Have they seen or heard an owl in the wild? Practise saying 'mārama' together. Can they remember the word for sun? wind? sea? Are there any other te reo Māori words that they remember from the book?
- Play the Māori version of the song (pp 20–31) and ask the children to listen out for the new words they have learnt.

Activities

ACTIVITY 1: CYCLES OF NATURE

Introduce or revisit the water cycle. Discuss ways that the water cycle can be affected by the weather. As a class, draw the water cycle on the whiteboard. Ask the children to draw the water cycle independently, using labels in te reo Māori from the story.

ACTIVITY 2: RESEARCHING MATARIKI

Share images of the night sky showing the Matariki constellation. Discuss with the students how they might accurately use rulers and/or compasses to draw the constellation. Using white crayons, ask the children to mark out the constellation on white cartridge paper. Use dark blue or black dye and paint over the paper to



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reveal the constellation. Label the picture with a title and the correct names for each star in the Matariki constellation.

Supporting information for extension can be found on the Te Papa website:

www.tepapa.govt.nz/learn/matariki-maori-new-year/matariki-star-facts

ACTIVITY 3: STORY PROMPTS

Practise ways that the students can use their bodies to create percussion sounds. Ask them to choose a movement or sound, then group children according to their choices so that similar sounds will come from the same place in the room. Ask the students to practise in their groups. You can adjust the instruction in relation to the students' musical knowledge. Play the song and ask the students to improve it by adding their body percussion. If time allows, ask each group to do it in turn, and then as a class. Record the class so they can listen to themselves.

ACTIVITY 4: RE-TELLING THE STORY WITH OUR BODIES

Practise ways that the students can use their bodies to create percussion sounds. Ask them to choose a movement or sound, then group children according to their choices so that similar sounds will come from the same place in the room. Ask the students to practise in their groups. You can adjust the instruction in relation to the students' musical knowledge. Play the song and ask the students to improve it by adding their body percussion. If time allows, ask each group to do it in turn, and then as a class. Record the class so they can listen to themselves.

ACTIVITY 4: RECALLING TE REO MĀORI

List the Māori words from pages 2–19. Ask the children to write the English words alongside them. Working in pairs may support less able learners. Play the song for them to self-check their work, or add the words they've missed.

Written by Sarina Dickson

