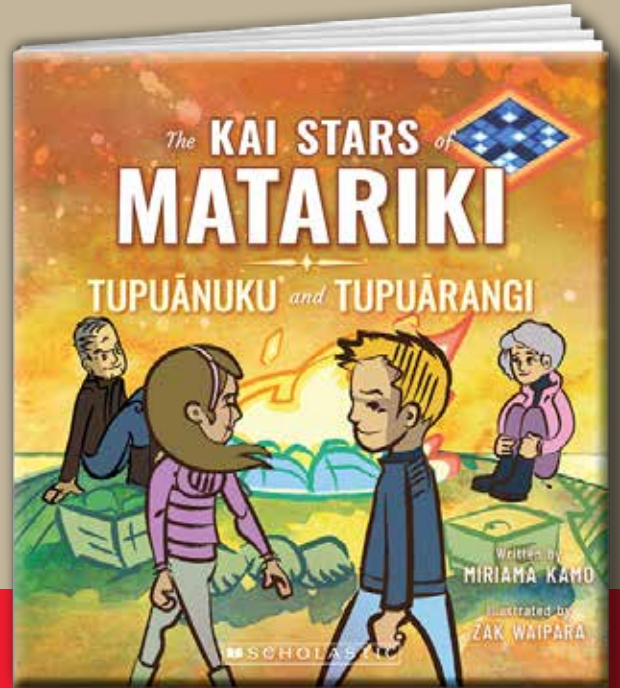


# The Kai Stars of Matariki: Tupuānuku and Tupuārangi

By Miriama Kamo  
Illustrated by Zak Waipara

- Reading • Writing • Matariki • Māori Traditions
- Social Studies • Art



## Synopsis

Te Rerehua and Sam are once again visiting Grandma at Pōua at Te Mata Hapuku (Birdlings Flat). It is time to begin stocking up in preparation for a Matariki feast. Grandma tells the children about Tupuānuku and Tupuārangi, the stars responsible for kai from the earth and kai from the stars. She mentions how, last Matariki, Waitī and Waitā were bright in the sky, ensuring they were plenty of eels this year, which they are now catching, drying and freezing, ready for cooking in the umu at this year's feast.

Fast forward a few months, and it is nearly time for the Matariki feast. Te Rerehua and Sam take a walk one evening and come across Patupaiarehu eating all the eels that Grandma and Pōua had stored up! The children catch them and force them to catch more. All night they fish, and by dawn their sacks are full. They take them back to Grandma and Pōua, who cook them up for the feast.

Next day, the community gathers to share the Matariki feast, which includes kūmara, carrots and cabbage – foods from Tupuānuku – as well as swan eggs, apples and pears – foods from Tupuārangi. As night falls, they see the Kai stars twinkling brightly in the sky.

## About the Author

**Miriama Kamo** is an award-winning journalist. She is the anchor of Māori current affairs programme *Marae* on TV1. Miriama has worked on many of TVNZ's key programmes including former current affairs programme *Sunday* and *1 News* as a newsreader. Miriama's first children's book with Scholastic was the popular *The Stolen Stars of Matariki*, followed by *The Twin Stars of Matariki*. Her 2022 book, *Matariki Around the World*, written with Rangī Matamua, was one of the bestselling children's books of that year.

## About the Illustrator

**Zak Waipara** is a former NZ Herald graphic artist and HOD of Animation at Animation College. Zak (Rongowhakaata, Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Ruapani, Ngāti Kahungunu) is now a Digital Media lecturer at AUT. He has worked as a designer for Māori Television's children's show *Mīharo*, illustrated comics and a range of books, and created animated music videos. He is the illustrator of *Horeta and the Waka*, *The Stolen Stars of Matariki*, *The Twin Stars of Matariki* and *Ihaka and the Unexpected Visitor*. Born in Milton in the South Island, Zak now lives in Auckland.

# Writing and Illustration Style

*The Kai Stars of Matariki: Tupuānuku and Tupuārangi* is a 32-page book that follows the bestseller *The Stolen Stars of Matariki* and the companion title *The Twin Stars of Matariki*. This story explores Māori traditions and beliefs in a contemporary way. Students will learn about Tupuānuku and Tupuārangi, the Matariki stars associated with food grown in the ground and from the sky. The author weaves the themes of the Māori New Year, intergenerational whānau relationships and the natural and supernatural world into the story, helping to enhance the understanding and connection to te ao Māori for everyone in Aotearoa New Zealand. Throughout the book, helpful glossaries feature at the bottom of the relevant pages to provide English definitions for some of the Māori words. The text is written in third person past tense, with present-tense dialogue between the characters. The story will appeal to readers aged 3+ and is also available in te reo Māori (*Ko ngā Whetū Kai o Matariki, ko Tupuānuku rāua ko Tupuārangi*).

The illustrator's colourful digital art has a wonderful graphic style and is created in watercolours and pencil and Adobe Illustrator using a Wacom tablet. The modern-looking characters work well for both the story's human characters and the supernatural, mystical patupaiarehe characters.

## Shared Learning and Discussion Points

Read the story aloud and have the students read alongside you or follow along as you read. Use some of the questions provided to help promote more in-depth discussions. Encourage the students to consider and discuss all of their blessings, as well as the plans or hopes that they have for the upcoming year. Explain that Matariki is the perfect time to reflect and plan ahead.

### ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the front cover and read the text on the back cover.

- What do you think this book is going to be about?
- What is the Matariki cluster? How many stars are in it?
- What do you notice about two of the stars in the cluster on the front cover?
- Which two stars do you think these will be?
- What foods might the family cook at the Matariki feast?
- What do you think the patupaiarehe characters on the back cover might be doing?

### COMPREHENSION:

- Have you ever heard of Te Mata Hāpuku? If you haven't, how would you go about finding out where it's located in Aotearoa New Zealand? Do you think the author has good or bad memories of Te Mata Hāpuku? Why do you say that? (p.3)
- What is a 'bach'? People in the South Island sometimes call a bach by another name. Do you know what that is? If there are lots of little baches in the area, would that mean that people come for holidays here or live here permanently? (p.3)
- Why might Te Mata Hāpuku be known as Birdling's Flat to some people? How do you learn about the history and place names of an area? (p.3)
- What does the word 'kai' mean? Point to the helpful glossary at the bottom of page 4. Read the meaning of the word 'kai'. What kai might Grandma be thinking there was all around them? (p.4)
- What does the word 'Pōua' mean? How could you find out? What do you call your grandfather? (p.5)
- What does the author mean when she says the lake has a 'glassy surface'? (p.5)
- Why do the children and their grandparents go eel hunting at night? What does that tell you about the lifestyle of eels? (p.6)
- The author uses alliteration to describe the wind. Alliteration is when two or more words that start with the same letter sound are used in a sentence for effect. What other words beginning with the letter w could she have used to describe the wind? She also uses alliteration to describe the 'sliding, slippery eels'. What other alliterative words could describe the eels? (pp.6-7)
- What are 'gaffs'? Have you ever used one before? (p.7)
- What does the word 'whata' mean? Read the glossary at the bottom of the page if the students are unfamiliar with the word. (p.7)
- Why might there be masses of stars where Grandma and Pōua live? How do the bright lights in the city affect how we can view the stars at night? (p.8)
- Do you know what the Matariki feast might be for? Have you had a Matariki feast with your whānau? (p.8)

- Why is it a good idea to plan for the future? What are your plans? Why do our plans often change and need to be revised on a regular basis? (p.9)
- It's important to give thanks for all our blessings. Why is that? What are you grateful for? Why do you think that you're blessed? Everyone's answers will vary. (p.9)
- What are the Waitī and Waitā stars of Matariki? Remind the students that these two special stars are connected to fresh water (such as rivers, streams and lakes) and the ocean, the living creatures within them and the food that is gathered from them. (p.9)
- What kai comes from the earth and the sky? What do you think Grandma means by that? (p.9)
- Look at the inset illustrations on pages 10–11. Why has the illustrator drawn these? Which one comes from the earth and which one comes from the sky? (pp.10–11)
- What does 'Āe rā' mean? How could you check your answer? (p.10)
- What is the Māori word for 'birds'? (p.11)
- Why would the eels be in a pit? Have you ever touched an eel? How did it feel? (p.13)
- The children were looking forward to the Matariki feast. What didn't they see lurking among the eels that were hanging on the whata? What do you think that pale character is going to do? (p.14)
- Have you had food that has been cooked in an umu? What did it taste like? (p.15)
- What do you think was making the noise that Te Rerehua and Sam could hear at the lake and what were they doing? Would you be scared if you heard noises beside a dark lake? Why or why not? (pp.16–17)
- What is a mingimingi bush? How could you find out if you didn't know? (p.18)
- What are patupaiarehe? Do you think they are real? Explain your answer. Talk about how patupaiarehe are fair-skinned mythical people who are like humans in their appearance. (p.18)
- Explain to the students that patupaiarehe are known as fairy folk. Why are the patupaiarehe eating the eels? How has the illustrator made the patupaiarehe stand out from Te Rerehua and Sam? (pp.18–19)
- If the patupaiarehe 'grinned wickedly', do you think they were sorry for what they had done? (p.20)
- What are the words 'schmack' and 'schlurp' examples of? (p.21)
- Do you agree with the patupaiarehe that they saved the tuna? Why or why not? (p.21)
- What do you think Te Rerehua will do and say next when the patupaiarehe claim that the eels don't run at Matariki? (p.23)
- What kind of characters are the patupaiarehe in this story – are they naughty or nice? Would you like to meet them? Why do you say that? (p.23)
- Why was Sam and Te Rerehua's solution to their problem a good one? Would you have done the same? Why or why not? (p.24)
- The patupaiarehe's fishing net is made of raupō. Have you heard of raupō? What is it? (p.25)
- On page 26, the type on a curve asks how they will make sure they don't come and steal it back later. What would your solution be to that problem? Read on to see if your solution is the same as the author's. (p.26)
- How does an umu cook food? What do you put over the food to create the steam? (p.26)
- Read the food lists on pages 29 and 30. How many of the foods listed have you eaten before? Which is your favourite? (pp.29–30)
- Why were the patupaiarehe angry? (p.31)
- Why do Matariki celebrations often happen at night? (p.32)
- What do you notice about the star pattern in the illustration? How many stars are there? Do you know the other Matariki stars? How could you find out more about them? (p.32)

### SEE NEXT PAGE FOR ACTIVITIES

# Activities

## ACTIVITY 1: MAP IT

Find Te Mata Hāpuku (Birdling’s Flat) and its surrounds on a map. Look for Te Waihora (Lake Ellesmere), Lake Wairewa (Lake Forsyth) and Kaitorete Spit. Now recreate your own small 3D relief map of the area out of salt dough. Find a recipe for salt dough and dye batches of it green (land), blue (lake), grey (stones) and orange (cliffs). Keep looking at a real map or photos for reference. Once your relief map is completed, you could add paper labels glued onto toothpicks and stick them in the different landmarks.

## ACTIVITY 2: A MATARIKI MENU

Matariki takes place in mid-winter, from late May to early July. On page 15, Grandma was expecting people to bring mountains of vegetables and juicy fruits fresh from their gardens to honour Tupuōnuku and Tupuārangi. On pages 29 and 30, the author lists lots of different foods that everybody brought to the Matariki feast. Draw six of the foods, including foods from both earth and sky (hint: elevated foods such as apples are ‘from the sky’). Cut a paper plate into a Matariki star shape. Draw your six chosen foods on the plate and label your food. Remember, when you’re planning a menu that you need to feature foods that are available in that particular growing season.

## ACTIVITY 3: THANKS, HOPES AND DREAMS

Grandma explained to Te Rerehua and Sam that Matariki is a time to stop work and focus on family. It is also a time to plan for the future and give thanks for the year that has just passed. Write down five things that you are grateful for and five things that are your hopes and dreams for the upcoming year.

## ACTIVITY 4: MĀORI DICTIONARY

A Māori dictionary is a resource that will help you learn and use everyday words in te reo Māori. Visit [www.maoridictionary.co.nz](http://www.maoridictionary.co.nz) to explore this excellent online bilingual dictionary. You can select MI and type in Māori words in order to get the equivalent English words and their definitions. You can also select EN and type in English words to get the equivalent Māori words and their definitions. Spend some time exploring this online resource. Choose five English words and five Māori words from the story and then get their English or Māori equivalent. Work alone or in pairs.

## ACTIVITY 5: FABULOUS FAIRY FOLK

Patupaiarehe are fairy folk. They are fair-skinned mythical people who are like humans in appearance. It is believed that they live in the bush on mountains. They don’t eat cooked food and are afraid of fires and sunlight. The illustrator Zak Waipara has done an amazing job of depicting the patupaiarehe in this story. Imagine that you’re the illustrator for this book and that you had to present your character sketches to the editor and designer of the publishing house. What would your patupaiarehe look like? Patupaiarehe can be slightly naughty, but they can also be nice and help people in trouble.

Written by Janine Scott