



The Learning Progression Frameworks describe significant signposts in reading and writing as students develop and apply their literacy knowledge and skills with increasing expertise from school entry to the end of year 10. This teacher support material (TSM) describes the opportunities in “Mariri, the Flying Man” for students to develop this expertise.

Overview

When Mariri, a great explorer, realises his homeland of ‘Avaiki has become overcrowded, he and his warriors set off to find a new home for their people. This traditional tale, featuring rich literary language, describes their discovery of an island (now called Atiu) and Mariri’s subsequent, extraordinary plan for getting back to ‘Avaiki to bring his wife to the island.

This text requires students to “confidently use a range of processing and comprehension strategies to make meaning from and think critically about” text (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 14).

There is a PDF of this text and an audio version as an MP3 file at www.juniorjournal.tki.org.nz

Related texts

Other traditional tales: *Mauī and the Sun* (RTR Purple); “Hinemoa and Tutanekei” (JJ 46); “Chang-O and the Moon” (JJ 56); “Rātā me te Rākau” (JJ 57); “Nian, the New Year Monster” (JJ 60); “Baskets of Fire” (SJ L2 Nov 2018)

Stories with connections to the Cook Islands: *A Quilt for Kiri* (RTR Purple); *A Gift for Aunty Ngā* (RTR Gold); “The Sons of Ma’afu” (SJ L2 Oct 2015); “Stealing Maru” (SJ L2 Aug 2019)

Text characteristics

“Mariri, the Flying Man” includes the following features that help students develop the reading behaviours expected at Gold and build knowledge of the structure and language of literary texts.

A mix of explicit and implicit content that requires students to make connections between information in the story and their prior knowledge to make predictions and inferences

Features of a traditional tale, such as storytelling language, the setting in the distant past, a hero, a challenging task, talking animals, and unusual or magical events

Ideas organised in paragraphs and a variety of sentence structures, requiring students to attend to punctuation and linking words and phrases (for example, “whose”, “where”, “once”, “Instead”, “which means”, “As”, “Then”, “But”, “Soon”, “now known as”) to track events and clarify connections between ideas

The inclusion of a map and a note addressed directly to the reader about present-day Atiu

Some words and phrases, including some in Cook Islands Māori, that may be unfamiliar (for example, “Mariri”, “explorer”, “‘Avaiki”, “generations”, “warriors”, “vaka”, “rakoa”, “potipoti”, “Enuamanu”, “flock”, “swarm”, “tutu tree”, “plucked”, “magnificent”, “pride”, “launched”, “Au-ē!”, “imitation”, “shamed”, “straightened”, “towering”, “Te Kurikuri”, “Aaarrggghhh!”, “gust”, “beneath”, “soared”, “horizon”, “embraced”, “Atiu”, “ancestors”), requiring students to apply their reading processing system

But as he looked upwards, he saw a towering hill, now known as Te Kurikuri (The Seabird). The hill reached up into the sky. Mariri picked up his wings and began climbing. When he reached the top, he looked out over the island. “Yes,” he thought again, “my wife will be happy here.” He tied his wings back on.

“Silly man!” squawked the potipoti and rakoa. For a moment, Mariri was worried they were right. He felt panic. “This hill is so high. Auē!” Then he remembered his wife, and he took a deep breath, spread his wings wide, and stepped forward off the side of the hill.

“Aaarrggghhh!” He fell like a stone towards the ground far below. Down, down, down ... but then, a gust of wind collected beneath his wings, lifting Mariri high into the sky. He flapped his rakoa wings and soared through the air. “I’m flying!” he cried. He circled the island once and then turned towards ‘Avaiki.

For part of his flight, the potipoti and rakoa flew along beside him, no longer laughing at his imitation wings.



Language features that enable students to apply and extend their vocabulary knowledge:

- literary phrasing (for example, “Long, long ago, there lived ...”, “For many months”, “They found no people”, “lifted his face to the sky”, “no longer laughing”)
- some less common irregular verbs (“spent”, “stood”, “bent”, “wept”, “known”, “felt”, “spread”)
- explanations in parentheses

Cross-curriculum links

English (Reading)

Level 2 – Processes and strategies: Selects and reads texts for enjoyment and personal fulfilment.

Level 2 – Language features: Show some understanding of how language features are used for effect within and across texts.



The New Zealand Curriculum

Suggested reading purpose

What can the students expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?

- To find out who Mariri was and why he is called the “flying man”

Possible learning goals

What opportunities does this text provide for students to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?

The goals listed below link to the descriptions of reading behaviours in *The Literacy Learning Progressions* and the [Learning Progression Frameworks](#). **Select from and adapt** them according to your students’ strengths, needs, and experiences – their culture, language, and identity (*The Literacy Learning Progressions*, page 7).

This text provides opportunities for students, over several readings, to:

- **make connections** between their prior knowledge and information in the story to **make predictions and inferences**
- use information in the text and illustrations to track (**summarise**) and **visualise** events
- identify and discuss (**analyse**) some aspects that make this a traditional tale
- **monitor** their reading and, when something is unclear, take action to solve the problem, for example, by checking further sources of information, rereading, and/or reading on.



Sounds and Words



The Literacy Learning Progressions

Introducing the story

Before introducing this story to your students, you could listen to the [audio version](#) to familiarise yourself with the pronunciation of any Cook Islands words you may be unsure of.

Use your knowledge of your students to ensure that your introduction to the story is effective in building or activating their prior knowledge and providing appropriate support for a successful first reading. Several options are provided below for you to **select from and adapt**. A short video on the importance of introducing the text is available at <https://vimeo.com/142446572>

For English language learners, you could discuss the title and the illustrations before the whole-group session to build confidence with vocabulary and to provide support with text features that may be unfamiliar. You can find further information about features of texts that may need support at [ELLP](#).

- Read the title and the author byline. Draw out what the students know about the Cook Islands. (You could look at the map on page 27, use a bigger map to clarify where the Cook Islands are in relation to New Zealand, or use Google Earth to see what the Atiu landscape looks like.)

- Encourage the students to share anything they know about the tale of Mariri. Make connections to familiar traditional tales, such as “Rātā me te Rākau” or “Maui and the Sun”, and briefly review some common features. Encourage debate about whether Mariri will really fly in this tale.
- Use the title and the illustrations on pages 20–21 to speculate about who, what, where, and why. Record questions or predictions the students have about the story. Together, set a reading purpose.
- Tell the students that, in addition to the name “Mariri”, this tale includes some words in Cook Islands Māori. You could write the place names “Avaiki” and “Enuamanu” and support the students in reading them by drawing attention to the glottal stop in “Avaiki”, breaking the words into smaller chunks, and drawing on the students’ knowledge of vowel sounds in te reo Māori. You could also use the illustration to introduce the word “vaka” and discuss the similarity to the Māori word “waka”. Reassure the students that you will discuss unfamiliar words together after the first reading.
- The students could start reading from this point. Alternatively, if you feel they need additional support, you could discuss further pages, keeping in mind that the illustrations on pages 24–25 will give away the answer to the question of whether Mariri can really fly. Give the students sticky notes to mark words or note ideas they might want to return to or discuss later.

Reading the story

Observe the students as they read the story by themselves, intervening only if it's clear a student needs help. During the first reading, the focus is on students experiencing and enjoying the story, rather than on totally accurate word-solving. Much of the processing that they do at this level is “inside their heads” and may not be obvious until the discussion afterwards. There will be many opportunities to provide support with word-solving and comprehension on subsequent readings.

Student behaviours

Examples of the sorts of behaviours (often overlapping and developed over several readings) that will help students achieve their learning goal(s).

The students use information in the text and illustrations to track and visualise events.

- They clarify who, where, what, and when on page 20.
- They use the references to time on pages 20–21 (such as “spent months”, “Finally”, “For many months”, “at last”, “a long time”) to clarify the immensity of the journey (and why Mariri wants to think of a quicker way to travel back to ‘Avaiki).
- They use the description and illustration on page 23 to help them visualise how Mariri is making the wings.
- They recognise that there are two challenges facing Mariri – finding a new place to live and then working out how he can fly.

They make connections between their prior knowledge and information in the story to make predictions and inferences.

- They use clues – such as the story title, the description of Mariri on page 20, his recognition of the need to find a new place to live, the references to “his warriors” and “his men”, and the fact that he names the island – to infer that Mariri is a leader and to predict that he will be the hero of the story.
- On page 22 (when Mariri decides to fly back to ‘Avaiki), they use their knowledge of the structure of traditional tales to predict it will take several attempts to achieve this goal but that he will eventually succeed.

- They make connections to their own experiences of challenges and determination to infer why it was important to Mariri to keep trying.
- They use key words and phrases (such as “felt sad”, “missed her”, “proudly”, “shamed”, “puffed”, “wept”, “worried”, “panic”, “deep breath”, “embraced”, “smiled”) to infer Mariri’s feelings across the tale.

They demonstrate self-monitoring and problem solving.

- They use a range of word-solving strategies, for example:
 - they break longer words into chunks or syllables (“gen-er-a-tions”, “E-nu-a-ma-nu”, “mag-nif-i-cent”, “hor-i-zon”)
 - they notice similarities to known words to build understanding of “vaka” (waka), “shamed” (ashamed)
 - they use the illustrations, the context of the sentence, and/or definitions in parentheses to support the meaning of the Cook Islands words “rakoa birds”, “potipoti”, “Enuamanu”, “tutu tree”, and “Te Kurikuri”.
- They reread or read on and check punctuation and linking words to clarify meaning, particularly in sentences with literary phrasing (for example, “a great explorer whose name was Mariri”, “‘Avaiki, where his people had lived”, “somewhere new – a place with ...”, “They found no people”, “it was alive with”).
- They mark words or phrases they are not sure of or aspects of interest that they want to come back to.

Deliberate acts of teaching

How you can support individual students (if needed).

- Remind the students of strategies they can use for word-solving (for example, looking for the biggest known word chunk and applying their knowledge of letters, sounds, and word structure) and for clarifying meaning (rereading or reading on, referring to the illustrations, and/or thinking about the overall meaning of the sentence or paragraph). If necessary, provide specific support, for example, reassuring them about the literary phrasing or the pronunciation of any unfamiliar Cook Islands Māori vocabulary.

Discussing and rereading the story

You can revisit this story several times, providing opportunities for the students to build comprehension, vocabulary, and fluency. **Select from and adapt** the following suggestions according to your students’ needs and responses to the reading. Some of the suggestions overlap, and several can be explored further as after-reading activities.  For some suggestions, you may find it helpful to project the PDF of the story so that you can zoom in on relevant sections.

- Encourage the students to share their responses to the tale. Have them briefly summarise the storyline (who, what, where, why), in particular, what made Mariri decide to become a “flying man” and how he went about achieving this.
- Ask the students to think, pair, and share one or two examples each of new words they noticed in the story. Work through some examples together, modelling ways of clarifying meaning, such as using the context of the sentence and the paragraph, making connections to their prior knowledge, and reading on to look for further information. Provide support with Cook Islands Māori words as necessary.
- Encourage the students to think critically, for example:
 - What clues helped you to work out that Mariri was going to be the hero in this tale?
 - What aspects of this story could be true? (For example, long distance ocean travel in vaka, seeking new lands, the place names, connections to other explorers). Draw out the idea that traditional tales are sometimes based on real events.
 - How is this tale the same as or different from other traditional tales you know?

- Have the students reread the story, stopping to discuss points of interest, including those they have marked with sticky notes. For example:
 - predictions or inferences they made (or changed) as they were reading
 - information about what Mariri is like. Focus first on pages 20–21 and ask the students to share their inferences (for example, he’s an explorer, brave, clever, good at making things, married, caring, a problem-solver, a leader). Together, highlight supporting evidence (explicit and implicit) on a copy of the text. Record their ideas (and their evidence) on a chart. The students could add their inferences for subsequent pages as an after-reading activity.
 - descriptive language, such as adjectives, vivid verbs, and adverbs (“Finally”, “gracefully”, “quickly”, “carefully”, “proudly”) that helped them visualise aspects of the story
 - examples of storytelling language:
 - » literary words and phrases (for example, “there lived”, “I will return”, “they found no people”, “alive with”, “a fine place”, “lifted his face to the sky”, “the wind caught his wings”, “no longer laughing”). Support the students in changing the phrases to less formal language to clarify their meanings. For example, “there lived a great explorer” could become “Mariri was a great explorer”; “I will return” could become “I’ll be back”.
 - » sentences with multiple phrases. Together, explore how phrases are connected, for example: by linking words (“a great explorer whose name was Mariri”; “in ‘Avaiki, where his people had lived ...”); by commas (“he filled the wing shapes with feathers, plucked from the rakoa”); or by dashes (“time to find somewhere new – a place with ...”; “Mariri and his warriors spent months building a vaka – a huge vaka ...”). Model phrasing and intonation as you reread the sentences together.
 - how the students worked out (or tried to work out) unfamiliar words. You could draw attention to such aspects as:
 - » the several different sounds for “c” in “ocean”, “circling”, “ancestors”, “magnificent”
 - » the irregular past-tense verbs (“spent”, “stood”, “bent”, “wept”, “known”, “felt”, “spread”). Discuss their root words and remind the students that some words in English can’t have “ed” added.
 - » the collective nouns (“flock” and “swarm”). Enjoy exploring other examples (a herd of cows, a pack of dogs, a school of fish, a pride of lions, and so on).

After reading: Practice and reinforcement

After-reading tasks should arise from your monitoring of the students during the lesson and provide purposeful practice and reinforcement. Where possible, make links to other texts, including texts generated by the students, and to the wider literacy programme (for example, oral language, writing, handwriting, and word games and activities) and other curriculum areas. **Select from and adapt** these suggestions, according to the needs of your students.

For English language learners, [SELLIPS](#) and [ELIP](#) also have ideas for purposeful and relevant tasks.

- Provide many opportunities for students to reread this tale and other related texts. The students can build their comprehension and fluency by rereading the story while listening to the [audio version](#).

Audio versions are particularly supportive for English language learners because, as well as clarifying pronunciation, they provide good models of the prosodic features of English, such as intonation, stress, and phrasing.

- You could have the students work together to dramatise the tale. Encourage them to make up sound effects for wind, waves, birds, and insects and actions to convey emotions such as despair or joy. One student might read the tale aloud while others create the sound effects.  The students could create their own audio or video version.
- Encourage the students to retell the story using some props and literary phrase prompts on cards, for example:

Long, long ago, there lived	“I will return”	sailed the ocean
They found no people	It was alive with ...	a fine place to live.
“I will fly!”	plucked from the rakoa	“Silly man, with your imitation wings”
He lifted his face to the sky and wept.	no longer laughing	lived very happily

- To further explore the literary language, the students could work in pairs to turn examples from the story into contemporary language.

- Have the students create a cartoon strip summary of the story. Alternatively they could draw and write about how Mariri was feeling at three different times in the tale.  They could use Google Slides or Google Drawing to complete this task.
- Have the students work in pairs to complete the chart of inferences about Mariri, with each pair working on a printout of a double-page spread.
- The students could compare this tale with another familiar tale or legend, for example, “Rātā me te Rākau”, “Maui and the Sun”, or “Chang-O and the Moon”.  You could use Google Docs to create and share a comparison chart, such as the one below.

Common features of traditional tales	“Mariri, the Flying Man”	[Another tale]
Setting (time and place)		
Challenging tasks		
Problems		
Unusual powers or events		
What the hero is like		
Talking animals		
Ending		

- You could support the students in finding out more about aspects of particular interest, such as Atiu, rakoā, or potipoti.
- The students could work in pairs to create a labelled diagram or flow chart showing how Mariri made his wings.
- To build confidence with literary sentence structures, have the students add appropriate linking words to examples, as in the table below. They could use the words from the story (as listed below the table) or choose their own examples.

First phrase	Linking words	Second phrase
Long, long ago there lived a great explorer		name was Mariri.
Mariri lived in 'Avaiki,		his people had lived for many generations.
"I will return,		we have found another home for our people."
Mariri named the island Enuamanu,		"island of birds and creatures".
Mariri felt shamed,		he didn't give up.
He saw a towering hill,		Te Kurikuri.
Mariri's wife was standing on the beach		she saw something far away on the horizon.

Linking words (in random order): "when", "whose", "but", "once", "which means", "now known as", "where".