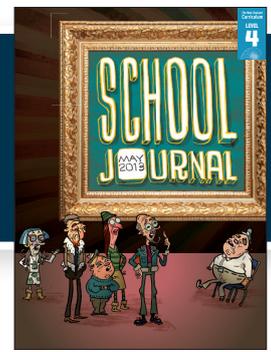


# Tūto‘atasi: The Struggle for Sāmoa’s Independence

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School Journal  
Level 4, May 2013  
Year 8



## Overview

The people of Sāmoa celebrated fifty years of independence in 2012. This article tells the complex story of colonisation and decolonisation that saw Sāmoa controlled by Germany, and then New Zealand, before finally securing self-rule. The former rulers enforced unpopular laws and punished dissent harshly. In addition, thousands of Samoans died of influenza as a result of poor quarantine practices under New Zealand’s rule. The article recounts the determination of the Samoan people to regain their homeland and to govern in their own way, based on

the values of fa’asāmoa. New Zealand’s relationship with Sāmoa is an important part of Pasifika history, and the article will give rise to much discussion of the ways people make decisions that impact on communities. Students may have personal and family knowledge to share, and it would be helpful to work with local Samoan community groups to discuss issues raised by the article.

Texts related by theme

“Switching Sides” SJ 4.1.11 | “The White Truck” SJ L4 Oct 2011 | “The Call of the Conch” SJ 3.2.10

## Text characteristics from the year 8 reading standard

sentences that vary in length, including long, complex sentences that contain a lot of information

non-continuous text structures and mixed text types

adverbial clauses or connectives that require students to make links across the whole text



1935: The first Labour government is elected in New Zealand. It is sympathetic to the Mau movement and makes some positive changes. Mau leaders are able to return from exile, and the people of Sāmoa are allowed to have some participation in government.

1941–1945: The Japanese attack the United States naval base in Hawai‘i, and the Second World War spreads throughout the Pacific.

1947: The United Nations announces a new era in international politics, declaring its commitment to the right of all people to have self-determination. A UN mission visits Sāmoa.

1948: The Samoan flag is raised alongside the New Zealand flag at Mulinu‘u, Apia, to symbolise the country’s move towards independence.



academic and content-specific vocabulary



### Women’s Mau

At the height of New Zealand’s crackdown on the Mau movement, most of its leaders were either detained, in exile, or in hiding. Although they feared for their lives, Samoan women decided to take over the work of the movement. They wanted to keep the hope of independence alive. These women (many of whom had been key leaders all along) did much of the organising, fund-raising, and marching. The women’s Mau ensured that the protesting continued – and that the pressure didn’t let up.



### The Second World War

After the Japanese attacked Pearl Harbor and invaded other parts of the Pacific, New Zealand knew it might have to defend Sāmoa. The New Zealand government turned to its powerful ally – the United States – for help. Within just a few months, the United States had sent thousands of soldiers to Sāmoa. At one point, there were almost as many soldiers as locals on the islands.

Although the Japanese never invaded Sāmoa, it was still a busy time there. To prepare for its defence, soldiers built many roads and ports – and the island’s first airport dates from this time. The soldiers also had their own money to spend, and the local economy boomed. But there was a downside to all this activity. Some of the close-knit communities of Sāmoa – especially the villages that bore the brunt of the “friendly occupation” – found the large number of military personnel disruptive. The soldiers were not always very good at respecting fa’asāmoa.

words and phrases with multiple meanings that require students to know and use effective word-solving strategies to retain their focus on meaning

complex layers of meaning, and/or information that is irrelevant to the identified purpose for reading (that is, competing information), requiring students to infer meanings or make judgments

Reading standard: by the end of year 8

## Possible curriculum contexts

### SOCIAL SCIENCES (Social Studies)

Level 4: Understand how formal and informal groups make decisions that impact on communities.

### ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 4 – Ideas: Show an increasing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

### ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 4 – Ideas: Select, develop, and communicate ideas on a range of topics.

### Possible reading purposes

- To learn about Sāmoa's recent history and New Zealand's role in it
- To understand the impact that the decisions of others can have on communities
- To learn about the way fa'asāmoa is expressed in the governance of Sāmoa.

See [Instructional focus – Reading](#) for illustrations of some of these reading purposes.

### Possible writing purposes

- To explore the way decisions are made in another country or community
- To explore the role of women in changing or maintaining a community.

See [Instructional focus – Writing](#) for illustrations of some of these writing purposes.

## Text and language challenges

### VOCABULARY:

- Possibly unfamiliar words or phrases, including “colony”, “govern”, “colonial government”, “regain”, “resistance movement”, “officials”, “exiled”, “influenza epidemic”, “nurture”, “unique”, “deadly strain”, “quarantine”, “global”, “Ordinance”, “banish”, “founding moment”, “petition”, “League of Nations”, “seeditious”, “peaceful resistance”, “sympathetic”, “participation”, “era”, “self-determination”, “mission”, “symbolise”, “crackdown”, “ally”, “downside”, “friendly occupation”, “disruptive”, “constitution”, “cabinet”, “decolonised”, “democracy”, “matai”, “chiefly lines”, “jointly appointed”
- Samoan words: “Tūto’atasi”, “Papālagi”, “fa’asāmoa”
- The Samoan names of people and organisations
- The idiomatic expressions: “stood as one”, “put down his weapons”, “economy boomed”.

### Possible supporting strategies

Preview the text to identify words and concepts that your students may find challenging. Select a small number of key words, such as “independence”, “colony”, “seeditious”, “resistance”, “occupation”, and “democracy” to focus on. Feed in these words during pre-reading discussions. Provide a definition for each word (ensuring that your definitions apply in the context of the article) and ask students to record the words and definitions in a notebook. Give pairs of students cloze sentences and have them fill in the gaps with the correct words from their list. Reinforce the meanings during reading, then explore further nuances in a range of contexts after reading.

Tell the students the article contains gagana Sāmoa (Samoan language).

Depending on the knowledge of your students, provide support for pronunciation and meanings. You could use an online resource or staff, students, parents, or other community members. You could construct a word list with the students, for example, for the Samoan names and words or for English words associated with governance.

*The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.

### SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED:

- Knowledge of colonisation and the policies and practices that go with it
- Knowledge of the governance arrangements of countries, including Sāmoa
- Knowledge of the history of nations in the Pacific region
- The concept of fa’asāmoa
- Understanding of the concepts of “independence” and “self-determination” and their importance to nations and communities
- Knowledge of influenza and the global epidemic in 1918.

### Possible supporting strategies

Prompt discussion about colonisation: what the word means, and how and why it operated. Discuss the impacts that exploration, trade, wars, and invasions have had on countries and communities, using New Zealand as an example. Feed in key vocabulary and provide students with support (see above) according to their needs.

Use photos from the text as prompts to preview the content and the vocabulary. Select three to five photos and put a copy of each at the top of poster paper. Give small groups a poster each, and a time frame, to discuss and write notes on the poster about what their photo shows and what it makes them think about. Have each group pass their poster to the next group. They read the previous groups’ notes and add their own. Continue until each group has written about each photo. Display all of the photos and discuss their ideas.

Elicit or build knowledge of Sāmoa and why it celebrated independence in 2012. Invite students who have experiences of Sāmoa to share these and make links to the article.

### TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE:

- The author’s viewpoint (and the language that reflects this)
- The use of headings to mark themes and topics
- The timeline that shows the sequence of events described in the body of the text
- Historical and contemporary photos, with captions
- The density and complexity of the information
- A broad range of mostly past verb forms
- A wide range of language signalling relationships between ideas, for example, “However, the colonial government”, “Instead”, “And so”.

### Possible supporting strategies

Support the students to identify contrasting values and to understand that the text is presenting a factual history from a Samoan perspective.

Support the students to identify the author’s point of view. Identify any language that suggests a particular purpose for writing.

Support the students to identify links between sentences and paragraphs. Ask questions to identify the words or phrases that signal the links. Draw circles around them with lines back to the parts of the text they connect with. Identify and label any relationships (for example cause and effect) between the ideas. You could start making charts of structures and or words or phrases that can signal relationships.

# Instructional focus – Reading

**Social Sciences** (Social Studies, level 4: Understand how formal and informal groups make decisions that impact upon communities.)

**English** (Level 4 – Ideas: Show an increasing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.)

## Text excerpts from “Tūto’atasi”

In 2012, the people of Sāmoa celebrated their country’s fiftieth year of tūto’atasi (independence). They were remembering the moment they finally stood again as one. This struggle for independence had taken over sixty long years – and it had cost some people their lives.

**1905:** The German governor dismisses the members of the Fono a Faipule (a kind of local parliament). He says they should only come to Apia when he calls them.

**1909:** ... Germans officials react harshly. On 29 March, Lauaki is exiled ... to the distant German colony of Saipan in Micronesia.

... under New Zealand rule, quarantine was poorly managed. As a result, Western Sāmoa suffered one of the highest influenza death rates in the world, with one in five people dying.

**1922:** The Samoan Offenders Ordinance, one of many harsh New Zealand laws, is passed. The act is used to banish dozens of Samoan chiefs from their villages ...

However, when Sāmoa became independent, only matai were allowed to vote or become members of parliament (MPs). Some people said this wasn’t very democratic, so all Samoans over the age of twenty-one voted to see if this was what they really wanted. It was.

In 1990, the voting system in Sāmoa changed. Now, everyone over the age of twenty-one – and not just matai – can vote, although MPs must still be matai.

## Students (what they might do)

The students **make connections** between the text, their knowledge of Sāmoa, and their understanding of the concept of independence to **hypothesise**. They predict that the text will provide the history of what happened. They **ask questions** about why it took sixty years and how it cost people their lives, and then they search for answers as they read.

The students **integrate** pieces of information about colonial rule in Sāmoa. They **synthesise** the information to understand why Samoans resisted this. They consider this idea and draw on their own knowledge, values, and experiences to **evaluate** colonial rule and the impact it had on Sāmoa.

The students **ask questions** about the impact of colonial rule and how it ended.

The students **make connections** between the text and what they already know about elections and democracy. They **integrate** these ideas to **infer** that the people took time to accept democratic elections. They **ask and answer questions** about why this might be so.

## Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

**ASK QUESTIONS** to help the students hypothesise and ask questions as they read.

- What does “independence” mean in this context?
- Why would independence be a struggle?
- What do you expect to read about in this article?
- What is your purpose for reading the text?

Remind students to keep their purpose in mind as they read and to check their hypotheses. Make a mind map with “tūto’atasi” in the middle to support the students to make connections with the text.

- What connections can you make to the ideas in the text?

Write the students’ suggestions on the mind map and ask them to add to it as they read the text.

**ASK QUESTIONS** to support students to synthesise and evaluate ideas and information.

- Why did Sāmoa resist being ruled by Germany and New Zealand? What evidence is there about this?
- What impact did the influenza epidemic have on how Samoans regarded their rulers?
- Why do you think Germany and New Zealand were such harsh rulers?
- Based on this text and what has been discussed, what conclusions can you make about the colonial rulers of Sāmoa?
- What values or experiences helped you to evaluate the idea of colonial rule?
- What do you think happened once Sāmoa became independent?

Return to your mind map and make a sub-branch for “resisting colonial rule”. Ask students to contribute ideas about the values and reasons behind Samoan resistance.

Support students to use a graphic organiser like the example below to track, compare, and evaluate the information about resistance to colonial rule.

resistance	reason	response

**PROMPT** the students to continue using information from the text, their own knowledge, and any other sources of information to synthesise the ideas in the text and evaluate the changes in Sāmoa.

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- You listed the pros and cons of colonial rule. That’s a good way to clarify and synthesise ideas.
- Your personal connections with Sāmoa helped you understand the matai system and how it has changed in recent times. Thank you for sharing your knowledge.
- Rereading and comparing information from different sections of the text helped answer some of your questions. How might you answer any further questions?

## METACOGNITION

- Work with a partner. Using one spread from the article, work through the text to explain what predictions and inferences you made and the questions you had.
- Tell your partner how you were able to combine information from the text with your own ideas to evaluate the events in the article. How did this help you meet your purposes for reading?

# Instructional focus – Writing

**Social Sciences** (Social Studies, level 4: Understand how formal and informal groups make decisions that impact upon communities.)

**English** (Level 4 – Ideas: Select, develop, and communicate ideas on a range of topics.)

## Text excerpts from “Tūto’atasi”

### Strange Days

It was a strange day in 1900 when the people of Sāmoa first learnt that their country no longer belonged to them. Amazingly, this decision had been made around a table in Berlin, Germany – almost as far from Sāmoa as you can get – by foreign rulers who had been competing for control of the islands. No one had asked the Samoan people what they wanted. No one from Sāmoa had even been invited to the meeting.

### Influenza

When soldiers returned from Europe at the end of the First World War, they carried with them a new and deadly strain of influenza ... For island nations like Sāmoa, which had few visits from ships, careful quarantine might have avoided any deaths ...

Only a few miles away, in American Sāmoa, quarantine was effective and no one died.

1918: 8500 Samoans die in the influenza epidemic that is sweeping across the globe.

1920: The League of Nations ... officially recognises New Zealand’s control over Sāmoa.

## Examples of text characteristics

### IDEAS

*Strong ideas for writing that enable the writer to engage the reader through interesting information or a range of perspectives.*

### SELECTING SUBTOPICS

*The “big idea” of an article is supported by several sub-topics. They are chosen for their effectiveness in illustrating the big idea.*

### MAKING COMPARISONS

*Providing readers with a comparison helps them to understand the importance of an event. Writers choose a comparison in which many things are the same but one or two critical factors can highlight a huge difference.*

### TIMELINE

A timeline allows a writer to show a large amount of information in a very organised way. It can show a sequence of related events, and provide information concisely. More detailed and descriptive information can be found in the body of the text.

The present tense is often used in a timeline, giving an “on the spot” effect as if the writer is reporting from that place and date.

## Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

**PROMPT** the students to consider their writing intentions.

- What is your overall purpose for writing on this topic? Think about the “big” purposes for writing and use them to clarify your overall purpose. Do you want to inform, persuade, entertain, explain, describe, or instruct?
- How do you want your readers to feel or think as a result of reading your work?
- What specific things do you want your audience to know? Why?
- Does the topic interest you? If not, it may be better to choose a different idea or to come up with an interesting perspective on the idea.

**ASK QUESTIONS** to support the students as they choose or reject sub-topics.

- What criteria can you use to decide which sub-topics to write about?
- Share your criteria with the group. Do you all have a similar list?
- When you’ve made your choices, how do you find the information?

**PROMPT** the students to consider using a comparison to make a point.

- In this extract, the writer shows that the death toll in Sāmoa is in dramatic contrast to the situation a few miles away in American Sāmoa. Are there places in your writing where a comparison would give a fact more impact?

**DIRECT** the students to create a timeline. If two or more students are working on the same topic, ask them to work together on the key events and dates.

- Which events could you put in the timeline?
- Are they all directly related to the big idea, or are they interesting side tracks? Remember to keep to the key events or actions to avoid confusing your readers.
- What time frames (days, months, years, or longer) will help your readers understand the sequence of events?
- When you’re both happy with the outline, start writing your entries.
- How can you make your entries concise? Try a few different ways of wording an entry and choose the one that is short but gives the essential facts.
- Try using the present tense: does this give the timeline more impact?

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- Your “big idea” was getting too big! By selecting sub-topics, you’ve brought it back to a manageable scope that will still meet your writing purpose.
- The timeline looks clear, and the entries you’ve written so far will help your readers to understand what happened.

### METACOGNITION

- Tell me why you chose to make this comparison. What effect did you want it to have?
- Show me where you revised and deleted unnecessary information. How has this helped you meet your writing purpose?
- What new understandings have you gained from researching and writing about this topic?

 **Writing standard: by the end of year 8**  
 **The Literacy Learning Progressions**