

**A WELLBEING ADVENTURE  
GUIDED BY ATUA MĀORI**

An adventure story guided by atua Māori. A book for parents, teachers and therapists to read to tamariki aged six to eight years. Helping tamariki learn about connecting with themselves, others and the environment and to learn how to respond to their emotions

# KEI WHEA A MAURI TAU?

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# KEI WHEA A MAURI TAU?

*Where is Mauri Tau?*

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## KEI WHEA A MAURI TAU?

*Where is Mauri Tau?*

Tamarere is an eight year old boy who is on a quest to find Mauri Tau, a magical mōkai – pet – of Tāne-mahuta, god of forests, birds and people. Tamarere is upset because he can't visit his nanny and koro and he misses them. Tamarere's mother, Māia, tells him that when she was a little girl, she could always find Mauri Tau when she needed him the most.

Mauri Tau has magical powers that children can use when they're upset. He is fluffy, with huge colourful wings, soft eyes, and a warm smile. Everyone who spends time with Mauri Tau feels so much better. Tāne-mahuta named his mōkai Mauri Tau because he's filled with the same energy that's in everything.

There's energy in the wind, the trees, the sun, and people. This energy is called Mauri. You also have mauri in you. Sometimes it is noho, so it's slow and doesn't want to do anything. Maybe you want a rest or maybe you feel pouri - sad. This is called mauri noho.

Sometimes your mauri can feel oho, which is tutū - jumpy, uncomfortable or agitated, or just hihiko - energetic like when you want to do things. You can also be āwangawanga - worried or riri - angry - and you can be harikoa - happy or experiencing wana - excited or inspired. This is called mauri oho.

Right in the middle of noho and oho is where Mauri Tau likes to be. When you're in the middle Mauri Tau will come and look for you because you're Tau - settled and calm. That's when you'll see him.

Tamarere is mauri oho. He's upset and mokemoke - lonely - because he's missing his grandparents.

Would you like to help Tamarere find Mauri Tau so that he can feel better?

Mauri Tau likes to visit all of Tāne-mahuta's whānau - ngā atua - the Gods - so you'll need to visit them, complete some magical tasks, and then they'll give you clues to help find him.

## TE TĪMATANGA - THE BEGINNING

This adventure starts in your imagination, so you need to be comfortable and relaxed. Mauri Tau is easier to find when you're lying down. You're going to imagine you're meeting the atua, who will give you clues about where to find Mauri Tau.

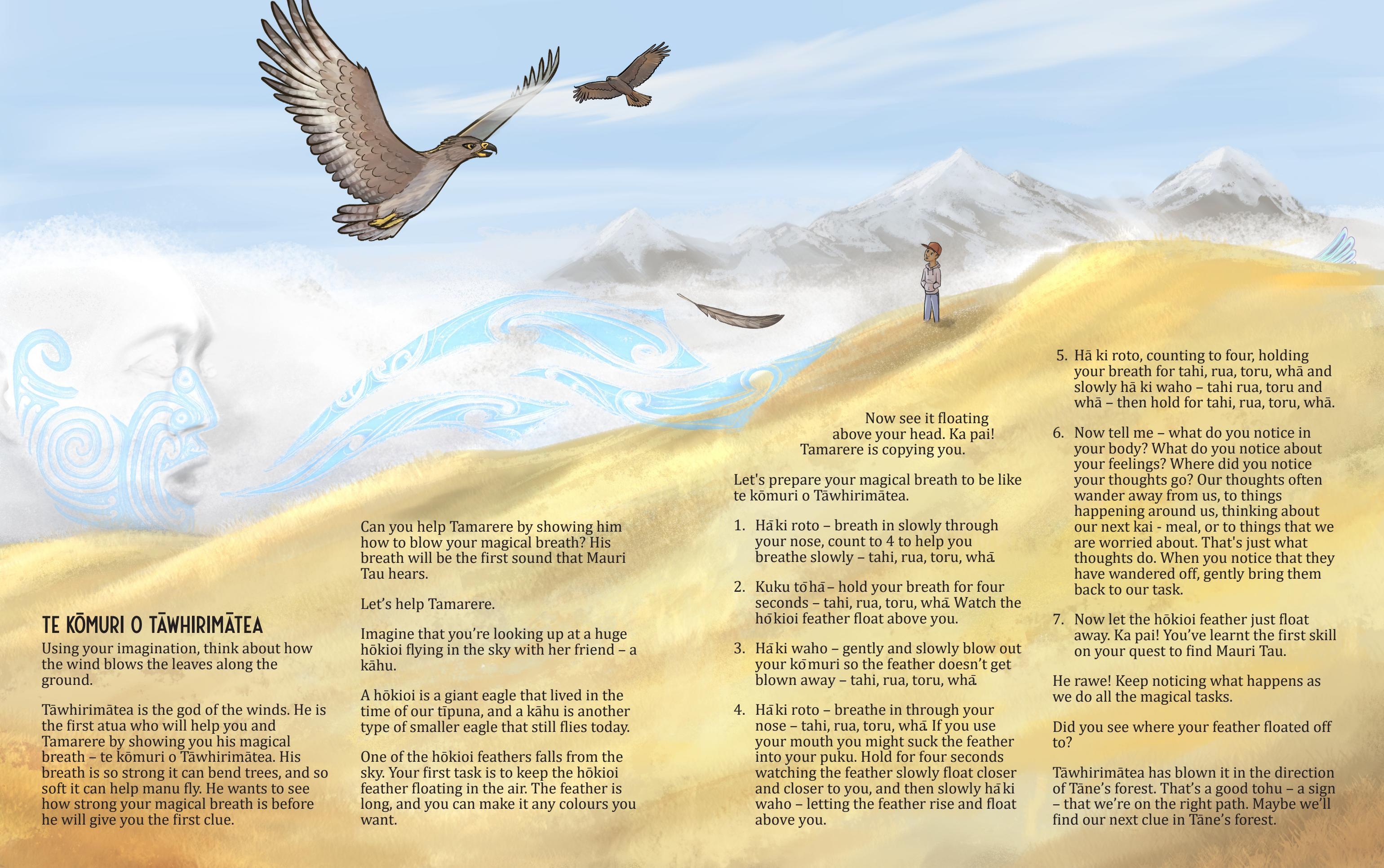
To help you get comfortable, listen to what your body is telling you. What can you feel in your body, in your puku, your shoulders or chest?

Do you notice any kare-ā-roto - feelings like harikoa- happy, hihiko - energetic, pouri - sad, or āwangawanga - worried or anxious?

Are you in mauri noho, mauri tau, or mauri oho?

Good noticing! Now let's go on a quest to find Mauri Tau.





## TE KŌMURI O TĀWHIRIMĀTEA

Using your imagination, think about how the wind blows the leaves along the ground.

Tāwhirimātea is the god of the winds. He is the first atua who will help you and Tamarere by showing you his magical breath – te kōmuri o Tāwhirimātea. His breath is so strong it can bend trees, and so soft it can help manu fly. He wants to see how strong your magical breath is before he will give you the first clue.

Can you help Tamarere by showing him how to blow your magical breath? His breath will be the first sound that Mauri Tau hears.

Let's help Tamarere.

Imagine that you're looking up at a huge hōkioi flying in the sky with her friend – a kāhu.

A hōkioi is a giant eagle that lived in the time of our tīpuna, and a kāhu is another type of smaller eagle that still flies today.

One of the hōkioi feathers falls from the sky. Your first task is to keep the hōkioi feather floating in the air. The feather is long, and you can make it any colours you want.

Now see it floating above your head. Ka pai! Tamarere is copying you.

Let's prepare your magical breath to be like te kōmuri o Tāwhirimātea.

1. Hāki roto – breath in slowly through your nose, count to 4 to help you breathe slowly – tahi, rua, toru, whā.
2. Kuku tōhā – hold your breath for four seconds – tahi, rua, toru, whā. Watch the hōkioi feather float above you.
3. Hāki waho – gently and slowly blow out your kōmuri so the feather doesn't get blown away – tahi, rua, toru, whā.
4. Hāki roto – breathe in through your nose – tahi, rua, toru, whā. If you use your mouth you might suck the feather into your puku. Hold for four seconds watching the feather slowly float closer and closer to you, and then slowly hāki waho – letting the feather rise and float above you.

5. Hā ki roto, counting to four, holding your breath for tahi, rua, toru, whā and slowly hā ki waho – tahi, rua, toru and whā – then hold for tahi, rua, toru, whā.

6. Now tell me – what do you notice in your body? What do you notice about your feelings? Where did you notice your thoughts go? Our thoughts often wander away from us, to things happening around us, thinking about our next kai - meal, or to things that we are worried about. That's just what thoughts do. When you notice that they have wandered off, gently bring them back to our task.

7. Now let the hōkioi feather just float away. Ka pai! You've learnt the first skill on your quest to find Mauri Tau.

He rawe! Keep noticing what happens as we do all the magical tasks.

Did you see where your feather floated off to?

Tāwhirimātea has blown it in the direction of Tāne's forest. That's a good tohu – a sign – that we're on the right path. Maybe we'll find our next clue in Tāne's forest.



## TĀNE AND THE NGĀRARA

You and Tamarere are now in Tāne's forest. I want you to imagine that you're lying down in the soft grass, under a giant tōtara tree. When you look up, you can see Tama-nui-te-rā – the sun – shining through the leaves, warming your body.

In the distance, you hear two voices arguing. You turn to look, and through the trees you can see the atua Whiro staring angrily at Tāne.

Whiro waves his arms and suddenly a swarm of ngārara – insects – covers Tāne. One of the ngārara has lost his way. It's a ngaro – a fly. The fly has landed on the end of Tamarere's nose.

Now imagine that the fly has landed on your nose. Your next task is to move the fly without using your hands.

1. So squish your lips together, close your eyes tightly, and scrunch up your nose as tight as you can. This is called whakakikini – creating tension - holding for tahi, rua, toru, whā.
2. Now wiggle your nose and face. He's flown away, so tukua kia rere – release all the muscles in your face.
3. Oops! He's come back! Whakakikini – tahi, rua, toru, whā. Now wiggle again – he's flown away. Tukua kia rere – release.
4. Just rest for a few seconds. Notice what's happening in the muscles around your face as you relax.

5. And he has come back. He is a tutūthis fly. Whakakikini – tahi, rua, toru, whā Now wiggle and tukua kia rere – the fly has gone away once more. Release.
6. Now tell me – what do you notice in your body? Any kikini -tension? What do you notice about your feelings? Where did you notice your thoughts go? If your thoughts have wandered off, well done for noticing. Gently bring them back to what we are doing.

Ka pai! Keep noticing what happens as we do all the magical tasks.

Tāne comes back to his forest, and thanks both you and Tamarere for being very clever and getting rid of one of Whiro's ngārara. He says that his mōkai Mauri Tau might be visiting Māui and his whānau, who live further on in the forest.

Ka pai! You and Tamarere have got your next clue.

## MURI-RANGA-WHENUA AND THE MAGIC JAWBONE

Further on in the forest, you and Tamarere meet an old lady. Tamarere asks her if she knows where to find Māui. She says she's Māui's grandmother, Muri-ranga-whenua.

Tamarere says that he knows about a story where she gave Māui a strong and magical jawbone for his adventures. She says that's right – she did.

She asks if you and Tamarere would like a strong jaw like Māui. Tamarere says, "Yes please!"

Do you want a strong jaw too?

This is your next task. For this, we're going to imagine we're chewing on 10 giant pieces of bubble gum, and they are really hard bubble gum!

1. So, put the bubble gum in your mouth. All 10 pieces. Your mouth is getting pretty full now. Now, bite down on the bubble gum as hard as you can. Whakakikini – tense up your jaw and neck as you squeeze down. Hold it there for 4 seconds – tahi, rua, toru, whā.
2. Now tukua kia rere – release. Let your jaw just

drop and relax. Notice how it feels when the kikini has gone.

3. Now let's keep going. Bite down again on your giant mouthful of bubble gum, holding here for tahi, rua, toru, whā. Now tukua kia rere – let your jaw drop.
4. Just rest for a few seconds. Notice what's happening in the muscles of your neck and face as you relax.
5. And one last time. Bite down, holding here for tahi, rua, toru, whā. Now tukua kia rere.

6. Now tell me – what do you notice in your body? What do you notice about your feelings? Where did you notice your thoughts go?

Muri-ranga-whenua says you'll have a super strong jaw now.

Tamarere asks if she knows where Māui is.

She says, "Yes. He's over the hill with his brothers making rope. You might need to help him if you want to talk with him. He's a busy man."

Tamarere says, "Let's go. Maybe Māui knows where Mauri Tau is."



## MĀUI CAPTURES THE SUN

While you and Tamarere are walking over the hill, you see a group of men making all different types of ropes out of flax.

Tamarere asks the group what they're doing. "Tēnā rā koutou, he aha ā koutou mahi?"

One of the men said that he was Māui's brother, Māui-mua, and that Māui was unhappy that Tama-nui-te-rā – the sun – had been moving so fast across the sky. The days were always too short which meant there wasn't enough light in the day for everyone to work, or for kids to play. So Māui decided to catch the sun and slow him down.

Tamarere asks, "Can we talk to Māui?"

Māui-mua says, "You'll need to help us hold down the sun with Māui's magical ropes first."

Tamarere agrees. Do you want to help him?

Your task is to help Māui and his brothers pull the sun down from the sky.

Māui does a karakia over his ropes, making them magical, and throws them over the sun, capturing him.

Now you join Māui and his brothers as they try to pull down the sun. So stretch out your arms high, holding the ropes around the sun.

1. Tama-nui-te-rā is pulling back against you, so stretch your arms out as far as you can in front of you, and then up as high as you can. Stretching your shoulders back as far as you can, and hold like that for 4 seconds. Notice the kikini - tension in your neck and shoulders. Tahī, rua, toru and whā.

2. Now quickly drop the ropes – tukua kia rere, dropping your arms down. Notice all the muscles in your arms and shoulders releasing and becoming relaxed and heavy.
3. Time for another turn, as Tama-nui-te-rā is pulling back up. Grab the rope, and stretch your arms out as high as you can – whakakikini. Keep holding for 4 seconds, tahī, rua, toru, and whā. Ok. Let go, release the ropes – tukua kia rere.
4. Just rest for a few seconds. Notice what's happening in the muscles of your shoulders and neck as you relax.
5. And one last time, grab the rope, holding your arms as high as you can, stretching your arms way up – whakakikini – tahī, rua, toru, whā. Now tukua kia rere.

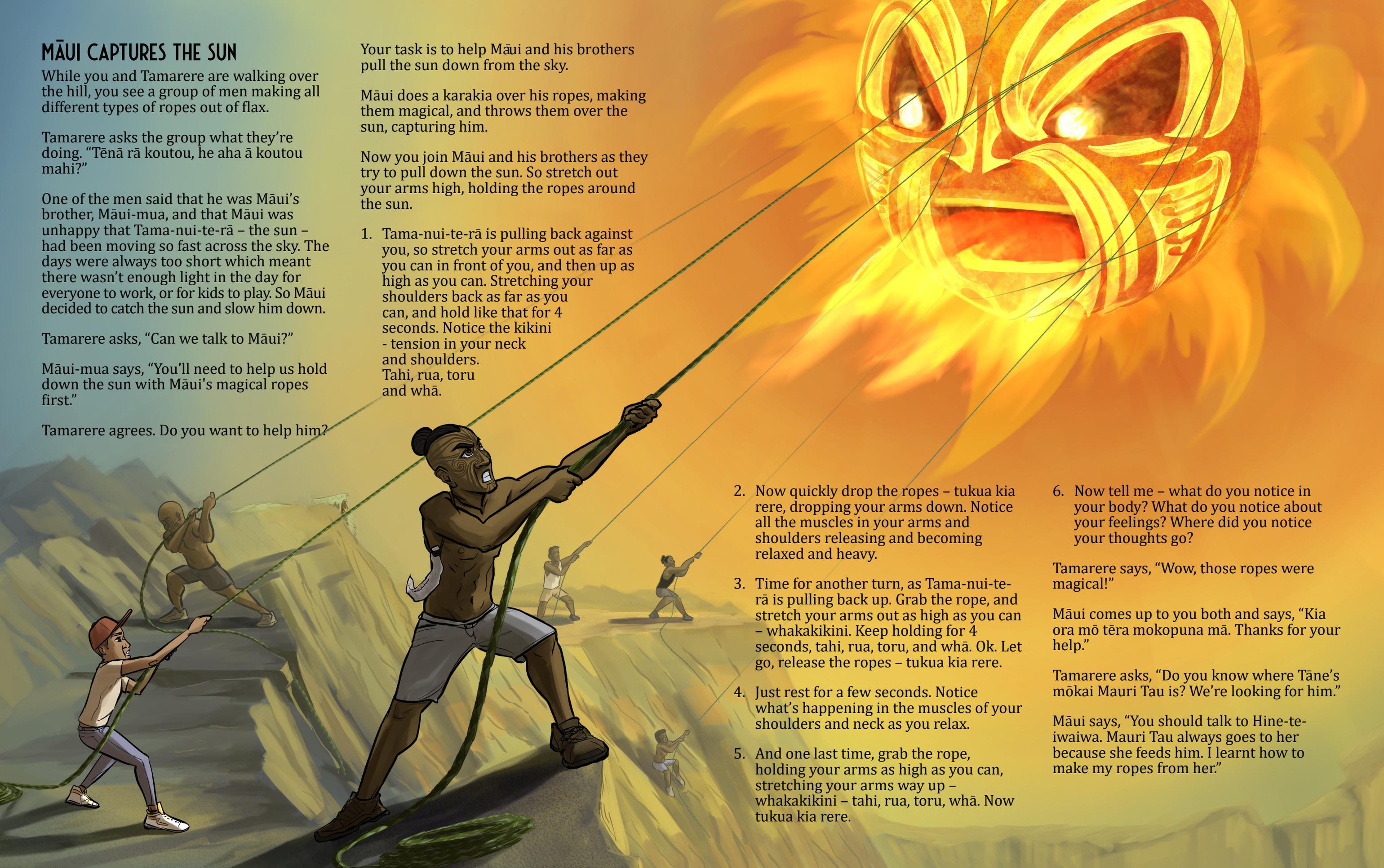
6. Now tell me – what do you notice in your body? What do you notice about your feelings? Where did you notice your thoughts go?

Tamarere says, "Wow, those ropes were magical!"

Māui comes up to you both and says, "Kia ora mō tēra mokopuna mā. Thanks for your help."

Tamarere asks, "Do you know where Tāne's mōkai Mauri Tau is? We're looking for him."

Māui says, "You should talk to Hine-te-iwaiwa. Mauri Tau always goes to her because she feeds him. I learnt how to make my ropes from her."



## WEAVING HARAKEKE WITH HINE-TE-IWAIWA

Imagine that you're walking through a huge garden filled with long, pointy harakeke plants. This is where Hine-te-Iwaiwa works. She's the goddess of childbirth and weaving and women's art. Hine-te-Iwaiwa has been preparing harakeke to make rope handles for a baby's wahakura for one of Māui's mokopuna. Wahakura are beds for babies that keep them warm and safe when they sleep with their parents.

Tamarere asks Hine-te-Iwaiwa if she knows where to find Mauri Tau.

Hine-te-Iwaiwa speaks very softly to you. She sounds like a lullaby as she says, "Yes, but first, I have to make some rope handles. I've just boiled some muka. When it's cool, I need to squeeze out all the water and then hang it up to dry. Would you like to help me?"

Tamarere is getting better at knowing what to do now. He quickly says yes. Do you want to help too?

This is your next task. Hine-te-Iwaiwa gives you both a small handful of soft muka. Muka are the threads inside the flax leaf which are very strong. You feel the muka which looks like a long string. It's soft and smells sweet.

I want you to imagine holding a big bunch of muka threads, just like a big rolled up towel.

1. With both hands, squeeze as hard as you can. This is called *kōtētē* – squeezing - the water out. You'll need to

squeeze it for 4 seconds to get all the water out. Count in your head, keep going. Tahī, rua, toru and whā. Do you notice how tight your hands and fingers feel?

2. Now, *tukua kia rere* – slowly release the muka – noticing all the muscles in your forearms, hands and fingers releasing and becoming relaxed and heavy.
3. So again, we have our next bunch of muka in our hands. *Kōtētētia*, squeeze tight, tahī, rua, toru and whā. Now *tukua kia rere* – release. Again, notice the change in how your hands and arms feel.
4. Just rest for a few seconds. Notice what's happening in the muscles of your forearms, hands and fingers as you relax.
5. And there's one last bunch to go. *Kōtētētia*, tahī, rua, toru, whā. And finally, *tukua kia rere* – release.
6. Now tell me – what do you notice in your body? What do you notice about your feelings? Where did you notice your thoughts go?

"He kaha kōrua ki te āwhina," says Hine-te-Iwaiwa. She's thanking you for your help.

Māui will also be happy with the wahakura.

Hine-te-Iwaiwa weaves her hands in front of you and a rainbow appears – he *aniwaniwa*. She tells you and Tamarere to walk through the rainbow to find Tūmataunga at the top of a mountain. Mauri Tau has gone to help him speak to his brothers Tūmatakaka and Whiro, who've been arguing.



## TŪMATAUENGA AND THE PLATFORM

Imagine that you and Tamarere walk through the rainbow. When you come out, you're at the top of a big mountain. There are angry storm clouds rolling around in the sky.

You and Tamarere see Tūmatauenga. He's the god of people and war, and he makes things safe for us to use, like using our land for growing food. Tūmatauenga is calling out to his brother Tūmatakaka to help him with his argument with Whiro but it's so windy and noisy that Tūmatakaka can't hear him.

Tūmatauenga asks Tamarere if he can help lift him higher so Tūmatakaka can hear him.

Tamarere has a great idea. He says, "Yes. I'll lie down and you can stand on my puku. It's strong."

Do you want to help Tamarere too?

Ok! Your task is to be a tūāpapa, a solid platform, so Tūmatauenga can stand on your puku and call out to Tūmatakaka.



1. So here he comes, Tūmatauenga. Tense your puku muscles, and push your back hard into the floor.
2. Now whakakikini – tense and hold – tahi, rua, toru, whā.
3. And he hops off, so tukua kia rere - release the kikini - tension.

4. Auē, let's try again. Tūmatakaka didn't hear Tūmatauenga.
5. Tense your puku muscles – whakakikini. Tense, tahi, rua, toru, whā, and he hops off, so tukua kia rere. It's so windy that Tūmatakaka still can't hear him.
6. One last try, he says. Whakakikini – tense, tahi, rua, toru, whā. Ka pai! Tūmatakaka heard him. Tukua kia rere.
7. Now tell me – what do you notice in your body? What do you notice about your feelings? Where did you notice your thoughts go?

“Kia ora e tama mā mō te āwhina – he toa maiā kōrua.” Tūmatauenga thanks you and says you're very strong.

Tamarere asks, “Do you know where Mauri Tau is?”

Tūmatauenga says, “Yes. He's lying on Papatūānuku where it's nice and warm. You just need to walk down the maunga, through the trees and across the muddy paddock.”

## CONNECTING WITH Papatūānuku

As you come to the trees at the bottom of the maunga, you see that the paddock is very muddy. Tamarere says to you, “Our next task must be to walk through muddy Papatūānuku. Do you want to come too?”

So, imagine that you’re stepping in some sticky, wet mud. You sink in up to your knees, but it feels warm and slushy. It feels nice.

1. So push your legs down as far and hard as you can into the mud.
2. Wiggle your toes at the bottom like you’re mixing up the mud, holding your feet down here for a bit longer tahi, rua, toru, whā.
3. Now tukua kia rere – release and relax your feet and legs. Notice how it feels in your feet and legs as you relax.
4. Have another turn. Push your feet down, stretch your toes forward, wriggle your toes. Can you feel the mud squeezing between your toes? Keep the stretch here, tahi, rua, toru, and whā. Now tukua kia rere.
5. And one last time. Stretch out and push down with your legs and feet. Wiggle your toes, tahi, rua, toru, whā, and now tukua kia rere – release.
6. Now tell me – what do you notice in your body? What do you notice about your feelings? Where did you notice your thoughts go?

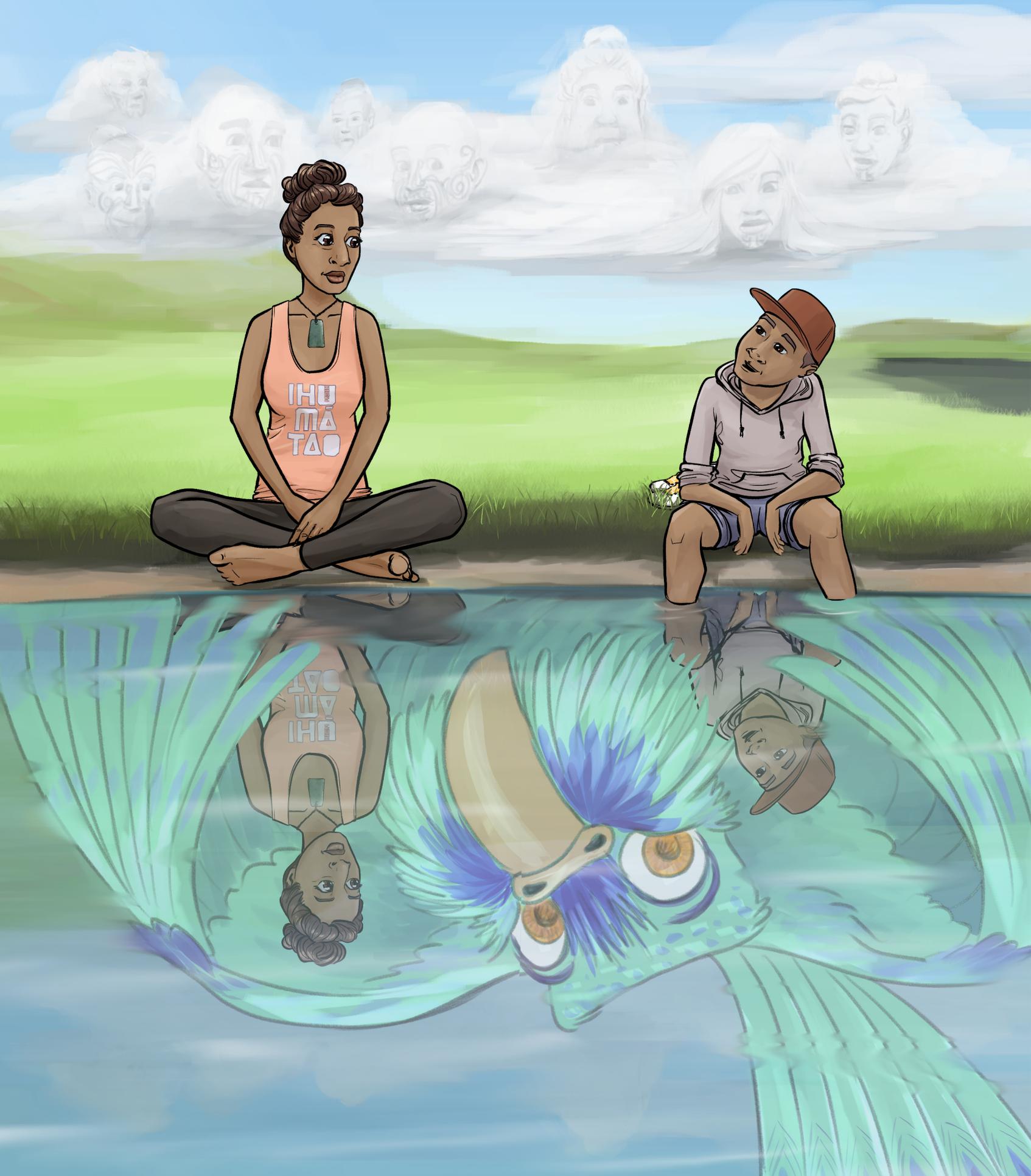
Ka pai! You’ve made it out of the mud.

Would you like to wash the mud off?

You can see that there’s a beautiful, still puna – a pool of fresh water.

Tamarere says, “Let’s wash the mud off our feet and have a rest.”





## FINDING MAURI TAU

Imagine that you and Tamarere look into the puna, and you both see a reflection of Mauri Tau smiling at you both. You look behind but he's not there. Instead, Tamarere's mother Māia is sitting there.

She asks, "Did you find Mauri Tau?"

Tamarere says, "I think I did. Is he inside me?"

Tamarere's mother says, "Yes. Mauri Tau is inside you. You've learnt some ways of finding him there. Remember, ngā atua are everywhere. Their tohu are everywhere. In the wind, the mud, and under the warmth of the sun. When you notice and listen, they'll show you that you're special, you are loved, and you can be strong when you need to be."

Tamarere says, "I feel much better. I am looking forward to seeing nanny and koro. I think I'll draw them a picture to show them that I miss them".

"Great idea, I will post it. So now that you are feeling better, let's have a look at what you can notice about you and your body now," says Māia.

1. What do you notice with your breath? Do you have the kōmuri of Tāwhirimātea, the gentle breath? Or is it deep? Is it shallow? Is it fast or is it slow?
2. What do you notice in your face and your jaw? Is it tense like you have been biting down hard, or do you notice it's relaxed?
3. What do you notice with your arms and shoulders? Do you

notice kikini – tension – like when you were pulling the ropes for Tama-nui-te-rā? Or are they relaxed?

4. What do you notice with your hands and forearms? Are they tense like squeezing the muka, or are they relaxed?
5. What do you notice in your puku and your back? Any kikini? Are there parts that feel loose and relaxed?
6. What do you notice in your legs and feet?
7. Kare-ā-roto? What emotions do you notice?
8. And finally your thoughts. Are they focused on what you are doing now, in the past, or maybe thinking about things that are happening next?

Whenever you feel sad or upset, or you have no energy, imagine you're helping Māui or Hine-te-lwaiwa. You can practice squeezing muka, or holding on to Maui's ropes. Notice if you need to relax. Then you can find Mauri Tau.

If you feel mauri oho like getting angry or distracted, and want to find Mauri Tau, use the kōmuri of Tāwhirimātea to breathe. You can also try and make your jaw like Muri-ranga-whenua. Mauri Tau will come to you when you notice your body, your thoughts and your feelings.

Tamarere turns to you and says, "Ngā mihi taku hoa. Thank you, my friend. It was so much easier with you helping me. The more we practice these magical tasks, the better we'll be at finding Mauri Tau."

# GUIDE FOR PARENTS,

This book, audio story and activities are guided by Māori knowledge of pūrākau. Pūrākau provide a way for Māori to “contextualise and find meaning in the events of everyday life and then identify culturally and spiritually acceptable pathways for their resolution” (Rangihuna, Kopua and Tipene-Leach, 2018. p16).

This pūrākau also has several components of therapeutic interventions developed to support children and adults experiencing anxiety, tension and pain, and anger. The core activity in this story is a progressive muscle relaxation (PMR) script. This script builds upon relaxation training for children published by Debra Ballinger and Paul Heine in 1991.

The PMR activity is used in combination with guided imagery, mindfulness, and controlled breathing. This is based on recommendations that relaxation for children is best developed using a combination of techniques (Schroeder & Gordon, 2002; Palermoa, 2012). Children tend to experience stress and different emotions within their body. Their bodies respond to stress with muscle tension and worry. This creates a negative feedback-loop, where a child senses this tension, which makes their existing stress, and tension more pronounced. Signs of stress are increased heart rate, rapid or shallow breathing, disorganised thinking and behaviour, and general tension and discomfort. Progressive muscle relaxation helps break this cycle by guiding tamariki to sense tension, and to experience tension release or relaxation, which they learn to

control. Reducing muscle tension and allowing a state of calm, or tau, can create a positive feedback-loop where tamariki gain an awareness of their bodies and their thoughts and emotions. This awareness increases their confidence to respond earlier and more effectively.

Guided imagery helps tamariki to use their imagination, to engage them in the task of PMR, and to create an ideal therapeutic space wherever they are (Kase & Ledley, 2007). Mindfulness helps tamariki to have more moment-by-moment awareness of their experiences and their responses to them (Rempel, 2012). Along with that, controlled breathing can reduce physical arousal and anxiety (Terai, Shimo & Umezawa, 2014). It is important when working with tamariki Māori, that therapeutic approaches acknowledge the way that emotions are experienced and our preferences for pathways to wellbeing. Emotions for Māori are often felt and expressed physically. Healing therefore does not happen in isolation; rather it occurs in connection with body, spirit, whānau, and the environment (Smith and Wirihana, 2012).

The pūrākau, Kei Whea a Mauri Tau, is broken down to a series of tasks where each task corresponds to an area of the body. For example, the task of ‘Maui and capturing the sun’ is associated with the neck and shoulders.

# WHĀNAU & TEACHERS

## ***How can you support the application of this approach with your tamariki?***

There are several ways that you can support tamariki to engage in and benefit from the exercises in this pūrākau.

Here are just some ideas.

1. Provide access to the different pūrākau mentioned in the story. This will help your tamaiti to connect with the story and the tasks. A list of associated pūrākau are provided on the following page.
2. Focus on just one task from the story in the early stages of practice. Repeat that task, and spend time discussing new words and actions in te reo Māori, such as: hā ki roto – *breathe in*, kuku tō hā – *hold your breath*, hā ki waho – *breathe out*, kikini – *tension*, whakakikini – *to tense*, kōtētētia – *to squeeze*, and tukua kia rere – *release*. When they feel confident with this task, you could move onto the next in subsequent sessions. Over time, and with practice, work towards doing the whole story in one session.
3. Create a regular time to practice this exercise. It could be during the day to create a calming space, or before bed. After reading the story, you may only need to play the audio file for the tamaiti to practice the exercises.
4. Engage in kōrero with your tamaiti about what they notice while doing the activities. Use the prompt questions in the story as starting points. You can also discuss the terms mentioned in the story like the different states of Mauri: mauri noho, mauri tau and mauri oho; and kare-a-roto - emotions: including: tutū - *jumpy*, *uncomfortable* or *agitated*, āwangawanga – *worried*, hihiko – *energetic*, riri – *angry*, harikoa – *happy*, wana - *excited* or *inspired*, and pukuriri - *angry*.
5. When your tamaiti notices their feelings and tensions, ask them to describe what is going on, where they feel it, and what emotion they are experiencing. Encourage your tamaiti to develop their own kupu for kare-a-roto that they feel represents their experience and actions. Again, this supports them to develop language about wellbeing and strengthens their awareness of the connection between others, their environment, body, and emotions.
6. When your tamaiti feels confident, you could ask which atua they choose to guide them in finding Mauri Tau. Prompt them to practice just one task, or to connect with the atua in the environment by going outside, taking their shoes off, standing on Papatūānuku, and feeling the breeze of Tāwhirimātea.
7. Encourage your tamaiti to draw or colour in Mauri Tau and discuss how it relates to them.
8. When the story and exercises have been well practiced, try starting the day with one of the tasks as a warmup. Or, if you notice that a tamaiti is unsettled, ask them which Mauri Tau task they would like to try.

The series of activities in the adventure refer to different ātua or aspects of te taiao, the natural environment.

Below are the activities in order and the pūrākau they are associated with. We encourage you to access these stories or pūrākau online, or from your local library or bookstore.

*Te kōmuri o Tāwhirimātea*  
Kāhu and Hōkioi

*Tāne and the Ngārara*  
Tāne and the Baskets of Knowledge

*Muri-Ranga-Whenua and the magic jawbone*  
Māui fishing up Te Ika a Maui (the North Island)

*Māui captures the sun*  
How Maui slowed the Sun

*Weaving harakeke with Hine-te-Iwaiwa*  
Hine-te-Iwaiwa, weaving, the moon and childbirth

*Tūmataunga and the platform*  
The Battle at Te Paerangi

*Connecting with Papatūānuku*  
The Separation of Ranginui and Papatūānuku

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Oh hey, check it out - a colouring-in page!



