

Tupaia: Master Navigator

by Hanahiva Rose

School Journal
Level 3, August 2019
Year 6



Overview

This TSM contains information and suggestions for teachers to pick and choose from, depending on the needs of their students and their purpose for using the text. The materials provide many opportunities for revisiting the text.

Tupaia was a Tahitian navigator and high-priest who travelled to Aotearoa with Captain Cook and the crew of the *Endeavour* in 1769. Tupaia spoke many languages and played a crucial role mediating between Māori and the British in the first formal encounters between the two peoples. He was recognised by tangata whenua as a person of great mana. Although his significant contribution to Cook's journey has generally been overlooked, Tupaia is remembered in Māori oral histories and remains a key figure in the history of Aotearoa.

This story:

- recounts the story of Tupaia, an important Tahitian navigator who accompanied Captain Cook on his first voyage to Aotearoa
- provides information about Pacific exploration, navigation, and migration

- broadens the historical narratives about first encounters between Māori and the British
- contains words and phrases in te reo Māori, reo māohi (a language spoken in Tahiti), and English
- contrasts the way Tupaia was acknowledged and remembered by Māori with the way he was treated by the crew of the *Endeavour*
- emphasises important links between Polynesian and Māori cultures, for example, a common language base and a shared ancestral homeland
- includes a text box, glossary, and map.

A PDF of the text is available at www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz

Texts related by theme | **“Hakaraia: Warrior Peacemaker”** SJ L4 May 2015 | **“Captain Cook: Charting Our Islands”** SJ L4 May 2016 | **“Sixth Sense”** SJ L2 Aug 2018 |

Text characteristics from the year 6 reading standard

We have retained the links to the National Standards while a new assessment and reporting system is being developed.

For more information on assessing and reporting in the post-National Standards era, see: <http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Assessment-and-reporting-guide>

A prophecy

In the 1750s, warriors from nearby Bora Bora invaded Rā'iaitea. A local priest named Vaita went into a trance and uttered a prophecy. One day, more people would come – a different kind of people altogether. They would arrive on a canoe with no outrigger and would change everything: “And this land will be taken by them,” Vaita said. “The old rules will be destroyed.”

Vaita's prophecy eventually came true. On 18 June 1767, a strange vessel was seen off the coast of Tahiti, where Tupaia now lived. The next morning, 'aroi priests paddled out to investigate. The boat was the *Dolphin*, a British ship searching for the **unknown southern continent**. Samuel Wallis and his crew were the first Europeans the Tahitians had ever seen.

some ideas and information that are conveyed indirectly and require students to infer by drawing on several related pieces of information in the text

Samuel Wallis and his men stayed in Tahiti for five weeks. During this time, they got to know Tupaia. When James Cook's *Endeavour* arrived two years later, some of Wallis's sailors were on board. They remembered Tupaia as an important, well-connected man, so Cook asked for Tupaia's help as an interpreter and a guide.

Cook had come to the Pacific to observe and measure the **transit of Venus**. This information was for a project run by scientists who hoped

to work out the distance between Earth and the sun. But Cook was also on a secret mission. Like Samuel Wallis, he was hoping to find the unknown southern continent. The *Endeavour* was on an epic journey, and to help record it, many skilled people were on board, including astronomers, scientists, and artists. One of these men was the **botanist** Joseph Banks, and he and Tupaia became friends. Tupaia also spent time with the ship's artists, learning to draw and paint the European way.

a significant amount of vocabulary that is unfamiliar to the students (including academic and content-specific words and phrases), which is generally explained in the text by words or illustrations

Kermadec Islands

Rapa Nui

THE FIRST PACIFIC TRAVELLERS

The Polynesian ancestors were voyagers. Guided by the stars and the tides, they crossed the Pacific, from west to east, until they reached the islands of West Polynesia, including Samoa and Tonga. Later, these people continued on to East Polynesia. Finally, in the last wave of migration, they settled in Hawai'i in the north, Rapa Nui in the east, and Aotearoa in the south. Over time, as these voyagers adapted their lifestyle and culture to each new environment, they became Polynesian.

illustrations, photographs, text boxes, diagrams, maps, charts, and graphs that clarify or extend the text and may require some interpretation

The diplomat

Over the following months, word spread about the high priest from Tahiti travelling in a strange waka with pale companions. Now, when the British had contact with Māori, Tupaia often took a leading role. Using his skills as a diplomat, he would speak to both sides, sharing his knowledge to prevent confusion and conflict. Tupaia was greeted as an honoured guest and given cloaks and other taonga. He was from the homeland after all. Māori wanted to hear his stories. They wanted to connect with their ancestral past.


sentences that vary in length and in structure (for example, sentences that begin in different ways and different kinds of complex sentences with a number of subordinate clauses)



Reading standard: by the end of year 6

VOCABULARY

Possible supporting strategies

- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, including “navigators”, “creation stories”, “remarkable”, “exclusive”, “specialising”, “mana”, “trance”, “uttered”, “prophecy”, “outrigger”, “Europeans”, “wave of migration”, “adapted”, “environment”, “well-connected”, “interpreter”, “epic”, “astronomers”, “botanist”, “apprentice”, “ashore”, “musket”, “companions”, “diplomat”, “ancestral past”, “tapa cloth”, “Aboriginal people’s”, “scurvy”, “fascinated”, “Tahitian bark-cloth”, “dysentery”, “malaria”, “devastated”, “acknowledged”, “crucial”
 - Terms associated with Cook’s journey: “unknown southern continent”, “*Endeavour*”, “transit of Venus”
 - Names of places in the Pacific and in Aotearoa: “West/East Polynesia”, “Sāmoa”, “Tonga”, “Tahiti”, “Hawai’i”, “Rapa Nui”, “Ra’iātea”, “Taputapuatea”, “Bora Bora”, “Huahine”, “Tūranganui-a-Kiwa”, “Gisborne”, “Ūawa”, “Tolaga Bay”, “Australia”, “Batavia, Indonesia”
 - Names of people: “Tupaia”, “Vaita”, “Samuel Wallis”, “James Cook”, “Joseph Banks”, “Taiato”, “Te Maro”
 - Words in Tahitian: “aroi (exclusive group of priests and navigators)”, “Oro (god of war)”
 - Words in te reo Māori: “waka”, “taonga”, “tohunga”, “pounamu”
 - Name of an iwi: “Te Aitanga-ā-Hauiti”
- Familiarise yourself with the Polynesian words and terms used and how to pronounce them. Seek advice from students, parents, or other community members if you are unsure. There are also guides to pronunciation online.
 - Support the students to pronounce the words and names in te reo Māori with accuracy and confidence by modelling this yourself. Seek advice from staff or students if you are unsure of the correct pronunciation.
 - Remind the students to use the map on pages 18 and 19 to find each location mentioned and to get a sense of the scale of the journey Tupaia made.
 - Prompt prior knowledge of strategies to work out unknown words, such as reading and thinking about the surrounding information, putting the words into context, and looking for parts of the words that they recognise.
 - Make a list of the various roles in the story, for example, interpreter, diplomat, botanist, apprentice, crew. Discuss their significance to the story and their relevance to the purpose of Cook’s journey and first encounters between Māori and the British.
 - Ask the students to contribute to a glossary of words from the article, listing, researching, and defining unknown words.
 - Use tasks that allow the students to practise the new vocabulary in their speaking and writing. For example, the students could create their own crosswords for each other. Crosswords provide great vocabulary practice as the students have to think about the words and their meanings.
 Students could use a simple online crossword maker like this one from [Education.com](https://www.education.com).
 - Challenge the students to draw a picture that includes as many vocabulary words as possible. The students then write each word they’ve used on sticky notes and attach them to their picture. Working in pairs, the students then try to find the words in each other’s pictures.
 - Provide sticky notes for the students to indicate words, phrases, or concepts they don’t understand and want to come back to.
 - *The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.
 - See also [ESOL Online, Vocabulary](#), for examples of other strategies to support students with vocabulary.

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

Possible supporting strategies

- Some understanding of the migratory journeys of peoples of the Pacific, including the East Polynesian origins of Māori
 - Some understanding of the highly respected position and exceptional skills of Polynesian navigators
 - Some knowledge of prophecies and tohunga
 - Some knowledge of first encounters between Māori and the British
 - Some knowledge of diseases commonly experienced in the tropics and at sea
 - Some knowledge of the purpose of Cook’s journey to the Pacific, including the journey’s scientific objectives and Britain’s dream of securing trade and riches from the “southern continent”
 - Awareness that some languages are more closely connected than others, making it easier for speakers of those languages to communicate
 - Some knowledge of oral histories and the way information about important people and events is remembered and passed on
- Provide opportunities for English language learners to explore the information and concepts in their first language before reading the text.
 - Have the students share what they know about navigating by the stars. Some students will be familiar with this topic from the Disney movie *Moana*.
 - Remind the students to use comprehension strategies as they read, in particular, asking questions, making connections with the text and things they already know, finding clues to help infer meaning (reading between the lines), and evaluating ideas during and after reading.
 - Discuss the roles of priests and tohunga before reading the story. Support the students to make connections with their prior knowledge about people foretelling the future. The *School Journal* poem “Sixth Sense” (L2 August 2018) could be used to discuss the idea that change is sometimes felt before it is experienced. Note that the term “tohunga” encompasses a wide range of experts, including priests, healers, navigators, carvers, builders, and teachers.
 - Share-read additional articles, stories, and videos to build up or activate prior knowledge before reading the text. The *School Journal* article “Captain Cook: Charting Our Islands” (SJ L4 May 2016) provides useful background information on the transit of Venus and the British hope of finding a southern continent. Tupaia is mentioned in the article as a translator and mediator. It also describes some of the first encounters between Māori and the British, including things that went wrong. Spend at least one session building students’ prior knowledge.



Text and language challenges

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE

- A non-fiction text with events described in generally chronological order
- An introduction followed by eight sections that provide information on Tupaia's origins, his first encounters with Europeans, his role on Cook's voyage, and his early death in Batavia in 1770
- The use of headings to support navigation of the text
- A map of the South Pacific and a text box that provides background information on the first explorations and settlement of the Pacific, including Aotearoa

Possible supporting strategies

- Skim and scan the article with the students to help them get a sense of its structure and purpose. Prompt the students to use the headings to identify the focus of each section.
- Revise the purpose of text boxes and glossaries.
- Demonstrate using the map to identify various locations in the article.
- Give the students a graphic organiser to record important or useful information that they find in each section.
- Support the students to understand complex sentences by breaking them into separate clauses and working together to identify the main ideas of each clause. Asking Who? What? Where? When? How? and Why? can help the students to identify the main ideas. Model how to pay attention to the signals of relationships between ideas.
- Prompt the students to make inferences, for example, making connections between Vaita's prophecy that the land will be taken by a different kind of people and the impact of Europeans, which is implied rather than stated. Support individual students as necessary.

Possible curriculum contexts

ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 3 – Processes and strategies: Integrate sources of information, processes, and strategies with developing confidence to identify, form, and express ideas.

ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 3 – Purposes and audiences: Show a developing understanding of how to shape texts for different purposes and audiences.

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Level 3 – Understand how the movement of people affects cultural diversity and interaction in New Zealand.

Level 3 – Understand how people remember and record the past in different ways.

Possible first reading purpose

- Find out about an exceptional Tahitian navigator, high priest, and translator who voyaged to Aotearoa with Captain Cook.

Possible subsequent reading purposes

- Learn about the first encounters between Māori and the British and the role Tupaia played in these interactions
- Learn about the ancestral connections between Māori and Polynesians
- Compare the way Tupaia was treated by Māori and by the British.

Possible writing purposes

- Retell the story of Tupaia and his experiences in Aotearoa and the Pacific
- Write a biography of another significant person in New Zealand history
- Write an explanation of one of Tupaia's drawings, including what it represents and how it relates to his story
- Write about the importance of New Zealanders knowing about Tupaia.



Instructional focus – Reading

English Level 3 – Processes and strategies: Integrate sources of information, processes, and strategies with developing confidence to identify, form, and express ideas.

First reading

- Introduce the text and share the purpose for reading. Depending on the students' prior knowledge, you may want to split the text into manageable chunks or spread the first reading over multiple sessions.
- Tell the students that they will be reading about an important Tahitian navigator, translator, and artist who played a special role in New Zealand's history. Explain that the text is told in a straightforward sequence but that some features, including the vocabulary and non-English words, may be challenging. Prompt the students to share strategies that they can use to help them work out unfamiliar words, including words in non-English languages.
- Skim and scan the text together, prompting the students to identify features such as headings, the map and text box, and the illustrations. Discuss how to use these features to navigate the text.
- Ask the students what they want to find out and what questions they have before reading the text.
- Give the students a graphic organiser to write their questions and record

If the students require more scaffolding

- Prompt the students to make connections with other stories they have heard about Pacific navigators or about Captain Cook's exploration of Aotearoa. Build up their prior knowledge and understanding of key concepts before engaging with each section.
- Remind them of strategies they could use to interpret the text, such as asking questions, using knowledge of specific vocabulary, summarising, rereading, and making connections with their prior knowledge. It may be useful for them to use sticky notes to record words, sentences, or concepts that they don't understand to explore later.
- Map out a timeline together on a chart, listing key people and the sequence of events.
- Use a What? When? Where? Why? Who? and How? template to support the students to understand each section.
- Share-read the introduction and other sections as necessary.
- Discuss the use of time connectives to indicate the passage of time, for example, "In the 1750s", "over the following months", and "during this time".

Subsequent readings How you approach subsequent readings will depend on your reading purpose. Where possible, have the students work in pairs to discuss the following questions and prompts.

The teacher

Choose a section of the text, for example, "The diplomat". Model how to identify the main idea of each paragraph:

- by highlighting sentences that contain the most important ideas ("Now, when the British had contact with Māori, Tupaia often took a leading role. Using his skills as a diplomat, he would speak to both sides, sharing his knowledge to prevent confusion and conflict.")
- by recording key words that relate to the main idea ("leading role", "diplomat", "speak to both sides", "prevent confusion and conflict")
- using the key words to rewrite the main idea in your own words.

Give pairs of students printed sections of the text and have them repeat the process, justifying their choice of sentences and key words. The students can share their retelling with a group, discussing any different interpretations of the main ideas.

The teacher

Explain the concept of mana, a word that originated in the Pacific but is now used worldwide. Prompt the students to make connections with people they know.

- *Who do you know who has mana?*
- *Tell a partner about those people and explain why you would say they have mana.*

Write down the roles that Tupaia played, for example, star navigator, linguist (speaker of many languages), diplomat, artist, storyteller. Have pairs of students find evidence of each role in the text. Remind them to use headings to help locate information.

Work with the students to co-construct a graphic organiser to record information about Tupaia and build a character profile of him. Include information on how Tupaia was perceived and treated by other groups.

Have the students share their ideas with a partner about why Tupaia was considered to be a person of great mana.

The students:

- read a paragraph from the text in pairs and discuss which sentences capture its main idea
- recognise that, depending on your reading purpose, some information in a paragraph may not be essential
- identify and highlight sentences that contain key words and supporting details
- paraphrase the main idea in their own words, using key words from the text as a guide
- share and discuss their retelling of key ideas with a group.

The students:

- scan the text and use headings to locate information about Tupaia's skills and roles
- identify the qualities Tupaia demonstrated that contributed to his great mana
- compare the levels of status Tupaia held in his homeland, among Cook's crew, and among Māori.


The teacher

Model how to make inferences from multiple ideas in the text, for example, using the text on page 25:

- *The text says that Captain Cook had hoped that Tupaia would be able to communicate with the Aboriginal Australians, but the languages were too different. Cook says that without being able to understand the language of the Aboriginal Australians, they couldn't make connections with them or understand their customs. This shows the importance of the role Tupaia played in Aotearoa. I wonder why the languages in Australia were so different. What do you think was the reason?*

Create a class table for pairs of students to record their inferences, for example:

We read ...	We think this means ...	We wonder ...

 The students could use a Google doc projected so that the class can see each other's entries.

As a class, choose one or two things they wonder about to explore further.

METACOGNITION

- *How did you identify the main idea in each paragraph? What thinking guided your decisions, for example, why did you reject some sentences and choose others?*

The students:

- share and explain inferences that they have made from the text
- discuss how their inferences relate to the story of Tupaia and their understanding of the context
- extend their learning by researching related ideas, for example, finding out about the idea of the “unknown southern continent” or learning about connections between Pacific languages.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- *I noticed that you referred back to the map several times while you were reading. Tupaia made a huge journey, and the map helps to make that clear. Using a diagram or map to make sense of information is a useful strategy. Place names can be tricky to remember, and looking them up on a map helps our brains become more familiar with them.*

 Reading standard: by the end of year 6

 The Literacy Learning Progressions

 Assessment Resource Banks

Instructional focus – Writing

English Level 3 –Purposes and audiences: Show a developing understanding of how to shape texts for different purposes and audiences.

Text excerpts from “Tupaia”

Page 16

This is the story of Tupaia, a navigator and high priest from the island of Rāiātea who died in Indonesia in 1770. How he came to be so far from home involved a remarkable journey, one that took him to the very edge of the Pacific ...

Examples of text characteristics

BIOGRAPHY

A biography is a non-fiction text that tells the story of someone’s life.

Although a biography needs to be factually accurate, writing a biography requires the same creativity and craft as writing a fiction story.

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Have the students talk with a partner about features of biographical texts, for example:

- information about where someone grew up
- circumstances, events, or people that shaped who they were
- key character traits of the person, supported by examples
- obstacles they faced or overcame
- ways that people or societies treated or viewed them at the time
- quotes.

Summarise the student’s ideas, adding to them if necessary, and have the students work in groups to look for evidence of each feature in “Tupaia”.

Co-construct a graphic organiser that the students can use to plan their own biography of a person of their choice. As they begin drafting their biographies, remind them of the importance of having a well-developed setting, a well-sequenced order of events, details that show when and where events took place, and a distinct ending.

You could model or use a guided writing approach for particular aspects of drafting a biography.

Page 22

The next day, Tupaia did go ashore, saving the crew from attack when he called out to a large party of warriors. Because of the similarities between reo ma’ohi (the Tahitian language Tupaia spoke) and te reo Māori, the warriors were able to understand. A long conversation followed. Where were these men from? Why had they killed Te Maro? What did they want?

KEY MESSAGES OR THEMES

Biography writers need to make decisions about what information to include and what to leave out. Having a key message or theme can help guide those decisions.

Give groups of students a set of statements about the theme or message of the biography, such as the ones below, and have them discuss which one they think is most important.

- *The importance of Captain Cook’s journey to New Zealand*
- *The migration of people across the Pacific*
- *Tupaia’s skills as a navigator and diplomat*
- *The importance of language when it comes to understanding other cultures.*

(Alternatively, they may like to identify a theme or idea of their own.)

Once the students have established a key theme or message in the story, have them look for at least three examples that support that idea.

After the students have completed research for their own biographies, ask them to identify one or two main themes that they want to emphasise. Have them explain to a partner the information they want to include in the biography and how that relates to their themes. Alternatively, the students could give their biography to a reviewer and have them identify what they think the theme or main idea of the biography is.

Page 19

The Polynesian ancestors were voyagers. Guided by the stars and the tides, they crossed the Pacific, from west to east, until they reached the islands of West Polynesia, including Sāmoa and Tonga. Later, these people continued on to East Polynesia. Finally, in the last wave of migration, they settled in Hawai’i in the north, Rapa Nui in the east, and Aotearoa in the south. Over time, as these voyagers adapted their lifestyle and culture to each new environment, they became Polynesian.

TEXT BOXES

A text box is a good way to include additional useful information without interrupting or overloading the flow of a biography.

Discuss the fact that some information in a biography may not relate specifically to a person’s life story but is still important for readers to understand.

Direct the students to read the text on page 19, and then think, pair, and share why the writer chose to include this information. For example:

- How does it relate to Tupaia?
- How does it relate to what we are learning about in the article?
- How does it relate to the map?

Explain that text boxes should be clearly separated from the main body of the text, using a frame or a different font or background and a heading that tells readers what it is about. Readers should be able to follow the information in a text box without referring back to the main text to understand it, but its relationship to the main text should be clear.

Encourage the students to use text boxes to provide additional information in their biographies, for example, about the time, place, or important events.

METACOGNITION

- How did having a clear plan for your biography help you to choose what to include and what to leave out?
- How did you decide what your main theme was going to be? Did having a theme make it easier or harder to write the biography? Why?

GIVE FEEDBACK

- There are lots of interesting ideas in your biography, and it's great to see evidence of research. Your next step is to see whether you can trim it down a bit. The theme for our biographies was "People who have made a difference". Let's go back to your original plan to see how your ideas line up with that.



Writing standard: by the end of year 6

The Literacy Learning Progressions