

Finding Home: Creating Communities in Aotearoa

Target Age Group:

- 1: Combined Kindergarten and 2nd Grade
- 2: Combined 1st and 3rd Grade
- 3: 4th Grade

Objective: To explore social, cultural, and gendered diversity through imagination and creative play through the creation myth of Aotearoa and the origins of the Maori civilization.

Goals: To enact social building, creative problem solving, and enhance understanding of different civilizations

Materials: Inflatable globe, Aotearoa creation myth

Procedure:

Starter: Map Activity

The Facilitator has the class create a circle, in which they will create their Map of the World. The Facilitator asks for the names of the seven continents. Once the class has been situated in the seven continents around the globe, the participants will be asked to name countries within that continent.

Transition: The Leader will ask where New Zealand is. Those in Oceania raise their hands and the Leader asks if anyone knows anything about New Zealand.

Activity One: Story Time

The Facilitator tells the story of the creation of Aotearoa and how Maui possessed magical powers and went fishing in the great sea. Yet, his fishhook caught on something heavy in the middle of the ocean. Maui pulled and pulled, calling to his brothers for help, and it was not until the great fish, Te Ika a Maui, what is known today as the North Island, emerged. Maui was worried the gods would be angry and went to make peace with them. However, as soon as he left, his brothers started to fight over the great fish. They pounded the fish with their weapons, creating the mountains and valleys. But they were soon punished as their boat turned into Te Waka a Maui, the South Island, and they were lost forever.

Or at least, it seemed they were. For it wasn't until Kupe, the great Polynesian navigator, set out from Hawaiki, discovered them again. Hawaiki was starting to become overpopulated and there was not enough resources for everyone, so Toto made two large canoes, Aotea and Matahorua. Aotea was given to his daughters. The two women set sail with the men in their boats to discover a new place for their people to live.

Activity Two: Building the Boat.

The Facilitator asks the participants to help them construct Aotea and Matahorua in order to set sail to discover the new land. The participants are coached to create two long wooden boats. *What will you need in your boat for the journey? What is your boat made from?* After the boats are assembled, they set sail to find the new land of Aotearoa.

Activity Three: Finding Land

The Participants are led through a series of obstacles to reach Aotearoa. They are coached to move around the room as their boats and encounter storms and stillness, eventually reaching Aotearoa (*You are hit by a storm, what do you do? You are trapped in the doldrums and your boat cannot move, how do you keep going?*).

Activity Four: Inhabiting a New World

The Facilitator welcomes the travellers to Aotearoa. “Welcome travellers to your new home. As you can see, Maui’s brothers have created mountains and valleys all around the two islands with plenty of room and vegetation and animals for you to make your home. What do you do first?” The Facilitator directs the participants to create a giant tableau of their new society. *What do you need to survive in a new land? What do you build first? How do you find food? How do you make shelter? Do you encounter anyone else on the island? If so, what do you do?*

Activity Five: Pantomime

After the Tableau is complete the Facilitator instructs the participants to come to life in their new society and silently pantomime day-to-day life.

Reflection:

- *What did you learn today?*
- *What did you need to build your boats?*
- *How did you make your new society?*
- *What is important in making a society?*