



Inquire to Learn!

There are many ways in which *Rangi and Papa/ Matariki* can be used as a base for Inquiry Learning. This is just one suggestion.

Session 1

Using the Big Book, share-read *Rangi and Papa*, stopping at natural points for discussion. Draw on the students' prior knowledge of creation stories, Māori folk tales and gods, family relationships and rebellion, native plants and animals, and the night sky.

Possible Starter Questions for Discussion

Creation Stories: *Why are there lots of stories about how the world came to be?* Discuss that many cultures have folk tales explaining how things came to be, and that these stories must all be respected.

Māori Folk Tales and Gods: *What Māori gods can you name?* Brainstorm Māori gods and demi-gods that the children have heard of/read about. Introduce the following characters: Rangi or Ranginui (some South Island iwi use Raki or Rakinui): Sky Father; Papa or Papatūānuku: Earth Mother; Tāne or Tāne Mahuta: god of the forest and forest creatures; Tū or Tūmataunga: god of war; Tāwhiri or Tāwhirimātea: god of the wind and storms; Rongo: god of peace, kumara, and other cultivated foods; Tangaroa: god of the sea, rivers, and lakes; Haumia or Haumia-tiketike: god of wild foods; Uru or Uru-te-ngangana: god of light.

Family Relationships and Rebellion: *Is it natural for children to rebel against their parents?* Discuss that most children, once they are grown, will leave their parents to begin their own adult lives. Family connections, however, usually remain strong.

Do brothers and sisters always agree? What do they do when they disagree about the best way to do something? Talk about the value of discussion and agreement.

Native Plants and Animals: *What is a native plant or animal? How many native plants and animals can you name?*

Text and Illustration Based Inquiry Questions

Cover: Look at the cover. *Without reading the text, how can you tell that this is a story from New Zealand? Can you name the New Zealand native plants and animals?* Discuss that both the moa and huia are now extinct, but they are included here because *Rangi and Papa* is a creation story from Aotearoa.

Title page: Look at the title page. *What do you think the little eye-shaped lights are?* (stars)

PP. 2–13: Revisit the following P. 2 text: *In the beginning there was no light. There was only darkness.* Ask, *How does the design of the book reinforce that the world used to be a dark place?* (The pages are black with white text until later in the story when Rangi and Papa are separated.)

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P. 5: Revisit the sentence: *“We are gods,” said Tāne.* and look at the illustration, paying particular attention to the colours of the characters and the symbols next to them. Referring back to the brainstorming session on Māori gods, challenge the students to name the gods in the illustration. (Tāne – green, symbol of tree; Tāwhiri – grey, symbol of wind; Tangaroa – blue, symbol of fish; Haumia – brown, symbol of fern frond; Tū – red, symbol of mere (weapon); Rongo – orange, symbol of plant.)

P. 6: Revisit the sentence: *“We should kill our parents,” said Tū.* and ask, *Why do you think that Tū was the brother who made this suggestion?* (Because Tū is the god of war and so he looks for violent solutions.) Discuss that the children never actually talk to their parents about their problem. Ask, *Do you think that Rangi and Papa would have agreed to separate so that their children could have light and move around in the world? Why/why not?*

P. 8: Revisit the sentence: *The brothers continued to argue, but finally everyone except Tāwhiri agreed with Tāne’s plan. They would separate their parents.* Ask, *How does Tāwhiri show bravery?* (He is prepared to go against his brothers for his beliefs.) Discuss that it can be difficult to stick to one’s view against the force of a group. Ask, *Was it fair for the children to try and separate their parents? Why/why not?*

P. 10: Recall/comprehension: *Why did Tāwhiri weep?* (Because he did not want his brothers to separate their parents, but he had no power to stop them.) Point out the figure of Tāwhiri on the bottom-left of the illustration. Revisit the text: *...no one could break the loving embrace of Rangi and Papa.* and note that Rangi and Papa love each other and want to be together, just as Tāwhiri wants them to be.

P. 11: *Does anyone know the name of the spear shown in the illustration? (taiaha) Why has the illustrator included a mere and a taiaha in this illustration?* (Because mere and taiaha are weapons, and Tū is the god of war.) *Do you think Rangi and Papa told Tū and his brothers to stop*

their pushing? Why/why not? Revisit the concept of rebellion and discuss that the brothers are rebelling against their parents.

PP. 12–13: Revisit the sentence: *“Let me try a different way,” said Tāne.* Discuss that Tāne has observed the repeated failure of his brothers’ attempts to push their parents apart using their arms and upper bodies. Instead, Tāne tries something new and lies down to use the strength of his legs to prise his parents apart. Make sure the children understand that Tāne is successful because he takes a creative approach to the problem. Revisit the text: *As Tāne pushed, light streamed into the new space he had made between his parents.* and note the blue, lightening sky in the illustration.

PP. 14–15: Point out that from this point on the design of the book changes so that the text is black and appears on a white or blue background to emphasize that the world is now full of light. Note the personification of rain as Rangi’s tears and mist as the tears of Papa. Direct the children’s attention to the figures of Tangaroa and Tāwhiri on P. 14. Ask, *How do you think Tangaroa and Tāwhiri are feeling?* (guilty, sorry for their parents) Revisit the text: *Tāne did not want to see his parents unhappy. He set about clothing his mother in trees, flowers, and ferns to keep her warm.* Note the native plants and animals in the illustration and challenge the students to name the yellow flowers (kōwhai) and the white flowers (clematis or puawhānanga).

P. 17: Note the description *blue cloak of sky* and discuss the personification of the sky as Rangi, wearing a cloak of blue. Challenge the students to find other references within the text where the sky is described as a cloak.

PP. 18–19: Refer back to the brainstorming session on Māori gods and note that Uru is the Māori god of light. Note the phrases *Shining Ones* and *specks of light*. Note also that the Shining Ones are referred to as Uru’s children. Ask, *What do you think the “Shining Ones” and “specks of light” are?* (stars)

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PP. 20–21: Revisit the text: *each Shining One was shaped like an eye* and note how the illustration supports the text.

P. 22: Refer to the text *Milky Way* and ask, *What is the Milky Way?* Make sure that the children understand that the Milky Way is the name given to the galaxy that contains our solar system. Revisit the concept that *Rangi and Papa* is a creation story that explains how things came to be.

P. 24: Revisit the text and note that resolution has been achieved. (*The separation of Earth and sky has been explained. The existence of the sun, moon, and stars has been explained. The existence of night and day has been explained. The existence of plants and animals has been explained. The close relationship between the sky, the Earth, and the natural world has been emphasized. Tāne has succeeded to some degree in making his parents happy again.*)

Further Discussion and Inquiry Extension

Invite the children to choose one of the Māori gods from the story and learn more about him/her, including the various ways in which their god has been portrayed in both traditional and contemporary Māori art. Ask the children to

prepare either a verbal or written presentation on their god, including their own visual art. Scan or photograph the visual art to info@cleanslatepress.com with the artist's name, age, and school. The best artworks will be posted on the Clean Slate Press Facebook page and the artist will receive a prize.

Share folk tales from other cultures that explain how things came to be. Compare and contrast them to *Rangi and Papa*.

Invite the children to retell a simplified version of *Rangi and Papa* as a rap or poem.

Challenge the students to learn about New Zealand native plants and animals and present their findings as a poster.

Invite the children to write their own folk tales about how the stars came to be in the sky.

Challenge the students to weave baskets or kete from flax (harekeke) or paper and make stars to go in their baskets.

Research the Milky Way and invite the children to create PowerPoint presentations of their findings.

Session 2

Using the Big Book, share-read *Matariki*, stopping at natural points for discussion. Draw on the students' prior knowledge of Matariki and other New Year celebrations, stars, Māori culture, seasons and gardening/crop production, and kites.

Possible Starter Questions for Discussion and Inquiry

Māori Greeting: *Te Reo is an official language of New Zealand. Does anyone know how to greet someone in Te Reo? We say kia ora.*

Cover: Look at the cover of *Matariki* and ask, *What is Matariki? (A group of stars that signalled the New Year for Māori. The name Matariki is also used to refer to the period of New Year celebrations.)*

Matariki celebrations and New Zealand: Look at P. 1 of *Matariki* and note the map of New Zealand. Discuss that Matariki is a traditional Māori celebration. As such, it is only celebrated in New Zealand. Make sure that the children understand that modern Matariki is a time of celebration for all New Zealanders. Revisit the following text on P. 1 of *Matariki* – *When Matariki was first seen at the end of May or beginning of June, it meant*



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the start of a new year. Discuss the concept that the new year begins at different times for different cultures e.g. Chinese New Year which begins when the new moon appears between January 21 and February 20. Revisit Facts 1, 2, and 4 on PP. 2–3 of **Matariki**. Ask, *How are Matariki celebrations similar to New Year celebrations on December 31/January 1? How are they different?* Revisit the text on P. 8 of **Matariki**. Share with the children that modern Matariki celebrations began in 2000.

Stars: Revisit the caption text on P. 1 of **Matariki**: *The name Matariki means “tiny eyes” or “eyes of God”.* Ask, *How does this relate to Rangi and Papa?* (The Shining Ones, or stars, are shaped like eyes; P. 20: *Tāne saw that each Shining One was shaped like an eye.*) Revisit Facts 5, 6, and 7 on PP. 2–3 of **Matariki**. Share that Matariki is not visible in all parts of New Zealand, especially in areas that lie west of mountains. For that reason, some iwi in Taranaki, Wanganui, and in the West Coast of the South Island begin the new year with the rising of the star known as Puanga.

Seasons/Gardening/Crop Production: Reread PP. 4–5. Ask, *In what ways do we still live by the seasons?* Guide the discussion to gardening, farming, and crop production. Ensure that the children understand that different plants and crops are planted and harvested at different times of the year and that different farming activities happen according to the season e.g. lambing and calving in spring, shearing and haymaking in summer. Ask, *What would have happened in the past if there was a poor kumara-growing or fishing season?* Discuss that while Māori traditionally ate many different foods and knew how to use their resources wisely, a bad kumara-growing season could mean hunger for the iwi. Remind the children that kumara was traditionally such an important crop that it had its own god, Rongo.

Celebrations: *In the past, would people have looked forward to Matariki? Why/why not?* Today, some people think that Matariki should become a national holiday. As a class, discuss the advantages and disadvantages of this idea.

Further Discussion and Inquiry Extension

In 2017, Matariki celebrations will begin on June 25. As a group, brainstorm ways in which the class could celebrate Matariki e.g. plant a class garden or a tree, visit an observatory to learn more about the Matariki stars, do simple cooking such as making and sharing kumara soup or star-shaped biscuits, learn and perform a Māori song.

Some people think of the Matariki stars as a mother with six daughters. The mother is Matariki and the daughters are Tupu-ā-nuku, Tupu-ā-rangi, Waipunarangi, Waitī, Waitā, and Ururangi. Find and share a version of this traditional tale with the class.

As a class, learn about how the Matariki stars were traditionally used for navigation.

Research on the Internet how to find the Matariki stars and challenge the students to get up early (between 5.30 – 6.30 A.M.) during Matariki to see if they can locate the cluster in the pre-dawn sky.

Research to learn some names, stories, and traditions about the Matariki star cluster from other cultures e.g. Pleiades – the Seven Sisters (Greece); Makara (Australian Aboriginal); and other Polynesian nations.

Challenge the students to learn more about traditional Māori foods and how they were harvested/hunted and stored.

If possible, visit a museum or Marae to learn more about traditional Māori life and culture.

Learn how to play traditional Māori games such as tī rākau (stick games) or whai (string games). There are guides on the Internet.

Challenge the students to follow the procedural text on PP. 6–7 of **Matariki** and make a Matariki kite.

