

Where the heart lives: the enduring homesteads tying Māori to their heritage

Level: Elementary

1 Warmer

- a. Talk to a partner or in small groups. What do you know about Māori?
- b. Now do this short Māori language quiz. Join the Māori words to their English translations. Then find the words in the article, where you will find a translation or an explanation.

- | | |
|------------------|---|
| 1. Aotearoa | a. ancestors |
| 2. whānau | b. the place where your feet stand |
| 3. tūrangawaewae | c. New Zealand (= land of the long white cloud) |
| 4. tūpuna | d. families |

2 Key words

- a. Write the correct words from the wordpools next to the definitions below. Then find them in the article to read them in context.

ancestor bury homestead inaccessible remote

- put something in the ground _____
- someone who is related to you who lived a long time ago _____
- a farm, including the farmhouse and any other buildings on the land

- far away from other cities, towns, or people _____
- difficult or impossible to get to _____

colonization condition emotional generations wonder

- groups of people who are born and live around the same time _____
- the act of taking control of another country by going to live there or by sending people to live there

- think about something because you want to know more facts or details about it

- the physical state of something _____
- relating to feelings and the way that they affect your life _____

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b. Use some of the key words above to complete these sentences.

1. My grandparents were from a _____ village in China.
2. He tells everybody that his _____ went to the US with the Pilgrims.
3. Look, the dog is going to _____ the bone.
4. The car was in a very good _____ for its age.
5. The _____ was behind a large group of trees.

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Tess McClure

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- 1 When the Makiha family pulled down their wooden house, they decided to bury it. Piece by piece, they took it down and put it carefully, like an ancestor, in the ground.
- 2 “A homestead is like a mother – it looks after the family. It protects, feeds and takes care of the family – if you care for your home, it will care for you,” says Rereata Makiha.
- 3 The Makiha home is one of many homesteads across Aotearoa, New Zealand. Often remote and inaccessible, these homes have been home to generations of Māori families and their ancestors.
- 4 To get to some home homesteads, you need to go by boat, helicopter or walk many kilometres. For many families, they are more than just a house: they are the connection between whānau (families) and the land.
- 5 Kimiora Kaire-Melbourne, a Māori filmmaker, says “tūrangawaewae” is the best word to describe how important land and home is to Māori: “It literally means ‘where your feet stand’.”
- 6 Many Māori families kept their homesteads even though colonization meant that they had to leave their land. Thousands of Māori moved to the cities to find work.
- 7 “Māori are not just one group. We’re all very different, we have lived different lives. But because of colonization and moving to cities, a lot of Māori have lost their connection to the land,” Kaire-Melbourne says.
- 8 For some families, looking after the homesteads is a lot of hard work. “You might wonder why we tried to save the house,” Tangimaioakumatua Moring says of the Ponga homestead. “It was in a bad condition.”
- 9 But, Moring, now a grandmother, was born in the house. “I wanted to save the house,” Moring says. “I really wanted to come home.” For her, a journey back to the Ponga house needed a trip by helicopter to the Parinui land in the remote Hokianga.
- 10 “Coming home was very emotional,” Moring says. “It’s always like that for me when I come home because my tūpuna (ancestors) are here. And coming home is really coming home to them.”

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3 Understanding the article

a. Match the sentence halves to summarize the article.

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. Because of colonization, thousands of ... | a. areas far away, which are difficult to get to. |
| 2. Many of the Māori homesteads are in ... | b. an important connection to their ancestors. |
| 3. Many Māori who now live in cities have lost ... | c. look after her family homestead. |
| 4. Rereata Makiha says that your home will ... | d. Māori had to leave their homesteads to find work in the city. |
| 5. Tangimaioakumatua Moring decided to ... | e. take care of you if you look after it. |
| 6. Looking after their family homestead helps give Maori ... | f. their connection to their family lands. |

4 Key language

a. Without looking at the text, complete the phrase from the article.

“A h_____ is like a m_____ – it looks after the f_____. It protects, f_____ and takes care of the f_____.”

b. Now create other similar comparative phrases of your own using these (or other) beginnings.

Her garden is like a ...

Their living room is like a ...

The children's bedroom looked like a ...

5 Discussion

a. Go on the internet and find the article written for the *Guardian*: 'Where the heart lives: the enduring homesteads tying Māori to their heritage' by Tess McClure. Look at the photos in the article. Did you imagine that the house looks like this?

b. Then discuss these questions:

- How many times have you moved house in your life?
- How close do you live to your childhood home now?
- How important is/was the building that is 'home' to you when you were a child?
- Where do your ancestors come from?

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6 In your own words

a. Do some research.

- Who is Kupe and why is he important to Māori?
- Watch a video of a Māori Haka.
- Find three interesting facts about Māori and share them with the class.