



Helping teachers work with children when they first return to education following major traumatic or life-changing events

Ka ora te whenua, ka ora te tāngata.
When the land is well, the people will be well.

Designed for ages	3 - 5 years old
Adaptable for ages	2 - 10 years old
Learning Experience Summary:	This learning experience offers opportunities for tamariki (children) to explore their individual and collective relationship with te taiao (the beyond human world) as a means to support wellbeing and the wellbeing of te taiao.
Te Whāriki (Aotearoa New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum):	Mana Whenua – belonging.
Te Whare Tapa Whā (Māori model for well-being):	Whenua - land, roots.
Te Whare o Oro (Māori framework for understanding the brain):	Limbic system: emotional regulation, empathy, affiliation.
Tapasā (Cultural competency resource for teachers working with Pacific learners):	Turu 1: Identities, languages and cultures: Kaiako understand their own identity and culture, and how this influences the way they think and behave.
Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> A picture book / e book / audio or video of your chosen creation story <input type="checkbox"/> Karakia and mihi examples from the appendix in this document 	
Things to consider: This is not a one-off learning experience, rather it is designed as a way to consider creating a unique karakia / incantation / ritual for children to use when embarking on interactions with te taiao.	
Prepare ahead: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Choose your creation story: Decide which creation story you would like to share with the children. We suggest that it is helpful for you to have a relationship with the story to build familiarity and confidence in your knowledge of it. The intention is that tamariki will also build their relationship with the story and the atua (Gods) in it. See Appendix 1 for resource suggestions. ● Choose a karakia or mihi: When you spend time in nature with your children, you could begin together with a co-created ritual to establish the intention of your visit/ time in te taiao. You could consider a karakia or mihi. You may want to decide which you want to offer ahead of time, including if you would like to co- 	



create a karakia or mihi with the children. *Karakia*, prayer, incantation or ritual chant, are an integral part of tikanga Māori (Māori ways of being and doing) and serve many functions. *Mihi* is an acknowledgement or greeting. The key is to be communicating with te taiao as part of your growing whanaungatanga. Karakia or mihi can reflect your centre's community, and can range from a karakia you have learned, or one you read, or you can create your own. You can also invite tamariki to share a karakia or mihi of their own creation. See **Appendix 2** for examples of karakia and mihi.

Instructions:

- Share the pūrākau Māori of the creation story (known as 'i te timatanga – in the beginning' and 'te wehenga – the separation'). This can happen how and wherever you usually share stories and can be read from a book, an e book, audiobook, or video to accommodate kaiako (teacher) knowledge and confidence levels.
- Alongside this storytelling, kaiako and tamariki can plan and take time to visit and build whanaungatanga (relationship) with te taiao (the beyond human world). This could be visiting the ngahere (bush, forest, green space) that you have access to, or your outside environment. Take time to discuss your understanding of what karakia and mihi mean and are used for.
- Work together to co-create your ritual of mihi to atua/ taiao e.g. mihi to start outdoor play time/ art time/ hauhake (harvest)/ water play etc.
- Once you have created your ritual of intention, tamariki and kaiako are free to explore, hīkoi, tākaro, noho, takoto, whakarongo, titiro, rongo (walk, play, sit, lie down, listen, look, feel etc). The key purpose of this time is to be in te taiao. Tamariki will build whanaungatanga in their own ways.

Ara mai i te kore – Potential Pathways

Here are some additional pathways you can explore with your tamariki to continue developing a relationship with te taiao and pūrākau (legend or myth).

- Learn waiata (songs) related to the part of te taiao you are exploring while you are spending time there e.g. 'Ko te pū' in the garden/with harakeke (flax).
- Open a kōrero (discussion) by posing a pātai (question), sharing a whakaaro (thought) about the emotions of the atua in the pūrākau e.g. I wonder how Tāne felt when his dad flew high into the sky.
- Reciprocity through actively caring for Papatūānuku – picking up rubbish, caring for whenua (earth) and tipu (plants) – planting, replanting, watering, harvesting responsibly.
- Learning about maramataka (Māori lunar calendar) and planning your visits based on the phases of the moon and energy of each phase.



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- Collect and gather only taonga that have been gifted by te taiao and create offerings to atua of the ngahere, such as Tāne and Hinewao.
- Invite tamariki to take photographs. Use photos as provocations for visual arts e.g. paint, clay, construction etc.
- Bringing found taonga (nature resources) into the centre for clay work. Clay links to the pūrākau of Hineahuone as a potential learning pathway for kaiako.
- Mauri tau (meditation) with atua e.g. feel Tāwhirimātea fill our lungs.
- Hauhake (harvesting) harakeke (flax), putiputi (flowers) etc. for weaving, making kakala etc. Think about the cultures present in your centre community, which plant fibre art forms are connected to who you are in your place?
- Mahi māra (gardening)! This connects to the pūrākau of the creation, as Tāne cloaked Papatūānuku in everything that grows. Additionally, this connects to Rongo mā tāne, one of Rangi and Papa's tamariki, atua of cultivated kai.



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Appendix 1: Resources for Creation Stories

- Atua by Gavin Bishop
- I te Timatanga, In the Beginning retold and illustrated by Peter Gossage
- Taming the sun, Four Māori Myths by Gavin Bishop
- A Māori creation story - [Ranginui and Papatūānuku](#)
- [How Māui slowed the sun](#)
- [The Story of Papatūānuku and Ranginui](#)

Appendix 2: Karakia and Mihi Examples

Āio ki te aorangi by Rose Pere <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=26CJaQPxPy0>

Āio ki te Aorangi x2	
Aroha ki te Aorangi x2	Peace to the Universe
Koa, koa, koa ki te Aorangi x2	Love to the Universe
Pono ki te Aorangi x2	Joy to the Universe
Āio ki te Aorangi. x2	Truth to the Universe
	Peace to the Universe

Kei te mihi, atua by Emma Parangi <https://vimeo.com/1081199769>
Sing to the tune of Frère Jacque

Kei te mihi x2	Greetings, thanks, acknowledgements
Atua (can use name of atua here e.g. E Rongo) x2	To you atua, Rongo etc.
I roto i te (insert the place of the atua you are giving mihi to e.g. māra) x2	Here in the garden, art space, water etc.
Mō ēnei koha x2	For these gifts

Te timatanga o te ao (ko te pū) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZdJ7MuLL-Gw>

Te Pū	Root, Origin
Te More	Tap root
Te Weu	Rootlets
Te Aka	Creeper, vine
Te Rea	Growth
Te Wao-nui	Great wood
Te Kune	Conception, Form



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Te Whe	<i>Sound</i>
Te Kore	<i>Chaos, Void</i>
Te Pō	<i>Darkness</i>
Ki ngā Tāngata Māori	<i>Connection of people</i>
Ko Rangi, rāua ko Papa	<i>Sky Father and Earth Mother</i>
Ko tēnei te tīmatanga o te Ao (Anō)	<i>Creation of the world has begun</i>