



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

Matariki for Tamariki

Designed for ages	3 - 5 year olds
Adaptable for ages	2 - 8 year olds
Learning Experience Description:	In this activity the teacher provides provocations to prompt the children's curiosity in exploring the influence of Matariki within their lives.
Te Whāriki (Aotearoa New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum) Link:	Mana whenua (belonging)
Te Whare Tapa Whā (Māori model for well-being):	Taha whānau (family and social wellbeing)
Te Whare o Oro (Māori framework for understanding the brain):	Limbic system: Whanaungatanga/emotional engagement, social connections, and experiences. Cortex: ako/learning, complex conversations, social interactions and exploratory play.
Tapasā (Cultural competency resource for teachers working with Pacific learners):	Turu 2: Collaborative and respectful relationships and professional behaviours.
Materials: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="checkbox"/> Clay <input type="checkbox"/> Tools for cutting, carving, and decorating the clay. <input type="checkbox"/> Ceramic tiles (or something similar) for the children to work their clay on. Enough for every child in the centre as the clay will need to stay on the tile to dry. <input type="checkbox"/> Table for the children to work on, preferably outdoors in te taiao (nature) as being outdoors is often instantly calming and helps children to focus. <input type="checkbox"/> Picture Book on Matariki and her 8-star children which should have already been introduced to the children (see Appendix 1 for a list of picture and board books that discuss Matariki). <input type="checkbox"/> String or yarn. <input type="checkbox"/> A branch for hanging the stars from after the clay has dried. 	
Things to consider: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This experience would ideally be offered <u>after</u> Matariki and the seven other stars have been introduced to the children. • This is a small group experience for maybe six children (maximum) at a time. If children want to join but there is no room, the teacher might like to keep a list of who is interested so they can be invited back once the first group has finished their crafting. It's okay for children to wait their turn as delicate work with clay requires concentration which is not often possible in larger sized groups. 	



- This experience may be best offered during a calm time in your learning environment. This might be first thing in the morning, after morning tea or after a reading time.
- Any leftover scraps of clay should be returned to Papatūānuku as is the appropriate tikanga (procedure) for working with materials from the whenua (land).
- If working outdoors, find a shady place to set up so the clay doesn't dry out too quickly.

Prepare ahead:

- Visit www.matariki.com to access resources for the teachers to support their ongoing learning and development. This includes karakia (chants, pray, incantation) specific to each of the whetu (stars) as well as Matariki.
- Read your children a picture book about Matariki.
- Decide which karakia (prayer, incantation or ritual chant) you would like to open with if at all. This is a great resource for karakia <https://www.matariki.com/resources>
- Set up your clay table with everything you will need.

Instructions:

1. The kaiako (teacher) can either sit down and wait for the children to join them or invite up to six children to join them at the clay table.
2. The kaiako can begin by explaining that the purpose of the clay experience is to explore the children's working theories about Matariki. The teacher should make sure they link this to previous explorations, such as reading the book on Matariki, discussing wayfaring, the importance of Matariki to many Māori, the influence of Matariki on wellbeing. Keep the introduction brief but link it to the context that has already been built upon.
3. Follow the brief kōrero (discussion) with a karakia, which the children are hopefully already familiar with. You could share this one:

Matariki

Mānawa maiea te putanga o Matariki

Mānawa maiea te ariki o te rangi

Mānawa maiea te Mātahi o te Tau.

Whano, whano

Haramai te toki ata huakirangi

Haumi e Hui e Tāiki e!

Celebrate the rising of Matariki

Celebrate the lord of the skies

Celebrate the new year
Unite, unite
And bring forth the dawn
Together In union
We are one!

Note: This karakia is from <https://www.matariki.com/resources>.

4. Next, the teacher may choose to introduce each of the whetu (stars) and remind the children what they each represent.
5. Invite the children to choose which star speaks to them, that they “like best” and which one they would like to create in clay.
6. The children are then ready to proceed with cutting, shaping and creating the clay star.
7. As the children work, the kaiako may make their own whetu. But they must not shape or contribute to the children’s own creations as all the children learn from this is that the teacher can do it better. We want the children to draw upon their own creativity and imagination, and connect this with what they know from home, and with what they have learnt at their early childhood centre.
8. As the mahi (work) continues on the stars, if they feel it’s appropriate, the kaiako may prompt discussion about what each of the children are working on to hear the children’s thoughts, feelings and interpretations of Matariki and how the children relate to their whetu. The kaiako may invite a child to share about:
 - a. the shapes they’ve moulded
 - b. the marks they’ve made on the clay
 - c. what makes them feel connected to the star.

(note: the teacher may also decide it inappropriate to introduce conversation as this may interrupt the flow of the children’s mahi).
9. Once the child/children have finished their whetu, invite the children to name their star. Then help the child pierce a hole in the star so the stars can be hung up later. Place the stars somewhere safe to dry.
10. Invite the next group of children to join the kaiako at the table to make their whetu.
11. When the stars are dry, ask the children if they’d like to hang their Matariki stars at home or at the early childhood centre.



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Appendix 1: Matariki Picture Books

- Little Kiwi's Matariki by Nikky Slade Robinson.
- Matariki by Gavin Bishop. *This is a board book.*
- Matariki by Melanie Drewery.
- Matariki Around the World by Rangi Matamua and Miriama Kamo.
This book begins with a description of Matariki from within te ao Māori (the Māori worldview). However, the story can support the learning of Matariki from many different cultures. From page 38 onwards there are descriptions from other cultures such as Japan, Hawai'i, India, Greece, Scandinavia, China.
- Nanny Rina's Amazing Nets by Qiane Matata-Sipu.
- Twinkle, Twinkle, Matariki by Rebecca Larsen

Auckland Council Libraries also have [a list of Matariki Picture Books](#).