



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

Tau'olunga Mai

Designed for ages	3 – 5 years old
Adaptable for ages	2 years old and above
Learning Experience Description:	This embodied activity helps children bring awareness to their surroundings and connections through song and dance. This learning experience shares a traditional Tongan dance.
Te Whāriki (Aotearoa New Zealand Early Childhood Curriculum):	Mana whenua – belonging
Te Whare Tapa Whā (Māori model for well-being):	Whenua (land, roots well-being)
Te Whare o Oro (Māori framework for understanding the brain):	Limbic system: emotional engagement, social connections and experiences, narrative, validation, complex movement.
Tapasā (Cultural competency resource for teachers working with Pacific learners):	Turu 1: Culture and identity
Materials: <input type="checkbox"/> Speaker (something to play the music) <input type="checkbox"/> Music Suggested songs for the dance include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Fakatapu - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Efgcxb5_v-Y Folau - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=unBXS6UohX4 Fotu'i he la'a - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=GSJaPM4tXsU 	
Things to consider: Tau'olunga is a traditional Tongan dance. You can learn more about Tau'olunga here . You are welcome to adapt this activity to a dance/song from your culture. This can be incorporated as a daily practice to support students to foster a mind-body connection and ground to the present moment.	
Prepare ahead: Watch the instructional video of the dance moves beforehand so you can teach it to the students. Or you can play the video for the students to watch themselves.	



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Instructions:

1. Share with the students that we are going to learn a dance from Tongan culture. This dance helps us acknowledge the environment and people we are connected to.
2. Ask the students if they know of any dances or songs from their culture that talk about the environment or people.
3. Teach the students through demonstration each action for the following sequence:
 - a. **Fakatapu** – Acknowledging Atua/Tangata whenua (Contextual – this would be the royal family or chief in Tonga, but in NZ it is about acknowledging tangata whenua and the iwi who are present, whoever is present, clearing the space and giving acknowledgement for the opportunity to be present and able to stand)
 - b. **La'ā** – Embracing the Sun
 - c. **Fetu'u** – Shining Stars
 - d. **Langi** – Connecting Cosmos/Sky
 - e. **'Umata** – Painting Rainbows
 - f. **Moana** – Making waves
 - g. **Fonua** – Connecting land/nature
 - h. **Tangata** – Building relationships with people/whānau
4. Share with the children that we are going to practice the dance all together. Play the music and invite lead the children through the dance.
5. Ask the children...
 - Who do we acknowledge when dancing?
 - How can we look after the environment?
 - How can we stay connected to the world around us?
 - How important is the natural world?
 - How do you think the sun looks after us as people?
 - Why do you think we nurture the environment like this in Tongan culture