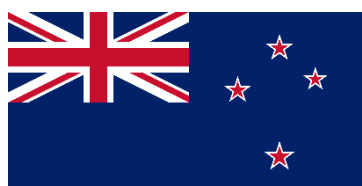


Where is New Zealand?



Facts About New Zealand

- New Zealand lies in the South Pacific Ocean. Its nearest neighbour, Australia, is 1,000 miles away. New Zealand is a group of islands formed from volcanoes. The country has 50 volcanoes, some of which are still active. New Zealand has steep, rugged mountains capped with snow, as well as green pastureland and rocky beaches.
- Because New Zealand is such a remote island, most of the animals that live here are birds that flew here thousands of years ago. Many of the birds can no longer fly. When Dutch and British settlers arrived, they brought cats, rats and other predators. These predators have killed many of the native species on the island. In addition to birds, the island hosts giant insects, including the giant weta, which resembles a cricket, but weighs three times more than a mouse!
- Mount Cook stands at 3,724 metres and is the tallest mountain in New Zealand. It is also known by the name Aoraki.
- Waikato is the longest river and flows for 425km.
- Because of its location and proximity to fault lines New Zealand is prone to earthquakes.
- According to information taken from NASA, New Zealand has more than 3,000 glaciers.
- The New Zealand flag:



The History of the Maori People

New Zealand is an island country in the Pacific Ocean, to the east of Australia. It is made up of a North Island and a South Island. The North Island has a warmer climate and has active volcanoes and hot springs. The South Island has many mountain ranges and a cooler climate.

The first people who came to New Zealand arrived from the Polynesian islands to the north. They first came to New Zealand around the year AD 1300. The people who came to New Zealand called themselves the *Maori*. The word Maori means the 'original people'. Maori legend says that a leader called Kupe led the people to the island in boats. They called their new country *Aotearoa*, which meant 'land of the long white cloud' in their language.



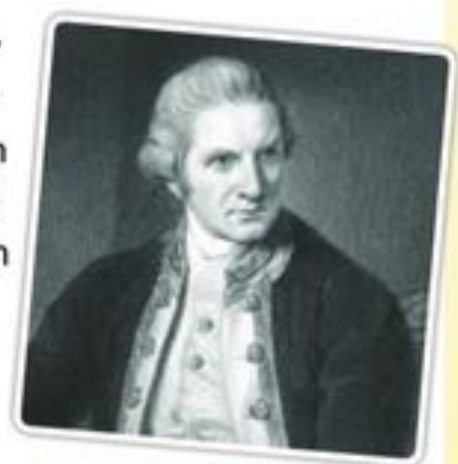
Checkpoint

1. When did the first people arrive in New Zealand?
2. Where did the Maori people originally come from?
3. How did they travel to New Zealand?

Europeans in New Zealand

In 1642 the first European explorer found New Zealand. It was discovered by Abel Tasman. The Maori people did not allow him to land his ship. Abel Tasman was from the Netherlands and New Zealand was named after the area of Zealand in the Netherlands.

In the 1760s and 1770s, Englishman Captain James Cook made several sea **voyages** to New Zealand and made a map of the country. Over time more European explorers came and began to settle in New Zealand and to trade with the Maori people. The Maori called these European settlers Pakeha, which means 'white people'. The Maori and the new settlers often fought over land. In 1840 New Zealand eventually came under the rule of the British.



▲ Captain Cook

A Timeline of The Maori People And New Zealand

TIMELINE			
			
1300 First Maori people arrive in New Zealand by boat	1642 Abel Tasman is the first European to find New Zealand	1760s – 1770s James Cook makes several voyages around New Zealand	1840 The British start ruling New Zealand after signing the Treaty of Waitangi with the Maori

Maori Traditions



Hi! My name is Arihi. That's my little sister Kiri in the photo with me. Today our school had a special day to celebrate Maori culture. We were treated to an outside concert of music and dance near the beach. My family's ancestors were some of the original Maori settlers who came from the Polynesian islands.

Almost one-third of my class in school have some Maori connection in their family.

We gathered at the wooden canoe house near the beach. It had a brightly painted war canoe in it. The house was covered with beautiful carvings. Maori crafts like woodcarving are still practised today by many New Zealanders.



A Maori storyteller told the class a story of the Great Fleet arriving on the shores of New Zealand. He wore a traditional Maori cloak and costume. He had amazing tattoos covering his face. They are important Maori symbols and no two people have the exact same tattoos.

Next, the dancers performed the *kapa haka* dance. This dance was used by Maori warriors to show their strength before a battle. It was very exciting to watch. They looked scary when they stuck their tongues out and stamped their feet! The music was played on a guitar and by hitting a conch shell. They chanted very loudly and everyone in the class was smiling and clapped at the end. The class was shown the *hongi*, which is a traditional Maori greeting in which we touch faces and noses are pressed together. We

all ate food that was cooked in a pit in the ground using steam. This type of cooking is called a *hangi*. We had pork, chicken, potatoes and kumara (sweet potatoes). Kiri and I felt very proud today that we are keeping our traditions alive and can share them with all New Zealanders.



[Click on the picture here to watch a video showing some other Maori traditions.](#)



The New Zealand Coat of Arms

The New Zealand coat of arms is the official symbol of New Zealand. Each part of the coat of arms has a meaning. There is a European woman and a Maori man, which shows the history that they share. The woman holds the New Zealand flag. The man holds a Maori weapon. The coat of arms also shows the crown of the British queen, who is also the queen of New Zealand. The three ships explain the importance of travel by sea in the history of both the Maori and European people of New Zealand. The hammers, wheat and sheep show the importance of mining and farming in New Zealand today. The four stars on the coat of arms can be seen in the night sky over New Zealand. They are called the Southern Cross and they can also be found on the New Zealand flag. These stars were important in Maori beliefs and they also helped European sailors to find their way to New Zealand.



The All Blacks and the Kapa Haka

Rugby is a very important sport in New Zealand. The New Zealand rugby team is known as the All Blacks because of their black team colours. To show



how proud they are to be from New Zealand, the players perform a Maori war dance before each game, wherever they are playing in the world. The dance is called the kapa haka. Players from both Maori and European traditions all perform the dance together. They sing, stamp their feet and stick out their tongues. The kapa haka is meant to frighten the other side in a war. The All Blacks are one of the most successful international rugby teams in the history of the sport.

Click on the picture here to watch a video of the haka:



[And click here to see the Irish version of the Haka you might like to try out at home](#)

Here are some extra facts and information about the Maori people:

The first people to inhabit New Zealand were the Māori people. The Māori people travelled the seas in huge canoes.

They used the sun, stars and currents of the sea to navigate the waters and find land.

They arrived in New Zealand some time between 1200-1300AD. Before this, New Zealand was known as 'The Land of the Long White Cloud'.

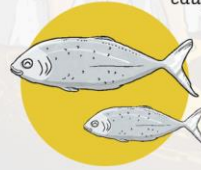


Māori Life

The Māori people were hunter gatherers. Food was often gathered and hunted from the land and sea. The Māori people mainly survived on a diet of a huge flightless bird called a moa. The Māori people hunted this bird and it is now extinct.



They also spent a lot of time fishing. Their food was usually cooked on a large heated stone. Some fish was eaten raw. Some of the seafood they caught was used for trading.



Māori Culture and Traditions

The Haka

A well-known Māori cultural activity is the Haka. The Haka is a 'war dance'. It is a chant which involves lots of hand gestures and foot stamping. Facial expression is also very important in the performance of the Haka.

It was originally performed by warriors before a battle.

Now, it is performed by the New Zealand rugby team before a game.



Māori Culture and Traditions

Wood Carvings

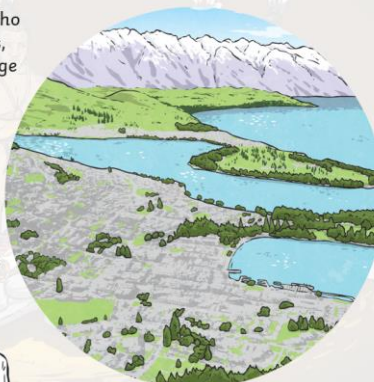
Māori masks are made through carving pieces of wood. The masks are designed to look vicious, with aggressive expressions. The lines on the masks are designed to mirror Māori facial tattoos. Facial tattoos were worn to look ferocious and scare off enemies. Today, some Māori people have facial tattoos to preserve the culture of their ancestors.



Māori People Today

There are still lots of people who identify as Māori. Māori songs, dances, traditions and language are being taught in schools.

The Māori language, Te Reo, is an official language in New Zealand. However, not many have mastered the language or use it as their first language.



Activities

1. Write 5 facts about the country of New Zealand.
2. Answer the following questions about the history of the Maori people:

- a) What does the word Maori mean?
- b) What islands did the first people who came to New Zealand come from?
- c) What does "Aoteroa" mean?
- d) When did the first European explorer find New Zealand and what was his name?
- e) New Zealand is named after a place in what other country?
- f) Who became the rulers of New Zealand in 1840?
- g) What name did the Maori people give to European settlers and what did it mean?

3. Draw pictures showing 4 Maori traditions or customs and describe them.
4. Create a simple timeline of your own for the history of the Maori people and New Zealand using a grid like this:

1300	1642	1760	1840

5. Draw a picture of the New Zealand flag and coat of arms.
6. Create your own carved Maori mask design. You can use the outline on the next page if you prefer.

