

Week 3: Lesson 1
The Week of May 8 to 14

– Listening to the Voices of Maori Ancestors –
‘How a Matarunga Māori Changed My Life’



Success Criteria

Students will gain a better understanding of traditional Māori foods, how Māori view food, and be able to recount the best times to eat and to fast according to Māori tradition.

Task 1: Watch the video – ‘TUPUNA KAI: A Māori diet based on what ancestors ate.’

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ziCKhZRqHXk>

This video shows how a Maori man who was overweight and searching for meaning in his life, lost weight and changed his life by turning to traditional Māori kai (food).

1. What plants did he find in the forest to eat?
2. What fruits did he eat?
3. What does he believe you should do during a full moon?
4. What does he do when there is very little moon (‘the moon is dark’)?

Class Discussion: How did this man turn his life around by embracing his cultural traditions? Why is a person's culture important? (Remember Term 1 and our unit on Culture).

Working in small groups –

Task 2: Research Skills – The man in the video talks about fasting. Go online and look up which major religions engage in fasting. Name some of the religions. When do they fast? Why? Look up the health benefits of fasting. Many doctors believe that there are several benefits. Name some. Write a summary under the heading – 'Research Skills & Fasting.'

Key words you could type into Google: 'fasting and health,' 'fasting and religion,' 'fasting and Māori.'

At your table – you will have 10-minutes to research this – then I will call on each group and I will write key information on the board in dot-points that you have written into your books.

Week 3: Lesson 2 – A Look at Traditional Māori Kai (Food)



Success Criteria

Students will gain a better understanding of traditional foods that were eaten by Māori long ago and more recently and will be able to recount where food was typically grown, why kumara only grew well in certain places, and several key Māori words for popular foods.

Activities:

1. Reading
2. Writing
3. Drawing

Read pages 9 and 10 of the book **Food and Culture in New Zealand** (these pages appear at the end of this lesson), and answer the following questions:

1. Why did early Māori locate villages near and along coastal areas?
2. In which parts of New Zealand does kumara not grow and why?
3. Early Māori ate a variety of foods. Write down the definition of the following foods with their European names. Draw a picture of the food next to it. For example:

a. ika moana = sea fish



b. manu =

c. kiori =

d. aruhu =

e. karaka =

f. karengo =

4. On the top of page 10, it mentions that the early European visitors noted that Māori survived by eating one particular food that was in abundance. What was it?

5. They also ate fish. How did they cook it?

6. How did Māori prepare fern root before it was eaten?

Homework: What you do not complete in class is homework.

The Reading for lesson 2 appears below – pages 9 & 10.

MAORI TRADITIONAL FOODS

— Nga Tino Kai a te Maori

Every culture has its traditions. The New Zealand Nutrition Taskforce recognised that Maori, Pakeha, Pacific Island and other ethnic groups living in New Zealand eat special foods. Differences in traditional foods result from living in vastly different physical and cultural environments.

For all ethnic groups in New Zealand food availability and food choices have changed significantly over the years. This is not so for the Maori people (tangata whenua), who retain traditional foods which have a spiritual significance.

Food for Health, 1991

Maori have retained these traditional foods in spite of contact with Europeans. The kumara was carried to New Zealand by the first canoes to visit these shores. Taro was brought by early Maori migrants from their Pacific homes. As well as the foods themselves, Maori have special traditions concerning planting, harvesting and preparation of foods. As a people they understood the land, the forests, the sea and the foods available to them. The area where food was to be gathered was respected. Maori were conservationists, never taking more than was needed.

Early Maori settlers established villages along the coast, at streams and at river mouths. This gave them good access to the resources of land and sea and somewhere safe to pull up their canoes. They travelled throughout New Zealand and food, for example kumara, which didn't grow in the colder southern areas, was an item of trade.

Early Maori depended on what the sea, rivers, land and forest supplied:

- ika moana — sea fish, for example patiki (flounder), koura (crayfish)
- ika wai whenua — freshwater fish, for example tuna (eels), inanga (whitebait)
- pipi moana — seawater shellfish, for example paua, pipi, kuku (mussels)
- pipi wai whenua — freshwater shellfish, for example koura (freshwater crayfish)
- manu — birds
- kiori — rat.

Foods used included:

- roots — aruhe (fern root), raupo (bulrush)
- young shoots — piko piko/mauku (fern fronds)
- leaves — poniu (wild cress), puha (sour thistle)
- berries — karaka, hinau, tawa, matai, titoki
- pollen — raupo (bulrush)
- heart of the leaf — nikau (New Zealand palm), ti kouka (cabbage tree)
- seaweed — karengo, rimurimu.

Comments on Maori food by early European visitors*

Food Patterns

Early European visitors to these shores recorded Maori food patterns. In December 1769, Monneron, an officer with the French Expedition of Jean de Surville at Doubtless Bay in the north of New Zealand, recorded:

The main diet of the Maori was fern root, which grew in great quantity. It was prepared by being warmed by a fire, beaten, then used as bread.

They also ate quantities of fish. To do this a hole was dug in the ground, half-filled with stones, and a fire lit on top. When the stones were heated, the fish, well-enveloped in leaves, was laid on them. Soil was then used to cover the oven until the food was cooked.¹

Fern Root

In the above short extract Monneron explains the importance and use of fern root for the Maori people. He also gives a description of a hangi, or earth oven.

In 1807, a European doctor, John Savage, visited the Bay of Islands. He too commented on the use of fern root:

The fern grows here in abundance, the root of which is held in great estimation by the Maori. Before the introduction of potatoes it was almost their only edible vegetable. They call it rauaruhe.²

During his visit to New Zealand in 1814 John Nicholas made many observations of life in this country. He writes that "once heated, the fern root was beaten with a stone or wooden mallet until soft and ready for chewing". It was chewed until all the sweet, glutinous substance was extracted, then the fibrous material was spat out. "This," wrote Nicholas, "satisfied the appetite." Nicholas recorded:

Further along the beach [Rangihoua Bay, in the Bay of Islands] we came to some people sitting on the sand in small groups. Cooks were roasting and beating fern root, which when ready was thrown to those seated. On seeing us they called out, 'Haere mai, haere mai,' and invited us to join them. Some fern root was thrown to us. They considered me their guest.³

A Maori Meal: Using a Hangi

In January 1815, the young Bay of Islands chief Ruatara took Samuel Marsden and his friend John Nicholas up the Kerikeri Inlet — 'three hours of very hard paddling by canoe.' Nicholas records a meal prepared by the great Ngapuhi chief Hongi Hika and his people:

To light a fire Hongi took some dry grass and a piece of rotten wood. He turned a small stick rapidly between the palms of his hands until the friction where the stick met the grass caused it to burn. Then he carefully folded the grass, shaking it backwards and forwards until it burst into flames. Meanwhile the cooks had prepared a hangi or ground oven. Others peeled potatoes using a mussel shell.⁴

Week 3: Lesson 3 – Māori Food Tourism



British Chef Gordon Ramsey on his recent visit to Aotearoa New Zealand.

Success Criteria

Students will gain an understanding of how traditional Māori would forage for food and how elders are attempting to keep the ancient traditions alive by foraging for traditional foods, so the knowledge does not become lost.

Task 1: Watch the video on Māori Food Tourism

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=B8sKQeLmax0>

(12:07 sec.)

1. The words of the plants they gather are shown on the video and what they are used for, their qualities (e.g., taste, colour), and how is it beneficial for your health? For each of the plants listed below, list their qualities and how they are beneficial to human health.

2. Kawakawa

3. Why do they harvest the Kawakawa on the north side of the tree?

4. Pirita vine:

5. Piko Piko:

6. Ear Mushroom:

7. Puti Puti:

8. White bait:

9. Kamo Kamo

10. What do they do to sweeten the salmon?

11. Koa Koa Pavolva

Homework: What you do not complete in class is homework.