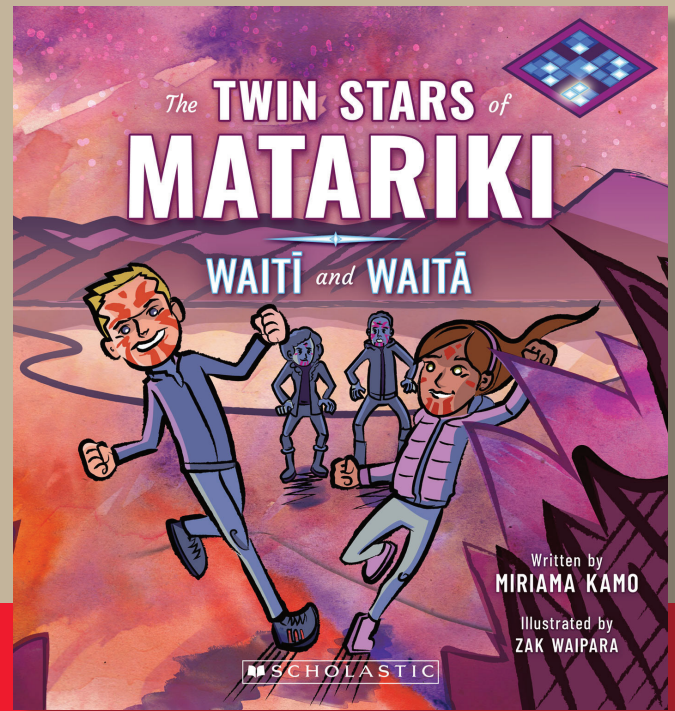


# The Twin Stars of Matariki: Waitī and Waitā

By Miriama Kamo

Illustrated by Zak Waipara

- Reading • Writing • Thinking Skills • Matariki
- Environmental Awareness



## Synopsis

Te Rerehua and Sam know that nothing in nature is identical; not the eels, not the stones on the beach. Not even the twin stars of Matariki, Waitī and Waitā: one looks after fresh water and lakes, the other salt water – the ocean. When they notice Waitī is looking dim one night, Grandma and Pōua enlist the children's help with planting around the edges of the lake to help keep it healthy. But at night, those sneaky Patupaiarehe come and pull up the plants! Grandma devises a plan to scare those naughty fairies away.

## About the Authors

**Miriama Kamo** is an award-winning journalist. She is the anchor of TVNZ's flagship current affairs programme *Sunday* and Māori current affairs programme *Marae*. Miriama has worked on many of TVNZ's key programmes including *1 News* as a newsreader. Miriama's first children's book with Scholastic was the popular *The Stolen Stars of Matariki*. Her 2022 book, *Matariki Around the World* was one of the bestselling children's books of that year.

## About the Illustrator

**Zak Waipara** is a former NZ Herald graphic artist and HOD of Animation at Animation College. Zak Waipara (Rongowhakaata, Ngati Porou, Ngati Ruapani, Ngati Kahungunu) is now Digital Media lecturer at AUT. He has worked as a designer for Māori Television's children's show *Miharo*, illustrated comics and a range of books, and created animated music videos. He is the illustrator of *Horeta and the Waka* and *The Stolen Stars of Matariki* (Scholastic NZ). Born in Milton in the South Island, Zak now lives in Auckland.

# Writing and Illustration Style

A companion book to *The Stolen Stars of Matariki, The Twin Stars of Matariki: Waitī and Waitā* has the same charm and fresh approach brought by author and illustrator team Miriama Kamo and Zak Waipara. Both the writing and illustration style are contemporary, linking Māori traditions and beliefs around the use of the Matariki stars to predict the year ahead to a modern setting. Readers will learn about the stars Waitī and Waitā, and their respective connections to salt water and fresh water. Themes include Matariki, individuality, the natural world, intergenerational whānau relationships, oral traditions and kaitiakitanga (protection and guardianship of the environment).

The richly poetic and playful language of the text pairs beautifully with the vibrantly coloured, digital, graphic-style art. *The Twin Stars of Matariki* promotes environmental awareness and upholds the importance of riparian planting around Aotearoa's lakes, rivers and streams. Perfect for Matariki and all year round, this 32-page picture book enhances the understanding and connection to te ao Māori for all New Zealanders, and acts as a reminder that we are all responsible for protecting our environment.

## Shared Learning and Discussion Points

During the shared sessions, encourage students to ask questions to clarify their understanding of characters and events. Have them make predictions and inferences and relate these to their own experiences. Read the book aloud and, if appropriate, have students read alongside or by themselves. Use all or some of the questions below for discussion, comprehension checks and making connections.

### ASK YOUR STUDENTS:

Look at the cover and read the blurb then turn to the title page.

- Which parts of the natural world are the twin stars Waitī and Waitā connected to?
- Why do you think Waitī is not 'shining bright tonight'?
- What do you think the red marks on Sam, Te Rerehua, Grandma and Pōua's faces might be from?
- Who do you think the pale creatures on the back cover and title page are?

### Comprehension

- What does the word 'Pōua' mean?
- What is the meaning of 'translucent'?
- What word could you use to describe something that is one of a kind, or slightly different from anything or anyone else?
- How are people, including twins, different from each other? What does it mean to have your 'own personality'?
- What is the word 'Boooom!' an example of? (p.6)
- What is the Māori word for 'eel'? Why do the whānau go eeling at night? What is a 'gaff'?
- Who is the pale creature watching the whānau at the beach? (pp.11–13) What do you think the diamond shapes around him signify?
- At the end of P.11, predict why 'the news isn't good'.
- Why is there less wildlife in the lake than there used to be?
- Predict what you think Te Rerehua's plan is. (p.13)
- Why did the whānau plant new plants at the lakeside? Why did Te Rerehua and Sam feel proud?
- What are 'schwoop', 'schwap' and 'shick' examples of?
- What are patupaiarehe? Why do you think they are tearing out the new plants?
- How do the illustrations convey what Te Rerehua and Sam are feeling? (pp.16–17)
- How does Grandma know how to solve the problem of the patupaiarehe?
- Why is Waitī looking 'dimmer than ever'?
- What does 'titiro' mean? How does Waitā help Waitī? (p.22)
- Why has the illustrator included the inset illustrations on pp.24–25? What purpose do they serve?
- Why did the patupaiarehe run away?
- What does 'pitched in' mean? (p.28) Why do you think that others were happy to help? What are they being?
- What does 'E hika!' mean? How could you check your answer?
- Why is Waitī looking brighter?
- How has the illustrator shown that it is the end of the day? (pp.30–31)
- How does the whānau know that 'it was going to be a very good Matariki'?
- Te Mata Hāpuku is a special place to Sam and Te Rerehua. Do you have a special place you like to visit? What do you do there? Who do you see?

# Activities

## ACTIVITY 1: FOLLOW WAITĪ'S PATH

Waitī doesn't just look after awa (rivers), roto (lakes), kūkūwai (wetlands) and waipuna (springs), she also looks after the wildlife that live in them. Find out more about some of the freshwater fish and animals that are native to Aotearoa New Zealand. You might want to learn about the amazing 100-year-lifespan of the longfin tuna (eel) and the incredible journey they make from rivers and streams to the depths of the Pacific Ocean, or you may want to look at how kōura (freshwater crayfish) help keep their environment clean. Use Google Slides to create an animal fact file about your freshwater creature.

## ACTIVITY 2: BE KAITIAKI

As a class, research to find out more about riparian planting. Why is it needed? What kinds of plants are used? What are the benefits of riparian zones? Make posters explaining riparian planting. You might even be able to help plant, weed or add to a riparian area in your community.

## ACTIVITY 3: EXPLORE THE COUNTRY

Research Te Mata Hāpuku/Birdling's Flat. Where in Aotearoa New Zealand is it? Mark it on a map and write a caption explaining what is special about it.

## ACTIVITY 4: BE A WRITER

Write your own story involving Waitā, Waitī or patupaiarehe. Plan your characters and plot. Who is in the story? What will happen? Try to include some 'wow' words (exciting adjectives, verbs and adverbs). Give your story a title and add an illustration to make it extra appealing.

## ACTIVITY 5: CREATE A COMIC

Retell the story of *The Twin Stars of Matariki: Waitī and Waitā* as a comic. You could retell the whole story or choose your favourite scene.

Written by Frances McBeath