



# HE TUITUIA MĀORI KI TE AO KOIRI

**INTER WEAVING MĀTAURANGA MĀORI INTO PE**

# Ko wai au



# Integrating Mātauranga Māori in PE

**A Holistic approach to Hauora and Movement**

**Aligning with the HPE curriculum 1999. This curriculum stresses the importance of bicultural heritage in its approach**

Main Goal

1. An understanding of Mātauranga Māori
2. The importance of a Bicultural Lens
3. A holistic approach
4. Whakapapa and connection
5. Wai – Water as movement
6. Insight into a Year 11 unit at Dio
7. Practical takeaways – Weave whakapapa in PE, learn about Horohopu and create a poi toa

# What is Mātauranga Māori?

## The bicultural lens

**Bicultural means bringing together westernised and Māori knowledge**

**This example of a unit of learning aims to counteract this by positioning Māori knowledge at the centre**

**This bicultural lens HPE is discussed in the context of how Māori concepts have historically been marginalised within a Pākehā worldview, as argued by Meier, Caroline, 2020**

# What is Mātauranga Māori?

## The bicultural lens

**This approach focuses on the environment:**

Papa, Rangi, and Wai by Amy Kaukau, 2025

**It uses a framework including concepts like**

**Whakapapa** (connections and relationships)

**Huahuatau** (learning from our environment)

**Whakatīnanatanga** (learning through movement) similar to Arnold Arnold, J. P., 1988

**Ngā Tohutaka** (timing with natural signs)

Atua Matua framework by Ihirangi Heke

# Hauora



**Hauora is a Māori philosophy:** Te Whare Tapa wha is a core part of this unit

The unit applies these dimensions through culturally responsive, water-based experiences

This approach ensures that learning in PE considers all aspects of a student's health, not just physical. All walls representing a different, interconnected dimension

# Whakapapa: Connections and Relationships

**Whakapapa means connections and relationships:**

**The unit plan explicitly includes learning about the historical significance of local Wai and exploring connections between Wai and Whakapapa (genealogy)**

**It helps us see how everything in nature is linked**

**Tracing ancestral bonds links all beings together – including people, the land, species, and even Atua**



# Wai

**WAI means water**


**WAI is dynamic**

**WAI as movement, breath, life – flowing,  
adjusting, connecting us to our Taiao and  
each other**

**Parawhenuamea is specifically identified as  
the atua (guardian spirit) of freshwater and  
floods by Deborah Heke, 2021**

**Movement on water is different from  
movement on land**





***This is a central concept in the unit's design. It moves beyond simply teaching physical skills to fostering critical evaluation and social justice. Transformative teaching is conceptualised as a continuous process striving for greater democracy and social justice by Gerdin et al., 2020***

***Transformative pedagogy encourages students to examine power structures, identify inequities, and take informed action by Katie Fitzpatrick, 2019***

***This approach aligns with a "modest pedagogy" where reflection, humility, and relational learning replace top-down, performative models by Tinning, 2002. It challenges traditional, skill-focused PE, drawing on the five principles of transformative pedagogies by Philpot & Ovens, 2019***

**CHALLENGING TRADITIONAL PE**

# Student voice

## Respect for Nature

Students emphasised the importance of not littering, being kind to animals, and showing respect to the environment.

## Connection to Mauri (Life Force)

Student feedback highlighted powerful moments of connection to nature's mauri

# Student quotes

“Sitting quietly outside,” “feeling the wind,” “being in the ocean waves.”

“We need to stop littering. It’s disrespectful to Papatūānuku.”

“When I sit under a tree and just listen, I feel calm – like the forest is alive.”

“The ocean makes me feel connected, like I’m part of something bigger.”

“I never thought about the mauri of things before, but now I try to notice it – like the wind or birds.”

“Being outside helps me breathe and reset. Nature teaches you if you listen.”

# Tāne Mahuta

Tāne Mahuta is the Māori deity of forests and birds, deeply connected to knowledge and learning

Learning from Tāne Mahuta involves engaging with these stories, relationships, and the mauri (life force) present in nature

Trees are considered tūpuna (elders), holding wisdom and stories

NGĀ KETE O TE WĀNANGA



KETE  
TUAURI

KETE  
TUATEA

KETE  
ARONUI

The word for tree (rākau) is the pū (base) of pūrākau (stories), showing how stories originate from trees and the earth

# Ngāhere and the Human body

**Biodiversity** = Diverse species rely on each other for survival, **similar to organs and systems working together**

**Nutrient Cycling** = Decomposed leaves & dead organisms return nutrients to the soil, **similar to digestion**

**Respiration and Oxygen exchange:** Trees release and absorb, **similar to lungs regulating oxygen in the body**

**Water regulation:** Forests rainfall absorption, **similar to regulation of sweating and circulation**

**Homeostatis & Adaptation:** Disruption in the forest e.g storm or pests, it adapts/or heals, **similar to bodies healing from injury**

**Trees** = spine/joints

**Movement principles from trees:** strength, flexibility, kotahitanga

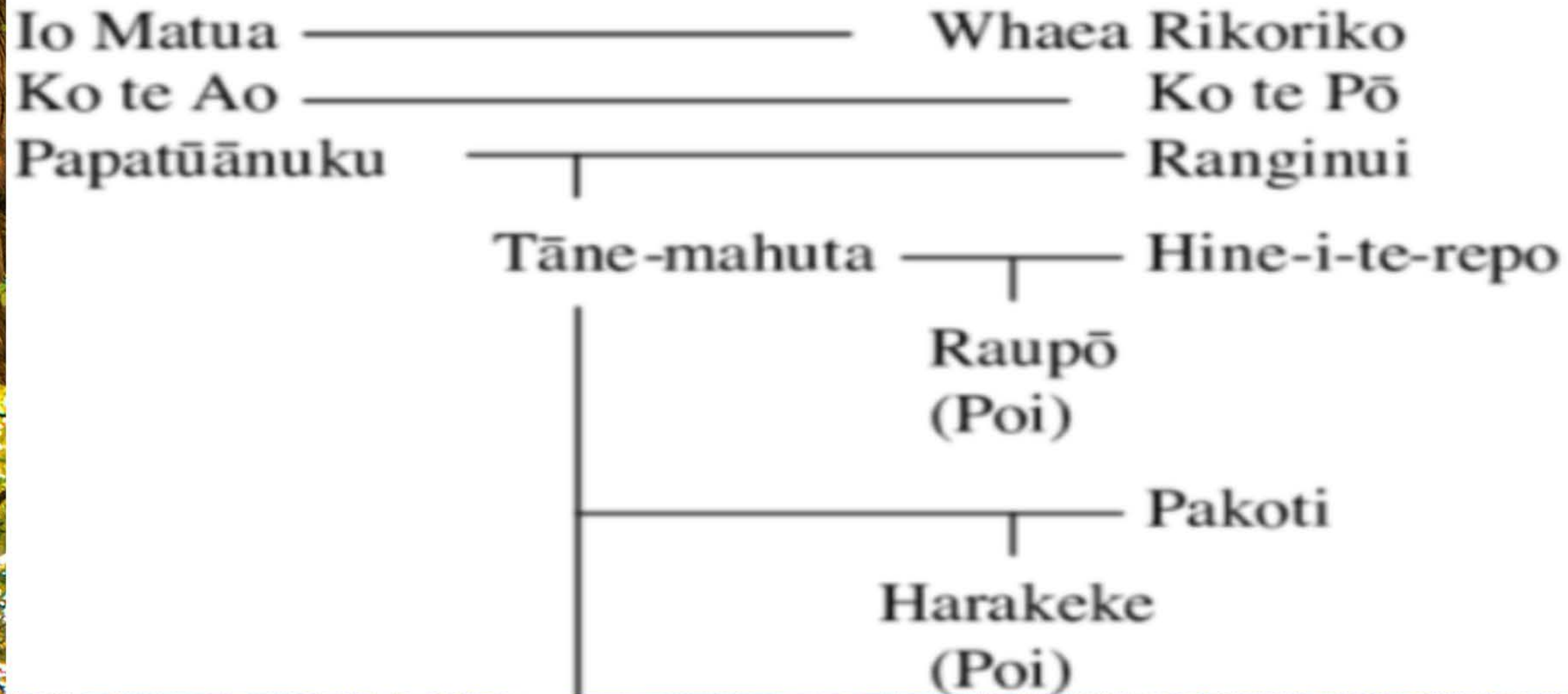
**Muscular balance:** Agonist muscles are tall trees reaching for sunlight, while antagonist muscles are forst undergrowth supporting them, **similar to muscles to create smooth controlled movements**

1. *Storytelling to share knowledge and relationships*
2. *Genealogy and connections to people and place*
3. **Huahuatau** – *Observation of the natural world*
4. **Whakawhanaungatanga** – *Building and maintaining relationships*
5. *Seeking wisdom from elders (including trees)*
6. *Respect and reciprocity*
7. **Understanding Mauri** – *Life force or energy in all things*
8. *The forest as a place of learning*
9. *Iwi-centric/localised approach to knowledge*
10. **Whakatinanatanga** – *Putting knowledge into action; embodiment*

## **WAYS OF LEARNING FROM TĀNEMAHUTA**

# Tāne Mahuta

Te Whakapapa ō [sic] te Poi  
IHO MATUA



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