

Waikato

ENVIROSCHOOLS



Ngā momo wai- Types of Water

This activity explores language for water.

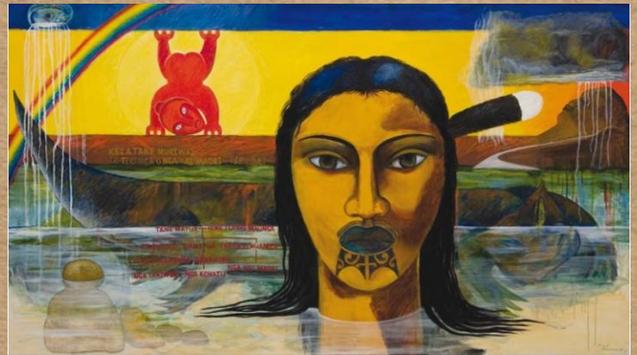
Water is important in all cultures, because it is essential for life. Each culture thinks about water in a different way, which we can see from language about water. Māori have many ways to describe different types of water.

Descriptions of water are often used in the name of the river, lake or stream.

e.g. Wai-kato: (full flowing river) • Wai-rakei: (the place where the pools were used as mirrors) • Wai-rarapa: (the glistening waters) • Wai-whetu: (the star waters) • Wai-taki: (the tears of Aoraki) • Wai-makariri: (cold waters)

INSTRUCTIONS

1. Read the types of water on next page
2. Use the pictures and definitions (on the following page) to explore momo wai.
3. Cut up and match up pictures with definitions
4. Create a collage from pictures found in old magazines, photos you have or pictures from home to match each category.
5. Add momo wai in surrounding area to the water map created in the last water activity [Waterscapes - What's special about water near you](#)



Whakapapa of Water Robyn Kahukiwa

Extras

6. Can you find different water words in other languages...example Irish- uisce, Croatian -Voda
7. How many words can you find for different types of water e.g rapids, deluge, aquifer

Additional Resources

- Te Wiki o te reo Māori 2018: [Types of water Ngā momo wai](#)
- Te Wiki o te Reo Māori Phrase booklet including water: [te Reo Kia Kaha Taiao](#)
- Te Ara: Water as the source of life - <https://teara.govt.nz/en/tangaroa-the-sea/page-5>
- Te Ahikaaroa performance: [teaomaori.news/te-ahikaaroa-promote-water-consciousness](#)
- Science Learning Hub: [Wai Māori](#) [Wai words](#)
- Higher level reading: The whakapapa of freshwater - [Wai Māori: a Māori perspective on the freshwater debate](#)



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Momo wai	Explanation	Momo wai	Explanation
 <p>wai horoi</p>	<p>Water that is used to bathe in or to wash clothes.</p>	 <p>wai inu / wai unu</p>	<p>Pure water with mauri that is life-giving, a source of well-being. This water may be used for healing the sick and creating positive energy. It is this water that can become waitapu.</p>
 <p>wai inu / wai unu</p>	<p>Water that is used only for drinking. Drinking water is not taken from a source that is used for washing in unless there is no alternative, and then it should be taken from the stream at a specific time of the day when washing of clothes or bathing is not permitted.</p>	 <p>wai puke</p>	<p>Slow moving or slack water as found in repo (swamps). It may smell, but still can sustain life. This water provides many resources which include rongoā (medicines), dyes and materials for weaving, and homes for tuna (eels) and many other living organisms.</p>
 <p>wai kino</p>	<p>Water that can cause harm. It is also the term used for water that conceals some hidden danger, e.g. rivers that often flood and produce white water.</p>	 <p>wai puke</p>	<p>Flood or flood waters.</p>
 <p>wai makariri</p>	<p>Cold water, mainly fresh cold water.</p>	 <p>wai tai</p>	<p>Salt water, water of the sea or tide.</p>
 <p>waimāori</p>	<p>Usually fresh water that flows freely. Refers to ordinary water, water in its natural state.</p>	 <p>wai tapu</p>	<p>Water that is used for special ritual practices, e.g. tohi, pure, baptism and purification ceremonies. Water that has had a tapu imposed on it. Food cannot be collected from this wai or other everyday activities carried out here. Sometimes a restriction is imposed temporarily, for example if there had been a drowning in a harbour, then a rāhui would be set.</p>
 <p>waimate</p>	<p>Water that has become "dead" i.e. has no mauri (life force), usually due to pollution; water that has been damaged in some way so that it can no longer sustain life. It may therefore contaminate other living or spiritual things.</p>	 <p>wai rare</p>	<p>A waterfall. It may also be waitapu used for ceremonial purposes.</p>