

# The Māori People

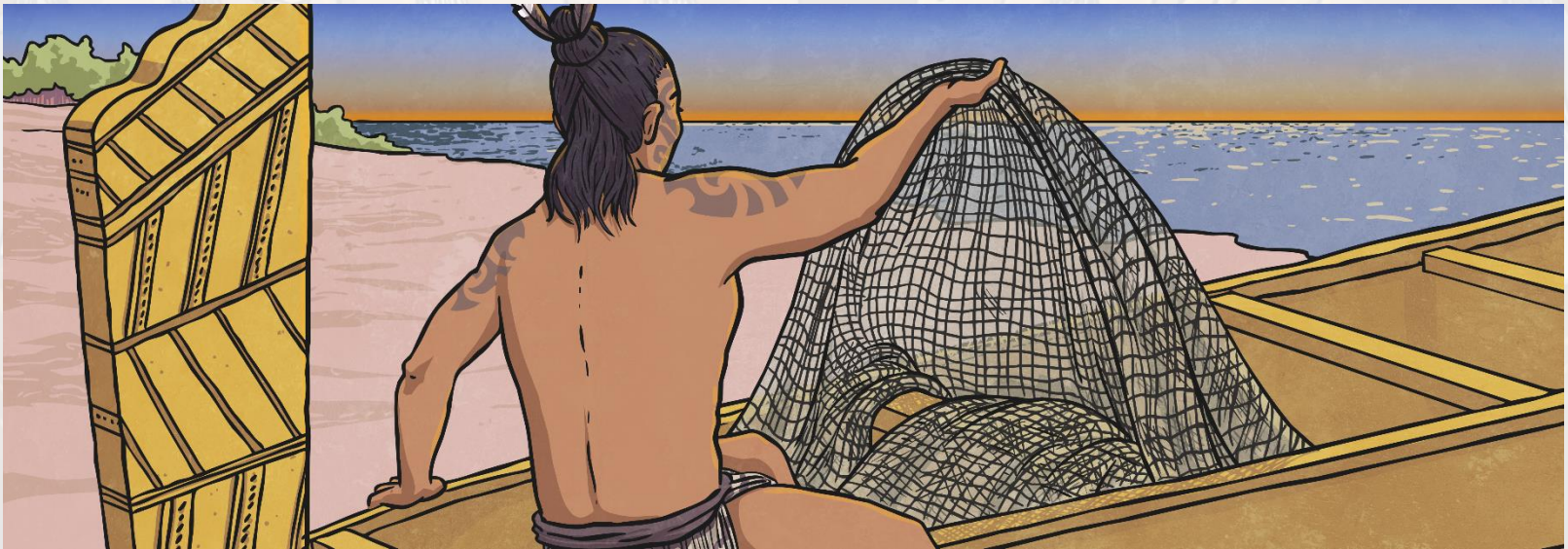




The first people to inhabit New Zealand were the Māori people.  
The Māori people travelled the seas in huge canoes.

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'**.

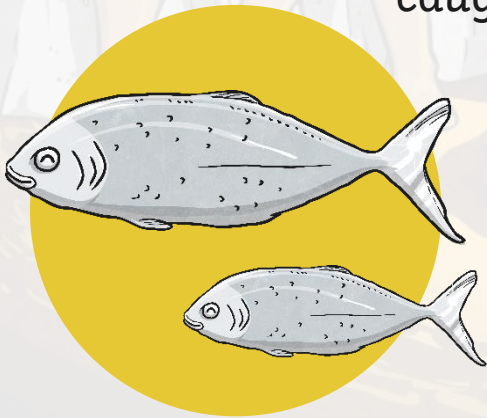


# Māori Life

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.





# The Māori People and Their Beliefs

The Māoris have deep spiritual beliefs.

They believe in gods which represent sky, earth, forests and forces of nature. They have deep beliefs in the spirits of their ancestors. The Māori people believe that they can call upon their ancestors in times of need.



# 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.

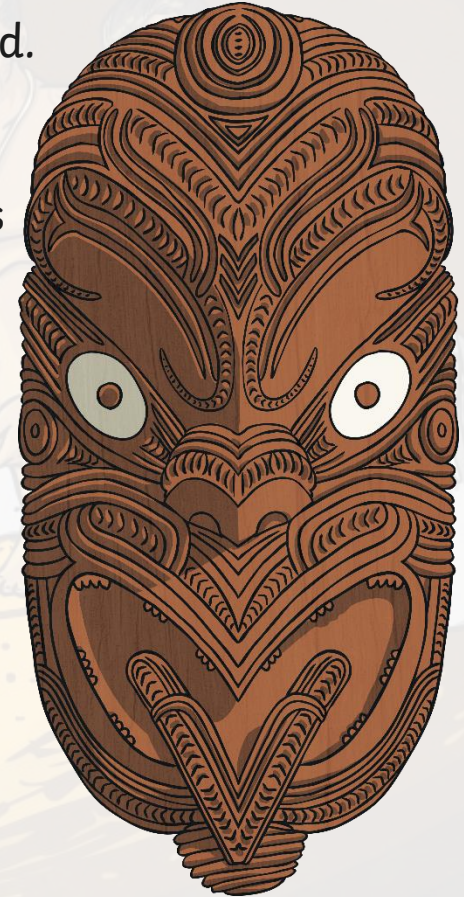
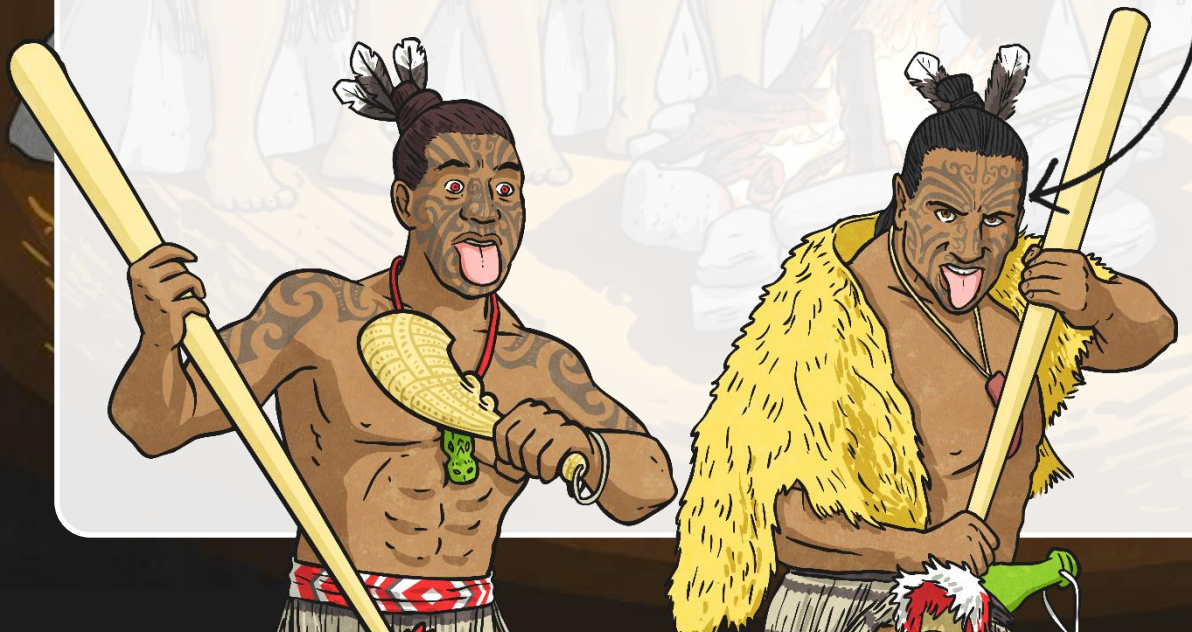




# Māori Culture and Traditions

## 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.

