FREE RESOURCES FOR KAIAKO, TAMARIKI AND WHĀNAU

Matariki 2027 Teacher Pack

Matariki public holiday: Friday 25 June 2027



1. Teacher notes
2. The nine stars: fact cards
3. Colouring: the nine stars
4. Colouring: my Matariki
5. How to find Matariki in the sky
6. Te reo Māori word list
7. Word search (with answer key)
8. My Matariki: remember, celebrate, look ahead
9. Take-home sheet for whānau

Made by Matariki NZ, an independent guide to Matariki. Free to print and copy for classroom and home use. Not for resale.

Teacher notes

Matariki is the Māori name for the star cluster also known as the Pleiades. When it rises in the north-east just before dawn in midwinter, it marks the start of the Māori New Year. Since 2022 Matariki has been a public holiday in Aotearoa New Zealand. In 2027 the holiday is on **Friday 25 June**.

The three principles of Matariki

Matariki Hunga Nui

Remembering those we have lost since the last rising of Matariki.

Matariki Ahunga Nui

Celebrating the present and giving thanks for what we have, together.

Matariki Manako Nui

Looking to the future and the promise of a new year.

Using this pack

- **Fact cards:** print on card, cut out, and use for matching games, group research or a class wall display.
- **Colouring pages:** suit early childhood and junior classes; older students can label each star with what it looks after.
- **Finding Matariki:** share with whānau so tamariki can look for the cluster before dawn in late June and early July.
- **Word list and word search:** build te reo Māori vocabulary for the season. Practise the macrons: they change the meaning of words.
- **Remember, celebrate, look ahead:** a reflective writing and drawing sheet linked to the three principles.
- **Take-home sheet:** simple ideas for whānau to celebrate together.

A note on tikanga

Matariki traditions differ between iwi and hapū. Some iwi, including those of Taranaki and Whanganui, celebrate the new year with the star Puanga (Rigel) instead, because Matariki is hard to see from their area. Where you can, connect with your local iwi, hapū or marae for the stories and tikanga of your rohe.

Sources

Professor Rangi Mātāmua, *Matariki: The Star of the Year* (Huia Publishers); Te Papa Tongarewa (tepapa.govt.nz); Te Kāhui o Matariki and Manatū Taonga Ministry for Culture and Heritage; Employment New Zealand (public holiday dates). The names and meanings of the nine stars follow Professor Mātāmua's published work.

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The nine stars of Matariki

Each star looks after a part of our world. Cut out the cards and use them to learn, match and talk.



Matariki

LOOKS AFTER

Health and wellbeing. The mother of the other stars.

Talk about it: What helps you and your whānau stay healthy and happy?



Pōhutukawa

LOOKS AFTER

Those who have died since Matariki last rose.

Talk about it: Who is someone special that you remember?



Waitī

LOOKS AFTER

Fresh water and the food in it: rivers, lakes and streams.

Talk about it: Where does the fresh water near your home or school come from?



Waitā

LOOKS AFTER

The ocean and the food that comes from it.

Talk about it: What lives in the sea? How can we look after it?



Waipuna-ā-rangi

LOOKS AFTER

The rain.

Talk about it: Why do plants, animals and people need rain?



Tupuānuku

LOOKS AFTER

Food that grows in the ground, like kūmara.

Talk about it: What food grows in the ground? Have you planted something?



Tupuārangi

LOOKS AFTER

Food from up high: birds, fruit and berries in the trees.

Talk about it: Which birds and trees live near you?



Ururangi

LOOKS AFTER

The winds.

Talk about it: How can you tell which way the wind is blowing?



Hiwa-i-te-rangi

LOOKS AFTER

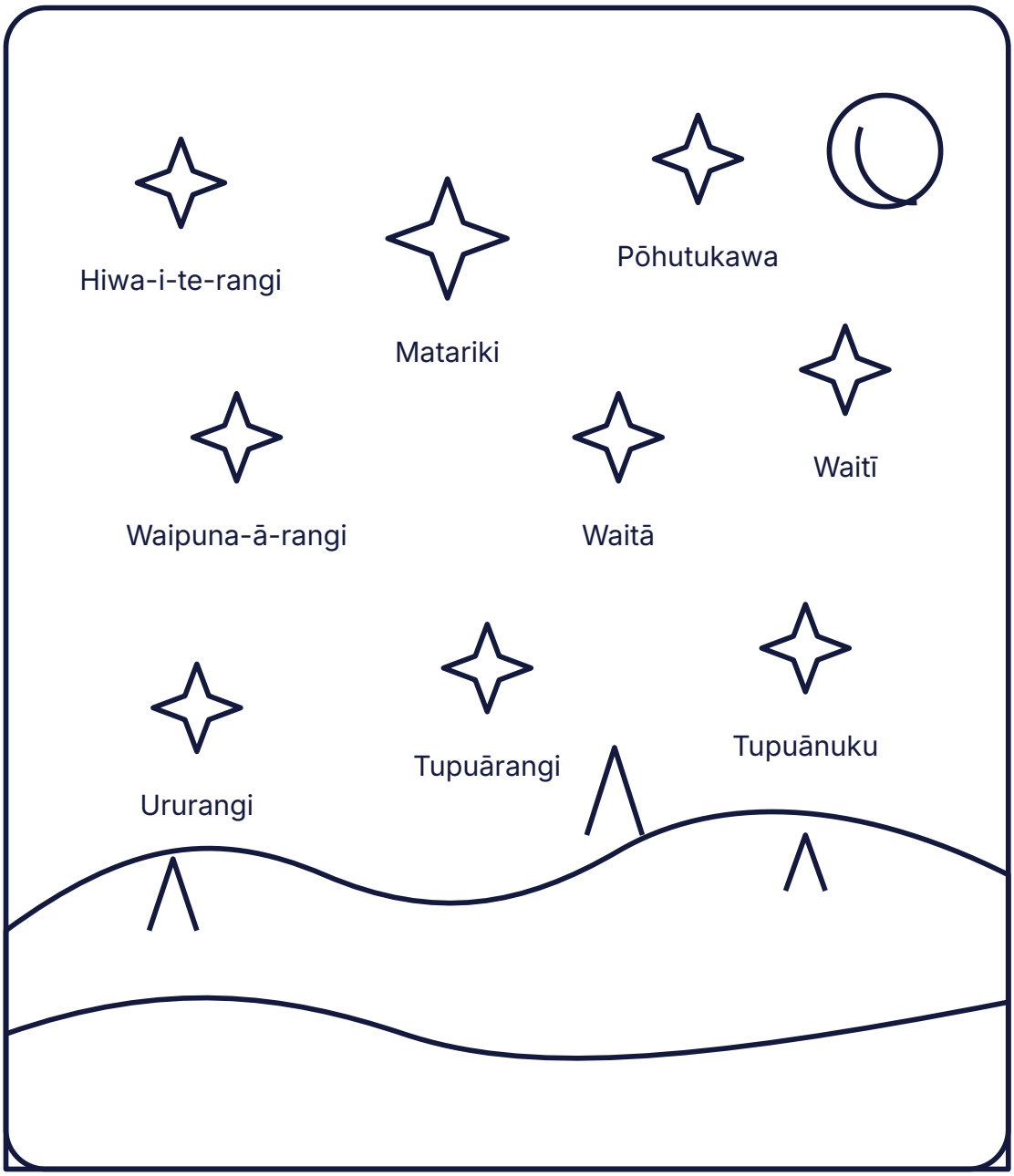
Wishes and hopes for the year ahead.

Talk about it: What is your wish for the new year?

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Colour the nine stars

Matariki is a cluster of stars. Colour each star and the hills below. Can you find all nine names?

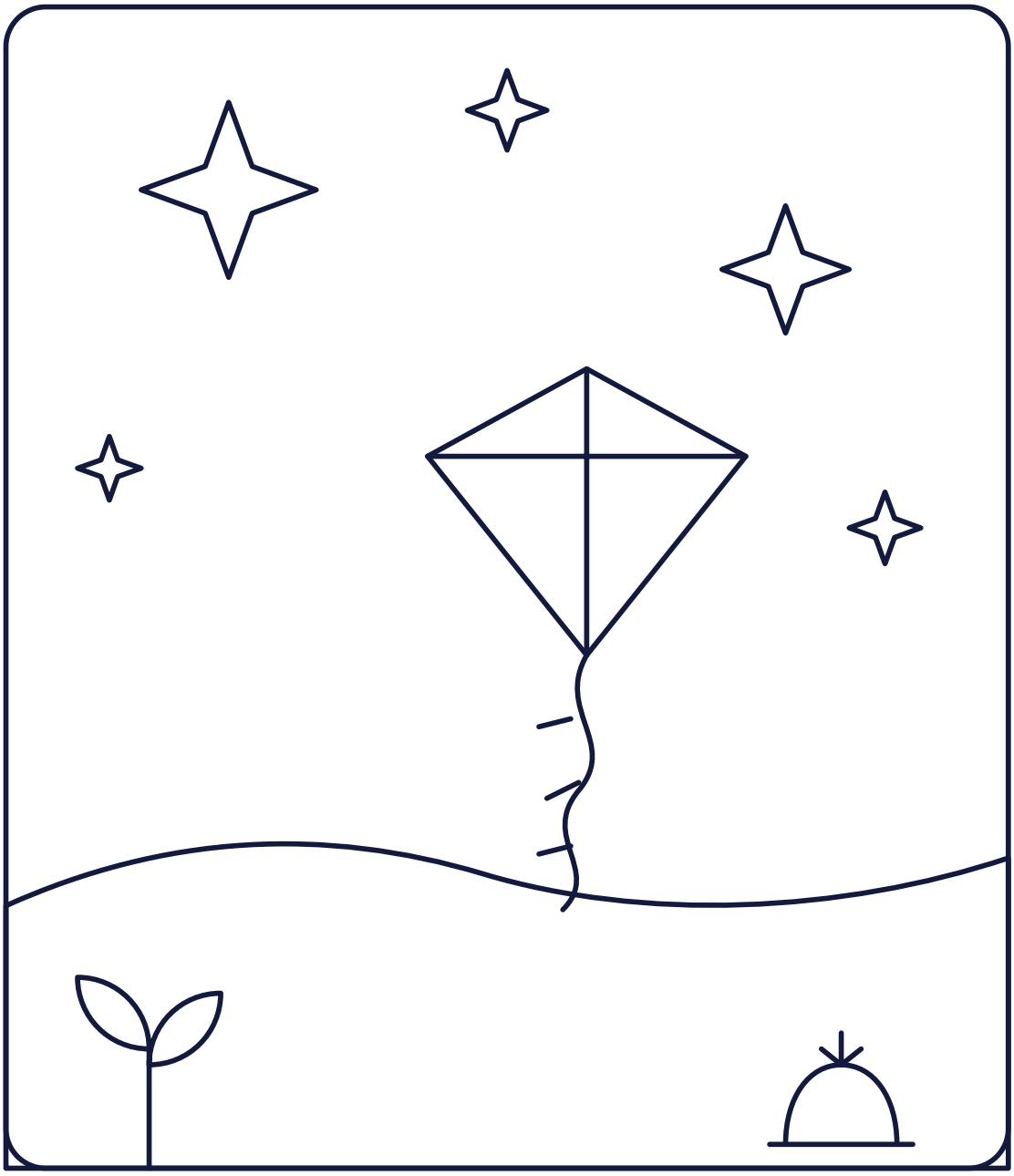


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My Matariki

Colour the stars, the manu tukutuku (kite) and the garden. Add yourself and your whānau to the picture.

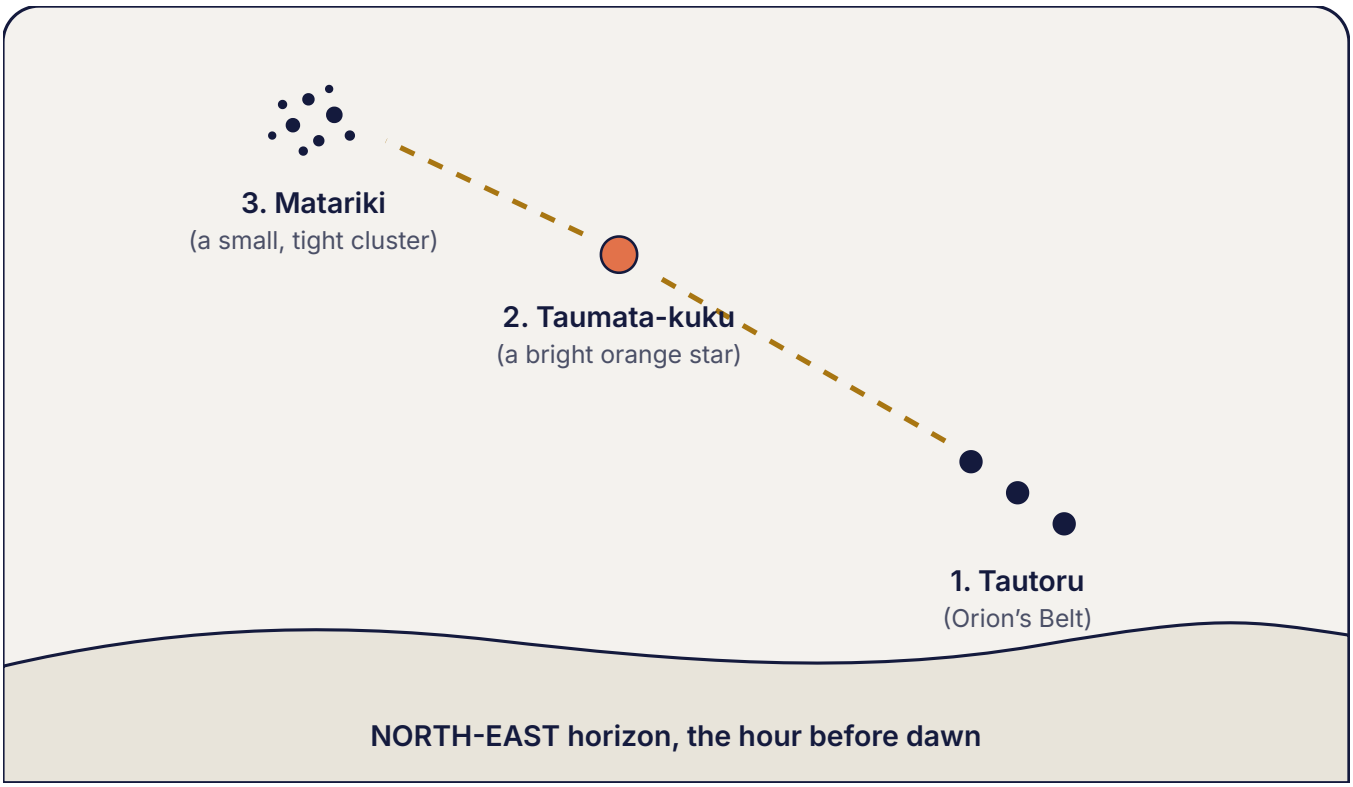


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How to find Matariki in the sky

Matariki rises in the north-east just before dawn from late June. Pick a clear morning, find a dark spot away from street lights, and give your eyes ten minutes to adjust.



1. **Find Tautoru.** Look low in the north-east sky for three bright stars in a short, straight line. This is Tautoru (Orion's Belt).
2. **Follow the line to Taumata-kuku.** Trace the line of Tautoru up and to the left until you reach a bright orange star. This is Taumata-kuku (Aldebaran).
3. **Keep going to Matariki.** Follow the same line a little further and you will see a small, tight cluster of stars. That is Matariki. Most people can see six or seven stars without binoculars.

Tip: the best mornings are clear and cold, in the hour before sunrise. If you live where Matariki is hard to see, look for Puanga (Rigel), the bright star near Tautoru.

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Te reo Māori word list

Words to learn and use during Matariki. Look out for the macrons (ā, ē, ī, ō, ū): they show a long vowel and can change the meaning of a word.

KUPU (WORD)	MEANING
Matariki	the Pleiades star cluster; the Māori New Year
Te Tau Hou Māori	the Māori New Year
whetū	star
rangi	sky
marama	moon; month
maramataka	the Māori lunar calendar
Tautoru	the three stars of Orion's Belt
Puanga	Rigel, the star some iwi use to mark the new year
hōtoke	winter
whānau	family
kai	food
hautapu	a ceremony offering food to the stars
waiata	song
kōrero	talk; story
aroha	love; compassion
maumahara	to remember
manaakitanga	caring for others; hospitality
whakataukī	proverb; saying

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Matariki word search

Find the words. They go across, down or diagonally. Macrons count as part of the letter.

W	H	E	T	Ū	K	P	R	N	E	T	E
P	N	K	E	I	M	N	K	A	P	R	M
T	W	I	H	E	A	R	Ō	H	N	T	M
N	A	N	U	H	R	U	R	H	A	G	H
A	I	R	O	U	A	P	E	Ō	K	A	I
M	A	I	H	W	M	K	R	T	W	E	I
O	T	I	U	I	A	E	O	O	H	P	M
M	A	T	A	R	I	K	I	K	Ā	U	I
E	H	O	R	H	W	U	P	E	N	A	H
O	E	N	I	P	T	P	A	O	A	N	H
H	O	T	A	U	T	O	R	U	U	G	O
I	T	A	R	O	H	A	E	I	U	A	R

MATARIKI

WHETŪ

RANGI

MARAMA

WHĀNAU

KAI

WAIATA

PUANGA

AROHA

HŌTOKE

TAUTORU

KŌRERO

Answer key (fold under before copying)

W	**H**	**E**	**T**	**Ū**	K	P	**R**	N	E	T	E
P	N	K	E	I	**M**	N	**K**	**A**	P	R	M
T	**W**	I	H	E	**A**	R	**Ō**	H	**N**	T	M
N	**A**	N	U	H	**R**	U	**R**	**H**	A	**G**	H
A	**I**	R	O	U	**A**	P	**E**	**Ō**	**K**	**A**	**I**
M	**A**	I	H	W	**M**	K	**R**	**T**	**W**	E	I
O	**T**	I	U	I	**A**	E	**O**	**O**	**H**	**P**	M
M	**A**	**T**	**A**	**R**	**I**	**K**	**I**	**K**	**Ā**	**U**	I
E	H	O	R	H	W	U	P	**E**	**N**	**A**	H
O	E	N	I	P	T	P	A	O	**A**	**N**	H
H	O	**T**	**A**	**U**	**T**	**O**	**R**	**U**	**U**	**G**	O
I	T	**A**	**R**	**O**	**H**	**A**	E	I	U	**A**	R

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My Matariki

Matariki is a time to remember, to celebrate and to look ahead. Write or draw in each box.

Remember

Pōhutukawa: someone I remember, and something special about them

Celebrate

Something I am thankful for, and how my whānau celebrates

Look ahead

Hiwa-i-te-rangi: my wish for the year ahead

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Celebrating Matariki at home

Kia ora whānau! Your tamariki have been learning about Matariki, the Māori New Year. The Matariki public holiday is on **Friday 25 June 2027**. Here are some simple ways to celebrate together.

1. **Look for Matariki.** On a clear morning in late June or early July, look to the north-east before dawn. Use the “How to find Matariki” sheet.
2. **Share kai.** Cook and eat a meal together, perhaps with food that grows in the ground, like kūmara.
3. **Remember loved ones.** Talk about family and friends who have died, and share their stories.
4. **Make a wish.** Each share a hope for the year ahead. Hiwa-i-te-rangi is the wishing star.
5. **Plant something.** Matariki is a time to plan the garden for the new season.
6. **Sing and play.** Learn a Matariki waiata, fly a kite or play a traditional game together.
7. **Find an event.** Many towns hold free Matariki events, dawn gatherings and light shows.

Find free guides, waiata, stories and Matariki events near you at **matariki.co.nz**

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