

Wānanga Reo Rūmaki

He wānanga reo e hāpai
ana te maramataka

Kāhui: Te Tai Tokerau





INTRODUCTION

As part of Te Mātāwai's support in revitalising te reo throughout Aotearoa, we are showcasing some of the kaupapa kaitono have been doing in Te Taitokerau. Rangimarie Pomare sat down with us to kōrero about her kaupapa, and tell us a little bit about what she's been up to in Te Hiku o te Ika.



HE AHA TE KAUPAPA WHAKARAUORA REO?

Rangimārie and her team hosted wānanga reo rūmaki starting from the Summer of 2020, with the purpose of increasing conversational reo amongst parents, and strengthening the hapori reo Māori for Kaitaia. Each whānau received an A2 wall planner maramataka, detailing which days are traditionally ideal for particular activities, such as planting, fishing, for wānanga, and so forth. The maramataka aligns sets of days to particular atua, offering whānau a way to guide their daily activities according to “what’s in season.” The wānanga reo involved various haerenga, in doing “everything that we do in the Far North – except this time it was in Māori.”



“We would go to key pā sites, and did a little bit of work with horses and horse riding – like how to break horses in – and some eeling as well. [Other] things we do in Te Hiku o Te Ika around our taiao include gathering kaimoana, maara kai, and ahu whenua.”

Each whānau learnt key phrases and words in preparing for the next haerenga, and the tikanga would be to stay in te reo throughout the duration of the activity. “So the reo here becomes the vehicle of delivery, rather than focusing on teaching grammar.” This allowed reo to be dovetailed into the ‘everyday activities’ whānau undertake in the Far North, encouraging a more ‘effortless acquisition’ of te reo.



Rangimārie is a kaiako at kura kaupapa, and while she sees that tamariki are very strong in their reo, “their parents can’t keep up with them. Parents have instructional reo (‘E tū, e noho’), but don’t have the key kupu in other situations, like cooking.” This is what motivated Rangimārie to apply for funding through Te Taitokerau, “to empower and normalise te reo outside the kura and within the home.”



WHAT ARE THE LESSONS YOU'VE LEARNED?

When we asked, “He aha ngā hua e puta mai ana?”, Rangimārie remarked on the increase of confidence amongst whānau to use more reo in their everyday lives. She “definitely” wants to continue with this kaupapa reo into the future, “...but Te Hiku is a large area, and we would love for hapū to take it up.” In that vein,



Rangimārie’s desire is to train up local hapū and whānau in how to run a kaupapa like this, and for them to take it back to their rohe and hapū, and lead similar wānanga reo there.

WHAT CHALLENGES DID YOU FACE?

Covid-19 brought some of the biggest challenges for the wānanga reo rūmaki, with Alert Levels impacting upon some of the haerenga. “So we’ve had to use Zoom as a workaround, and that’s been challenging.” As some whānau were less familiar with technologies like Zoom, they were not able to participate during lockdown. “It meant that we didn’t have as many people participating, but we were still able to have really good quality wānanga. It was more about quality than quantity.” Communicating with Te Mātāwai was also challenging, as well as “not having a lot of ‘go-to’ people to help out with the tono itself.” What helped Rangimārie and her team through this was talking to members of the Pae Motuhake and other kaitono, to share experiences with them and see if they could help one another out.



For potential kaitono looking to apply for Te Mātāwai funding, Rangimārie suggested the following:

1. “Have a strategy and a plan where you don’t have to rely on the financial investment from Te Mātāwai alone.”
2. “See what skills you can draw from within your whānau and hapū, and see what they can bring to your kaupapa.”
3. “Take good photos! And keep good records of hui, wānanga, and haerenga to help with reporting. So when it comes to reporting, you’ve got lots of material to draw from. It’ll make it much easier on you in the long run!”
4. “Social media is essential [in getting word out about your kaupapa], but must be supported with traditional forms of promoting kaupapa, like radio and phone calls, to draw in older generations.”

WHAT ARE YOUR FUTURE ASPIRATIONS FOR TE REO MĀORI?

Looking to the future, Rangimārie hopes te reo is normalised in different contexts:

“I see te reo normalised in our hapū and whānau, where we have more strong reo speakers across different ages – intergenerational reo. I see more reo advocates and champions in different settings – not just in education, but within lots of different industries, like health and hospitality.”

