

# The peoples of Aotearoa

The purpose of this activity is to introduce some of the words from te reo Māori, the Māori language, used to describe the different peoples in Aotearoa/New Zealand today.

## Activity 5

**Time:** 20 minutes.

**Materials:** Worksheet page 19.

1. Hand out the worksheet folded in half and ask the group to share what they know about the terms on the left-hand side (5 min).
2. Participants unfold their page and match the words on the left with the meaning on the right.
3. Go through the answers together as a group. The definitions are listed in the notes below.
4. Our names: Ask participants to share the names they use in their own language to describe themselves and to say how these differ from the way they are identified in English.

## Notes

### Māori

The word *māori* originally meant *common* or *ordinary*, as in *wai māori* (fresh water) or *rākau māori* (native tree). It started to be used by the indigenous people of Aotearoa/New Zealand to describe themselves, as opposed to the 'different' European settlers. Before the Europeans arrived Māori had no need for a word to describe themselves in this way. The Europeans adopted the term *Māori*, thinking it was the name of the indigenous people. However, Māori people originally identified themselves just as *tangata* (people) or by their *hapū* names and saw themselves not as a single nation but as a number of nations.

### Pākehā

The words *Māori* and *Pākehā* are both terms coined in the post-contact period to distinguish the two groups. *Pākehā* has had two main uses over time. It was a word chosen by Māori to describe the newcomers to Aotearoa/New Zealand, when for the first time they had the need to use such a term. At the time of the Treaty it was used to refer to all non-Māori. However, because the majority of these

newcomers were from Britain and Europe, the word *Pākehā* has come to refer to white New Zealanders. The word was borrowed into New Zealand English with this second meaning. There are a number of explanations for the origin of the word *Pākehā* (all non-derogatory).

### Tauīwi

Landing people. People from elsewhere other than one's own *hapū* and *iwi*. In its contemporary usage it refers to non-Māori New Zealanders, including *Pākehā* and all other non-Māori ethnic groups. This is a relatively modern usage of the word and not everyone accepts it.

### Tangata whenua

Land people/People of the land. Sometimes used to refer to all people of Māori descent; more properly used to describe the indigenous people of a particular area.

### Whānau

Family. The main family unit in Māori culture. Whānau can also mean to give birth.

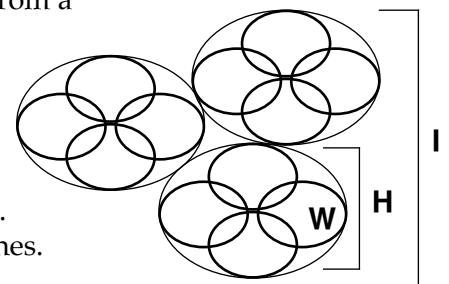
### Hapū

Group of extended whānau with all members tracing descent from a common ancestor and originating in the same area. This was the main political decision-making unit. The Treaty was signed by representatives of some hapū. Hapū can also mean pregnancy.

### Iwi

Affiliated hapū with a common ancestor. The largest political unit from a particular area.

An *iwi* is a grouping of related hapū, which are in turn made up of related whānau. *Iwi* can also mean bones.



### Rangatira

Leader or leaders of a hapū.

# Peoples of Aotearoa

Words that come from the Māori language are often used for different people or groups of people living in this country.

How many of these words have you seen before? Can you explain what they mean?

**Māori**

**Pākehā**

**Tauīwi**

**tangata  
whenua**

**whānau**

**māori**

**hapū**

**iwi**

**rangatira**

*fold*

**family: parents, grandparents,  
aunts, uncles, cousins,  
brothers and sisters, etc.**

**people from a different place /  
non-Māori /**

**ordinary, normal, natural**

**the indigenous people of New  
Zealand**

**people of the land /  
indigenous people**

**alliances of hapū**

**related family groups from the same  
area with a common ancestor**

**a leader of a hapū**

**white New Zealanders**

*fold*

## Peoples of Aotearoa: some Māori vocabulary for understanding Te Tiriti o Waitangi

<b>Te reo Māori</b>	<b>English meaning</b>
Māori	The indigenous people of New Zealand
māori	ordinary, normal, natural
Pākehā	white / European New Zealanders
Tauīwi	non-Māori / settlers / people from a different place
tangata whenua	people of the land / indigenous people
whānau	extended family (aunts, uncles, cousins...)
hapū	Related family groups from the same area with a common ancestor. A Māori nation.
iwi	alliances of hapū
rangatira	leader (of a hapū)