

KA WHAWHAI TONU

STRUGGLE WITHOUT END



Education Guide

Ka Whawhai Tonu - Struggle Without End | EDUCATION GUIDE

Education Guide

The education guide pack provides a framework to support teachers teach the history the invasion of Ō Rākau with students in years 7-13. It is not designed as a list of lessons or learning experiences, rather offers content and contexts that can help scaffold learning within New Zealand Curriculum, in particular, Aotearoa New Zealand Histories and Te Takanga o te Wā.

It also provides rich opportunities for ākongā to develop critical research skills about one of our most defining moments in history.

Resource

[Ka Whawhai Tonu: Struggle Without End](#) is a uniquely innovative and interactive learning experience for students aged 11 to 18 exploring the history of the 'Battle of Ō Rākau.

It is crafted uniquely from a Māori perspective and seamlessly integrates the feature film 'Ka Whawhai Tonu - Struggle Without End' (2024) with other content such as interactive images, videos, [3D scan](#) of the Pā site, [weaponry](#), haka, waiata (songs), interviews with descendants and Iwi leaders as well as [6 O'clock news segments](#). This enables students to connect with the past through a dynamic multi-media experience, that enhances and archives this important event.

While the resource is intuitive it is not designed to be used as a stand-alone teaching tool. Therefore teacher input and guidance is paramount.

The resource follows a chronological progression leading up to the invasion, the battle itself and the aftermath.

Introduction to the Film

This resource has been developed in conjunction with the film Ka Whawhai Tonu - Struggle Without End, and is suited to work along side having viewed the film or working towards seeing the film. Either approach will work to maximise the effectiveness of this resource.

Cinema's around the country have a copy of the film on file, so a private booking will be well received by cinema's, should you be able to take enough students along. The film has been designed to be immersive and our local cinema's are the perfect place to experience 1864 up close and personal.

Ka Whawhai Tonu: Struggle Without End the feature film tells the story of two fictional rangatahi set in the backdrop of the Battle of O-Rākau (1864). The intention of this tale is to shed light on those brave men, women and children who fought in the battle. Factual links have been made to this early NZ colonial war and told from the perspective of Māori in both Te Reo Māori and English.

The defining part of this story is the involvement of the most vulnerable casualties of war – the children. They along with their mothers, fathers and grandparents, were caught up in the chaos, hardships and horrors of war, the impact of which, is still felt today.

Why Teach Aotearoa Histories

Learning about Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories helps ākonga develop an understanding and appreciation for the diverse cultures, identities, and perspectives that make up New Zealand society. It promotes respect for the histories, traditions, and contributions of different ethnic groups, including Māori, Pacific Islanders, and other communities. [Y7 – Y11 Te ao tangata | Social Sciences, Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories, Te Toi, The Arts]. As well as connecting with their own identity and heritage, the history of these wars is deeply intertwined with the whenua (land) and Iwi and hapū, making it a crucial part of New Zealand's collective memory.

Understanding these conflicts also provides insights into the impact of colonial violence on Māori communities. By learning about the struggles, resilience, and perspectives of Indigenous people during this period, students gain more understanding of our nation's history and the ongoing effects still realised today.

Teaching the historical contexts around the Battle of Ō Rākau encourages critical thinking and empathy, as students grapple with complex historical events and consider different viewpoints. By remembering Ō Rākau, the Iwi and communities involved, ensure that the lessons from the past inform their future.

Key Themes

1. *Children Involved in the War:*

Daily lives were disrupted, where there was no school or normal routines. They would have been playing amidst the tension, watching battle unfold, seeing loved ones fighting, dying, hearing gunshots with no sense of safety or stability. They would have grown up with those vivid memories of chaos, loss and displacement.

2. *Families in Grief:*

Whole families experienced the loss of loved ones including grandparents, friends, family and fellow warriors. Those whānau involved in the battle, and their descendants; carry memories of hardships, pain, sacrifice and loss.

3. *Bravery and Sacrifice:*

The men faced the frontlines, sometimes in few numbers defending their people and the land. They endured physical and emotional wounds, knowing they might not survive. Women stood alongside men, contributing to the defence while still looking after their families. They faced danger, cared for the wounded, and grieved the fallen.

4. *Resilience and Hope:*

Despite the hardships, everyone during the land wars fought for survival, dignity, and their way of life. And afterwards hoped for a better future free from conflict.

Programme Design

The collection of material are historical prompts relating to the context of The Battle of Ō Rākau. This makes for an rich context for students to explore this history under Te ao Tangata – Social Sciences using the Understand-Know-Do framework and the big ideas of Aotearoa New Zealand’s histories:

- Māori history is the foundational and continuous history of Aotearoa New Zealand
- Colonisation and settlement have been central to Aotearoa New Zealand’s histories for the past 200 years
- The course of Aotearoa New Zealand’s histories has been shaped by the use of power
- Relationships and connections between people and across boundaries have shaped the course of Aotearoa New Zealand’s histories

This programme is underpinned by the following concepts:

- Cultural Understanding and Respect
- National Identity and Belonging
- Addressing Injustices and Inequalities
- Treaty of Waitangi Understanding
- Empowering Marginalised Voices
- Critical Thinking and Historical Inquiry



Curriculum Connections

- **Vision:** This resource underpins the NZC vision for our young people to be confident, connected, actively involved, lifelong learners.
- **Key Competencies:** This resource promotes critical thinking, communication, cultural awareness and understanding.
- **Values:** Explores the values of bravery, empathy, integrity, solidarity and resilience.
- **Learning Areas:** Many authentic cross-curricula links can be made to English, Social Sciences, Arts and Technology.
- **Assessment:** With strong links to the curriculum, assessment opportunities relevant to Levels 3-8, including NZCEA Levels 1,2 & 3.

Te ao Tangata – Social Sciences

Understand: The big ideas of Aotearoa Histories - including exploring the history of Māori, the impact of colonisation, the power people and groups hold, the different perspectives they bring, how they form communities and society, and the interactions that shape their experiences and rights.

Know: National rōhe and local contexts – including drawing on local stories from Iwi, and Hapū (descendants of the Battle) in the rōhe that can lead to finding out more about enduring societal issues in the rōhe and wider area

Do: Thinking critically about the past and interpreting stories about it – including encouraging ākonga to become thinking, imaginative young citizens identifying and critiquing possible solutions to social issues and empowered to take action now and in the future.





TEACHER GUIDE YEARS 7-8

Setting the Scene

The Battle of Ō Rākau (1864) was a very important part of our history. It was when Māori warriors and villagers defended themselves against the invasion of the British because they wouldn't give up their land.

Māori built a strong fort called a pā to protect themselves. But even though they were brave, they lost the battle. Many Māori people, including men, women, children, and elderly, were hurt or killed. The battle is an important part of New Zealand's history, showing how people stood up for what they believed in, even when it was extremely tough to do so.

The Battle of Ō Rākau was more than just a fight. It was a reminder that promises matter, and when they're broken, it hurts people. The Treaty of Waitangi was supposed to protect Māori rights, but at Ō Rākau, those rights were ignored. And that's why we remember this battle—it teaches us about fairness, respect, and the importance of keeping our word.

<https://kawhawhaitonu.nz/>

Discussion Starters

The Battle of Ō Rākau holds immense cultural and historical importance in New Zealand's past, discussing this with students from various perspectives can help enrich students' learning experiences and their understanding of our shared history.

- What motivated England and other European countries to explore and [conquer](#) the 'New World' and eventually settle in Aotearoa?
- What were the historical events leading up to the Battle of Ō Rākau, and why did it occur?
- Who were the key figures involved in the battle? (e.g., Māori and Colonial leaders)
- Who were the main [defenders of Ō Rākau](#), and which tribes did they belong to?
- What [weaponry](#) and tactics were used by both sides during the conflict?
- How did the Māori defenders demonstrate resilience and courage during the battle?
- What impact did the battle have on the Māori community, including men, women, children, and elderly individuals?
- How do you think the children felt during wartime? What would be some of their emotions as they clung to their parents, wondering if they would be safe?
- How do you think the Māori people felt when they were fighting to protect their land and culture? How does this relate to times when you have had to stand up for something important to you?

Learning Activities

Understand: *Big Ideas*

- Explore the historical context of [Māori migration](#) to Aotearoa.
- Investigate the implications of global influences around the time of the European expansion when European powers like Spain, England, and France were exploring and conquering new lands for trade, wealth, and power.
- Investigate early European encounters with Aotearoa and the impact on Māori.
- Compare the resources and training of the British troops to that of the Māori defenders, including preparedness for battle and tactics used by both during the siege.
- Research the cultural importance of waiata (songs) in helping to preserve tribal history and connect with tūpuna (ancestors).

Know: *Contexts*

- Study the cultural practices, beliefs, and traditions of the Māori involved in the battle during this time, their way of life, trade etc.
- Explore the causes of the battle, including land disputes and tensions between Māori and British forces.
- Find out more about the unique process of anointing the first [Māori King](#), considering leadership achievements and whakapapa connections.
- Explore the historical significance of [Rangiaowhia](#) and how the tragic events came about and the consequent siege at Ō Rākau.
- Find out about the decisions that led to building the [Pā at Ō Rākau](#) and insights into the [design considerations](#) for strategic defensiveness and access to resources.
- Explore the [types of weapons](#) used by the Māori defenders at Ō Rākau.
- Investigate the historical origins of haka, both in ceremonial contexts and as a form of [preparation for battle](#).
- Investigate the consequences of the battle and [what happened afterwards](#), including further land confiscations.
- Reflect on the dilemmas faced by individuals during the conflict especially the impact on the most vulnerable - women, children and the elderly.

Do: *Practices*

- Analyse primary sources (letters, diaries, sketches) related to Ō Rākau.
- Research Māori life and customs prior to the battle - stories of Hapū and Iwi (7) of the region and present in a multimedia presentation.
- Describe the geographical features of Ō Rākau including the significance of the swamps, ridges, and waterways and its surrounding landscape.
- Research and present findings on specific aspects of the battle, such as the [types of weapons](#) used by Māori defenders and British troops.

- Compare and contrast the [design of Ō Rākau Pā](#) with typical British field-works.
- Engage in critical inquiry and reflection around the impact of early European expansion and the [Doctrine of Discovery](#).
- Discuss the impact of large-scale raupatu (land confiscation) on Indigenous peoples, including Māori.
- Create a visual representation (e.g., map, diagram) showing the [layout of Ō Rākau](#), highlighting its key features and the areas defended by different tribes.
- Write a short fictional diary/journal entry from the perspective of a Māori defender, describing the frustration, emotions, experiences and challenges faced during the siege.
- In consultation with mana whenua, visit local historical sites and cultural trails related to Ō Rākau.

Activities

- Role-play scenarios from the battle, considering different viewpoints.
- Create your own [‘6 O’Clock’](#) news segment.
- Create a multimedia presentation (video, poster, or slideshow) showing a timeline of events leading up to the battle.
- Create a movie poster, storyboard, or film-inspired artwork based on the movie, Ka Whawhai Tonu: Struggle Without End.

Curriculum Connections

- **English:** Analyse the movie’s dialogue, themes, and literary techniques.
- **Social Sciences:** Explore cultural contexts, historical background, and societal issues depicted in the film.
- **Arts:** Learn or compose waiata or action songs to reflect important stories, people or places. Learn about the symbolism and power associated with haka performances.
- **Languages:** Consider the use of language(s) in the movie and how it conveys emotion.
- **Health and Physical Education:** Discuss physical well-being and mental health themes.
- **Technology:** Investigate the clothing and costumes of the time, their fabric and utility. Use digital technologies to capture important stories. Be mindful of data sovereignty and intellectual property.

Notes for Teachers

Guiding students through the interactives in the web resources is crucial for their comprehensive understanding. It also helps to explain new vocabulary and deeper contextual concepts related to war.

More importantly, when discussing this content, it’s crucial to approach the topic with care. Some distressing facts are connected to this event, which continues to impact the uri (descendants) today. Treat this material as highly sensitive, and consider the impact it will have on all of your students.



TEACHER GUIDE YEARS 9-10

Setting the Scene

The Battle of Ō Rākau is so important, especially when we talk about Te Tiriti o Waitangi and [The Treaty of Waitangi](#). Imagine a special agreement made between Māori chiefs and the British government. This agreement was called the Treaty of Waitangi. It happened in 1840. The treaty promised that Māori would keep their land, their culture, and their way of doing things. It was like a promise to be fair and respectful to each other.

Fast forward to 1864. There was a big battle at Ō Rākau. Māori warriors, led by brave leaders like Rewi Maniapoto, stood up against British soldiers. But guess what? The British government had changed its mind. They started taking away Māori land. They didn't listen to the promises in the Treaty of Waitangi. Māori saw this as a big problem. They thought, "Wait a minute! This is not fair. The treaty said we could keep our land, but now they're taking it away!"

So, here's the important part: The Battle of Ō Rākau was a breach of [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](#). It means the British didn't keep their promise. By taking Māori land, they hurt the mana (power and authority) of Māori people. They didn't respect the self-government that Māori were supposed to have over their own lands.

Te Wherowhero, a Māori leader, even wrote a letter to Queen Victoria. He asked her to make sure the treaty was followed. He wanted her to say, "Yes, we'll keep our promises." But sadly, the damage was done. The Battle of Ō Rākau showed how the treaty was broken, and Māori suffered because of it.

<https://kawhawhaitonu.nz/>

Discussion

The Battle of Ō Rākau holds immense cultural and historical importance in New Zealand's past, discussing it from various perspectives can enrich students' learning experience. Exploring thought-provoking prompts with your students can encourage critical thinking and a deeper understanding of this significant historical event. For example,

- What were the underlying political and cultural tensions that led to the Battle of Ō Rākau?
- How did the colonial policies of displacement and raupatu (land confiscation) impact Māori communities during this period?
- What role did women, and children play in building the Pā?
- What were the specific military strategies employed by both Māori defenders and British forces during the battle?

- What role did the surrounding landscape and environmental factors play in the battle's dynamics?
- What challenges did the Māori defenders face regarding their [weaponry](#) and ammunition during the siege at Ō Rākau and how did they overcome these?
- Why do you think the British forces believed that their way of life and beliefs were superior?
- Can you think of a time when someone had a different opinion or belief than you? How did you handle it?
- How did the families affected by the wars (loss of life, land, income, way of life) recover after the wars?
- What are we doing today, to remember, honour and restore justice?

Learning Activities

Understand: *Big Ideas*

- Discuss the 13th-century [migration of Māori](#) ancestors across the Pacific and their settlement in what is now New Zealand. Highlight the significance of waka (boats) and the establishment of Aotearoa as a new home.
- Explore the historical context and the impact of European nations' desire for empire expansion. Emphasise the role of Christian explorers, their motivations, and the formalisation of expeditions through the [Papal Bulls \(Doctrine of Discovery\)](#) and the impact on Indigenous cultures.
- Explore the broader historical context (e.g. Treaty of Waitangi), the scale and pace of migration and the desire for land.
- Dive deeper into the 1455 [Papal Bull "Romanus Pontifex"](#) and the 1493 Papal.
- Bull "Terra Nullius." Understand their content, implications, and how they shaped European actions including enslavement and land ownership.
- Investigate the role of Colonial leaders key historical figures - Lieutenant-General Cameron, [Governor Grey](#), [Thomas Russell](#) and [Frederick Whitaker](#). Examine their political and business roles as well as their interest in Waikato lands.
- Explore the establishment of the Māori [Kingitanga](#) movement, including the responsibilities of the Māori King when first established and the role of the Māori king today. Discuss the significance of placing lands under the King's protection.
- Explore key figures and leaders like Pōtatau Te Wherowhero, [King Tāwhiao](#) and Rewi Maniapoto's role in unifying tribes, promoting peace, and safeguarding Māori independence.

Know: *Contexts*

- Explore the arrival of Dutch mapmaker [Abel Tasman](#) in 1642 and [Captain James Cook's](#) journey in 1769. Discuss the impact of European exploration on Māori.

- Explore the historical context of the Pā at Ōrākau, the reasons behind the [Pā's construction](#), the role of Rewi Maniapoto, and the significance of the Urewera prophecy.
- Analyse the consequences of [building the Pā at Ōrākau](#) and the impact of the chosen site on the outcome of the battle.
- Research historic accounts of daily [life inside](#) the Pā during the siege, detailing survival tactics, food sources and scarcity, health conditions, and other aspects.
- Find out about the roles women and children played in the defence of Ō Rākau during the siege.
- Research traditional Māori [weaponry](#) and battle tactics including ingenuity and resourcefulness.
- Explore the lyrics of the sad waiata composed by Te Tarakitauaki about the defeat of Tūhoe. Discuss how songs like this serve as expressions of mourning and remembrance.
- Research the significance of the Pūniu River during the escape including the geographical features and challenges of reaching the river.
- Compare Ō Rākau with other significant battles in the New Zealand Land Wars history, such as The Battle of Gate Pa, Te Ranga, Taranaki.
- Examine the [aftermath of the battle](#) for both Māori and British forces, particularly the impact on Māori in regards to forced exile, displacement, and loss of land.

Do: Practices

- Analyse primary sources, including excerpts from the [Papal Bulls](#). Discuss the ethical and moral implications of these documents. Consider the impact on indigenous peoples, including Māori.
- Research the Māori King movement in relation to mana, whakapapa, sovereignty and the significance of the [Kingitanga](#) movement today. Explore key concepts between Pupuru i te whenua, pupuru i te toto, Mana Motuhake.
- Debate the effectiveness of different resistance strategies, such as trench warfare and the influence of tactics and strategies in other wars overseas.
- Research the importance of and cultural context of waiata (songs), how waiata contribute to the collective memory of a community and the cultural significance during times of grief and loss, particularly at Ō Rākau.
- Share findings about the [impact of Ō Rākau](#) on subsequent land ownership and Treaty negotiations.
- Analyse the consequences of the forced evacuation of Māori from Auckland, and invasion of Waikato. Discuss the emotional impact on Māori communities then and today.
- Discuss the legacy of how Ō Rākau has shaped New Zealand's history and impacted local communities. Reflect on the importance of historical empathy.
- Investigate related topics (e.g. colonisation, land confiscations, historical trauma) from other Indigenous cultures.
- Engage in critical discussions about colonisation and Indigenous rights.

Activities

- Create a digital map or virtual tour showing key locations around Ō Rākau using tools like Google Maps and/or Google Earth.
- Map the journey of the British and the mobilisation of Māori Iwi using tools like Google Maps and/or Google Earth.
- Create a timeline of key events during the three-day siege at Ō Rākau that highlights significant moments, troop movements, decisions, and outcomes of the battle.
- Write a fictional speech urging your fellow defenders to stand strong have courage and determination, to defend ancestral lands and their future.
- Craft rich questions and interview Iwi, uri (descendants), historians or community members to connect history with lived experiences. Capture these as video and present them using multi-media platforms.
- Create your own '[6 O'Clock](#)' news segment.
- Collaborate with kapa haka leaders to learn and practice a haka. Reflect on the experience and consider how it connects to the themes of power, solidarity, and cultural pride.
- Attend a viewing of the movie, Ka Whawhai Tonu: Struggle Without End and write media reviews for various forms of media (e.g., movies, TV shows, podcasts, online articles). Evaluate content based on criteria such as accuracy, credibility, entertainment value, and social impact.
- Highlight and share stories of hope and inspiration and collaboration between Tangata Whenua and Tangata Tiriti.

Curriculum Connections

- **English:** Analyse the movie's dialogue, themes, and literary techniques. Explore how storytelling elements contribute to the film's impact.
- **Social Sciences:** Explore the cultural contexts, historical background, and societal issues depicted in the film. Discuss how the battle reflects broader historical and social dynamics.
- **Arts:** Discuss the different styles, dialects, and themes found in Māori songs. Explore expressive elements of haka and the cultural contexts in which haka is performed.
- **Languages:** Consider the use of language(s) in the movie. Explore how dialogue, accents, and language choices convey cultural nuances.
- **Health and Physical Education:** Discuss physical well-being and mental health themes portrayed in the film. How do characters' experiences during the battle impact their well-being?
- **Technology:** Explore how technology is used in filmmaking. Investigate camera techniques, special effects, and editing that bring historical events to life on screen. Use digital technologies to capture important stories. Be mindful of data sovereignty and intellectual property.

Notes for Teachers

It's important to note there are some tragic and horrific facts associated with this event, that still haunts the uri (descendants) today, therefore it's important to treat this material as highly sensitive and approach this history with empathy and understanding. You may also wish to seek guidance from local kaiarahi and kaumātua.

It's also important at this age to encourage critical thinking, historical empathy, and a deeper understanding of this significant event. The Battle of Ō Rākau is not just about conflict; it reflects broader themes of colonisation, resistance, and the enduring resilience and impact on Māori.



TEACHER GUIDE YEARS 11-13

Setting the Scene

The Battle of Ō Rākau in 1864, a pivotal moment in the New Zealand Wars, represents a clash between indigenous Māori forces and British colonial troops. The [Māori defenders](#), outnumbered and facing overwhelming firepower, made a courageous last stand at Ō Rākau Pa, embodying resilience and resistance against colonisation.

This battle serves as a poignant example of the consequences of greed and deceit driving colonial expansion, as the British sought to acquire Māori land for economic gain. Moreover, the aftermath of Ō Rākau highlights the enduring legacy of injustice and the ongoing struggle for social justice, as Māori communities continue to fight for recognition of their rights, land, and cultural heritage amidst the impacts of colonisation. Studying this event through a lens of social justice prompts reflection on the enduring consequences of historical injustices and the importance of addressing them for a more equitable future.

Despite the defeat, the courage and resilience shown by the Māori defenders became part of their cultural identity. Ō Rākau is also remembered as a symbol of resistance and determination.

<https://kawhawaitonu.nz/>



Discussion

Studying the historical events that led up to the battle, the invasion itself and the aftermath through a lens of social justice, help prompts reflection on the enduring consequences of historical injustices and the importance of addressing them for a more equitable future. Some guiding questions include:

- How did the Battle of Ō Rākau reflect broader issues of social justice during the colonial period?
- What injustices did Māori communities face, and how did the battle intersect with their struggle for their rights and dignity?
- What role did land confiscations, cultural suppression, and systemic racism play in shaping the conflict?
- What factors contributed to the bravery of the Māori defenders despite their disadvantages?
- In what ways did the Māori defenders at Ō Rākau resist oppression and assert their agency?
- What lasting effects did the Battle of Ō Rākau have on Māori communities, both immediate and long-term?
- What are some ways that people today explore and conquer new territories? How does this relate to the motivations of the European powers in the text? Can you think of any examples from your own life or in the news today?
- What responsibilities does our generation have, in understanding and addressing historical injustices?

Learning Activities

Understand: *Big Ideas*

- Investigate the contexts [leading to the battle](#) and explain both the British and Māori position at the time, including the Governor's motivations behind the Waikato invasion.
- Explore the broader context of the New Zealand Wars and their impact on Māori land rights.
- Delve into the complexities of treaty breaches, sovereignty rights, reconciliation, restitution, and restorative justice going forward in Aotearoa.

Know: Contexts

- Investigate more about the relationship and tension between the Governor of the time upholding [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](#), imposing British sovereignty and the protection of Māori rights.
- Examine how misinformation influenced public perception and justified the invasion. Discuss and analyse the misinformation of the [Kingitanga](#) movement and its impact on Māori.
- Investigate the invasion of the settlement of [Rangiaowhia](#), the tragic outcomes, and the impact on Māori lives and the subsequent actions at Ō Rākau.
- Discuss [Rewi's warnings](#) and visions, and reflect on the importance of listening to advice and considering practical factors in decision-making.
- Learn about the final decision to [flee from Ō Rākau](#), including the role of Rewi Maniapoto and the Chiefs, and the tragic losses suffered by the community.
- Explore the intensity of the [escape from Ō Rākau](#) and the tragic losses suffered by the community. Discuss the emotional toll and the desperate situation faced by those fleeing.
- Research the significance of the Pūniu River during the escape and why it was seen as a point of safety.
- Investigate the geographical location, natural features and challenges of reaching the river.

Do: Practices

- Examine primary sources, including the Declaration of Independence of the United Tribes of New Zealand (1835) and the Treaty of Waitangi (1840). Discuss the complexities of translation,

differing interpretations, and the implications for Māori sovereignty.

- Research personal accounts and stories of individuals and groups during the siege. For example, the actions of Ensign William Mair a British soldier who intervened to protect Hine Tūrama. Discuss the ethical dilemmas faced by soldiers during intense conflict.
- Explore cultural norms and values related to compassion and care. Discuss how different societies approach the treatment of wounded combatants.
- Explore the impact of and significance of Ō Rākau on Māori resilience and cultural survival.
- Analyse the [aftermath](#) and lasting impact on sovereignty and identity, due to forced displacement and land confiscation and opportunities afforded to military soldiers and Pākehā settlers.
- Compare discrepancies between official Crown accounts and Māori oral histories regarding casualties and the impact of raupatu (land confiscation).
- Research recent activity post-siege, including Crown representatives, returned a taonga (treasure) that belonged to Ngāti Maniapoto rangatira Rewi Maniapoto, who led the Māori forces during the battle.
- Discuss the concepts of 'historical justice' and ongoing commitments as active partners of [Te Tiriti o Waitangi](#).

Activities

- Engage with scholarly articles and research papers on these topics.
- Watch, read, view informed speakers including video interviews with the uri (descendants) of the battle.

- Create a [timeline](#) of Te Tiriti o Waitangi breaches.
- Investigate Treaty settlements signed by Waikato-Tainui and Ngāti Maniapoto and present a report on the key elements of the agreements as well as recognition of wrongdoing and formal [apologies](#).
- Write a reflective essay about the ongoing effects of European expansion and colonisation in Aotearoa. Highlight stories of hope and inspiration or offer personal ideas for processes of reconciliation and restitution.
- Create your own [‘6 O’Clock’](#) news segment.

Curriculum Connections

- **English:** Analyse the movie’s dialogue, themes, and literary techniques. Explore how storytelling elements contribute to the film’s impact, especially in portraying social justice issues.
- **Social Sciences:** Explore the cultural contexts, historical background, and societal issues depicted in the film. Discuss how the battle reflects broader historical and social dynamics, including power imbalances and indigenous rights.
- **Arts:** Discuss visual storytelling, cinematography, and sound design and how these artistic choices enhance the movie’s narrative and emotional resonance.
- **Languages:** Consider the use of language(s) in the movie. Explore how dialogue, accents, and language choices convey cultural nuances.
- **Health and Physical Education:** Discuss physical well-being and mental health themes portrayed in the film. How do characters’ experiences during the battle impact their well-being?
- **Technology:** Explore how technology is used in filmmaking. Investigate camera techniques, special effects, and editing, Computer Generated Imagery (CGI) that bring historical events to life on screen. Use digital technologies to capture important stories. Be mindful of data sovereignty and intellectual property.

Notes for Teachers

Facilitate meaningful discussions that honour the complexities of the Battle of Ō Rākau and its relevance to contemporary social justice issues, also be mindful that these themes (wounded, murdered, displacement, confiscations of land) need to be approached with skillful levels of cultural sensitivity, an understanding of Māori perspectives, especially the uri (descendants) of Ō Rākau and other New Zealand Land wars, as well as the impact on current generations – the rangatahi of Aotearoa.

Remember to adapt these activities based on your students’ interests, resources, and local contexts.

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6. War in Waikato – The Battle of Ōrākau <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/war/war-in-waikato/battle-of-orakau>
7. Ōrākau, famed battle site - roadside stories <https://nzhistory.govt.nz/media/video/orakau-famed-battle-site-roadside-stories>
8. Ōrākau March 1864 <https://digitalnz.org/stories/5dbf83bd38d17301eb2ca531>
9. Roadside Stories: Ōrākau, famed battle site <https://teara.govt.nz/en/interactive/35258/roadside-stories-orakau-famed-battle-site>
10. Battle of Ōrākau commemorations: 'Don't let the fires go out on our whenua' <https://www.rnz.co.nz/news/te-manu-korihi/513259/battle-of-orakau-commemorations-don-t-let-the-fires-go-out-on-our-whenua>

Appendixes

Curriculum Connections

National Identity and Belonging: Studying Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories New Zealand histories helps ākonga develop a sense of national identity and belonging. It provides them with a connection to their country's past, its people, and the land they inhabit. This understanding fosters a sense of pride, attachment, and responsibility towards New Zealand and its communities. [Y7 – Y11 Te ao Tangata | Social Sciences, Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories]

Addressing Injustices and Inequalities: Exploring New Zealand's Histories enables ākonga to learn about the injustices, inequalities, and challenges faced by different groups throughout history. This knowledge encourages critical thinking, empathy, and a commitment to promoting social justice and equality. It can also inspire young people to challenge and address ongoing issues of inequality in their society (call to action). [Y7 – Y11 Te ao Tangata | Social Sciences, Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories]

Treaty of Waitangi Understanding: Learning about Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories includes an exploration of the Treaty of Waitangi. Understanding the Treaty and its principles promotes a sense of biculturalism and partnership between Māori and non-Māori communities. It helps ākonga recognise the importance of honouring the Treaty's promises and working towards equitable relationships for now and the future.

Empowering Marginalised Voices: Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories Curriculum can highlight the stories, experiences, and achievements of historically marginalised groups. This includes Māori perspectives and narratives that were often excluded or underrepresented in traditional education. By including these voices, ākonga gain a more comprehensive and inclusive understanding of their country's history.

Critical Thinking and Historical Inquiry: Studying New Zealand histories fosters critical thinking skills and historical inquiry. Children learn to evaluate sources, analyse different perspectives, and develop their own informed opinions about historical events. These skills are valuable for engaging with history and society throughout their lives. [Y7 – Y11 Te ao Tangata | Social Sciences, Aotearoa New Zealand's Histories, Mathematics and Statistics]