

How well do we know our language?

Activity 1: New Zealand Place Names

The North Island

Te-Ika-a-maui



The South Island

Te-Wai-pounamu

Research into New Zealand place names, either original Maori place names, or those given since European discovery and settlement, reveals many aspects of interest about our history and our social and cultural heritage.

1. Many Maori names have a geographic origin, reflecting the local environment or topography. Examples include:

Manga

Nui

Puke

Roto

Wai

Whanga or wanga

Find three examples of each of these and give their meanings.

2. Find four examples of placenames beginning with **Kai**. Explain why the names are associated with kai (food).

3. What are alternative or early names for:

Akaroa

Inglewood

Maungakiekie

Napier

Naseby

Otakou

Queen Charlotte Sound

Southland

Stewart Island

Ranfurly

4. How did these towns or places get their names?

Arthur's Pass

Bell Block

Carterton

Dannevirke

Eketahuna

Featherston

Greymouth

Haast

Hamilton

Invercargill

Johnsonville

Kerikeri

Lilybank

Mackenzie country

Masterton

Ninety-Mile Beach

Norsewood

Otane

Palmerston

Quail Island

Rotoiti

Shannon

Taumarunui

Taylor's Mistake

Upper Hutt

Vogelton

Whareroa

Young Nick's Head

5. Divide the names listed in 4. above into those that have their origin in New Zealand and those that were 'imported'? How does **Hamilton** differ in origin from **Masterton** or **Carterton**?

6. Which is the longest place name in New Zealand? How many letters does it have?

7. Hypocoristics and place names:

Hypocoristics are pet names or abbreviated forms of words, sometimes known as diminutives. What are the correct placenames for these hypocoristics:

Cardie

Dunny or Duffers

Gissy

Heke

Kune

Murch

Palmy

Queens

Rags

TK

P-town

T-town

Wellywood

8. Why are these places remembered?

a. **Bastion Point**

b. **Opononi**

c. **Tangiwai**

d. **Whirinaki**

9. Which one of the following names is used most often in New Zealand to name places and aspects of the New Zealand environment?

a. **Palmerston**

b. **Victoria**

c. **Wairoa**

d. **White**

10. Which New Zealand locations or placenames would be most closely associated with these terms:

- a. **crib**
- b. **naati (sometimes ngati)**
- c. **kiekie**
- d. **Maori huntaway and German doggie**
- e. **pakahi**
- f. **tomo**

Resources:

Think carefully about the resources you will use.

How do you know that your resources are reliable? What will you do to ensure that your information is reliable?

For assistance or further information, e-mail dianne.bardsley@vuw.ac.nz

