



Mana Tu, Mana Ora Identifying Characteristics of Maori Giftedness

Presented by Sonia White

(Based on the work of Pita Mahaki & Claire Mahaki)

2007



TEAM
Solutions

Total Education Advice
and Management

*Me Whakakotahi
Ahu Whakamua*



**THE UNIVERSITY
OF AUCKLAND**

FACULTY OF EDUCATION

Te Kura Akoranga o Tamaki Makaurau
Incorporating the Auckland College of Education

***He kapura iti i te
ngahere, mura katoa
te pae rae***

***A small flickering flame
in the forest burns to
the furthest horizon***






Acknowledgement...

Pita Mahaki (Tohu Matauranga Maori, Dip Tchg, Post Grad Diploma in Ed).

Claire Mahaki (Bachelor Matauranga Maori Te Wananga o Raukawa, Dip Tchg, Post Grad Diploma in Ed).

Pita's tribe is Tuhoe and his hapu is Ngati Rongo.

Both Pita and Claire have been in Maori education over the last 15 years, working in immersion and bilingual classes in mainstream schools. Their experience covers both primary and secondary school and over a long period of time they have developed the concepts in this paper which form the basis of their teaching philosophy and pedagogy. They are both completing their Masters Degrees with a focus on Maori and gifted and developing a teaching model for Maori achievement.



“As educators we are challenged to provide an environment which enhances the whole person with language, beliefs, values and cultural background integral to holistic development.

Cultural beliefs are boundless in quantity and interpretation.

The concepts offered in this paper are concepts that we have worked on during our time teaching in primary and high school, and are but a sample of the myriad of values that are inextricably interwoven into “Te Ao Marama”.

- Pita & Claire Mahaki

Similarities or common themes between ...



- the development of an educational environment which fosters a positive belief in self-efficacy,
- the creation of a contemporary Maori pedagogy which reflects the holistic cultural views of values and beliefs,
- and the Maori perception of special abilities.

Each has the aim of empowering and supporting students to maintain the confidence to establish and achieve goals worthy of high expectations.

These parallels are further highlighted when we examine the values attributed to Maori aptitude” - Pita & Claire Mahaki.

The traditional Maori concept of special abilities is



- broad and wide-ranging, not bound by social class, economic status, lineage or gender.
- holistic in nature and inextricably intertwined with other Maori concepts where importance is placed upon both qualities and abilities that will be used in the service of others.

Maori beliefs about talent are intertwined within a cultural context.

Valued qualities include...

- Manaakitanga
- Whanaungatanga
- Wairuatanga
- Kaitiakitanga
- Rangatiratanga
- Mātauranga
- Te Mahi Rehia and
- Tikanga

“The Maori perspective of giftedness is grounded in kaupapa Maori and is viewed as being owned by an entire group for the benefit of all” (McKenzie, 2001).

Identification of Maori Giftedness

Students may be gifted who demonstrate a high level of potential or performance, compared to peers of similar age, background and experience in any one or more areas as listed below.

These attributes may be recognized in either immersion classes or mainstream classes.

No one student will exhibit all the qualities and within each quality, some students will be strong in some aspects, but yet to develop in others.

Manaakitanga:
(generosity - honouring, caring and giving mana to
people thus maintaining your own)

*Ma tau rourou, ma taku
rourou, ka ora ai te iwi*

*With your contribution and
my contribution, the
people will thrive.*



A student gifted in Manaakitanga will:

- exhibit the capacity and natural inclination to respond, nurture, and care for others;
- have integrity and mana;
- have a sense of occasion; be welcoming; demonstrate hospitality;
- show generosity of spirit; be giving and understand the importance of, and demonstrate reciprocity;
- be strong in tautoko qualities (support; value that one person's success is the success of the group).



Whanaungatanga (family values - relationships)

*Ma te tuakana ka to tika te teina;
Ma te teina ka to tika te tuakana*

By the elder's actions the younger will find the right path.

The reverse is also true.

*The younger keeps the older on the straight path, because of
the responsibility the older one bears.*



A student gifted in Whanaungatanga will:

- form, strengthen & maintain bonds with peers;
- value and promote loyalty and inclusiveness;
- be a role model, team player, and connect well with others;
- demonstrate an awareness of relationships and positions;
- be aware of their responsibility, especially in relationship to others;
- be strong in tautoko (support: value that one person's success is the success of the group).





Wairuatanga

(balance – harmony, spirituality,
being grounded, calm)

***Nga wai e rua; he ira tangata,
he ira Atua***

***The dual balance which flows
within the physical and
spiritual being***

A student gifted in Wairuatanga:

- has ability to 'read' the wairua of an environment or event and to respond appropriately;
- has the ability to nourish and restore their wairua;
- is a sensitive and reflective thinker;
- has a heart of humility which is open and giving;
- may appear 'absent-minded' or introspective but can be incredibly insightful on occasion (not always on prescribed occasions).




Kaitiakitanga (care taker / guardianship of knowledge, environment and resources)

Toi te kupu, toi te mana, toi te whenua
Guard the permanence of language, mana, and land.



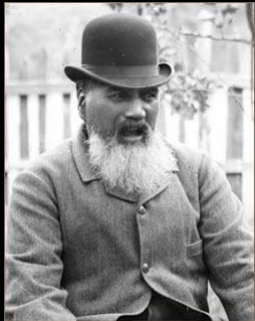
A student gifted in Kaitiakitanga:

- 
- has a very strong awareness of global issues and responsibility;
 - recognizes that human welfare and care for the environment are inextricably linked;
 - is internally driven with a passion;
 - is perceptive – aware of the need to nurture and maintain knowledge, environment & resources for the short term or long term future;
 - demonstrates the *need* comes before *self*;
 - may be a gifted storyteller: have an excellent memory, knowledge of and pride in linking whakapapa, iwi, geography.

Rangatiratanga (ranga – to weave, tira – a company – leadership that inspires unity)

Tamaiti akona i te kainga, tau ai i te marae

**A child educated to be strong in their own identity stands
as a chief on the land.**



A student gifted in Rangatiratanga will:



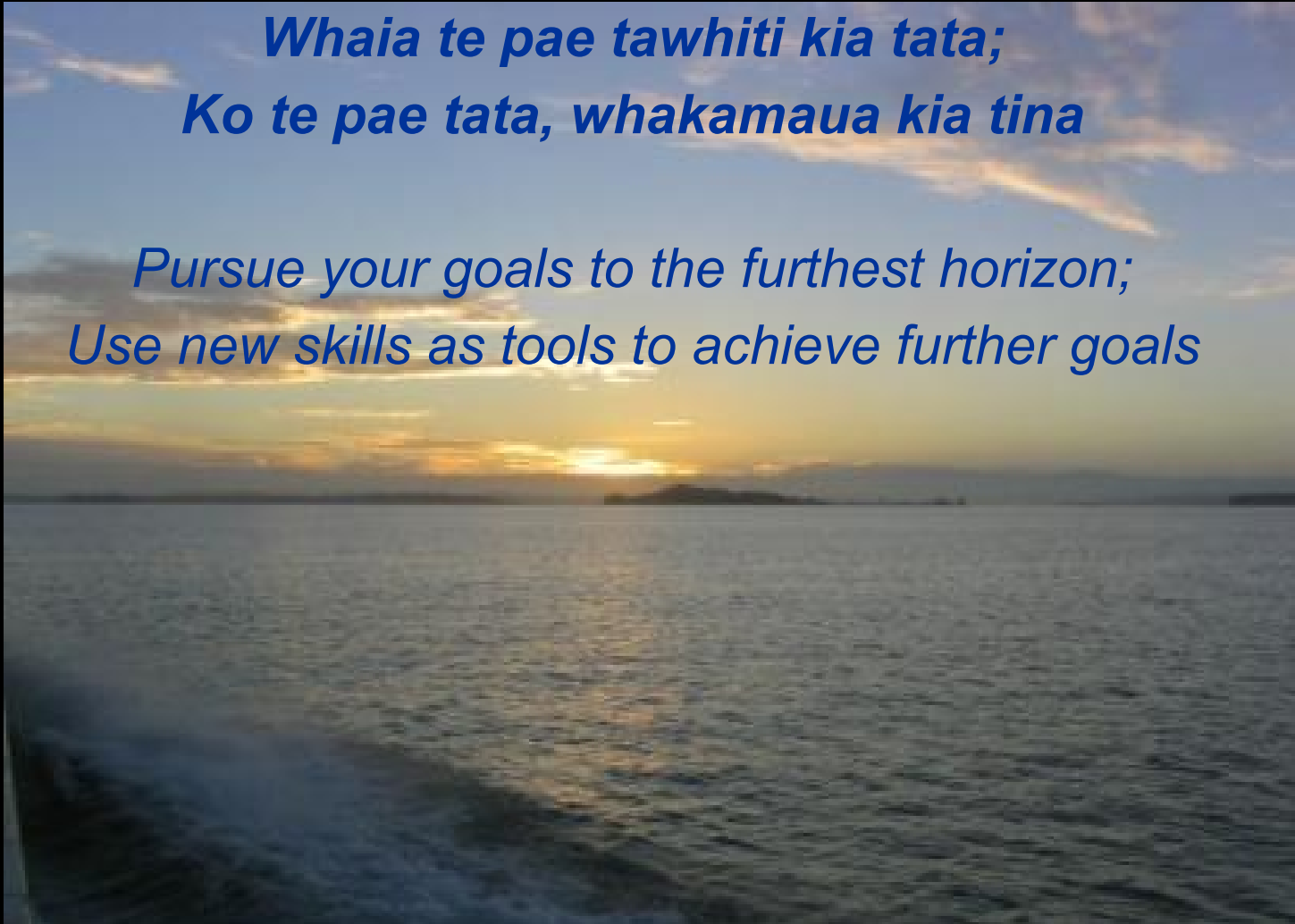
- **have mana amongst their peers;**
- **be visionary and strategic thinkers: their opinions are sought, valued and considered;**
- **stand up for beliefs and values sometimes against adversity;**
- **inspire and motivate others to work for the common good;**
- **show initiative and motivation; see beyond the obvious to recognize what needs to be done;**
- **often have the mandate from the group as the spokesperson;**
- **reflect and present controversial ideas with respect.**



Matauranga (knowledge – intellect, thinking skills, wisdom, education, learned, studious)

*Whaia te pae tawhiti kia tata;
Ko te pae tata, whakamaua kia tina*

*Pursue your goals to the furthest horizon;
Use new skills as tools to achieve further goals*



A student gifted in Matauranga:

- **has intrinsic motivation and persistence to seek and acquire knowledge;**
- **has advanced thinking skills; thinks critically and creatively;**
- **has effective use of knowledge and intellect;**
- **learns quickly and can transfer knowledge into new contexts;**
- **can problem find, problem solve and analyse;**
- **is intuitive and visionary;**
- **is an acknowledged and sought after for their expertise;**
- **shares knowledge wisely and with discretion;**
- **has ability in Language skills, e.g. Oral Story telling-excellent memory, knowledge of and pride in whakapapa, iwi, geography, and can make links.**

Te Mahi Rehia (Recreational Pursuits - physical and artistic performance)

E kore te kakano e ngaro, i ruia mai i Rangiatea.

A seed born of greatness will never be lost.



A student gifted in Te Mahi Rehia...

...demonstrates ihi, wehi, and wana (linking appropriate knowledge of whakapapa and iwi to the occasion) and has ability in one or more of the following:



- **Visual Arts:** (includes Raranga (weaving) Tukutuku, Whakairo (carving) Kowhaiwhai (motifs & symbols);
- **Music:** (includes Taonga Puoro); performance and composition;
- **Performing Arts:** Waiata, Haka, Karakia, Mau Rakau (traditional weaponry), Toi Whakaari (drama). Whai Korero (oratory skills), Karanga, Poi;
- **Sports**

Tikanga
(approved etiquette – correct behaviour, truthful, proper, respectful).



***Hoki ki to maunga kia purea koe
e nga hau o Tawhirimatea***

Turn to your homeland and access
the knowledge of your ancestors

A student gifted in Tikanga:

- can demonstrate initiative and appropriate behaviour before, during and after events;
- has knowledge of protocols customs and rituals that demonstrate and reinforce values and beliefs;
- maintains, directs, and guides others in appropriate tikanga;
- can transfer and appropriately adapt tikanga to a variety of situations and environments.





**“Once identified, it is important
that teachers acknowledge and develop
these qualities
as a pathway to helping our Maori
students develop their own identity
and emerge into a global context from the
heart of their culture”
– Pita & Claire Mahaki.**

(This completes the section on Pita and Claire’s paper.)

Sharing a vision...

**Create a vision – have a clear definition
set clear goals
inspire others to join you.**



**Hold the vision in one hand and reach out to others
Invite them to revise and extend the vision.**

**It is a paradox of change that leaders must believe
in their ideas but be open to the reality that
others must reshape those ideas for change to
really happen.**

Few worthwhile journeys progress in a straight line.

(Tomlinson).

How best can we help our Maori students take flight?



**Ignore the stereotypes and those who would perpetuate them –
reach before and beyond
embrace the beauty of all that Maori culture, values and beliefs
have to offer
create the best you can dream**

holistically

**with passion
respect
and
aroha**



A few possible goals as a starting point only:

If the goal of the special class for gifted Maori students is to

- develop personal strength and resilience through knowing and understanding themselves and their culture,**
- empower learning within a cultural context,**
- inspire them to be role models to other Maori students when they are in other classes and mixing socially with their peers**
- inspire them to give back to the community**

And....

And if the parameters of the programme are:

- **The Curriculum areas of the designated teacher are Te Reo, Social Studies and English**
- **These are timetabled classes, and will require curriculum be taught during these hours – but with a Maori focus.**
- **Some specific areas are (or could be) already developed in other curriculum areas, or in extra-curricula time (– lunch hours , after school) and need not be covered during this time**

which of the areas of maori giftedness should be woven into the key focii of her teaching programme? (This will help determine which students are selected for the programme.)

If all – which might have priority?

'Poi-E'

Lyrics: Ngoi Pewhairangi

Music: Dalvanus Prime 1982



The Message of Poi-E

The lyricist compared the poi,
which is like the fantail that flies through the forest,
to Maori youth trying to find their way in the concrete jungle of
the Pakeha.

Just like the fantail which has to flit between trees and leaves,
Maori youth have to flit between skyscrapers,
and still search for identity.



http://www.folksong.org.nz/poi_e/index.html

So must our gifted youth find themselves...

...discover and celebrate their inner selves...

E kore e ngaro, he takere waka nei

**The hull of a great canoe (talent)
cannot be hidden**

