

Creating a Poupou (Ancestor Panel)

Remembering and honoring one's ancestors is incredibly important to the Māori people. In addition to connecting to their human families, the Māori also are genealogically connected to the land and to the waters.

The Māori are tangata whenua—"people of the land," and you often will see design elements in carvings, art, and tattoos that connect to the land and sea. For example:



Koru is the fern frond. It represents new life, growth, and family.



Moana/Ngaru is the water, sea, and waves. It represents continuity versus change, movement, life and death.



Mangōpare is the hammerhead shark. It represents strength, determination, courage, and power.

GUESS WHAT?



A poupou is a carved wooden panel that shows Māori family stories. It's like a family photo album made of wood! These special panels are found inside meeting houses and help people remember their ancestors.



Poupou Activity

1. Select three ancestors, older people in you family, or other people (not related to you) who are important to you.
2. In the space provided, draw visual representations of these people.
 - a. These can be literal drawings of the person or symbols to represent them (things that reflect their interests, personality, your shared culture, why they are important to you, etc.).
 - b. Typical colors in Māori art are red, black, and white, but you can choose any colors you like!
3. Incorporate **at least one of the Māori symbols on the previous page** that speaks to you/fits with the people you selected.

You will have the rest of class to finish! We will share our poupou in the last 5 minutes.

Ancestor #1 (Oldest)

Ancestor #2 (Middle)

Ancestor #3 (Youngest)