

*The New Zealand Wars*  
By Philippa Werry  
*A non-fiction children's book from New Holland Publishers*

Synopsis:

*The New Zealand Wars* is a fascinating look at a part of New Zealand's history and culture that many people feel they don't know enough about.

The book begins with a brief overview of the wars, why they started and who was involved before going into each campaign in more detail. It traces land disputes and confiscations and their ongoing impact up to the present day. It also describes how the New Zealand Wars are commemorated around the country and helps readers to understand why and how we remember these events.

The text is written in a clear, easy-to-understand style with many illustrations. At the back of the book, ideas are given for follow-up activities and for websites to look at.

About the author:

**Philippa Werry** is a children's writer who began her career writing for the *School Journal*. Since then, her non-fiction, stories, plays and poems have been widely published and anthologised. Several of her books have featured in the Storylines Notable Books lists and her historical novel *Enemy at the gate* was shortlisted for the NZ Post Children's Book Awards in 2009. *Anzac Day: the New Zealand story* was shortlisted for both the NZ Post Book Awards for Children and Young Adults and the Lianza Book awards in 2014. *Waitangi Day: the New Zealand story* was shortlisted in the Children's Choice section of the NZ Book Awards for Children and Young Adults in 2015.

Philippa lives in Wellington and visits schools around the country as part of the Writers in Schools programme; she is an online writing tutor and maintains several writing blogs. In 2014, she visited Gallipoli with the Gallipoli Volunteers program to help out with the Anzac Day services, and in December 2016 she went to Antarctica on the Antarctica NZ community engagement programme (formerly Artists and Writers to Antarctica).

For further info, see

<http://www.philippawerry.co.nz/>

The story behind the book:

This is a book that grew out of other books I've worked on. After learning a lot about World War One for my Anzac Day and Armistice Day books, I realised that I knew very little about the wars fought actually in this country. The research I did for my Waitangi Day book was a further prompt to find out more about the New Zealand Wars.

As with my previous work, I have received help from librarians, archivists and many others who shared their expertise and knowledge. Making these connections is a real reward of writing a book like this.

I have tried to put together a history of the New Zealand Wars from different viewpoints, without glorifying war but honouring the memory of those who served and died here in our own country, and exploring the idea of how we remember the wars and what they mean for us today. I think it's vital that New Zealand children from all backgrounds gain a deeper understanding of their country, their history and their story.

Writing style and design:

This is a non-fiction book for 8-14 year olds, but teenagers and even adults will find it interesting and informative, and younger children will be attracted by the photographs and other illustrations.

The topic is a huge one and it was a challenge to condense all the information available. The resulting content is based on extensive research and the book contains a wide range of images, both historic and contemporary. These include photographs, portraits, paintings, newspaper articles, maps, graphs, stamps and posters. The book also contains non-fiction features such as contents page, index, timeline, bibliography, glossary, picture credits and text acknowledgements. The text is clear but succinct, so each section could be expanded on with further research if wanted.

The images have been carefully selected with these aims in mind:

- to expand on and deepen understanding of the text
- to capture children's attention
- to be thought-provoking, but not too confronting
- to cover as many parts of New Zealand as possible

When I began to research this subject, I found it confusing trying to figure out who was involved and where and when things happened. I've tried to make that basic information clear in the opening sections, with information about the roles played by men, women and children on both sides, so that the following sections about the main campaigns of the wars are easier to follow.

Later chapters cover land confiscations and Māori protest movements, how the wars have been remembered over the years, anniversaries and commemorations and the journey towards the creation of a national day of remembrance. The book looks at how the wars have featured in New Zealand art, music, film and literature and it also contains a description of war memorials and sites around the country.

The final sections contain suggestions for how to find out more, websites to look at and ideas for further activities.

The book is intended to be inclusive, in that it doesn't just focus on soldiers and Māori warriors but also on women, children and the elderly who were involved on both sides. It is not meant to glorify war, but to recognise its reality and its cost.

I've tried to bring the history alive by focusing on individual stories, and by using word-of-mouth accounts from diaries and other contemporary sources. I would also suggest that if you can visit even a few of the battle sites or monuments, the history will immediately begin to make more sense as you start to put events and places in context. Added interest will come from looking up on the Papers Past website some newspaper accounts of what was happening at the time (bearing in mind that these reports maybe biased or not totally reliable).

Classroom discussion points:

Children will come to this text with differing levels of knowledge and understanding. Many children will have been to Anzac Day services, but they may know more about overseas wars (such as World War One and Two and the Vietnam War) than about the New Zealand Wars. Some children may have relatives who have served or are serving in the armed forces. Others may have lost family members to war, or have personal experience of it. New immigrants or refugees may have raw memories of recent conflicts. The topic of war therefore needs to be handled carefully and thoughtfully.

In particular, the topic of the New Zealand Wars and associated land issues has been contentious and controversial over the years and needs to be handled sensitively and with respect.

1. From 2017, 28 October has been named as Raa Maumahara: the national day of commemoration. We already have special days of remembrance on Anzac Day, Waitangi Day and Armistice Day. How is Raa Maumahara different? How is it the same? Find out when and why some other countries have their national day, and what they remember or commemorate.
2. Why is it important to remember those who went to war? Talk about whether you have visited any of the sites mentioned or pictured in this book, or describe any other war or peace memorials that you know.
3. Gate Pā / Pukehinahina has been described as one of the most important places in New Zealand history. What happened there in April 1864? (You might want to look up some newspaper reports on Papers Past.) Why did Governor General Sir Jerry Mateparae say, "To me, the qualities we associate with the Anzac spirit...are equally relevant to Gate Pa"? What are these qualities, and why are they relevant? What other dates do you think are important in New Zealand's history?
4. Imagine yourself in the situation of Māori or European, meeting for the first time, like Alexander Whisker in the Bay of Islands. What would be the differences in your backgrounds and way of life? What would be the similarities between you? How could you communicate without a common language?

5. Flags were a feature of the New Zealand Wars: for example, Te Kooti's flag or the Gate Pā flag. What is the point of a flag? What flags from other countries can you recognise? Recently there was talk about changing New Zealand's national flag. Do you think this is a good idea? Find out what alternatives were suggested, or make up a design of your own, and carry out a poll amongst family and friends to see which they prefer.

Classroom activities:

1. Use a large map of New Zealand, or choose a particular region, and put coloured drawing pins in places mentioned in the text. Find out who has been to any of those places.
2. Draw or create a map of your local area and mark any places, buildings or structures that have connections to war or peace. They may not be obvious, but you might be surprised at how many there are. They might be memorials, peace walks, plaques, street names or museum exhibits.
3. Look at the paintings that were done by people (such as Cyprian Bridge and John Williams) who were present during campaigns of the New Zealand Wars. What do they tell you about what happened and who was there? Choose one event from the New Zealand Wars and draw or paint a scene, or write a poem, letter, song or diary entry, from the point of view of someone who might have been there.
4. The book includes a timeline of events connected with the New Zealand Wars. Make up your own timeline that includes some of those dates, and match them up with dates that are significant for you and your family or friends. For example, you might want to include dates when people in your family were born, or first came to New Zealand, or other important events in your family's history.
5. Some of the early meetings between Māori and Europeans happened not only in New Zealand but also in Australia and England. Find out about Māori who travelled overseas, for example Hongi Hika and Waikato who went to London in 1820.
6. Read Haare Williams' poem ("The white feathers of Rongomai"), or listen as someone reads it out loud to you. You might want to listen to it two or three times. Talk about any words or lines that you don't understand and see if you can figure out the meaning together. What pictures does the poem make in your head? Draw or paint your response to the poem, or choose some of the words from the poem and use them as a starting point to make a poem of your own.
7. Find out more about the history and geography of one of these areas: Northland, Taranaki, East Coast, Central Plateau, Wanganui, Wellington, Nelson. How would you get there? What would you most like to go and see? Use Internet travel sites to work out transport, accommodation and costs.

8. How are the New Zealand Wars marked in your local area? Are there any exhibits held in local museums? Talk about any events or exhibitions you have been to, or plan your own. What is a good way to commemorate the New Zealand Wars?

9. What are some of your favourite Kiwi meals, music, films or books? Share recipes, book and film reviews and playlists.

10. Carry out one of the activities listed under Things you can do.

#### Websites:

A number of useful websites and primary sources are listed towards the end of the book.

#### Information about the New Zealand Wars for extra learning:

##### **1. Books about early New Zealand history include:**

###### Junior fiction:

Beale, Fleur. *Mission girl: the writings of Atapo, Paihia, c1840* (Scholastic, 2010)

Originally published as: *A new song in the land* (2004).

Bishop, Gavin. *Katarina* (Random House, 2008)

Condon, Alison, and Gina Taggart, illustrated by Tania Hassounia. *Wīremu Tāmihana Tarapīpipi the King Maker* (Big Book Publishing, 2015; Chronicles of Paki series)

De Roo, Anne. *Jacky nobody* (Methuen, 1983) and *Sergeant Sal* (Black Cat Books, 1981)

Locke, Elsie. *Journey under warning* (OUP, 1983) and *The end of the harbour* (Jonathan Cape, 1968)

Long, Don. *The battlefield* (Reed, 2003) Also published as *Te Tāhuna*

Menefy, Diana. *Shadow of the Boyd* (Harper Collins, 2010)

Morris, Paula. *Hene and the Burning harbour* (Puffin, 2013)

Roxborough, Tania. *Bastion Point: 570 days on Takaparawha* (Scholastic, 2017)

Tonkin, Keith, illustrated by Spike Wademan. *Te pou kara: the flagpole* and *Te tupuna maunga o Parihaka: The ancestral mountain of Parihaka* (Gilt Edge Publishing, 2006; Kids in time series).

Whaanga, Mere. *Te Kooti's diamond: Te Taimana a Te Kooti* (Ashton Scholastic 1991), reprinted in *Te ao mārama: contemporary Māori writing*, ed Witi Ihimaera.

###### YA fiction:

David Hair's Aotearoa series, a mixture of fantasy, history and mythology, includes *Justice and Utu*, set in Russell, and *Ghosts of Parihaka* (Harper Collins)

###### Graphic novels

Grosz, Chris. *Kimble Bent malcontent : the wild adventures of a runaway soldier in old-time New Zealand* (Random House, 2011)

McKinley, Matthew H. *Wars in the Whitecloud: Wairau, 1843* (Kin Publishing, 2016)

Marsh, Sid. *Crow of Whareatua: a New Zealand war story* (Kermadec, 1999)

Non fiction:

Jenkins, Jenny. *Battle at the Gate: the story of the battle of Gate Pa, Tauranga, New Zealand*. (Penguin, 2008)

McCauley, Debbie, ill by Sophie McCauley, translated by Tamati Waaka. *Taratoa and the Code of Conduct: A story from the Battle of Gate Pā* (Mauao Publishing, 2014)

Rountree, Kathryn, illustrated by Peter Gosage. *Ruapekapeka Pa*. (Longman Paul, 1986)

Wright, Matthew. *The New Zealand Wars – a brief history* (Libro International, 2014)

Revised version of *Fighting Past each other: New Zealand wars 1845-1875* (Reed, 2006)

## 2. People

**Find out more about:**

- Any of these people: Te Rauparaha, Te Rangihaeata, Hōne Heke Pōkai, Wiremu Tāmihana Tarapīpipi Te Waharoa, Rewi Maniapoto, Governor George Grey, Gustavus von Tempsky, Kimble Bent, Dame Whina Cooper, Eva Rickard, Robert Muldoon, Jamie Belich, Sir Paul Reeves. Explain what their connection is to the New Zealand Wars.
- Any person who works or has worked for peace. (They don't have to be famous. Perhaps you know someone in your own family who is a peace-maker.)
- Māori women who were involved in the New Zealand Wars. Who were they, and what part did they play?
- Artists and photographers

A number of images in the book are by well-known artists, illustrators or photographers. See if you can find biographical information and other pictures, paintings or photographs by Cyprian Bridge, Horatio Gordon Robley, Charles Heaphy, Gottfried Lindauer, Arthur Herbert Messenger, Alfred Burton or Gil Hanly.

## 3. Poetry

Many New Zealand poets have written about Parihaka; for example, Alistair Campbell (*Parihaka Grieving*), Cilla McQueen (*Fuse*), Apirana Taylor (*Parihaka*), Elizabeth Smither (*Twelve little poems about Parihaka*), Hone Tuwhare (*Not by wind ravaged*), James K. Baxter (*A walking stick for an old man*) and Sam Hunt (*Parihaka Dreamsong*).

The book written for the City Art Gallery exhibition is a good place to start. It includes poems by J C Sturm, Roma Pōtiki, Chris Orsman, Ian Wedde, Elizabeth Smither, Robert Sullivan, Dinah Hawken, Apirana Taylor, Cilla McQueen and Alistair Te Ariki Campbell. (See *Parihaka: the art of Passive resistance*, edited by Miringa Hohaia, Gregory O'Brien and Lara Strongman (City Gallery / VUP/Parihaka Pa Trustees, 2001))