

Ti Rakau – A Traditional Maori Stick Game

**This game can be played using any small wooden sticks that can be easily held and tossed. The instructions below are for making your own set of sticks made from paper, not wood. Playing the game with paper tubes is a little bit safer in the classroom when young children are first learning how to toss and catch.*

Purpose: To have children make their own paper sticks for playing Ti Rakau, while learning about traditional Maori rafting patterns.

Kindergarten Standards:

Power NYSCCLS ELA Standards (ICSD) - Responding to Literature:

11. Create and/or present a poem, dramatization, artwork, or personal response to a particular author or theme studied in class, with support as needed.

Materials:

- Paper towel tubes (2 per child)
- Markers
- Pencils
- Traditional Maori designs (see attached sheet)
- Ti Rakau photo card

Set Up:

- You will probably need to collect paper towel rolls a week or more in advance of the project.
- You may wish to make additional copies of the Maori design sheet for each table, or project it on the board for the class to see as they work.

Guided Instruction:

TEACHER: (Hold up Ti Rakau photo card.) *Today we are going to make our own sticks for playing Ti Rakau. Traditionally, the Maori people of New Zealand use wooden sticks to play the game. Our sticks are going to be made from paper! Paper sticks are a little easier to toss and catch. Let's learn how to make them, so we can have fun playing the game!*

- Pass out two paper towel rolls to each child.
- Explain that the rolls will be used as the sticks for the game, so they should not be intentionally crushed or torn.
- Share the traditional Maori design sheet, and explain that these are the patterns the children will use for decorating their sticks. **Note: each symbol holds great meaning for the Maori and would traditionally be seen in carvings, buildings, jewelry, boats, and even tattoos. All of the patterns shown are drawings made from traditional rafting patterns.*

- Using your pencil, carefully draw designs onto your rolls.
- When you have filled your rolls with designs, take your markers and trace over your work, so it can be easily seen.
- Don't forget to have the kids write their names on their sticks. (The teacher can also write their names on masking tape, so the rolls can be easily marked on the inside.)
- Now you are ready to play Ti Rakau!

**Note: Here is another quick way to make your own sticks. Have children tightly roll an old magazine or calendar. Securely tape the rolls, and you are ready to play!*