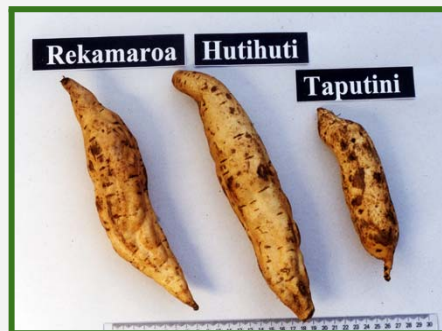


Māori sailed from their pacific islands for Aotearoa in the 1200's, taking with them all the crops that grew in their warm, tropical, sandy home. They found their new islands colder and wetter. All their traditional crops would not grow, except kūmara.

Māori made large kūmara gardens, often on sloping, sunny land. They grew the plants in raised mounds of soil and added sand for drainage, like the soils from the pacific. They built fences to shield the plants from strong winds and pesky pūkeko birds. The kūmara was ready in March and was stored in underground pits over winter for eating, with some planted the next spring.



Questions (look in the text for highlight clues!)

- 1) Where did Māori sail from to come to New Zealand?
- 2) What were two reasons that traditional Māori crops failed in New Zealand?
- 3) What were two reasons why Māori built fences around their kūmara gardens?
- 4) Which of these Māori gardening methods DID NOT help grow kūmara?
 - a) Raised mounds of soil
 - b) Planting for the tropical weather
 - c) Building fences around the garden
- 5) Why did Māori gardeners put sand into the soil around the kūmara?
- 6) Explain what 'crops' are?
- 7) Why do you think that Māori stored the picked kūmara in underground pits?

Adapting to new environments

Produced by Paul Tucker@Orewa College (2023)

New Words (look in the text for highlight clues!)

What do you think the word **pesky** means in the story? Read the sentence. Does it mean:

- a) The pūkeko birds were hungry.
- b) The pūkeko birds were blue.
- c) The pūkeko birds were annoying.

Joining Words (Conjunctions)

For each sentence find the word that joins two sentences together.

- 1) The pūkeko flew in and ate the crops.
- 2) Māori built the fence because of the pūkekos.
- 3) Most crops failed so kūmara became very important.

Many of the hills and mountains around the Auckland region were home to Māori kūmara gardens and pits. You can still see evidence of the gardens on Auckland's volcanic cones where Māori often had pa sites.

