



*One of the important settlements for Māori was the hot water beach at Waiwerawera - which means very hot water! Europeans shortened the name to Waiwera. Māori believed that the waters could help heal injuries and sometimes referred to the place as 'Te Rata' or The Doctor.*

**My name is Wikitoria Eliza, born on the shores of Waiwerawera, and I am immortal.**

**I never heard the shot that should have killed me. I was struck by an intense pain in the back of my ribs and at first I thought I had a stitch, like I used to get when racing the other kids down the slope at breakneck speed. Sometimes I used to get to the bottom and have to double over, bringing my knees to my chest in a tight hug, gasping for air, just to get my breath back. This time it was like an invisible hand had rolled me forward. I did not call out or scream or even have time to be afraid. I lay in the warm pool of water and gasped, mouth opening wide. I must have looked like so many of the fish I had caught on this same beach. I felt the warmth of the waters I had been born into some 15 years earlier, close over me. My mother's face appeared above mine. She cradled my head in her lap. I had no sensation of hearing her but could see the shock on her face and her mouth moving looking to soothe my passing. The last memory of my death before my world turned to darkness was my mother's eyes fixed on mine as she was dragged away.**

**The warm waters that had nurtured me when I was born and had sustained me as I grew, now healed me as I died. I did not understand the reason for my survival then. Why had I been spared? For what purpose? It took me lifetimes to find an answer that **justified my survival**. All those wasted years, those angry years when I was driven by **utu**, seeking revenge on those that had taken my life and given me a life of never ending loss.**

**As I look at how I was back then, I want to explain to that girl that she is a Wāhine Toa born of two cultures, a girl that would help shape a country. But I can't. I can only retell you what I have seen on my seemingly endless journey by providing insights into our shared past. I am a Go-Between - a bridge not between two cultures, but a channel, delivering the stories of the past to bring change to our future.**

- 1) What did Wikitoria believe she had when she felt pain?
  - a) That she had been shot.
  - b) That she had a stitch.
  - c) That she had been burned by the water.
- 2) How old was Wikitoria when she died?
  - a) 14
  - b) 15
  - c) The reader is not told.
- 3) What did Wikitoria feel she must have looked like when she rolled into the water?
- 4) What does Wikitoria feel was the reason why she did not die after being shot?
  - a) The soothing words of her mother.
  - b) The waters of Waiwerawera.
  - c) The invisible hand of a higher power.
- 5) What was Wikitoria doing when she got shot?
  - a) Running down a hill.
  - b) Bathing in a pool of water.
  - c) The story does not say.
- 6) Māori had another name for Waiwerawera which was Te Rata. What does this mean?
- 7) What is a piece of evidence from the story that proves Wikitoria's mother's emotional state?
- 8) What does the Māori word 'utu' mean?
- 9) What does Wikitoria feel was the reason that justified her survival?
- 10) Briefly state in your own words what you feel the go-betweener role of Wikitoria is.

### Word Salad

*There are many unusual words and phrases in the story you have just read. Complete the following tasks to ensure your understanding:*

- 1) Find the definitions of the following English words.
  - a) cradled
  - b) immortal
  - c) soothe
  - d) sustained
  - e) insight

- 2) Use each of the five words in five separate sentences using your own words.

### Parts of Speech: Nouns

Nouns are naming words. Identify each noun in the following sentences:

- a) The tree stopped her fall.
- b) She slipped slowly into the water.
- c) The bullet ripped through the air.

### Did You Know?

*The beach has not had hot water flow across it in more than a century. The thermal waters that spring up from the ground were captured and redirected into the pools and away from the beach.*

*Since the closure of the Hot Springs Resort in 2017 the hot waters have been flowing from the bores drilled to take them. Locals hope that in time the hot waters may once again flow across the beaches so locals can dig a hole and have a soak.*

