

Stick game

Polynesian stick games honed spear-handling skills.

Traditionally, Polynesian stick games were a kind of practice to improve warriors' spear-handling skills. Today stick games are played for enjoyment by adults and children. They are often played to music or chants with the players seated on the floor facing each other and performing a series of rhythmic movements with sticks. At times, the sticks are tossed or passed among the players. In New Zealand, these stick games are called titorea.



Make a Polynesian stick

How to make your Polynesian sticks for playing the game.

The sticks can be made from either lengths of plastic pipe, but preferably, for this project, it would be much better to use 2 lengths of wood, which can be painted. You must ensure that each participant has 2 sticks. These could easily be cut from wooden broom handles which can be purchased from any DIY store.

Making these from wood would enable pupils to create simple designs based on their work on Polynesian tattoos or Gauguin as their creative inspirations.

Alternatively, firm cardboard or paper could be used to make early “practice” versions of the sticks until the learners are used to the game. Health and safety issues should be considered at all times.

Learn to play a stick game

Here are some suggested websites and videos which might help generate ideas.

Learn to play the New Zealand stick game - E Papā Waiari

<http://www.mamalisa.com/blog/learn-to-play-the-new-zealand-stick-game-e-pap-waiari/>

Maori stick game

http://wn.com/PCC_Maori_stick_game#videos

Movement sequences

Here are some of the simplest movement sequences used in Polynesian stick games. Once pupils have mastered these sequences, they could try playing a game. Pupils could then develop their own game/ sequences and share these with the class. They could work in pairs or small groups, and may want to add some traditional dance movements to enhance the game.

Sequence A

Down—hit both sticks on the floor in front of you (1 count)

tap—hit the tips of one stick on floor in front of you alternate right hand left hand every other

Turn (2 counts)

Sequence B

Down—both sticks on the floor in front of you (1 count)

Together—gently hitting both sticks together flush (2 counts)

Sequence C

Cross click—gently hit the tips of your sticks together making an X, alternate each hit with right on top/ left on top (try 12 fast counts)

Sequence D

Down—hit both sticks on the floor in front of you (1 count)

Click—gently hitting sticks together at the tips alternate right hand, left hand every other turn (2 counts)

Resting spot—a designated place to put your sticks when they should not be making noise (both sticks resting on knees)

A down—tap—tap 16 times

B down—together—together 4 times

C cross click 12 counts fast

D down—clicks—clicks 8 times

B down—together—together 4 times

C cross click 12 counts fast

A down—tap—tap 16 times

B down—together—together 4 times

C cross click 12 counts fast

D down—clicks—clicks 8 times

B down—together—together 4 times

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A down—tap—tap 16 times

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