



NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE  
**humanities**

**UNION**

*Religious Worlds of New York*

• *Curriculum Development Project*

# The Hip-Hop Marae

*Lavie Raven, North Lawndale College Prep High School, Chicago, IL*

## Purpose

This project outlines a five-to-seven day arts integrated project where students will use the visual hip-hop arts and poetry to illustrate traditional Maori concepts. The purpose of the lesson is for students to learn about Maori culture and how communal identity is supported and maintained through adherence and understanding of important cultural and spiritual values. The central focus will be the creation of a hip-hop arts-based Marae, the house that serves as central community space and spiritual center of Maori community in Aotearo, New Zealand.

Students will use a) a template for the visual arts element that replicates the basic shape of a Marae, b) graffiti lettering for the Maori values they will illustrate, and c) figurative metaphor and symbols to visualize four Maori concepts, and d) poetry/rap lyrics to explain/further their visualization.

Students will examine how the early hip-hop community developed in Aotearoa, New Zealand, and how Maori values were expressed through hip-hop. Looking at historical documents and listening to early Aotearoa hip-hop music, students will work in pairs to illustrate four traditional Maori concepts, to explore and further their understanding of these concepts, and to share their artistic visualizations with others. The hip-hop Maraes they create can then be used as displays in school, or as a basis for a graffiti mural.

Students will be asked to reflect on how these values apply in their own lives, and how the Maori culture is informed by such values. Ultimately students are being asked establish a foundation for understanding aspects of Maori culture, to transpose their conceptions and interpretations of Maori values through their own imaginations, with graffiti, rap/poetry as their tools of creation.

## Resources and Supplies Required

- Marae template
- *Marae: The Heart of Maori Culture* by Huia Publishers (Images included)
- *MARAE — TE TATAU POUNAMU: A Journey Around New Zealand's Meeting Houses* By Muru Walters, Sam Walters, Robin Walters (images included)
- “Street Action Aotearoa” text by Mark Scott (excerpts provided here)

- Poster-board, Scissors, Pencils, Colored Pencils, Markers, Journals/Notebooks
- Paper for sketching ideas, and Graphic organizer for brainstorming figurative concepts and metaphors with a partner
- Graffiti alphabets packet
- Packet of select poetry/rap music lyrics reflecting positive values (i.e. Dead Prez, Invincible, Shadia Mansour, Tupac, Oddisee)
- Two songs from Che Fu with print-outs of lyrics (He Kotahi and Hold Tight)
- Two songs from Ladi6 with print-outs of lyrics (Shine On and Walk Right Up)

## Essential Questions

### ***ON THE MAORI COMMUNITY AND CULTURAL VALUES***

Who are the Maori people and where are they from?

How are the Maori an indigenous culture or a First Nation?

What is a Marae, and how does it fit into Maori culture?

What are the values and Maori history shown in the artistic design of Maraes?

What are some important values/beliefs/practices in the Maori community, and how is the Marae a communal space where these values are communicated?

What is a waka, and why are wakas central to Maori culture? How do Maori values travel with the waka?

### ***ON CONNECTIONS BETWEEN HIP-HOP AND MAORI VALUES***

How did Maori youth first engage with the hip-hop arts, and what value did it have to those young people?

What were some values in the hip-hop community, when the arts first appeared in New Zealand?

What are some common elements and different values in the Maori community and the early New Zealand hip-hop youth community?

Looking at four essential values of Maori culture, what do these values mean to you?

How are these values represented in your families, community, and other environments you travel through? How are they not represented?

Listening to some Maori hip-hop artists, what values are being communicated in early hip-hop music made by these artists?

## ***ON THE DESIGN OF A HIP-HOP MARAE***

How would you illustrate the meaning of the essential Maori values you have been introduced to, using drawing, graffiti lettering, and rap/poetry writing?

How would you use your illustrations and poetry to design your own hip-hop Marae?

Why did you design your Marae values the way you did with your group? How would you explain your Marae and values to an audience of community members?

Where would you like to display your hip-hop Marae, to help others learn about the values of Maori culture through your creative hip-hop ideas?

## **Unit Plan and Student Activities**

### **Day 1-**

**Students will be asked to write a journal response to the meaning of hip-hop as put forth by the University of Hip-Hop organization:**

**Prompt-** *An acronym for H.I.P-H.O.P. is Healthy Independent People Helping Other People...what does this mean? What does it mean to be Healthy, Independent, and Helping? Why are these values important in society today?*

- After students have written a response to this question in their notebooks, the instructor will lead a Socratic Seminar asking students to share their interpretations of these values, and to converse about these values as represented in society. The instructor will reference the University of Hip-Hop as establishing these particular values as goals for that organization/community.
- Follow-up questions for the seminar:
  - Do you think hip-hop achieves this today?
  - Why do we emphasize or place importance on certain values as goals in life?
  - How do values that we share serve communities?
- Lastly, what are some values that are important to you? Allow students three minutes to write down 3-5 values that are important to them. Then go around the room and ask students to share their town favorites from their list. Have a student write down the values that the class mentions—leave that list up for the duration of the lesson.

## Day 2/3-

Students will be introduced to four essential Maori values that are taught at all schools in New Zealand.

- Students will first be introduced to the geographical location of New Zealand. Students will then be introduced to the Maori culture through examples of Maori artwork (The Carver), Maori language through the Powhiri welcoming ceremony (youtube.com), and the Marae (“The Marae” text).
- Students will be asked to reflect on their knowledge of indigenous cultures, such as Native American cultures, and how the values of such cultures are spiritually embedded in indigenous communities through traditional practice and arts.
- Students will be given a basic timeline of the colonial history of Britain’s relationship with the Maori, and will be given historical background of the Waitangi treaty. Students will be asked if they know of any indigenous treaties that have been reviewed or honored in the United States. The instructor will inform them that virtually none have. I.e. in Illinois the last lawsuit on the treaties between the federal government and indigenous groups in Illinois was dismissed.
- Essential question for discussion: *Why is it important to maintain community values when community is being attacked by outside forces? Contemporary connections: how do you see this unfold today in the world (protecting values against invasion or oppression?)*
- Explain the Waka/Canoe and it’s role in Maori culture.



- **Traditional importance of the waka for the Maori:**

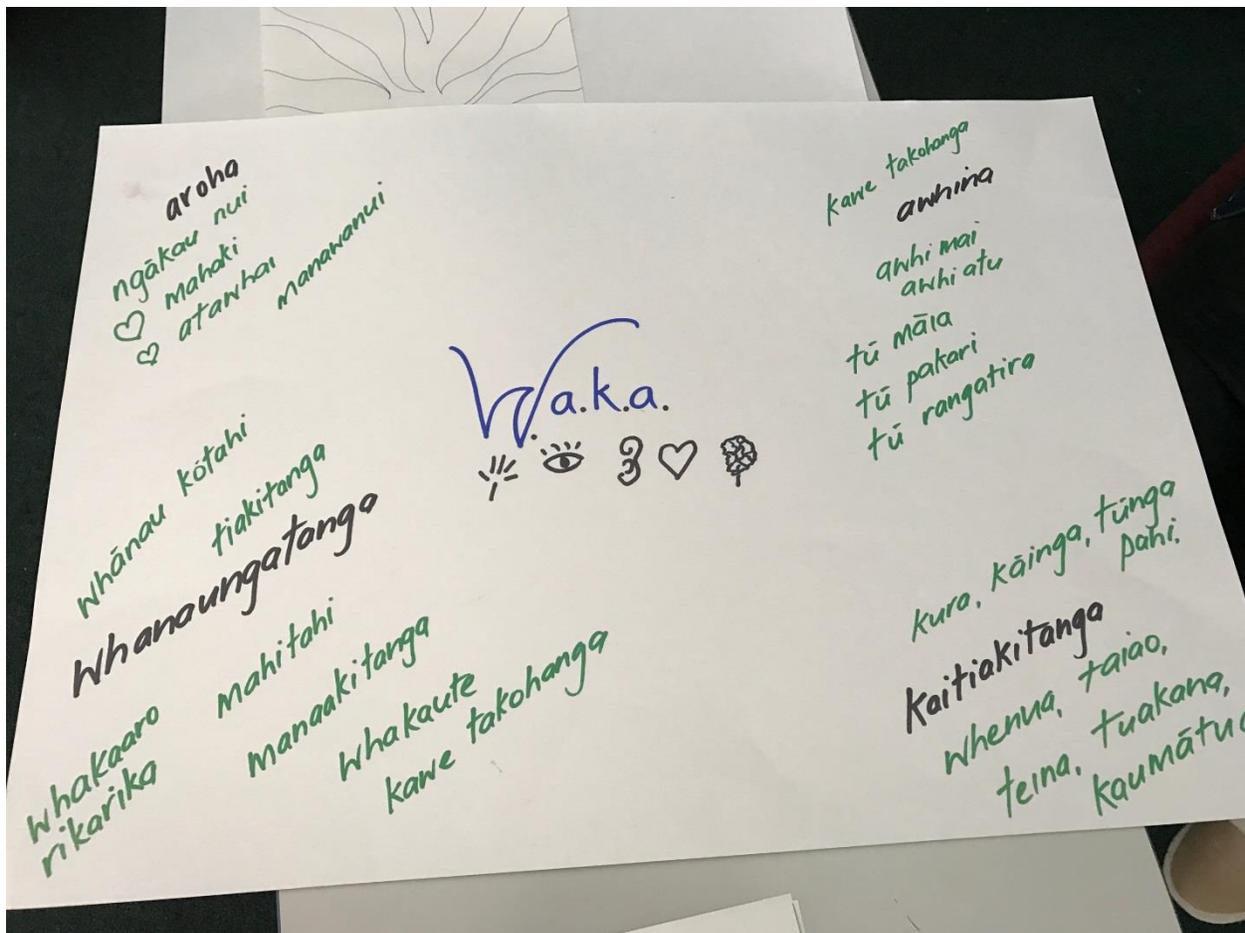
The significance of **waka** (canoes) for Māori has its roots in times past, when voyaging waka forged the links between the ancestral homeland of Hawaiki and New Zealand, the cradle of Māori culture. Māui, a god-like ancestor, travelled by waka into the southern ocean and fished up the North Island, known as Te Ika-ā-Māui (the fish of Māui).

His waka became the South Island, Te Waka-ā-Māui (Māui’s canoe). A human ancestor, Kupe, is said to have later discovered New Zealand on a waka voyage. His wife Kuramārōtini is credited with naming it Aotearoa (long white cloud) – the Māori name now used for New Zealand.

Source- <https://www.teara.govt.nz/en/waka-canoes>

(A popular culture reference is the Moana film.)

*How is the Waka is also therefore a carrier of values, with the people?*



- Students will conclude this introduction to aspects of Maori culture with a conversation about four Maori values and their meanings. These values will be the ones they will be drawing about, when they create their Hip-Hop Marae. These values come from an acronym for the W.A.K.A. canoe explained previously.
  - WHANAUNGATANGA- Relationship/kinship/family connection
  - AROHA- Love
  - KAITIAKITANGA- Guardianship/Protection/Stewardship
  - AWHINA- Helper/supporter
- A student or the instructor will write the values on the board for the entire class. Students will be asked to write down three thoughts for each value. Then as a class, students will have a discussion sharing some of these meanings and make a communal list on the board. The scribe student or instructor will write down shared ideas on the board under the value discussed. There should be three or four ideas under each value. This discussion will serve as motivational basis for the subsequent illustrations they will create.

## Day 4-

Students will look at examples of Marae and the purposes of the Marae house in Maori communities. Source: “The Marae”

### What is a Marae?

The **Marae** (meeting grounds) is the focal point of Māori communities throughout New Zealand. A **Marae** is a fenced-in complex of carved buildings and grounds that belongs to a particular iwi (tribe), hapū (sub tribe) or whānau (family). Māori people see their **Marae** as tūrangawaewae - their place to stand and belong.

([www.newzealand.com/us/feature/Marae-maori-meeting-grounds/](http://www.newzealand.com/us/feature/Marae-maori-meeting-grounds/))

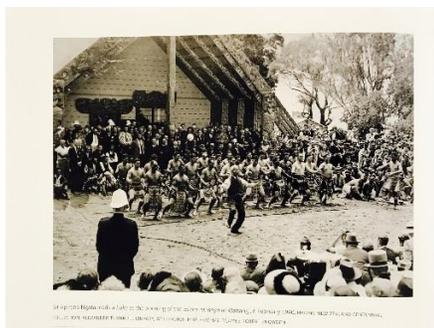
Marae are places of refuge for our people and provide facilities to enable us to continue with our own way of life within the total structure of our own terms and values”.

The Marae is an institution from classical Māori society that has survived the impact of western civilization. It is central to the concept of Māoritanga and the Māori cultural identity. Māori oratory, language, value and social etiquette are given their fullest expression on the Marae at the tang and hui (assemblies).

The Marae is the place where values and philosophy are reaffirmed. It is the only institution where the dignity of the tangi can be reserved and the dead farewelled in the appropriate customary fashion. The Marae is sacred to the living, and is a memorial to the dead. For this reason, the Marae must be entered in a reverent manner.

The Marae is socially integrative (brings people together) in the sense that it fosters identity, self-respect, pride and social control. The Marae is also integrative in that all people are welcome as guests. It is one institution where the Pakeha can meet the Māori on Māori terms and come to a better understanding of what it means to have a bicultural society.

(Source-awataha.co.nz)



Meeting and sharing speeches at a Marae/Carvers preparing the pillars of the Marae

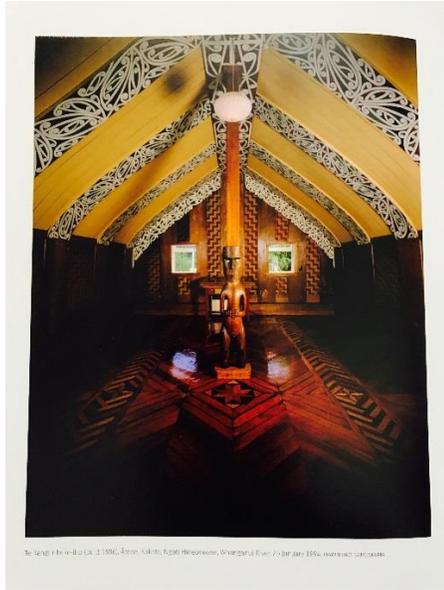


The pillars of the Marae tell the story of treasured leaders and community members  
The ceiling rafters represent the 'ribs of the ancestors'



Examples of modern Marae





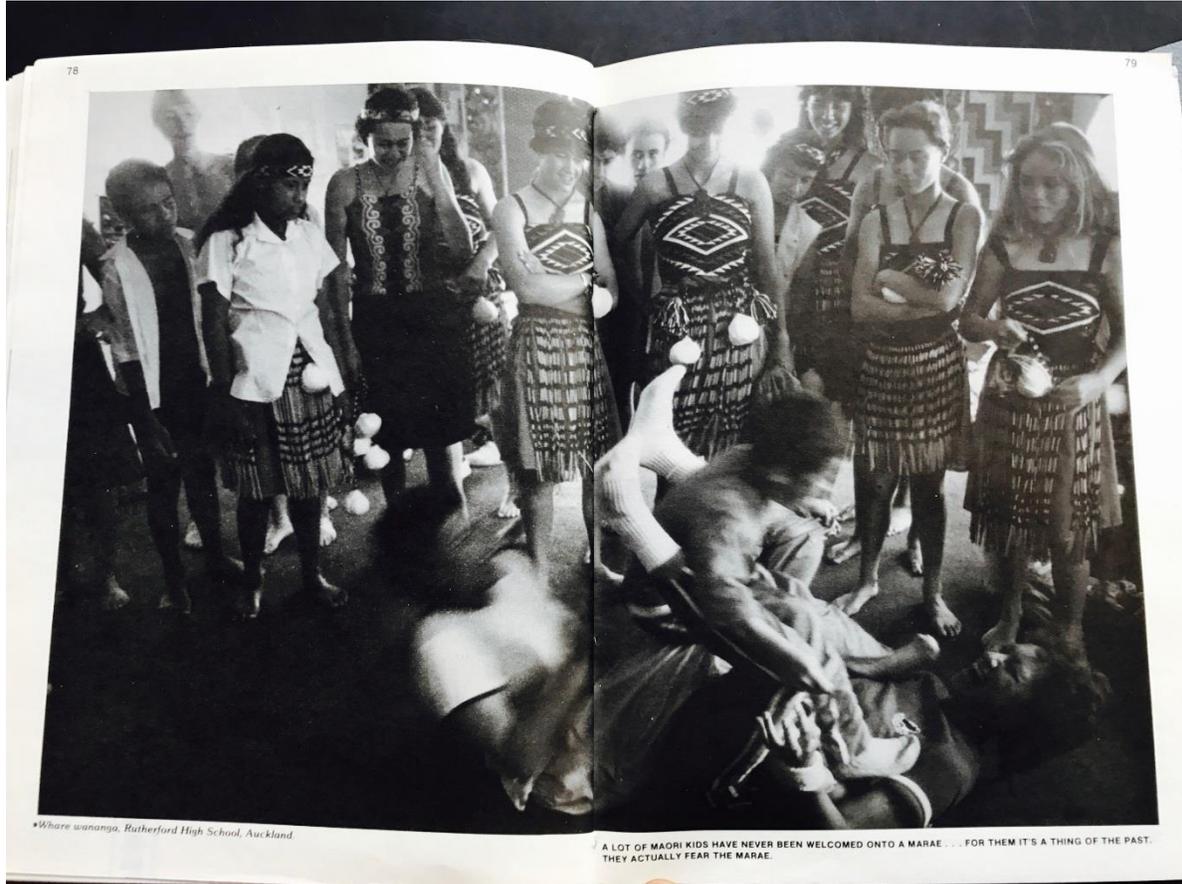
**Powhiri greeting ceremony at a Marae**

### Day 5-

**Students will be introduced to the history of hip-hop in New Zealand through excerpts of the text “Hip-Hop Aotearoa.”**

This text shows how after hip-hop became popular in New Zealand, Maraes became a place for hip-hop programs and community projects. Images can taken from this lesson’s text and re-printed larger for students.

- Essential questions: *Why do you think the Marae became a home for hip-hop? Did both communities share values?*
- Students will then compare/contrast the Maori values and the values from the acronym they wrote about for the meaning of H.I.P. H.O.P.



\*Whare wananga, Rutherford High School, Auckland

A LOT OF MAORI KIDS HAVE NEVER BEEN WELCOMED ONTO A MARAE . . . FOR THEM IT'S A THING OF THE PAST. THEY ACTUALLY FEAR THE MARAE.

- *What similarities/ differences do hip-hop communities have with the four values you have been introduced to?*

Choose four images from the text and describe what you see hip-hoppers doing at the Marae.

*How was the Marae important as a space for young people to practice and perform hip-hop?*

- Students will listen to two songs from Che Fu, and two songs Ladi6, both hip-hop/soul artists in New Zealand. Students will be given the lyrics to the songs and will be asked to underline four sets of lyrics in each song that stand out to them. They will then be asked to volunteer to read the lyrics aloud. A sampling of students will be asked to share a lyric that stood out to them and why.
- This will give a foundation that informs students that hip-hop in New Zealand has a history that is connected with Maori values. *What do you think of these songs? What values do they communicate? Why is hip-hop an important tool for young people communicating what YOU value in life?*

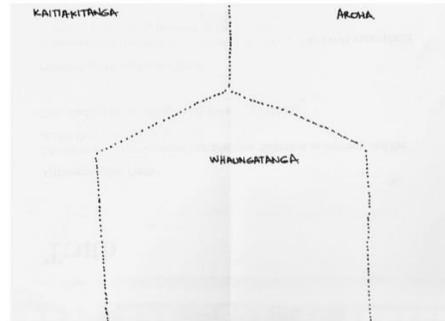
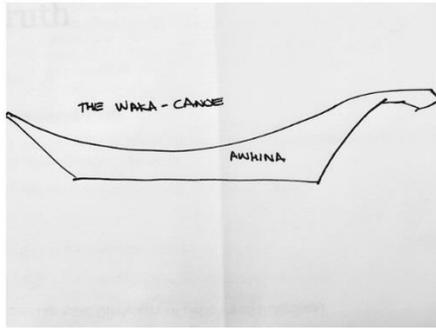


## Day 6--7

Students will create their own Hip-Hop Marae that communicates the meaning of the Maori values they have been introduced to.

- Students will be assigned to pairs collected in groups of 8. Each group will have four pairs of participants. Each pairing will be responsible for illustrating the meaning of one of the Maori concepts we have been discussing.
- Students will be introduced to figurative and literal-how to communicate ideas without words.
- The instructor will prep poster boards with the template for the Marae (cutting them out with student assistants)
  - Fold the poster-board in half. Reproduce the template of the Marae on the board—it is separated into three parts. Each part is labeled with a value (i.e. Whanaungatanga, Kaitiakitanga, Aroha). This value will be emphasis of that portion of the poster-board to be illustrated.

- Cut out the Waka, the Maori canoe. The fourth value, Awhina will be illustrated on the canoe.
- Please note- the values do not have to be assigned to a particular part of the template. They can be randomly distributed or decided upon by the instructor, collectively as a class, or within the small groups.

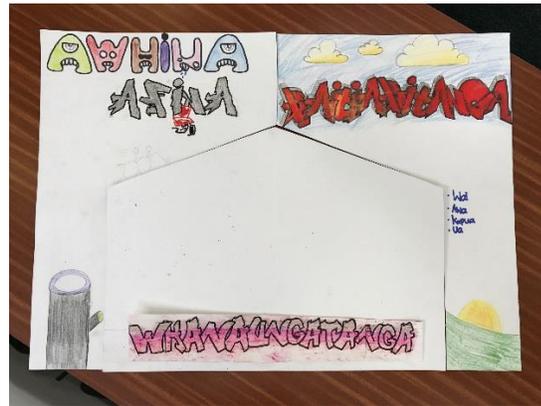


- Students will be given sketch paper for brainstorming and doing initial drafts of their visualizations.
- Pairs will be given a graffiti alphabet pack, to draw their chosen/assigned concept with graffiti lettering. They will prepare initial drafts that will be eventually transferred to the poster-board.
- Using the motivation from the Che Fu and Ladi6 songs, students will write (at least) seven-line poem *with* their partner reflecting the meaning they have found in their Maori value.
- Play music by Che Fu and Ladi6 while students are doing their artwork.



- Students will be given their portion of the poster-board for their group's hip-hop Marae and will be asked to work in their pairs to transpose their best ideas onto their portion of the Marae.

- After sketching their final draft, students will use colored pencils and markers to illustrate their final drawings. No white poster-board should be left visible—everything should be colored in.



- Students will also write the poem they created with their partner onto their portion of the illustration.
- Students will assemble their hip-hop Marae with their group. Each pair will place their value on the composite poster-board and paste the four pieces back together to create their final Marae.
- Students in each group will write a brief summary explaining how they illustrated the Maori concepts, to be placed next to each Hip-Hop Marae when displayed. Each member of the group should work with their partner to write a brief paragraph of description of their illustration.

### Day 7-

Students will present their Hip-Hop Maraes to the class and the explanations of the meaning they are communicating through their artwork. The audience of students will be asked to complete an ‘epiphany slip’ for what they appreciated about the group’s artwork, and any feedback or critique they may offer. All critiques must end in a positive statement.



Maori graffiti piece by Lavie Raven

### **Public Sharing Opportunities:**

Find a location in your school to display the Hip-Hop Maraes.

Approach community arts galleries and community centers about being a part of collaborative gallery exhibits to display the Maraes.

The design by the students can be used as the basis for a larger mural that can be painted at school or community agency.



“Hip-Hop Marae” mural painted by students at Maori immersion school Te Ara whanui school painted with Raven, Kerb, Ceaper, and Juse-painted as part of the Fulbright program

## Appendix: Lyrics for Poetry/Rap Writing

### HE KOTAHI by Che Fu (example of sharing Maori values through hip-hop)

Te Tima Maori kia maia  
Te Tima Maori kia wehi  
Te Tima Maori kia kaha  
Te Tima Maori kia toa  
Te Tima Maori kia maia  
Te Tima Maori kia wehi  
Te Tima Maori kia kaha  
Te Tima Maori kia toa  
Ka hoe te waka taua  
kei waho I te moana  
Kia mau  
kia ita  
Pera ki kotou Tipuna  
(Yes we\_re moving  
across the water  
like our fathers before  
we remain steadfast and sure.)  
Ka tu he kotahi  
tu tata mai  
kia mihi a tu ki te Ao Katumaia I te paerangi  
Tu tata mai  
kia mihi a tu ki te Ao  
Katumaia I te paerangi  
(Unified together  
we will greet the risen sun  
shoulder to shoulder  
heads up on the front line. We will greet the  
risen sun  
shoulder to shoulder  
heads up on the front line.)  
Tata pau te wa  
Hoki ki uta  
kei reira ra  
kei  
reira ra  
Te Ao Kohatu  
I tu Rangatira nga Tipuna  
Aoki mai  
Aoki mai  
(The clock is ticking  
we reach into ourselves and there it is

there it is  
there it is. Back in the past  
where our people once did walk  
now we\_re running in  
now we\_re running in)  
Ka tu he kotahi  
tu tata mai  
kia mihi a tu ki te Ao  
Katumaia I te paerangi  
Tu tata mai  
kia mihi a tu ki te Ao  
Katumaia I te paerangi  
(Unified together  
we will greet the risen sun  
shoulder to shoulder  
heads up on the front line. We will greet the  
risen sun  
shoulder to shoulder  
heads up on the front line.)  
Kua hikina  
te kohu  
ka anga atu taku aro  
ki te kainga  
a ata titiro  
ka tu te ihi ihi  
ka tu te wana wana  
mo te whenua e  
mo to whenua e  
(Our minds stay clear  
frosty  
our eyes are clear as days back home  
concentration  
concentration  
concentration. Now give more than you can give  
it\_s getting closer for your nation)  
Te Tima Maori kia maia  
Te Tima Maori kia wehi  
Te Tima Maori kia kaha  
Te Tima Maori kia toa  
Te Tima Maori kia maia  
Te Tima Maori kia wehi  
Te Tima Maori kia kaha  
Te Tima Maori kia toa  
Ka tu he kotahi

tu tata mai  
kia mihi a tu ki te Ao  
Katumaia I te paerangi  
Tu tata mai  
kia mihi a tu ki te Ao  
Katumaia I te paerangi  
Tu tata mai  
kia mihi a tu ki te Ao  
Katumaia I te paerangi  
(Unified together  
we will greet the risen sun  
shoulder to shoulder  
heads up on the front line. we will greet the risen  
sun  
shoulder to shoulder  
heads up on the front line.)

### **HOLD TIGHT by Che Fu**

My mind keeps on searching, for a reason why,  
our world keeps turning, needlessly we die  
In a war fought without machinegun fire and it's  
on home ground, its spirit lockdown  
and still I find the words  
Mama hold tight, I can see the skies are clearing  
over  
sister hold tight, I can see the clouds have blown  
away  
mama hold tight, I can see the skies are clearing  
over  
poppa hold tight, if we do then we will be ok  
Oh the days keep passing, and I'm asking myself,  
why am I still waiting, when I know I can help  
in this war, fought without machinegun fire It's  
on home ground, spirit lockdown  
still we must say  
Mama hold tight I can see the skies are clearing  
over  
sister hold tight I can see the skies are blown  
away  
mama hold tight I can see the skies are clearing  
over  
poppa hold tight if we do then it will be ok  
So we're wondering around, thinking about this  
time, when we would be together  
saying no, no fire, no fire, listen for yourselves,  
sending out own S.O.S, we listening, receiving

you, so all you got to say  
Mama hold tight I can see the skies are clearing  
over  
sister hold tight I can see the skies are blown  
away  
mama hold tight I can see the skies are clearing  
over  
poppa hold tight if we do then it will be ok

### **SHINE ON by Ladi6**

Breaking hearts, minds  
I do apologize  
It's not my way  
I hate to make you feel uncomfortable  
  
Take a load off  
Or you can put it right on me  
It would be my pleasure to unburden you  
Actually

I see you, you see me  
And I know that you are down  
I wanna pick you up from where I see ya  
Lying on the ground

Trust in me  
I'll take your broken heart home to fix  
Cause you're generally on my lips  
Whisper my promises

All your strengths and weaknesses too  
Baby to me you are a star  
So shine on  
All your strengths and weaknesses too  
Baby to me you are a star  
So shine on

### **WALK RIGHT UP by Ladi6**

Hate it if we don't  
Hate it if we do  
I'm not sure if we every really knew  
What we'll ever really know  
Stories twisted as it's been told  
Hard to handle, all through my day

I get the feeling like you wanna walk away but  
But please don't say it again don't wanna hear  
Why do we leave ourselves open all these years?  
Yeah and ever since I feel like I know ya  
So when we talk all I wanna do is get closer  
Maybe hold you it's not needed  
As long as in my heart I know that you believe it  
too  
Is to believe me when I say  
We're gonna make it one day, we're gonna walk  
right up  
Right up, right up, yeah

We're gonna walk right up, into the light  
See you tomorrow, see you tomorrow, see you  
tomorrow

We're gonna walk right up, into the light  
See you tomorrow, see you tomorrow, see you  
tomorrow yeah

Can we talk or just sit down  
I need to tell you what I have found  
To be true and righteous, true and righteous  
I've got a tale to tell you of love and laughter  
Of hardship after a lifetime captured  
And can you spare me sometime, to let me speak  
my mind, yeah  
I'll put myself in the center said I'm on the front  
line, yeah  
Said I'm on the front line, yeah and I'm on the  
front line

***For information about the Religious Worlds of New York  
summer institute for teachers, and more resources to enrich your teaching  
on religious diversity, see: [www.religiousworldsnyc.org](http://www.religiousworldsnyc.org).***