

tahi one lucky kiwi

Melanie Drewery, John O'Reilly & Ali Teo

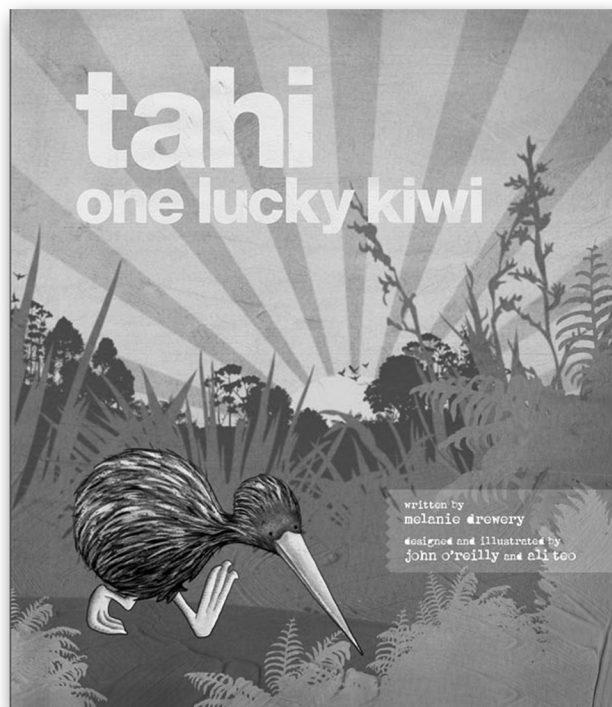
TAHI – ONE LUCKY KIWI

A delightfully illustrated conservation tale with a twist, and the true story of a remarkable team effort to save a kiwi that lost its leg. The real-life Tahi made the headlines when Weta Workshop, the Artificial Limb Centre and Wellington Zoo all joined forces to provide him with an artificial leg.

In this beautifully designed book, with incredible illustrations in a blend of traditional and digital styles, the fictional narrator is a schoolboy who is doing a project on kiwi.

He desperately wants to impress his teacher with his project and this amusing sub-plot runs alongside the tale of the kiwi in a multi-layered story.

Terrific factual details about kiwi appear in the boy's notebook – and therefore on every spread of this book.



Melanie Drewery (author)

Melanie Drewery works as a potter, painter and writer from her rural home in Ruby Bay, near Nelson. After starting to write stories at school, she never stopped and has now had 19 children's books published. She lives with a blended family of four girls, her husband Jeremy, and numerous pets. Her favourite colour is purple and her favourite food is sushi.

Ali Teo (illustrator)

Ali Teo was born in East Malaysia, grew up in Wainuiomata and now lives and works in Wellington. She has illustrated four children's books as well as numerous stories for the School Journal. Her wonderful images draw children to pick up books and read.



Including classroom activities for students aged 5-10, in the following areas:

- Discussion Questions
- Word Bank
- Themes:
 - Conservation
 - Research
 - Design
- Illustrations
- Art Responses
- Writing
- Fiction and Non-fiction
- Visual Language/Literacy

Discussion Questions

- What does the word 'Tahi' mean?
- Why does the teacher keep saying 'has anyone else got news'?
- Does the teacher believe the boy's news?
- When is she convinced at last?
- Why did the teacher organise a trip to the zoo?
- How does the boy know so much about Tahi's adventure?
- What does 'I will keep you posted' mean?
- Who do you think is the main character in the story?
- Describe the boy's attitude and interests.
- This book tells a kiwi story in three different ways. What are they?

Word Bank

Find the meanings of these important words: *nocturnal, national icon, contraption, predator, habitat, forage, anatomy, amputate, artificial limb.*

Themes

1. Conservation

- Why has more than three-quarters of New Zealand's native forest disappeared over the past 700 years? What does this mean for animals?
 - Wanted – Deadly Predators! Humans introduced predators that wiped out many NZ birds. Native birds are easy targets because they often live near the ground and have few defences. What are the threats to kiwi?
 - Write and illustrate a wanted poster about one of these deadly bird
- Predators: stoat, rat, ferret, feral cat, dog.
- (Information to research – description of animal, what it kills, where it's found, how to control it.)
- Kiwi project: make your own kiwi. Divide a page into four sections and draw a kiwi in the centre. Make notes on the following four topics (juniors could illustrate):
 - Anatomy: what are kiwi bodies like?
 - Food: what do kiwi eat?
 - Habitat: where do they live?

- Strengths: how do they protect themselves?
- Flightless NZ birds are often endangered. Label a map of NZ with where these birds still live:
 - kakapo – on Codfish Island (off Stewart Island), and Fiordland;
 - little spotted kiwi – mostly on Kapiti Island;
 - Okarito brown kiwi – Westland (very rare);
 - weka – mainly in South Island forests, such as Nelson.
- Conservationists: Don Merton has done much to save endangered birds. He saved the black robin when there were only five left in the world! Find out more about Don Merton or other people who save New Zealand's native birds. (Eg. in *A Bird in the Hand: Keeping New Zealand Wildlife Safe*, by Janet Hunt.)
- Bird's legs: draw different bird's legs and claws. Divide them into predatory or foraging birds.
- Listen to the sound of a kiwi on CD or tape.

2. Research

- Weta Workshop: how do they create special effects such as 'fake

noses' and monsters? View their work at

<http://www.wetaworkshop.co.nz>.

- Artificial limbs: What is Tahī's artificial leg made of? Who else needs artificial limbs? Find out about the Wellington Artificial Limb Centre. Why is Mark Inglis famous?
- Why don't some birds fly? Research other flightless birds from around the world. Make a list.
- Read other stories about native NZ birds. Eg. *Kiwi Moon* by Gavin Bishop.

3. Design

- Kiwi as national icon: Why has the kiwi become the symbol that represents New Zealand people? What is unique (special) about the bird? What is unique about our people? What are some other NZ icons (things or people)?
- Teachers: more icons can be viewed at <http://www.nzedge.com/gallery/index-symbols.htm>
- Design a 'Tahī the kiwi' stamp or flag.
- Design a sign for a forest area – to encourage trampers to protect kiwi.

Discussion Questions

- What has the illustrator used to make the pictures? Which parts may be computer illustrated and which parts hand drawn or painted? What kind of illustration would you call this? (Eg. realistic, cartoon, digital)
- Why has the illustrator shown a real 'flip file' (with photos) for the kiwi facts?
- Colour: How is colour used to attract the reader's eye on the first page? Comment on the use of the colour green in the pictures.
- Discuss the use of shadows and backgrounds in the illustrations.
- Look at Ali Teo's other animal characters on her website:
<http://www.aliteo.co.nz/aliteo.html>

Art Responses

- Create a forest scene like those in the book. The background can be made with light green dye, then the shapes of trees and bush outlined with dark green dye. Stick colour photos (from magazines) of animals to the background scene.
- Sunrise picture: Create a silhouette of trees along the bottom of the picture (eg. cut from black paper). Paint a spectacular, colourful sunrise on the top half of the picture.
- Instant kiwi: Paint a picture of a kiwi and use a fork to scratch textured feathers. Or use the scraffito technique (black paint over crayon) to scratch a kiwi.
- Cartoon characters: Cartoon people often have exaggerated head size and very simple facial features (like the boy in the book). Create a family of characters with large heads.
- Mask-making: make a half-face mask of Tahi the kiwi.

Writing

- Write the story of Tahi from the kiwi's point of view. Begin with his being trapped, then his chopper ride, hospital and zoo experiences.
- Write Tahi's story as a play script. It could be a recorded play, or you could use head bands to show the animals.

- Write a story or poem about Tahi.
- Write a newspaper report (for the 'Kiwi News') about Tahi getting a new leg.
- Write a song or rap about Tahi the lucky kiwi.
- Write a review of the book. Think about illustration, writing, strands of the story, quality of printing production, your personal response, and a suitable age group for the book.

Fiction and Non-fiction

- What are the differences between fiction and non-fiction?
- Which do you prefer reading?
- What parts of the Tahi story are true? How do you know?
- List the evidence that proves it is true. Where else could you look to check the facts about Tahi?
- Try and find some up-to-date news about Tahi's progress, perhaps from Wellington Zoo.

Visual Language/Literacy

- How do the pictures make you feel?
- What attracts your attention in a particular picture?
- What kinds of colours have been used?
- What kinds of lines are used?
- Do the pictures mirror the text or go beyond what the story tells you?
- Do the pictures suit this kind of story?
- What part of the text has the illustrator chosen to draw?