

LET'S GET SINGING!

Ngā Iwi E

by **Hirini Melbourne**

(used with permission – Hirini Melbourne Whānau Trust)

E-i-a-i-e

Whakarongo, tautoko

Listen, support

E-i-a-i-e

Ngā iwi e, ngā iwi e

All people, all people

Kia kōtahi ra te Moana-Nui-a-Kiwa

Be united across the Pacific Ocean

(x2)

Kia mau rā, kia mau rā

Hold firmly, hold firmly

Ki te mana motuhake me te aroha

To your identity/sovereignty/essence & compassion

(x2)

Ngā Iwi E was composed in 1984 for the Festival of Pacific Arts, planned to be held in New Caledonia. The festival organisers sent music to participating countries, asking them to compose words in their own languages. While the festival was subsequently cancelled, this song, written by Hirini Melbourne for the New Zealand group, remains and continues to be performed regularly by artists in a range of educational and community contexts. Over time, other verses have been added. *Ngā Iwi E* calls for unity among peoples of the Pacific and, by extension, all people.

Source: <https://www.rnz.co.nz/concert/programmes/composeroftheweek/collections/hirini-melbourne/audio/201806666/hirini-melbourne-part-3-music-and-protest>

About the composer

Composer, singer, and academic, Hirini (Sydney) Melbourne ONZM (1949-2003) (Ngai Tūhoe, Ngāti Kahungunu) was a significant figure in the revival of both te reo Māori and

taonga puoro (traditional Māori instruments). He was a prolific composer and his compositions have continued to be performed in schools and communities across Aotearoa New Zealand and indeed the world.

About the presenter



Based in Tāmaki Makaurau Auckland, soprano and performer Te Ohore Williams (Ngāti Porou, Ngāti Kahungunu, Waitaha, Ngāterangi, Ngāti Pukenga) began singing in high school choirs, where she found her love of singing from her music teachers. Having completed a Master of Music and taught as an itinerant voice teacher for two years, she is now looking to pursue classical singing and acting overseas.

Warm-ups

Warm-ups help to prepare us physically and vocally for singing. They help to relax our bodies and sharpen our minds.

Physical

- 1 Posture. Objective: standing tall and relaxed. Make sure the body is well-aligned, with weight evenly distributed across both feet.

- 2 Breathing. Objective: low breath, efficient exhalation. When we sing, we exhale over a much longer period so we need to manage our breath flow very efficiently. A combination of the muscles controlling our ribcage movement and breathing deeply to the very bottom of our lungs will help with this. Feel the rib cage expand and contract as you breathe.
 - a Exhale with continuous sound over time. We need this skill to breathe out over long musical phrases.
 - b Exhale with short, staccato consonants. This helps to get the abdominal muscles working to support the inhale/exhale process.
- 3 Tongue rolling. Objective: relaxed facial muscles. Our facial muscles, and tongues, help us to form vowels and consonants. Relaxed muscles, free of tension, support clear vocal tone, good diction and expressive faces.

Vocal

- 4 Tongue twister. Objective: clear diction. Tongue twisters are a good way to warm up our facial muscles and practice crisp diction.
- 5 Sirens and lip trills. Objective: clear, well-supported vocal tone and confidence using the entire vocal range. Lip trills can be a bit tricky as they require very consistent airflow. Continue to use the 'ng' sound if it is easier.
- 6 Bella Signora. Objective: clear, well-supported vocal tone and confidence using the entire vocal range.

Teaching Notes

- This waiata has a chorus and two verses. The verses have some quick words/syllables so spend time getting to know the lyrics confidently.
- The text is in te reo Māori. Clear, consistent vowels are important: AEIOU. Te Ohorere will support you with the pronunciation.
- Once you feel confident with the chorus, you could add other harmonies to this section. Have a look at the accompanying musical notation/score for some ideas with this.
- Check that students are using their voices to sing as opposed to speaking. As this waiata is a little lower, it will be easy for students to fall into using a speaking resonance. You'll find a demonstration of the difference between speaking and singing resonances here: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=t_DCUSrcWms&t=7s

What else could you do with this song?

Extension/Curricular links

- Explore other waiata by Hirini Melbourne. You will find more in this set of resources.
- Develop an instrumental arrangement – perhaps add ukulele and percussion. You could also explore adding taonga puoro.

- Find out more about New Zealand's neighbours in the Pacific/Moana-nui-a-Kiwa. What connections exist within your class and school community?
- Hirini Melbourne's waiata for children often use a very small set of notes. This gives them a chant-like quality. Analyse this waiata to see how he has done this. Investigate this technique in his other waiata too. Set students a composition challenge using a defined set of notes (between three and four notes that are steps apart). These could be played on tuned percussion/mallet instruments, on keyboards/pianos if you have access to them or by picking on guitar or ukulele.
- Explore the work of Hirini Melbourne, Richard Nunns and Brian Flintoff and the world of taonga puoro.

Glossary of musical terms

Beat	The steady heartbeat of the music that continues as long as the music does. It only gets faster or slower if the music requires it. Sometimes the beat is audible and sometimes it is implied. An ensemble stays together by sharing a sense of beat. Keeping the beat means keeping in time.
Ensemble	A musical group or team, usually of more than ten. Groups smaller than this have names according to the size of the group e.g. duo (2), trio (3), quartet (4), quintet (5). Ensembles can be instrumental or vocal.
Legato	The playing or singing of a musical line in a smooth, connected way.
Melody	A series of notes/pitches that make up a tune.
Phrase	A musical sentence.
Rhythm	The pattern of long and short sounds that move the music forward through time. In a song, the rhythm is the pattern of the words.
Staccato	The playing or singing of a musical line in a short, detached, spiky way.

Te reo Māori vocabulary

Waiata – song

Taonga puoro – singing treasures. This term is used to refer to traditional Māori musical instruments

Important Messages

- Singing is fun!
- It is important for the health and safety of children's voices that they are singing in a pitch range that is not too low.
- Never louder than beautiful. Let the natural beauty of children's voices shine. Understand that the volume they produce is directly proportional to

their age, size and stage of development. Encourage healthy singing, not shouting.

- Singing voice, speaking voice, whispering voice – we can use our vocal mechanism in different ways. Ensure that children are using their voices in a 'singing' way. A light and ringing sound will help protect young voices from overuse and possible damage.

- Our body is our instrument. That means that no two voices will sound the same – we are each unique!
- We need our whole body to sing – energy, breath, posture, expression as well as a singing voice.
- Again - Singing is fun! And important! And good for us! Singing every day will energise you and your students.

