

Trend Task: Fiji and Niue

Approach: Team

Focus: Finding and comparing information in similar texts

Resources: 2 books: *Fiji* and *Niue*, 2 pair answer sheets, 1 team answer sheet

Year: 4 & 8



What does Fiji look like?

Fiji is made up of between 326 and 332 islands – no one is too sure! Many of these islands have no people living on them. The largest islands are Viti Levu and Vanua Levu.

The capital city of Fiji is Suva.

The islands of Fiji were made by volcanoes. Large areas are covered by very thick forests. Many islands are atolls.

An atoll is an island made of coral.

Animals and plants

There are a lot of tropical rainforest areas in Fiji. There are many types of plants, birds and animals in these forests.

The coconut beetle is as large as a coffee cup – and it flies!

This Giant Orb spider is actual size!

The reefs around Fiji contain amazing sea life. This includes fish, corals, lobsters, turtles and starfish.

What is the weather like in Fiji?

The weather in Fiji is mostly warm and moist. It rains a lot in Fiji. However, because of a range of mountains, the eastern side of the country gets more rain than the western side. The mountain range blocks the winds that are carrying the rain.

Cyclones and hurricanes cause a lot of damage in Fiji.

Food

Fijians grow and gather most of what they eat. Crops include taro, yams, bananas and coconuts. Food is normally steamed or boiled. All people in Fiji eat a lot of seafood. Indo-Fijians grow, eat and sell many foods that they brought from India. These include curries and dishes that contain chillies, cucumbers and mangoes.

Ceremonies

Kava

The ceremony of greatest importance to Fijians is yaqona – the kava-drinking ceremony. Traditionally, only male chiefs and priests could take part in this ceremony. But today, men and

women drink kava made from yaqona, the roots of a shrub. The kava ceremony is used to gather people to celebrate an event or just to visit with each other and talk.

Yaqona is dried before being used to make kava.

Firewalking

Firewalking is linked with the people from the island of Beqa. No one is sure why the people from Beqa began firewalking. Today, men from Beqa perform firewalking on many islands throughout Fiji. Firewalking was once done by both men and women. Dancers would meditate and prepare for days before walking.

They would slowly and calmly walk over a long pit, full of red-hot rock. Today, firewalking is done only by men. The walkers are trained by a ratu, their firewalking chief.

Questions / instructions:

In this activity you will be finding and sharing information about a Pacific Island.

To start off, you will work in pairs. [Students 1 and 2] will be finding information on Fiji. [Students 3 and 4] will be finding information on Niue.

Hand Students 1 and 2 book on Fiji, and Students 3 and 4 book on Niue. Hand students pair answer sheets.

Your book tells you about a Pacific Island. Use the book to make notes that will help you to answer the questions written on this sheet. Write your notes in the boxes.

Allow time.

Fiji:

Make notes in the boxes to help you answer the questions.

1. What does Fiji look like?

Number mentioned:

[volcanoes, lots of islands, thick forests, some islands are coral atolls]

2. What is the weather like?

Number mentioned:

[warm and moist; rains a lot; east side gets more rain than west side; cyclones/hurricanes cause damage]

3. What types of sea creatures can be found?

Number mentioned:

[fish, corals, lobsters, turtles, starfish]

4. What types of food do they grow?

Number mentioned:

[taro, yams, bananas, coconuts]

Number mentioned:

[chillies, cucumbers, mangoes]

5. What special ceremonies do they have?

Mentioned: kava drinking ceremony
firewalking

Niue:

Make notes in the boxes to help you answer the questions.

1. What does Niue look like?

Number mentioned:

[world's biggest atoll; coastline rises straight up/no beaches; lots of coconut palms]

2. What is the weather like?

Number mentioned:

[sunny and warm; cyclones/hurricanes cause damage]

3. What types of sea creatures can be found?

Number mentioned:

[poisonous snakes, poisonous coral fish, shellfish, fish]

% response
2009 ('05)
year 4 year 8

4	4 (0)	8 (3)
3	5 (5)	16 (17)
2	16 (13)	28 (27)
1	36 (42)	39 (42)
0	39 (40)	8 (10)

4	2 (5)	7 (10)
3	13 (5)	35 (31)
2	42 (40)	46 (48)
1	37 (40)	12 (10)
0	6 (10)	0 (2)

5	54 (42)	78 (75)
4	12 (17)	17 (15)
3	3 (8)	1 (3)
2	4 (5)	1 (2)
1	22 (18)	2 (3)
0	6 (10)	2 (2)

% response
2009 ('05)
year 4 year 8

4	46 (47)	84 (85)
3	9 (17)	4 (7)
2	16 (8)	1 (3)
1	18 (12)	4 (2)
0	12 (17)	8 (3)

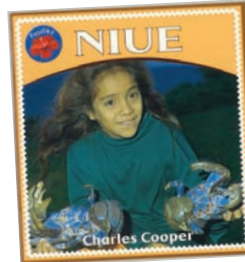
3	27 (20)	30 (15)
2	4 (2)	2 (3)
1	9 (8)	5 (3)
0	60 (70)	63 (78)

72 (73)	90 (98)
52 (42)	65 (78)

3	2 (0)	6 (0)
2	12 (18)	52 (46)
1	36 (37)	19 (32)
0	52 (45)	22 (22)

2	55 (48)	90 (76)
1	42 (48)	9 (24)
0	4 (3)	1 (0)

4	5 (3)	6 (3)
3	4 (8)	12 (7)
2	49 (48)	64 (76)
1	34 (30)	9 (9)
0	9 (10)	9 (5)



What does Niue look like?

Niue is the world's largest atoll. Most of the coastline around Niue rises straight up out of the sea. Because of this, Niue does not have the beaches that are usually seen on Pacific islands.

An atoll is an island made of coral.

'Niue' can be broken into two words. *Niu* means coconut and *e* means here. However, Niue's proper name is Niue Fekai. Some people believe it means *Niue* as a *Whole*. Others believe it means

The capital of Niue is Alofi. About 700 people live in Alofi.

What is the weather like on Niue?

Niue's weather is mostly sunny and warm. However, the island does get hurricanes that often cause a lot of damage. Today, many people live in houses made of concrete. They call their houses 'hurricane houses'!

Water

Because Niue is made of coral, a lot of the rain that falls runs straight through the ground. The drained water falls down into the sea and forms a 'lake' that floats on top of the sea water. This 'lake' makes diving and snorkelling in Niue an amazing adventure because the water is so clear.

Animals

There are no poisonous animals, spiders or insects on Niue. However, in the sea there is a poisonous snake and a poisonous coral fish.

The forests have many birds and flying foxes. Sadly, the numbers of birds and flying foxes are getting smaller. This is because the forest areas are being cleared away to make room for the growing of crops.

A flying fox is a type of bat.

Food

Niueans get their food from the land and the sea. Some of the main foods they eat are *talo* (taro), *pitako* (a bread), shellfish, fish and, everyone's favourite, *uga*, which is a coconut-eating land crab.

Uga is said 'u-nga'. The flying fox is also a highly valued source of food for the islanders.

The umu

An *umu* is an earth oven, much like the *hangi* that Maori use to cook food. A hole is filled with wood and large rocks. When the wood has burnt off, the rocks are very hot.

Food is put in woven baskets, placed on the rocks and completely covered with layers of coconut palm fronds.

After a few hours of steaming, the food is cooked.

Coconuts

Niueans use coconuts and the coconut tree in many different ways. The flesh of the coconut can be eaten. The flesh can also be pulped and squeezed to make coconut cream. When coconut cream is left to curdle it makes oil.

The oil is used for cooking and as an ointment for healing. The shell of the coconut can be used to carry water. It can be cut in half to make jewellery and bras for costumes.

Inside a coconut, there are about three cups of sweet liquid that is nice to drink.

Celebrations and ceremonies

Both Niuean boys and girls have a special ceremony to celebrate their 'coming of age'.

Girls have ear-piercing ceremonies any time between the ages of 5 and 19. The girl's ceremony is known as *hukiteliga* (hookey-ti-linga). People give money to her family for the girl's future.

Boys have a haircutting ceremony. The boy's hair is not cut much from the time he is born. At the boy's ceremony people pay money to cut off one of his braids and keep it.

4. What types of food do they grow?

Number mentioned:

[*talo* (taro), *bananas*, *coconuts*]

5. What special ceremonies do they have?

Ear piercing ceremony for girls:

mentioned and says it's for girls
mentioned ear piercing (*not girls*)
mentioned coming-of-age ceremony for girls (*not ear piercing*)

Haircutting ceremony for boys:

mentioned and says it's for boys
mentioned hair cutting (*not boys*)
mentioned coming-of-age ceremony for boys (*not haircutting*)

Now it's time for you to work as a team. Start off by sharing your notes on each question. As you share your notes think about the things that are the same and the things that are different about Fiji and Niue.

Allow time.

Hand students team answer sheet.

Use your pair answer sheets and talk together to fill out this team answer sheet. Decide which things are the same and different about Fiji and Niue. Write how they are the same and different in the boxes. When you have finished filling out the answer sheet, I'll ask you to share your ideas with me.

Allow about 10 minutes.

Commentary:

Working in pairs and then in teams, students were somewhat successful in gathering, comparing and contrasting information about Fiji and Niue. They were typically more successful in responding to questions for which answers could be readily located but were challenged by a variety of text features. Moderate growth was seen in year 8 students compared to the year 4 students.

% response
2009 ('05)
year 4 year 8

3	20 (15)	24 (29)
2	43 (40)	42 (41)
1	36 (33)	30 (31)
0	1 (12)	4 (0)

43 (53)	71 (71)
14 (10)	9 (9)
16 (15)	11 (10)

29 (33)	50 (56)
7 (12)	8 (7)
16 (13)	21 (12)

Now tell me your ideas about what is the same and different about Fiji and Niue.

Things that are the same:

both have coral atolls
temperature similar (*warm*)
cyclones (*cause a lot of damage*)
fish common to both countries

Number of same crops mentioned:

[*both islands grow taro* (*talo*), *bananas*, *coconuts*]

Things that are different

Mentioned:

geographical features:
(*physical features e.g. beaches*)

two or more differences
one difference

weather (*more rain in Fiji*)

difference in food grown
(*yams in Fiji, not mentioned for Niue*)

ceremonies

difference in sea creatures
(*e.g. turtles and starfish in Fiji; poisonous snakes and poisonous coral fish in Niue*)

Total Score:

41-50	4 (3)	14 (5)
31-40	25 (15)	57 (59)
21-30	50 (48)	20 (32)
11-20	17 (27)	7 (2)
0-10	5 (7)	1 (2)

% response
2009 ('05)
year 4 year 8

10 (13)	22 (22)
74 (58)	72 (81)
12 (23)	24 (32)
55 (55)	55 (53)

9 (13)	19 (17)
31 (23)	27 (25)
35 (23)	22 (32)
26 (40)	32 (25)

6 (8)	22 (22)
41 (45)	43 (53)
30 (17)	38 (34)
36 (22)	34 (20)
75 (63)	78 (90)
46 (40)	57 (48)