This waiata was originally composed by Sir Apirana Ngata. This particular version is an adaptation by Tuini Ngawai. It was written for the special occasion to welcome visitors to the marae at Ruatōria for the commemoration service for Te Moananui a Kiwa Ngarimu, who was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross.

The second verse honours Sir Apirana Ngata, who was responsible for getting the government of the day to recruit Māori for the war effort in the Second World War. Ask students if they have heard of these people before and what they know about them.

This song provides an opportunity to talk to students about awards, honours, and heroes. Discuss their ideas about what makes a hero. Read the Choices Heroes, 2008, which is a selection of stories about heroes. Discuss awards for bravery, such as the Victoria Cross, and a recent recipient such as Corporal Bill Henry “Willie” Apiata.

Add welcoming words to the ngā kupu hou chart.

Review the tikanga/uara chart and note another meaning for the word “aroha” – compassion.

*The song sheets for all waiata and haka are at the back of this book.*