

# Matariki

## A mid-winter festival

### Matariki. What is it? Why is it celebrated?

Matariki is the Maori name for the group of stars called the Pleiades or The Seven Sisters. Matariki can be translated as Tiny Eyes or Eyes of God.

Matariki rises in the last days of May and is visible during June.

It is traditionally believed that if the Matariki stars are shining brightly, the next growing season will be warmer and more food produced.

Matariki is also the name given to the Maori new year.

Matariki falls at the end of harvest time. This is a time for family and friends to come together to celebrate and to share gifts of food from both land and sea.

**Find a word in the story which means the same as those below:**

1. \_\_\_\_\_ a point of light seen in the sky at night time.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ one of four parts of the year.
3. \_\_\_\_\_ the first people of New Zealand.
4. \_\_\_\_\_ the time when farmers cut and gather the crops.
5. \_\_\_\_\_ to do something enjoyable at a special occasion.

Tick true or false.

true false

- |  |                          |                          |
|--|--------------------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Matariki is a group of stars.                         | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 2. Matariki rises at the end of May.                     | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 3. Family and friends share food during Matariki.        | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 4. The name for the Maori new year is Pleiades.          | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |
| 5. Bright Matariki stars may mean a good growing season. | <input type="checkbox"/> | <input type="checkbox"/> |

### Discuss with your home tutor

- (a) What are the main celebrations in your country?
- (b) What do you do on these special days?
- (c) How do you celebrate special days here in New Zealand?