

CAMBRIDGE

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Margaret Johnson
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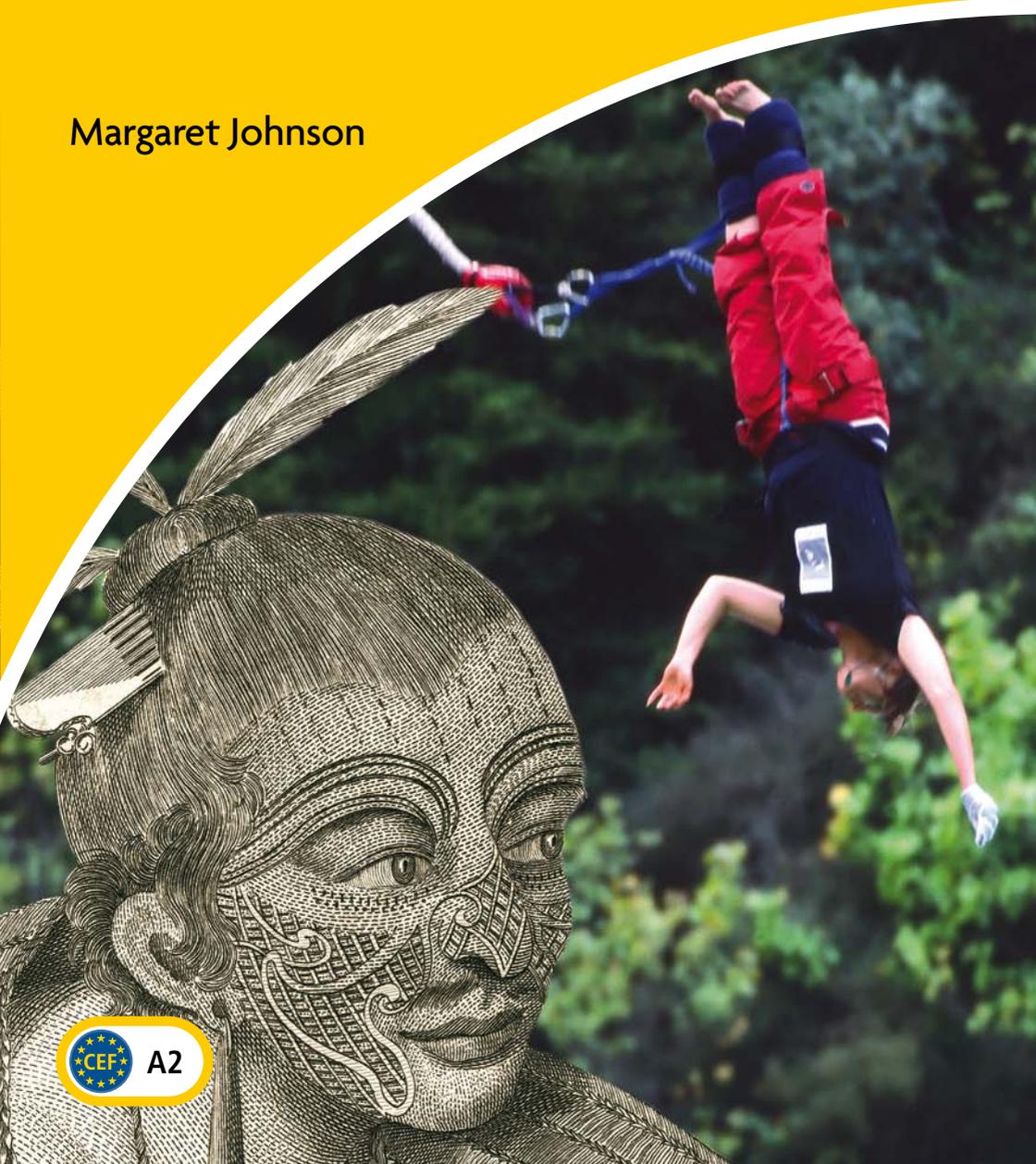
CAMBRIDGE



Cambridge
Discovery
Readers

New Zealand

Margaret Johnson



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Introduction

New Zealand is in the South Pacific Ocean, a long way from anywhere. Australia is the closest country and that's two thousand kilometres away. New Zealand is isolated and this makes it special. This isolation changes everything – New Zealand's history, the weather, the way its people are and the trees, flowers and animals that you can see.

New Zealand is made up of two large islands – the North Island and the South Island, and a much smaller island, Stewart Island. It is about the same size as the United Kingdom, but it has only four million people. The United Kingdom has sixty-one million people. There are almost a million young people under fifteen in New Zealand.

The main language of New Zealand is English. New Zealand was once part of the British Empire and still has the British flag as part of its own flag.

The weather in New Zealand is never usually really hot or really cold, but it is hotter on the North Island where most people live (about three million people live on this island). It often rains and the weather can change quickly. Sometimes you can get many different kinds of weather in one day, especially on the South Island.

New Zealand has a lot of water, clean air and good earth and there are many farms. It is famous for its butter, cheese and meat, which it sells to Australia, the USA, Japan and the rest of Asia.

FACT

There are forty million sheep in the country – that’s ten for every person!



For a long time, no people lived in New Zealand. The first people to make New Zealand their home were the Māori. They arrived from Polynesia in boats made of wood, called ‘waka’. We don’t know when they arrived, but some people think it was between 950–1130 AD. The Māori called New Zealand ‘Aotearoa’ or Land of the Long White Cloud. Around the year 1700 Europeans first came to New Zealand.

Today thousands of people go to New Zealand on holiday. They go to see the beautiful countryside and to enjoy sports. While they are there, tourists can also learn about the Māori and hear many Māori stories about New Zealand. The biggest business in New Zealand is now tourism.

How mountains and volcanoes began

Maui was a boy who could do magic.¹ One day he wanted to go fishing with his older brothers. He hid in the bottom of his brothers' waka. Once out at sea, Maui's brothers found him. They wanted to take him back to the village because he was too young, but Maui quickly used his magic. He made his village look very far away – too far to go home. His brothers had to let him stay.

When Maui and his brothers started fishing, Maui decided to use his magic again. Soon he felt something very strong pulling on his fishing line.

'Help me!' Maui called to his brothers and they all came to help.



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Everyone pulled very hard until they pulled up the North Island of New Zealand.

Maui didn't want the gods to be angry with them for doing this and he moved away from his brothers to talk to the gods quietly. But while he was gone, his brothers began to argue over the island.

'It's mine!' one shouted.

'No, it's mine!' the other said.

They became so angry they began to hit the island. Hit, hit, hit – over and over again. As they hit, they made the mountains and volcanoes² of the North Island.

The Māori believe that the North Island looks like a fish, the South Island looks like Maui's waka and Stewart Island looks like the waka's anchor.³

ACTIVITIES

1 Match these facts from the Introduction with the numbers.

- 1 kilometres between New Zealand and Australia 6
 2 people in New Zealand
 3 people in the United Kingdom
 4 people under fifteen in New Zealand
 5 people who live on the North Island
 6 sheep in New Zealand
 a almost 1,000,000
~~b~~ 2,000
 c 3,000,000
 d 4,000,000
 e 40,000,000
 f 61,000,000

2 Use information from the Introduction to answer the questions.

- 1 What is the main language in New Zealand?
English.....
- 2 What is the climate like there?

- 3 What food is New Zealand famous for?

- 4 What do the Māori people call New Zealand?

- 5 When did people from Europe first come to New Zealand?

- 6 What is the biggest business in New Zealand today?
