



GĀLULUE
FA'ATASI

Gagana
Sāmoa

TEACHER SUPPORT MATERIAL

UNPACKING THE BOOKS



Supporting Pasifika learners
through dual language texts

New Zealand Government

Many of these dual language books are available online as PDFs and audio files (MP3s) at <http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Pasifika-dual-language-books>

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Fa'afetai

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Unpacking the dual language books

More information about fa'asāmoa (the Sāmoan culture) and gagana Sāmoa (the Sāmoan language) can be found in later sections of this resource.

The following books can be used for reading to students who are reading at the **magenta** Ready to Read level:



I Can Write / E Mafai ona 'Ou Tusitusi Fiona Lovatt Davis

'O le fa'asāmoa

It is common for Sāmoan families in New Zealand to involve even young children in writing letters and emails, as families keep in touch with relatives overseas.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

“E mafai ona ...” (“Can I ...”) is a useful sentence starter. For example, you could use it in the question:

- ▶ E mafai ona 'ou fesoasoani atu? – Can I help you?



Let's Go / Tā Ō Feana Tu'akoi

'O le fa'asāmoa

Comparing this story – which is about a boy getting ready to go to school on a typical school day in New Zealand – with Emma Kruse Va'ai's account of what happens in Sāmoa (see *Ready for School / Sāuni mo le Ā'oga*) will give you opportunities to compare and contrast. Notice the contrast, for example, between store-bought things (such as the backpack) and homemade things (such as the 'ato [basket]).

'O le gagana Sāmoa

Notice the repeated sentence pattern, “Here is my _____”, which in gagana Sāmoa is “'O la'u _____ lea.”

“La'u” (and “lo'u”) are ways of saying “my” and “lea” means “here”. The order of words in a Sāmoan sentence is often the reverse of the order in an English one. Bear this in mind when you are helping a student who speaks gagana Sāmoa to read in English. Some mistakes may not have anything to do with reading.

Also notice a gagana Sāmoa term for “dad”, “tamā”. An equivalent term for “mum” is “tinā”, although many Sāmoans now also say “mum” when they are talking informally in gagana Sāmoa.



My Cat / 'O La'u Pusi

Sarona Aiono-Iosefa

'O le fa'asāmoa

The mother in this story is Pālagi. You can't assume that both parents of a Sāmoan child will be tagata Sāmoa – or that the non-Sāmoan parent won't understand some gagana Sāmoa.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

Gagana Sāmoa is more predicable in its sentence patterns, spelling, and pronunciation than English. Sāmoan students will bring this expectation to the English text they encounter in your classroom. You'll need to manage this.

The story is told using the sentence pattern, “ ‘E ... la'u pusi. – My cat is” Notice that on page 12 there's an exception, where the gagana Sāmoa sentence “ ‘E alofa la'u pusi ia te a'u” becomes “My cat loves me.”



Ready for School / Sāuni mo le Ā'oga

Emma Kruse Va'ai

'O le fa'asāmoa

Ready for School / Sāuni mo le Ā'oga is an opportunity to talk about what's involved in getting ready to start school as a five-year-old in New Zealand in contrast to what happens in Sāmoa.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

Notice the different sentence patterns of gagana Sāmoa and English in this text. In gagana Sāmoa, the verb phrase comes first and the subject (who does what) comes later. In English, the subject comes first. In both languages though, the strong picture-text match helps the reader predict *who* is making *what*.

The gagana Sāmoa word for “weave” is “lalaga” and for “sew” the verb is “su'i”. Introduce these in place of “fai”, if you would like to extend the text.



The following books can be used for reading to students who are reading at the **red** Ready to Read level:



Lavalava / 'O Lavalava

Lino Nelisi

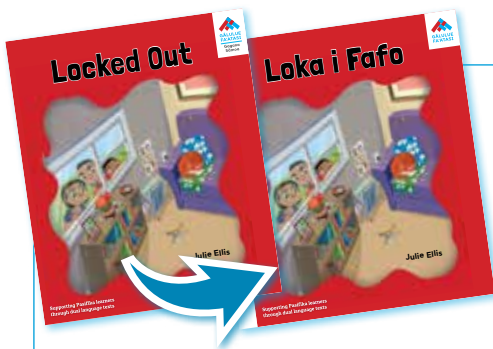
'O le fa'asāmoa

Lino Nelisi's father, Ugamea Levi, was born in Avatele, in Niue – and her mother, Peko, in the village of Vaipuna, in Sāmoa. She embraces both of her Pasifika cultures, languages, and identities. Mixed Pasifika ancestry is not uncommon in New Zealand, so be a little cautious about assuming that a student's identity is *only* Sāmoan. Some students may have three home languages and may have had early language and literacy experiences in all three.

You probably already know that the Pālagi game of cricket and the Pasifika game of kirikiti (also spelled “kilikiti”) aren't quite the same. Some of your students will know about the differences.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

The word “lavalava” is a gagana Sāmoa word you probably already know. Some Sāmoan dictionaries spell “lavalava” as “lāvalava”. Are there any other gagana Sāmoa words in this story that you are familiar with? What about 'āiga (family) and kirikiti (cricket)?



Locked Out / Loka i Fafu

Julie Ellis

'O le fa'asāmoa

Notice the way the youngest person shows respect by waiting for the older people to try to solve the problem first.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

While “let me try” is an idiomatic colloquial expression in English, there isn't an equivalent expression in gagana Sāmoa that is equally widely used.



Swimming / Fe'ausi
Vaitoa Baker

'O le fa'asāmoa

Fantasy forms part of the Sāmoan story-telling tradition. In fāgogo (traditional stories), animals often talk and do marvellous things. You may need to make explicit links between the illustrations and the text because of this. Vaitoa Baker brings his Sāmoan sense of what happens in a story to *Swimming / Fe'ausi*. Your students will enjoy knowing that Vaitoa Baker has drawn himself as the teacher and that he is of both Sāmoan and Tokelauan heritage.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

In Polynesian languages, including te reo Māori, pronouns distinguish between one, two, and three or more people – so notice what happens to “we” in the gagana Sāmoa version of this story.



The Race / 'O le Tū'uga
Liz Tui Morris

'O le fa'asāmoa

Tauvāga (competitions) are a popular feature of Sāmoan culture.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

In this book, there are two examples of formulaic expressions you could use with your class:

- ▶ 'Ua mua! – First! (place) at the end of a race.
- ▶ Sāuni! – Get ready!

Notice the different ways of starting a race in gagana Sāmoa and English. The gagana Sāmoa text on page 6 literally says, “Get ready, one, two, go!”



The following books can be used for reading to students who are reading at the **yellow** Ready to Read level:



Finding Mum / 'O le Su'ega o Tinā
Don Long

'O le fa'asāmoa

Notice that the boy's mum is Pālagi. Then notice the food choices on her shopping list.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

There's a useful gagana Sāmoa expression in *Finding Mum / 'O le Su'ega o Tinā* – “oi” – which you can also use to express surprise in place of “hey”.



My Sister / 'O Lo'u Uso
Sally Sutton

'O le fa'asāmoa

The bond between older sisters, brothers, cousins and younger ones is crucial to the story – and is a core value of fa'asāmoa.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

Just as te reo Māori does, gagana Sāmoa uses different words for “brother” and “sister”, depending on the gender relationship:

- ▶ tuafafine – sister of a male
- ▶ uso – sister of a female or brother of a male
- ▶ tuagane – brother of a female.



Palolo Time / 'O le Taimi o le Palolo Emma Kruse Va'ai

'O le fa'asāmoa

Palolo (*Palola viridis*) is an edible sea worm that spawns in October and early November in Sāmoa. Catching them is an annual community event, a bit like the start of the whitebait season here. People catch them with homemade nets, which you can see in Judith Künzle's illustrations. They fry palolo in oil or bake them with coconut cream and onions. Palolo are a much-loved once-a-year delicacy. To help students make a connection with similar things that happen here, consider using Tracey Cormack's Ready to Read book *Whitebait Season* (item 33252).

'O le gagana Sāmoa

Palolo Time / 'O le Taimi o le Palolo offers an opportunity to share some of the words for colours in gagana Sāmoa. In this story, they are:

- ▶ lanumeamata – green
- ▶ 'ena'ena – brown.

Other colour words that often start with “lanu” (colour) are:

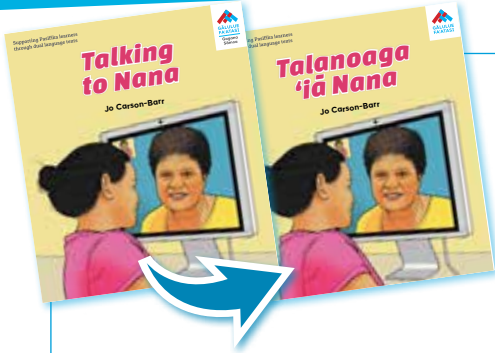
- ▶ lanumoana – blue
- ▶ lanupīniki – pink.

But colour words in gagana Sāmoa may omit “lanu”, for example:

- ▶ mūmū – red
- ▶ pa'epa'e – white
- ▶ samasama – yellow
- ▶ uliuli – black.

Consider giving your reading groups Sāmoan colour names.

When you explore this text with your students, talk about who is telling the story and explore the link between the words and the illustrations.



Talking to Nana / Talanoaga 'iā Nana

Jo Carson-Barr

'O le fa'asāmoa

Lots of Sāmoan families in New Zealand keep in touch with relatives who live overseas. As well as in Sāmoa and American Sāmoa, there are large Sāmoan communities in New Zealand, Australia, Hawai'i, and California. Many families use technologies to keep in touch, like the family in this story, which uses Skype.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

Talking to Nana / Talanoaga 'iā Nana contains some useful formulaic expressions that you could use in your classroom:

- ▶ Leai. – No.
- ▶ Tālofa. – Hello.
- ▶ Tōfā soifua. – Goodbye.

When people say “goodbye” to each other, the exchange often goes like this:

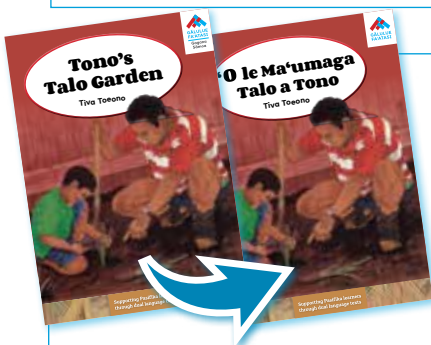
“Tōfā soifua.”

“Tōfā.”

“Fā.”

This is very colloquial – but quite typical. Try it and see.

Equally colloquial – and quite contemporary – is the use of “Nana” for “Grandma”.



Tono's Talo Garden / 'O le Ma'umaga Talo a Tono

Tiva Toeono

'O le fa'asāmoa

In New Zealand, Sāmoan families grow talo plants (*Colocasia esculenta*) for their leaves, which they use in such dishes as lu'au. (It is usually too cold in New Zealand to successfully grow the corm.)

'O le gagana Sāmoa

“Talo” and “taro” are different ways to spell and say the same word in Polynesian languages. In gagana Sāmoa, you say “talo”.

On page 8, Dad is speaking in the K-style when he says “Kamā Makua” instead of “Tamā Matua” (for “Grandpa”). For more about the K-style, see the section in this resource about the Sāmoan language.



The following books can be used for reading to students who are reading at the **blue** Ready to Read level:



***A Finger-painting for Grandpa /
'O se Ata Vali-i-lima mō Papa***
Edgar Tu'inukuafe

'O le fa'asāmoa

This story offers a wonderful example of a Pasifika family raising children in three languages – each of them functioning as a first language for the children. It reveals some of the literacy practices that many Sāmoan students experience before they start primary school, giving them an invaluable skill set to bring to your class. These include:

- ▶ talking at home in more than one language
- ▶ talking to one person in one language and to another in another language
- ▶ reading books in more than one language
- ▶ attending an ā'oga 'āmata (a Sāmoan-language early childhood centre)
- ▶ sharing stories with grandparents
- ▶ reading with an older brother or sister or cousin
- ▶ watching programmes on television in English
- ▶ reading picture books with family members
- ▶ talking about the photographs in a photograph album
- ▶ having bedtime stories read and told to them.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

Showing fa'aaloalo (respect) to older people is a core value of fa'asāmoa.



Mama Mānea / 'O Mama Mānea *Maureen Goodwin*

'O le fa'asāmoa

Mama Mānea / 'O Mama Mānea explores some of the many ways in which Sāmoan family members – in this case, grandmothers – contribute to early childhood centre and primary school classroom programmes. With the children, the grandmothers in this story make quilts and 'ula (necklaces), plant gardens, tell stories, sing and dance, teach children how to play the 'ukulele, and offer opportunities to talk in gagana Sāmoa. Though they provide extra pairs of hands, more importantly, they share hugs and smiles and love.

It is impossible to over-emphasise the respect in which the Sāmoan community holds elders. *Mama Mānea / 'O Mama Mānea* begins to explain why. For the children in the early childhood centre that features in this story, the visiting grandmothers offer direct experiences of important aspects of the culture, such as traditional stories and songs. They ensure that the children have contact with fluent speakers of the language, too.

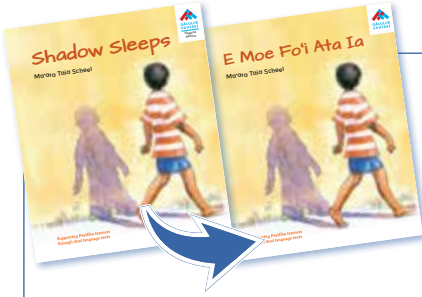
'O le gagana Sāmoa

One way to bring moments of gagana Sāmoa into your classroom would be to occasionally say “Ready to go?” and “goodbye” in gagana Sāmoa the way these expressions are modelled in this story:

- ▶ 'Ua 'e sāuni tā te ō? – Ready to go? (meaning “you and I” – said to one person)
- ▶ Tōfā soifua. – Goodbye.

You and your students can listen to how to say these things in the audio recording of the book.

If someone says “Tōfā soifua” to you, try saying “Fā” back. If you do, you are using a lovely, colloquial response. It is like saying “Bye” in response to “Goodbye”.



Shadow Sleeps / E Moe Fo'i Ata Ia *Ma'ara Taia Scheel*

‘O le fa’asāmoa

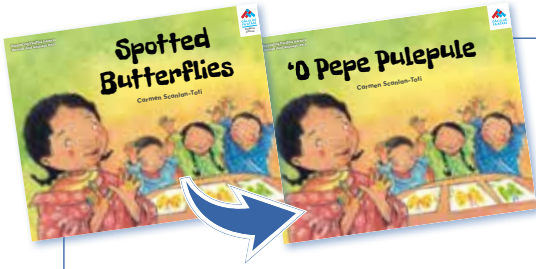
This book is filled with glimpses into the life of a child living in the tropical Pacific: gathering seafood with family members, buying bread at the local shop, playing marbles, feeding animals before going to school, and sleeping under a mosquito net with only a sheet (because it is often too warm in the tropics for anything else). Here is an opportunity for your students to compare their lives with the life of someone living in the tropical Pacific.

‘O le gagana Sāmoa

This story introduces some gagana Sāmoa words for the different times of the day. Terms of this type include:

- ▶ aso – day
- ▶ pō – night
- ▶ taeao – morning.

Notice that the word for “shadow”, “ata”, is the same as one of the New Zealand Māori words for a shadow.



Spotted Butterflies / ‘O Pepe Pulepule Carmen Scanlan-Toti

‘O le fa‘asāmoa

Spotted Butterflies / ‘O Pepe Pulepule was originally published in the Participation series with an early childhood setting in mind. But the discoveries in the story could equally well be made by students in a new entrant class, and the illustrations could be set in either setting, with family members occasionally visiting and lending a hand. Use this book as an opportunity to ensure that members of the families of your Sāmoan students feel that they are welcome in your classroom as you partner with them to build on the early reading skills and experiences that Sāmoan students bring to school in two languages.

‘O le gagana Sāmoa

Spotted Butterflies / ‘O Pepe Pulepule offers an opportunity to share and talk about some gagana Sāmoa words for colours, for example:

ENGLISH	GAGANA SĀMOA
purple	violē
orange	lanumoli
yellow	sāmasama <i>or</i> lanusāmasama
brown	‘ena‘ena (<i>plural</i> ‘e‘ena)
red	mūmū <i>or</i> lanumūmū
green	lanumeamata
blue	lanumoana
white	pa‘epa‘e (<i>plural</i> papa‘e)
black	uliuli (<i>plural</i> uli)

Notice how gagana Sāmoa sometimes includes the word for “colour” (“lanu”) in colour names (and how some of the words for colours have plural forms).

The word for “butterfly”, “pepe”, can also be used for “baby”.



Walking Home in the Rain / Savali 'i le 'Āiga i le Timu

Feaua'i Aмосa Burgess and Mere Tapaeru Tereora

'O le fa'asāmoa

You probably have students in your class whose parents both work – and so a grandparent looks after them after school, as in this story. In the Sāmoan community, older sisters, brothers, and cousins sometimes take on this responsibility too.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

There are some words in this story that you might find useful on a wet day:

- ▶ 'ofu fa'atimu – jacket
- ▶ se'evae pa'u – gumboots
- ▶ timu – rain (the noun is “tīmuga”)
- ▶ matagi – wind.



The following books can be used for reading to students who are reading at the **green** Ready to Read level:



A Present for Aunty Lise / 'O le Meaalofa mo Aunty Lise Vaitoa Baker

'O le fa'asāmoa

Giving and receiving meaalofa (gifts) is an important aspect of fa'asāmoa. Shell necklaces are a welcomed gift in the Sāmoan community.

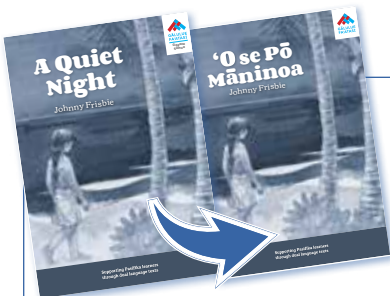
'O le gagana Sāmoa

Notice the way Aunty Lise thanks Lā:

- ▶ Fa'afetai, Lā. – Thank you, Lā.

You could use this way of saying “thank you” occasionally in your classroom too, if you wish.

Notice that Vaitoa Baker uses two words for “shell”: figota and atigifigota. The prefix “atigi” shows that a shell is empty. By using this term on page 8, Vaitoa Baker is reminding us that none of the shells have the sea creatures still in them.



A Quiet Night / 'O se Pō Māninoa Johnny Frisbie

'O le fa'asāmoa

While Johnny Frisbie was still a teenager, she wrote her first book – writing it in three languages – leo Pukapuka, gagana Sāmoa, and English. *A Quiet Night / 'O se Pō Māninoa* is a moment from her second book, *The Frisbies of the South Seas*, which was published by Doubleday in New York in 1959. Like *Shadow Sleeps / E Moe Fo'i Ata Ia*, this book offers students a glimpse of life in the tropical Pacific. They may not have a tropical lagoon close to where they sleep, but what if they were to look out the window late at night? What would they see?

'O le gagana Sāmoa

In this story, there are night-time expressions you could explore together, such as:

- ▶ i se tasi pō – one night
- ▶ i le vaveao – at dawn
- ▶ na lē mafai ai ona 'ou moe – I couldn't get to sleep

All of these can be used as story-starters.



'Afa Loves to Read / E Fiafia 'Afa e Faitau Tusi *Lisa Fuemana*

'O le fa'asāmoa

Fruit bats are widespread in the Pacific, including in Sāmoa. 'Afa has a stuffed toy fruit bat, Kuku. Other children in the story have toy lions and teddy bears.

'Afa Loves to Read / E Fiafia 'Afa e Faitau Tusi models:

- ▶ reading picture books in bed
- ▶ reading to a pet or stuffed toy
- ▶ parents reading books with children
- ▶ listening to a story read at school in English that a parent has read to the child at home in gagana Sāmoa
- ▶ reading with older brothers, sisters, and cousins
- ▶ children having a bedtime story read to them.

Notice the way the students sit quietly at school when their teacher shares a book with them. You may notice that Sāmoan students are often quite good at this and may have more patience than some of your other students. They have probably been exposed to situations at church and in the community where young people are expected to sit quietly and listen respectfully. One of the values of fa'asāmoa is to accord older people respect in this way.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

Page 7 introduces a way to say “English” in gagana Sāmoa – “gagana 'Igilisi”. An alternative is “gagana Peretānia”.



***Birthday Lu'au /
Lu'au o le Aso Fānau***
Mere Tapaeru Tereora

‘O le fa’asāmoa

You will notice that, while we tend to say “Grandpa Kelemete” and then “Grandpa” in English, traditionally Sāmoan grandparents are addressed and referred to by their first name.

Lu’au is both a word for taro leaves and the name of a dish made with them. This book shows how lu’au is often made in New Zealand. In Sāmoa, it is usually cooked in an umu.

‘O le gagana Sāmoa

Notice that on page 2, “tamā o lona tamā”, tells you that this grandfather is the father’s father. Otherwise, he would be a “tamā o lona tinā” (the mother’s father).



***Mum's New Job /
‘O le Gāluega Fou a Tinā***
Bronwyn Tainui

‘O le fa’asāmoa

Consider how the child in the story is learning how to show respect and consideration. Notice, too, that the aunt is Pālāgi.

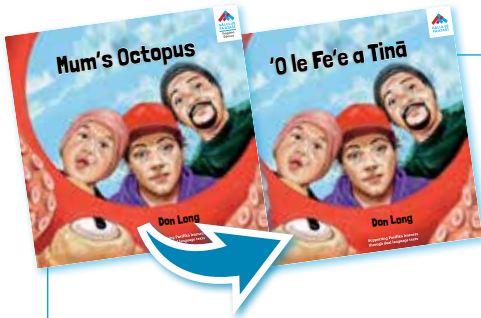
‘O le gagana Sāmoa

There is a very useful formulaic expression in *Mum's New Job / ‘O le Gāluega Fou a Tinā*:

- ▶ Fa’afetai tele. – Thanks heaps. (Thanks a lot.)



The following books can be used for reading to students who are reading at the **orange** Ready to Read level:



Mum's Octopus / 'O le Fe'e a Tinā
Don Long

'O le fa'asāmoa

Don Long's story is about what happens when a boy's dad – who is Sāmoan – wants to do one thing with an octopus and his mum – who may not be Sāmoan – wants to do something else.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

On page 11, “Malie lou loto” is an idiomatic way of saying “It's OK” that suits the situation in this story. You can also use this expression to politely decline a request.



My Name Is Laloifi / 'O Lo'u Igoa 'o Laloifi
Dan Taulapapa McMullin

'O le fa'asāmoa

Hearing your name pronounced correctly at school by your teacher and your classmates makes you feel welcomed.

'O le gagana Sāmoa

In the section on the Sāmoan language, you will find some advice about saying Sāmoan names. To ask what someone's name is in gagana Sāmoa, ask “'O ai lou igoa?” The title of this book is an example of how to answer this question.



Some aspects of Sāmoan culture (fa'asāmoa)

Half of the Pasifika people in New Zealand are Sāmoan. Within this group, there is variation in the extent to which people practise fa'asāmoa – the Sāmoan way.



Ask the families of the Sāmoan students in your class about the values of fa'asāmoa. How do the following feature in the lives of your students, for example?

- ▶ 'āiga (family)
- ▶ alofa (love)
- ▶ fa'aaloalo (showing respect)
- ▶ fa'alavelave (family obligations)
- ▶ feagaiga (the covenant between brothers, sisters, and cousins)
- ▶ gagana Sāmoa (the language)
- ▶ lotu (church)
- ▶ usita'i (obeying).

Here is some cultural knowledge that will help you in your partnership with Sāmoan families and the Sāmoan community:

- ▶ Respect Sunday – on Sunday, families are often involved in church activities.
- ▶ Take your shoes off before you go into a home – if this is the family's practice.
- ▶ Don't stand to speak when elders (such as grandparents, matai, and pastors) are seated. Stay at their level when you speak.
- ▶ Avoid pointing your feet at others once you are seated. Either tuck them away or cover them (for example, with your coat).
- ▶ When you invite the Sāmoan community to your school, offer some refreshments.
- ▶ Show respect to elders, such as grandparents and church ministers and their spouses. These are community leaders who will help you if they can.



Ask families – parents, grandparents, uncles and aunts, and older brothers, sisters, and cousins – to tell you more. For example, ask whether it's their practice to take their shoes off before entering their home?



The Sāmoan language (gagana Sāmoa)

No one expects you to learn gagana Sāmoa or teach it, but knowing a little bit about the language is useful when you are teaching bilingual Sāmoan students. Like te reo Māori, gagana Sāmoa is a Polynesian language. Polynesian languages share a common grammar and the two languages that are most distantly related still share half of their vocabulary. So if you know some Māori, you already know much more gagana Sāmoa than you might think.

The Sāmoan alphabet (pī faitau)

The Sāmoan alphabet is usually said in the following order:

‘Ā ‘Ē ‘Ī ‘Ō ‘Ū Fa Ga La Mo Nu Pi Sa Ti Vi He Ka Ro

You can listen to an audio track (MP3) of this at <http://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Pasifika-dual-language-books>

The following table compares the English alphabet with the Sāmoan one; though remember that the Sāmoan alphabet is recited with the vowels first:

ENGLISH	GAGANA SĀMOA	ENGLISH	GAGANA SĀMOA
a	a	n	n
	ā	o	o
b			ō
c		p	p
d		q	
e	e	r	r
	ē	s	s
f	f	t	t
g	g	u	u
h	h		ū
i	i	v	v
	ī	w	
j		x	
k	k	y	
l	l	z	
m	m		‘

Other vowel sounds are ‘a, ‘ā, ‘e, ‘ē, ‘i, ‘ī, ‘o, ‘ō, ‘u, and ‘ū. The consonants f, l, m, n, p, s, t, and v are all pronounced much the same as in English, though the s has less “hiss” in it than it does in English.



Using what you already know about te reo Māori

As in Māori, vowels are long or short. It helps to know that:

- ▶ a “g” in gagana Sāmoa sounds like in the “ng” in a Māori word like “ngā” or the “ng” in “sing”
- ▶ where te reo Māori uses an “r”, gagana Sāmoa often uses an “l”
- ▶ where te reo Māori uses a “wh”, gagana Sāmoa often uses an “f”
- ▶ where te reo Māori uses an “h”, gagana Sāmoa sometimes uses an “f” or “s” (“Hāmoa” = “Sāmoa”)
- ▶ where te reo Māori uses a “w”, gagana Sāmoa uses a “v”.

Here are some examples.

TE REO MĀORI	GAGANA SĀMOA
whare	fale
rā	lā
toru	tolu
aroaha	alofa
wai	vai

If you already know some Māori, see how many gagana Sāmoa words you already know!

The glottal stop

Like many other Polynesian languages, gagana Sāmoa uses a glottal stop, which in print looks like this: ‘

It only ever comes before a vowel or between two vowels. In Polynesian languages, it counts as a consonant. It’s a little catch in your voice, like saying the English word “bottle” the Cockney way. In te reo Māori, sometimes there is a “k” where gagana Sāmoa has a glottal stop.

TE REO MĀORI	GAGANA SĀMOA
waka	va‘a

Avoiding confusion

Of course, there are differences between English and gagana Sāmoa, so here are some potential sources of confusion when Sāmoan students are learning how to read in English:

- ▶ The glottal stop isn’t an apostrophe. It isn’t a punctuation mark.
- ▶ When students who speak gagana Sāmoa are first learning English, they sometimes confuse the sounds of p/b, k/g, l/r, and f/th.
- ▶ When you say a word in gagana Sāmoa, you tend to emphasise the second-to-last syllable.
- ▶ In English, we put adjectives before nouns (the “red book”). In gagana Sāmoa, it’s the other way around (“tusi mūmū”).



The T-style and the K-style

Spoken Sāmoan has two forms: the T-style (tautala lelei) and the K-style (tautala leaga). The use of the T-style and the K-style is highly contextual. In informal settings, people use the K-style. In more formal settings, they use the T-style (for example, in writing and in church services).

Though there are vocabulary differences, the main difference is in spelling and pronunciation, with a shift between:

T-STYLE		K-STYLE
t	to	k
n	to	g
r	to	l

So tinā (mother) becomes kigā and tālofa (hello) becomes kālofa.

Speech domain-appropriateness is everything. Sāmoans regard education as a formal domain. They use the T-style in the classroom and expect to see the T-style in books. In a book, they only accept the K-style inside speech marks – and then only if the people really would have been talking in the K-style in the situation portrayed.

Switching to the T-style is a way of sounding more formal. For example, a parent telling a child off might switch to the T-style. That immediately tells the child that they really have done something wrong. You also use the T-style when you are singing.

Elinor Ochs studied the acquisition of gagana Sāmoa by young children in Sāmoa (from the age of about nineteen months). She found that even from the one-word utterance stage, children acquire both the K-style and the T-style. She found that young children are exposed predominantly to the K-style, because they are mostly exposed to language in casual, informal, intimate family interactions. But she also found extensive exposure to the T-style at church, when overhearing the speech of older siblings (for example, when they were doing homework), on the radio and TV, and “finally, and perhaps, most importantly, children from a very young age are socialised into performance. They will be taught Bible verses, hymns, the alphabet, and a series of Biblical facts to be memorised and displayed around the age of 2 years. The transmission of this knowledge and its display are couched in tautala lelei.”

Sāmoans expect non-Sāmoans who have acquired some Sāmoan to speak in the T-style.

Saying Sāmoan names

If you haven't had Sāmoan students in your class before, some Sāmoan names can seem challenging at first, but make the effort to say them properly. Don't anglicise or shorten them. To pronounce someone's name correctly is to respect his or her identity. It's how we would all like to be treated.



If you are not sure how to say a name, such as “Feaua’i”, “Galū”, or “Umaga”, ask someone who speaks gagana Sāmoa to show you.

Family letter

Tālofa lava

Our school supports bilingual students who speak gagana Sāmoa and English. These students bring early language and literacy skills and experiences in two languages to school – which we can build on when your child is reading at school in English. So some of the books your child will bring home may be in both gagana Sāmoa and English. Read them to your child in your strongest language.

We will be using these books to build connections between what your child knows about gagana Sāmoa to help them to read in English. Many of the skills of reading in gagana Sāmoa can be transferred to reading in English. Dual language books give us a chance to build on all the language and reading experiences and skills that your child brings to school.

The following information would help me, but it is up to you whether you wish to share it.

Ma le fa'aaloalo lava



Student's name: _____

Please return to: _____



Which languages are spoken in your home?

- Gagana Sāmoa
- English
- Other languages: _____



What language does Dad usually speak at home?

- Gagana Sāmoa
- English
- Other languages: _____



What language does Mum usually speak at home?

- Gagana Sāmoa
- English
- Other languages: _____



What languages do other family members usually speak at home?

- Gagana Sāmoa
- English
- Other languages: _____



Has your child attended an ā'oga 'āmata in New Zealand or a pre-school in Sāmoa?

- Yes
- No



Does your child attend a Sunday school where gagana Sāmoa is spoken?

- Yes
- No

Fa'afetai tele

‘O le tusi ‘āiga

Tālofa lava

Mātou te lagolagoina tamaiti e ō mai i le ā’oga ‘a ‘ua iloa tautatala i la lātou gagana muamua e pei ‘o le gagana Sāmoa. ‘Ua iai fo’i nisi o nei tamaiti ‘ua iloa le gagana ‘Igilisi na lātou a’oa’oina i ā’oga ‘āmata, po’o o lātou ‘āiga fo’i. ‘O tomai tāua nei ‘ua lātou iloa, e iai le iloa tautala i le gagana Sāmoa, ma le gagana ‘Igilisi. ‘Ua fa’amāsani i nei tomai ‘ae le’i ‘āmata ona a’o’oga i vasega tūlagalua, ma ‘ole’ā mātou fa’aaogāina e fau ai ni o lātou tomai fou. ‘O le tomai tāua ‘ole’ā fa’amālosia, ‘o le faitau lea i le gagana ‘Igilisi i le ā’oga. E iai taimi e ‘avatu ai e tamaiti tusi faitau i le gagana ‘Igilisi ma le gagana Sāmoa ‘i le fale. Fa’aaogā lau gagana mālosi e faitau ai le tusi i lau tama po’o lou afafine po’o lou atali’i.

Mo lou silafia e lē ‘o iai se manatu ‘ole’ā fa’aaogā nei tusi e a’oa’o ai le gagana Sāmoa i le ā’oga – ‘ae ‘o le tele o tomai e maua mai i le iloa ma fiafia ‘i le faitautusi i le gagana Sāmoa, e mafai ona fa’aaogā e a’oa’o ai le faitau i le gagana ‘Igilisi. E aogā tele nei tusi i gagana e lua e a’oa’o ai tomai tāua e tamaiti i le faitautusi i totonu o le potu ā’oga.

E talosagaina le tali o nei fesili i lalo, e aogā mo a’u, ‘ae pule ‘oe pē ‘e te fia tali mai pē leai.

Ma le fa’aaloalo lava



Igoa o lau tama: _____

Fa’amolemole fa’afo’i mai ‘iā: _____



Gagana e fa’aaogā i lou ‘āiga?

- Gagana Sāmoa
- Gagana ‘Igilisi
- Se isi gagana: _____



Gagana muamua a le tamā?

- Gagana Sāmoa
- Gagana ‘Igilisi
- Se isi gagana: _____



Gagana muamua a le tinā?

- Gagana Sāmoa
- Gagana ‘Igilisi
- Se isi gagana: _____



‘O ā isi gagana e fa’aaogā e isi tagata o lou ‘āiga i le fale?

- Gagana Sāmoa
- Gagana ‘Igilisi
- Se isi gagana: _____



Na ā’oga lau tama i se ā’oga ‘āmata i Niu Sila po’o Sāmoa?

- ‘Ioe
- Leai



‘O ā’oga lau tama i se ā’oga Aso Sā o fa’aaogā ai le gagana Sāmoa?

- ‘Ioe
- Leai

Fa’afetai tele



More resources

Some useful expressions in gagana Sāmoa

- ▶ Tālofa lava. – Hello.
- ▶ Tōfā soifua. – Goodbye.
- ▶ Susū mai. – Come in.
- ▶ 'O ai lou igoa? – What's your name?
- ▶ 'O lo'u igoa 'o Liz. – My name is Liz.
- ▶ Fa'alogo. – Listen.
- ▶ Taumafai. – Try hard. (Do your best.)
- ▶ Fa'amolemole. – Please.
- ▶ 'Aua le pisa, fa'amolemole. – Quiet, please.
- ▶ Si'i lou lima. – Raise your hand.
- ▶ Fa'afetai. – Thank you.
- ▶ Mālō lava. – Well done.
- ▶ Mālō le galue. – Good work.
- ▶ Lelei tele. – Very good.
- ▶ Tālofa e. – This is an expression of sympathy, for example, if a student falls over in the playground and grazes a knee. When you say it, it sounds like one word.

Classroom vocabulary

- ▶ faiā'oga – teacher
- ▶ faiā'oga fesoasoani – teacher's aide
- ▶ kesi – desk
- ▶ laulau – table
- ▶ nofoa – chair
- ▶ penitala – pencil
- ▶ pepa – paper
- ▶ tamaiti ā'oga – student
- ▶ tusi – book

Reading prompts

Here are some prompts for when you are looking at a book with a student who speaks gagana Sāmoa. Use these if you wish. It is up to you, how much gagana Sāmoa you use.

- ▶ 'O fea lau tusi? – Where's your book?
- ▶ Faitau loa le tusi. – [You can] read the book now.
- ▶ Fa'amālosi mai, Sione. – Keep trying, Sione.
- ▶ Fa'asino mai le mea e 'āmata ai la'u faitau. – Show me where to start reading.
- ▶ Ta'u mai se mea e uiga i lenei ata. – Tell me about this picture.
- ▶ Va'ai i 'upu nei. 'O lēfea e fetai? – Look at the words. What would make sense?



Here are some further resources that you may find useful. In the information that follows, item numbers are provided where a resource was published for the Ministry of Education.

Resources about fa'asāmoa

- ▶ Fa'asāmoa – Sāmoan Culture at <http://www.teara.govt.nz/en/samoans/page-3>
- ▶ Fa'asāmoa: The Sāmoan Way, a Polynesian Cultural Center video at http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qEASE_raPX0
- ▶ Feleti E. Ngan-Woo (1985). Fa'asāmoa: The World of Sāmoans. Wellington: The Office of the Race Relations Conciliator.

Sāmoan songs

- ▶ Ministry of Education (2002). Fātuga Fa'asāmoa i Aotearoa: Sāmoan Songs. Wellington: Learning Media. (item 12822)

Resources about gagana Sāmoa

- ▶ Galumalemana Afeleti L. Hunkin (2009). Gagana Sāmoa: A Sāmoan Language Coursebook. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press.
- ▶ La'i Ulrike Mosel and Ainslie So'o (1999). Say It in Sāmoan. Canberra: The Australian National University.
- ▶ Ministry of Education (2009). Mua Ō! An Introduction to Gagana Sāmoa. Auckland: Teuila Consultancy. (item 119346)

Sāmoan alphabet resources

- ▶ Fatu Feu'u (1991). 'O le Tusi Pī. Auckland: Polynesian Press.
- ▶ "'O le Pī Fa'asāmoa", a Sāmoan alphabet song in Ministry of Education (2002). Fātuga Fa'asāmoa i Aotearoa: Sāmoan Songs. Wellington: Learning Media. (item 12822)
- ▶ Pī Faitau: Sāmoan Alphabet. Auckland: Pacific Islands Education Resource Centre, 1993. (wall frieze)

A Sāmoan number resource (1–10)

- ▶ Momoe von Reiche (2003). Pili ma Numera: Pili and Numbers. Āpia: Niu Leaf Publications.

Gagana Sāmoa dictionaries

- ▶ R. W. Allardice (1985). A Simplified Dictionary of Modern Sāmoan. Auckland: Polynesian Press.
- ▶ Papaāli'i Dr Semisi Maiai (2010). Tusi 'Upu Sāmoa. Auckland: Little Island Press. (volume 1 is gagana Sāmoa to English – volume 2 is English to gagana Sāmoa)
- ▶ G. B. Milner (1993). Sāmoan Dictionary. Auckland: Polynesian Press.