

This Response to Short Story Text Essay will describe an **interesting relationship** between Nani Miro and Mrs. Heta based on the text A Game of Cards written by Witi Ihimaera and will explain how this relationship helped me to better understand **an important idea within the story**.

An **interesting relationship** in the story, is one between Nani Miro and Mrs. Heta. They are two old kuia who love to play cards with other Māori women at the Homestead in Waituhi. However, when they played cards, they would tease each other relentlessly about being cheats. They were the **"unrivalled champions and when it came to cards Mrs. Heta...was both Nani's best friend and worst enemy"** (p.11).

During the card games, Nani Miro would say **"Eeee! You cheat"** and Mrs. Heta would respond **"You the cheat yourself, Miro Mananui. I saw you sneaking that ace from the bottom of the pack"** (p.11). But no matter what they accused each other of, Nani Miro and Mrs. Heta would always laugh until tears ran down their faces. **The important idea that I understood from this**, was that Mrs. Heta and Nani Miro didn't really mean what they said, they just loved to tease each other, play cards and have fun.

I understood this because when Nani Miro became sick, Mrs. Heta and all of Nani Miro's whānau rushed to be by Nani Miro's side, but as crowded as it was, it was Mrs. Heta who Nani Miro wanted to play a last game of cards with. In respect for Nani Miro, whanau and friends quickly sourced their own cards and began to play in the lounge, in the bedrooms and out on the lawn. Of course it wasn't long before Nani Miro and Mrs Heta began their usual bantering and squabbling, Nani Miro said to her old rival **"I saw you Maka tiko bum, I saw you sneaking that card from under the blanket"** (p.15) and whilst crying with laughing, she quietly passed away. Their love for one another was so strong, that when Mrs. Heta passed away later in the year, she was buried beside Nani Miro **"So that they could keep on playing cards"** (p.15).

In conclusion, in the Short Story A Game of Cards the two main characters Nani Miro and Mrs. Heta demonstrated that their **relationship** was robust, rich and loving, even when it appeared as though they were simply competitive rivals. However, **the important idea that I understood from the short story** was that, their **friendship** wasn't simply based on a love of cards, it ran much deeper and reflected a reason for family and friends to come together and share a common love for one another.