Understanding taonga species in the Ngāi Tahu takiwā

Teacher support material created to support Aotearoa NZ Histories inclusion into the everyday curriculum, to enhance the knowledge of environment, cultural practices, and plants in your region

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### Some teaching/learning activities & ideas

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Learning experiences to gain the key knowledge

The curriculum refresh will honour our obligations to Te Tiriti o Waitangi, be inclusive so that all ākonga see themselves and succeed in their learning, is clear about the learning that matters and is easy to use. This teacher resource will support learning experiences expected, have a local mana whenua perspective and will enable all to gain a deeper knowledge of taonga species. Referring to the Aoteatoa NZ Histories curriculum for further ideas, content and resources allows a well-rounded curriculum coverage that needs to include local historical contexts.
The Ngāi Tahu Education Strategy

We strive for our tamariki to see their culture in the classroom, as it uplifts pride and wellbeing, and their self confidence and belonging.
Using cultural contexts: some tips

The Aotearoa NZ Histories curriculum encourages schools to develop a relationship with mana whenua. Don’t make your first engagement a request for information or assistance. Without an existing relationship, your starting point should be to contact the curriculum lead in your local MoE. Their mandate is to connect schools with mana whenua.

Each school may have different starting points. An early task may be to understand who mana whenua is. The marae, pepehā, and any further information you can ascertain and learn is a great start. It may be that the papatipu rūnanga has an approach of progress they would like you to take. It would be great to understand what stories mana whenua are willing to share widely. Be prepared to use those stories, often starting with migration or creation narratives, explore the relationships and connections from that point. Acknowledge that the idea of historical thinking for iwi Māori starts at a different point than a western view. Understand also that oral histories are valid and reliable – just because it wasn’t “written” doesn’t invalidate the history. Oral histories are embedded in tribal pepehā, waiata such as mōteatea and haka, as well as karakia and well known whaikōrero. They are also embedded through tukutuku panels, and whakairo (traditional Māori carving) featured in Māori traditional houses.

Ensure Ngāi Tahu sources are used and uplifted as the primary information source. Acknowledge all sources and be prepared to question the perspective that source represents. Explore your own ideas of what mātauranga is/what history is in Aotearoa NZ. Interrogate your biases.
Critical skills development

1. Learn the information, embed the knowledge - mōhiotanga. Research widely
2. Use your content knowledge and social sciences curriculum knowledge to design explicit teaching points for your ākonga
3. When using an iwi cultural narrative, consult with and engage with mana whenua at the outset, and ensure you stay true to the story without making assumptions about the facts. Any expert help should be approved by mana whenua also.
4. Have a variety of reliable sources of information at the ready for your students to explore
5. Start with a rich question
6. Plan for progression within progressions - take the learning to where the students’ interest directs, delving deeply with critical questioning skills
7. Revisit the same big ideas and practices in different contexts
8. Encourage ākonga to look at everything with a critical eye

Acknowledgement: these ideas adapted from ASSEN Conference workshop, July 2022
Some tips for analysing texts

Māori history is the foundational and continuous history of Aotearoa New Zealand. To not investigate that cultural history, means the learning is incomplete. In Ngāi Tahu takiwā, that means Ngāi Tahu sources (as opposed to a Māori voice from another iwi) is crucial.

The study of plants is a universal context, however, this resource focused on Ngāi Tahu taonga species, which have particular significance to Ngāi Tahu. Any readings that talk of changes to the environment due to introduced species, change of land use, settler habitation vs mahinga kai use and the like, will need to be considered to ensure there is balance with a Ngāi Tahu perspective as well.

• When analysing texts from other sources, keep in mind:
  – Who is the source? Who is telling this story? What is their authority to give that information?
  – Are dates and sources shown in the information source (i.e. can you tell when that information was recorded?)
  – Who’s perspective is given? Who’s is missing?
  – Are the sources reliable?
  – Is the information unbiased and does it portray a balanced view?
Social Inquiry strategy - Te rautaki pakirehua pāpori

Zero in on one aspect of interest about your topic and following this social inquiry model:

- **Plan** – identify your focus area, and your methods of research. Plan methods of presenting the information.

- **Explore** – ask further questions and conduct your research. Read from a variety of sources, ensuring validity and authenticity in the information.

- **Use and choose** – organize the information and evaluate your discoveries, with justifications.

- **Create** a presentation for your material – make sure it is clear and you can use a range of formats; practice your presentation so you can confidently

- **Share** your mahi to a wider audience, and finally

- **Review** – assess the process and skills you used. What action/s can you take?
  - What would improve an inquiry like this in the future?
  - What did you do really well?
What are taonga species?

“Taonga species are native birds, plants and animals of special cultural significance and importance to Ngāi Tahu. The Crown’s settlement with Ngāi Tahu (Ngāi Tahu Claims Settlement Act 1998) included recognition of the special traditional relationship Ngāi Tahu have with taonga species. Ngāi Tahu participates in the management of those species in many ways, including representation on special recovery groups.”

(RD&I Christchurch, Published by Department of Conservation Christchurch 2006 RS0081)
Nine taonga species of focus

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Search for each plant – what can you find out about these plants? How will you present that information? The image above links to a reliable source.
Our taonga species:

- Are prized and treasured rawa taiao (natural resources) of land and sea
- Have customs and traditions (tikanga) associated with gathering and use, which passes on inter-generational knowledge
- Have traditional practices that enable the creation of heirloom pieces as well as useful everyday items

What heirloom pieces do you know of created from our focus taonga species? See if you can find pictures, historical information about each plant species to present to a wider audience
Chart your findings

Map where each species flourishes in your locality. Perhaps use an icon of the plant, or the flower, to “pinpoint” the areas on the map.

❖ What do the localities have in common?
❖ What is the different environment for the species?
❖ Are those areas well populated, or isolated regions? What other plants grow nearby?
❖ Consider how population changes and land use has impacted on the availability and viability of these taonga plant species.
CAN YOU MATCH THESE NAMES WITH THE IMAGES?

Harakeke, New Zealand flax, *Phormium tenax*
Wharariki, mountain flax, coastal flax, *Phormium cookianum*
Houī, lacebark, *Hoheria populnea*
Tī kōuka, cabbage tree, *Cordyline australis*
Tōī, broad-leaved cabbage tree, mountain cabbage tree, *Cordyline indivisa*
Pīngao, golden sand sedge, *Desmoschoenus spiralis*
Kiekie, *Freycinetia banksii* - a thick native vine
Neinei, grass tree, spiderwood, *Dracophyllum latifolium* and mountain neinei, *Dracophyllum traversii* - native shrubs
Tīkumu, common mountain daisy, cotton plant, *Celmisia spectabilis*
wharawhara, coastal astelia, *Astelia banksii*

Create a matching activity, using the traditional Māori name, the common name, and the images, so you can embed the new learning and remember to use the Māori name in the future. You could share the finished resource with other classes to use.

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Te Rūnanga o Ngāi Tahu
Compare and Contrast

Harakeke (phormium tenax) with English Flax (Linum usitatissimum)

- What do these two plant species look like? Flowers? Seeds? Leaves?
- Are they related (genetically, scientifically) to each other in any way?
- What products are each plant used to make? What are the processes involved?
- Why do you suppose the settlers chose to call harakeke by the name “flax”?

Present your findings to a wider audience (you may want to create a book, a digital presentation, a Venn diagram, or share the information in another way; it’s up to you).

“Now I know that harakeke is not flax and I should always call that plant “harakeke” from now on.”
Similarities and differences
Te oritetaka, te rerekētaka rānei

Each of the nine plant species featured in this resource can be used in a variety of ways.

**TASK 1:** Investigate and present what each can be used for as an information leaflet.

**TASK 2:** Create an instructional booklet. Choose one item and include each step of the process to achieve the end result, accompanied by pictures of the stages and the finished product. Comment on any new or interesting facts you learned while doing this comparative study.
RULE ONE - Syllabification is always “to the vowel, to the vowel”

Ka-hi-ka-te-a  Kahikatea

Ri-mu  Rimu

Ma-ta-ī  Mataī

Mi-ro  Miro

A macron over the vowel lengthens that vowel sound  ā ē ī ō ū

RULE TWO - vowels always sound the same

Are there three or two? a e i o u

RULE THREE - no cats and dogs

The vowels sounds in those words “cat” or “dog” do NOT exist in te reo Māori
How to pronounce those words?

Why do we need to say those words correctly?

"If you pronounce Māori words correctly, it implies you have respect for the language. If you have respect for the language that would imply you have respect for the culture. "If you have respect for the culture, you most probably have respect for the people."

Read the article here

Te Reo Māori pronunciation guide

Learn to pronounce Māori words correctly to become more confident using them.

Access the guide from Victoria University [here](#) and a Sharon Holt [video link here](#)

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Terminology

To understand any of the words that are new to you that are used in this resource, visit the dictionary through the link in the image.

To hear the word spoken and to learn how to pronounce it correctly, press the speaker icon that follows the word. Note there are often several definitions; find the correct one for the context.

Kupu hou: new words

Raranga
Whenu
Hapine
Muka
Whitau
Whatu
Haro
Kākahu
Kete
Whāriki

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Consequence Wheel activity

**Consequence Wheel link:** Starting with the “BIG IDEA” in the centre circle, wānanga together as to the impact of that “action” in ever widening circles. Think of the impact on plants, birds, and people, their well being and health of the environment, and show consequences that have an ongoing effect through the wheel. Here is an example for the centre “BIG IDEA”.

How has the decimated populations of plant species impacted on the traditional practices to create these artworks in and for marae (e.g: the tukutuku, the kākahu, the whāriki)

Enable access to information from a variety of sources to capture different perspectives from those readings. Here are some to help you get started:

**Most suited to Years 4-10**

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Plants help sustain life

In early Māori society, plants were used in many different ways, each important to societal and economic life and sustenance.

Use the link (in the pic below) to research about how plants were used

Ngā Rauropi Whakaoranga

Which of these plants were used for rongoā (traditional medicines)? Which provided food or equipment to gather or catch food? What else can you find out about the ways these plants were used? Please find images to show us.
I waenganui pū harakeke ahau

This waiata poi was first performed by a Taitokerau group at the national kapahaka competition at Ngaruawahia in 2000. The words of the song reveal the whakapapa of the poi.

Visit the site in the image. Here are the lyrics to the first verse

I waenganui pū harakeke ahau
Whakarongorongo ana ki ngā hau
Oho ana tōku wairua
Oho ana tōku wairua.
I ngā takawirihanga o te poi
E mireirei ana ka toko
Te wh(aka)aro i ahu mai koe i hea
Te wh(aka)aro i ahu mai koe i hea

In the middle of piles of flax, I am tuning in to the vibes and awakening my spirit
awakening my spirit.
In the twisting together of the poi there boldly springs to my mind
the idea of from where you were fashioned from where you were fashioned.
Is this waiata really about harakeke?

Hutia te rito

Hutia te rito o te harakeke  
Kei hea te kōmako e kō?  
Kī mai ki ahau  
He aha te mea nui?  
Te mea nui o teenei ao?  
Māku e kī atu Kia koe  
He tangata! He tangata!

Pull out the shoot,  
Pull out the shoot of the flax bush  
Where will the bellbird sing?  
Say to me  
What is the greatest thing?  
What is the greatest thing in this world?  
I will say  
The people! The people! The people

This version is sung to the tune of “Auld Lang Syne”. You may hear it sung to other tunes.
Waiata - the process to make a piupiu

Full lyrics (in te reo Māori) and explanation can be found through the link to the action song.

This was composed in 1987 by Tihi Puanaki and originally written as a poi, later adapted as a waiata-a-ringa (action song) and used widely. Watch the actions of the waiata that at times mirror the actions used in piupiu making, from the cutting of the harakeke, through to the preparation of muka, the miro, boiling, dyeing and weaving. The song reflects not only on the process but the skill and dedication required to make our piupiu.

Did you hear some of the kupu you have learned?
Two karakia for harvesting harakeke. It is customary to give thanks before using the taonga.

**Te Harakeke**
**Te Kōrari**
Ngā Taonga whakarere iho
O te rangi, o te whenua,
O ngā tipuna.
Homai he oranga mō mātou
Haumi ē, hui ē, tāiki ē!

Harakeke, the flower stems
Treasures left behind
of the sky and of the land
Of our ancestors
Give us health
United and affirmed

**Karakia**

Te Ao o te Harakeke Karakia
Ko Io-matua-kore
Ko Whaea rikoriko
Ko Rangi-nui
Ko Papatūanuku
Ko Tāne
Ko Pakoti
Ko te Harakeke
Ko te Kōrari
Ngā Taonga whakarere iho
O te Rangi
O te Whenua
O ngā Tūpuna
Homai he oranga mō tātou
Tihei Mauri Ora!

Prayer for matters related to flax
Treasures handed down
By the Heavens
By the Earth
By the Ancestors
As sustenance for us
The first breath of life!

This karakia acknowledges the whakapapa of the harakeke and is used before harvesting harakeke.
Early Māori society relied on plants for everyday life.

Conduct an inquiry into the many and varied ways plants were used.

Consider the need to gather food (plants, fish, birds), to live as comfortably as possible, for weapons and tools, and even transport.

➢ What items were created from the taonga species? What was the purpose of each creation?
➢ How did those items assist with everyday life?
➢ If those plants were not readily available, what alternative materials used?
➢ Were rongoā (traditional medicines) made from any?
➢ How did these plants contribute to food gathering and preservation?
➢ Were those plants left in the natural grown form, or were they altered in some way? What was the process and purpose of any alterations?
Settlers needed houses

- When settlers arrived in Te Wai Pounamu, they needed to create housing as a priority. The needed large trees to build their houses and used materials that were nearby.
- What effect did the decrease of large trees have on our taonga species?
- On the environment?
- On the well-being and health of mana whenua?
- On the bird life?
- On the insect life, fish life, and the wellbeing of all?
- Describe those effects, as a consequence of de-forestation.
Harakeke: What is a “cultivar”?  

Click on the image above to find information about the New Zealand collections of weaving plants.

Click on the image above to learn about tikanga (traditional customary practices) for harvesting harakeke, informed by expert Ngāi Tahu weavers.

Click on the image above for more information about harvesting this taonga species.

Harakeke is the most universally used and versatile resource, able to be harvested all year – link to further information here.
A “whakapapa” is a genealogy line. For people, it shows the parents, grandparents, great-grandparents and so on. For Māori, every living thing has a whakapapa, and even these can differ from tribe to tribe. Here is one from “Hira’s Weaving Journey” (linked through the image). Hira is from Ngāti Pōrou and is a keen student of raranga.

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Rangatahi - Papatuanuku

Rangaranga-ihi-matua - Hine-muka-tai-ore

Ti-paea-houare - Kapo-huare
Harakeke-muru-aho - Harakeke-muka-taura
27 Varieties of Harakeke

Ngataki-uru-ao - Hine-tua-muta
Harakeke-muka-iti
22 Varieties for Whariki

Mara-Tauhara - Tuata-tau-oha
Harakeke-tawini
32 Varieties for Kawenga
```
Whakapapa of Harakeke 2

This genealogy of trees is found in this story of Te Waonui a Tāne – forest mythology in TE ARA The Encyclopedia of New Zealand.

This shows Tāne being the link between all trees and plants in his realm “Te Waonui ā Tane” – literally the great forest of Tāne.

This excerpt from the source, linked in the image:

“Trees in the forest are seen as Tāne-mahuta, rising to separate earth and sky. Tāne, the tree, holds the sky aloft, bringing light into the world. The widespread felling of forests in New Zealand in the 19th and 20th centuries was calamitous to the traditional world view of tribes that lived in the forest – it was like the sky rejoining the earth, and the world returning to darkness. The felling of forests also went against traditional models of behaviour. The word ‘tika’ means erect, upright and correct – as a tree is upright and erect. It informs the concepts of tikanga – correct behaviour or action – and whakatika, which means to arise. Correct behaviours arise from within a person, as a tree rises from the ground.”
Raranga - weaving

Refer back to the dictionary activity where you learned the terminology. What can you see happening in these pictures? Can you put the process into order? If you are unsure, how can you find out?

Photo credits: copyright-free sources, and R McCallum, personal collection
Raranga Konae
(Weaving a 4 cornered kit)

Download the NCEA L.1 Visual Arts activity AS90917 through the link

Follow the step by step instructions to weave a kono (konae) in the video

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Wharariki

Click on the image to find out about harakeke’s versatile cousin

The harvesting instructions for wharariki are the same as for harakeke
Legend of Pīngao

“Pingao once lived in the sea with Tangaroa, but she fell in love with Kākaho who lived on the beach shore. She asked Tangaroa if she could go and live with Kākaho, but he advised against this. Not taking his advice she left the ocean, reached the beach and watching him waving handsomely in the breeze. When she reached Kākaho he rejected her and very distressed by this she tried to return to Tangaroa and back to the sea, but every time she tired the water receded further back and she never reached it. If you see pīngao you should bury it so it can return to the sea.

“In truth, by burying it the plant grown longer, stronger and becomes more golden because it is not exposed to the elements.”

“Another story told to the researcher was that Tāne and Takaroa were always fighting with each other. Takaroa pulled at the body of Tāne and Tāne pushed back at Takaroa. All the creatures and birds that lived between the two got tired of this constant fighting and had a hui in the middle of the night. A solution was found and they suggested to Tāne that he send Takaroa a peace offering. So he plucked out his eyebrows and called on Tāwhirimātea to give the koha to Takaroa. Takaroa being so powerful just laughed and told him to take them away exclaiming ‘What an insult!’ Poor Tāwhirimātea was caught between the two and so he threw the eyebrows into the sandhills. They grew into the beautiful pīkao plant which now acts as a barrier between the two gods Tāne and Takaroa.”

From p.75 “He Kete Taoka, Southern Cultural Materials Resource Kit” © 2008 Rua Mccallum
Wharawhara (coastal asteria)

How many other names can you find for this beautiful coastal epiphytic plant? Use this resource to find out more, including a legendary account of Māui, mōteatea (traditional chant), waiata, and images.
Tī Kōuka

The image below links you to the Ngāi Tahu mahinga kai video series, with an additional link to the education framework associated with each of the contexts. Tī Kōuka features as one of our taonga species of great use in a variety of ways.

Tōī is a smaller, broad-leaved cousin of tī kōuka, found in wet hilly and mountainous regions. The tree bears a majestic single clump of leaves atop a massive, unbranched stem (up to 80-cm diameter) or on sparingly branched stout stems.

Tī Kōuka Inquiry sheet to accompany the video, link here

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NEINEI

The images link you to seven sources of information about the Neinei plant. There are some similarities and some different information contained through these accounts. Chart the commonalities and differences.
Tīkumu
mountain daisy

The images link you to six sources of information about Tīkumu.
There are some similarities and some different information contained through these accounts.
What has been new learning for you?
Where does tīkumu thrive?

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Houī

- How many other names can you find for Houī?
- Is it ribbonwood or lacebark? Or both?
- How many native species?
- What are its uses?

The article linked below provides information about our taonga species, including houī.

Video link above
Rongoā: on-line texts

“Rongoā Māori is an important aspect of health care to many Māori, representing diversity of practice and a holistic approach to health. Native plant based remedies are an integral part of treatment along with physical therapies and spiritual healing.”
(link to full article here)
“Ngāi Tahu Mahinga Kai” series features 12 ten minute episodes filmed in the stunning landscape of Te Waipounamu. It captures the stories and essence of traditional food gathering practices passed down through the generations. The series offers a window into the lives of Ngāi Tahu whānau carrying on the food gathering traditions of their ancestors – from tuna and pātiki on the east coast, medicinal rongoā plants in the north and kanakana in the far south. Through our characters we explore the evolution of the practice – its past, present and future and we learn about the species and their natural environment.
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</tbody>
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- Possible plant sources: harakeke, houi, kiekie, pīngao, kuta, pīngao, kuta, harakeke, houi, tī kōuka, harakeke, houi, tikumu, tōī, harakeke, tī kōuka, houi, harakeke, tī kōuka, tikumu (wharawhara), tōī, harakeke, harakeke, houi, harakeke, tikumu, houi, tikumu, harakeke, houi, houri, kiekie, pīngao, harakeke, houi, kiekie, kuta, raupō, raupō, houi, raupō.
Dozens of articles on native plant/tree species have been published in Te Karaka; here are the links to some of those. The information is now published in “Treasures of Tane” – a valuable resource.
Kiekie, ambrosia of the bush

“Legend has it that a character by the name of Tamatakuariki travelled down the Poutini coast in search of his wife and, in his haste, shreds of his pōkeka (rain cape) were torn off by the vegetation. These fell to the ground and germinated as kiekie. One name of the plant is therefore Te Pōkeka-a-Tama, Tama’s raincoat.”

GeoNews article Issue 180 Mar–Apr 2023  Rob Tipa, (Ngāi Tahu)
Best Quiz Creation Sites for Education

- ClassMarker.
- EasyTestMaker.
- Factile.
- Fyrebox.
- Gimkit.
- GoConqr.
- Google Forms.
- GoToQuiz.

your students could create their own quiz to test their understanding of the story – here are some platforms they could use. Which other ones do you like to use?

Suitable for Years 4-13
“Nāku te rourou, nāu te rourou, ka ora ai te iwi”

• Do share any resources you create with us, as we’d love to celebrate with the papatipu rūnanga and marae nearby what is happening with our history in your schools.

• This whakataukī says: With your (food) basket, and with mine, the people will thrive.

• A modern application of this whakataukī in this context is that with your contributions of knowledge, skills and resources, and with the ideas, links and resources I’ve shared, we all contribute to the understanding and knowledge of all.

• Please email to: matauranga@ngaitahu.iwi.nz