Te Whakatika

The Aotearoa New Zealand Professional Practice Journal for Outdoor and Environmental Learning.

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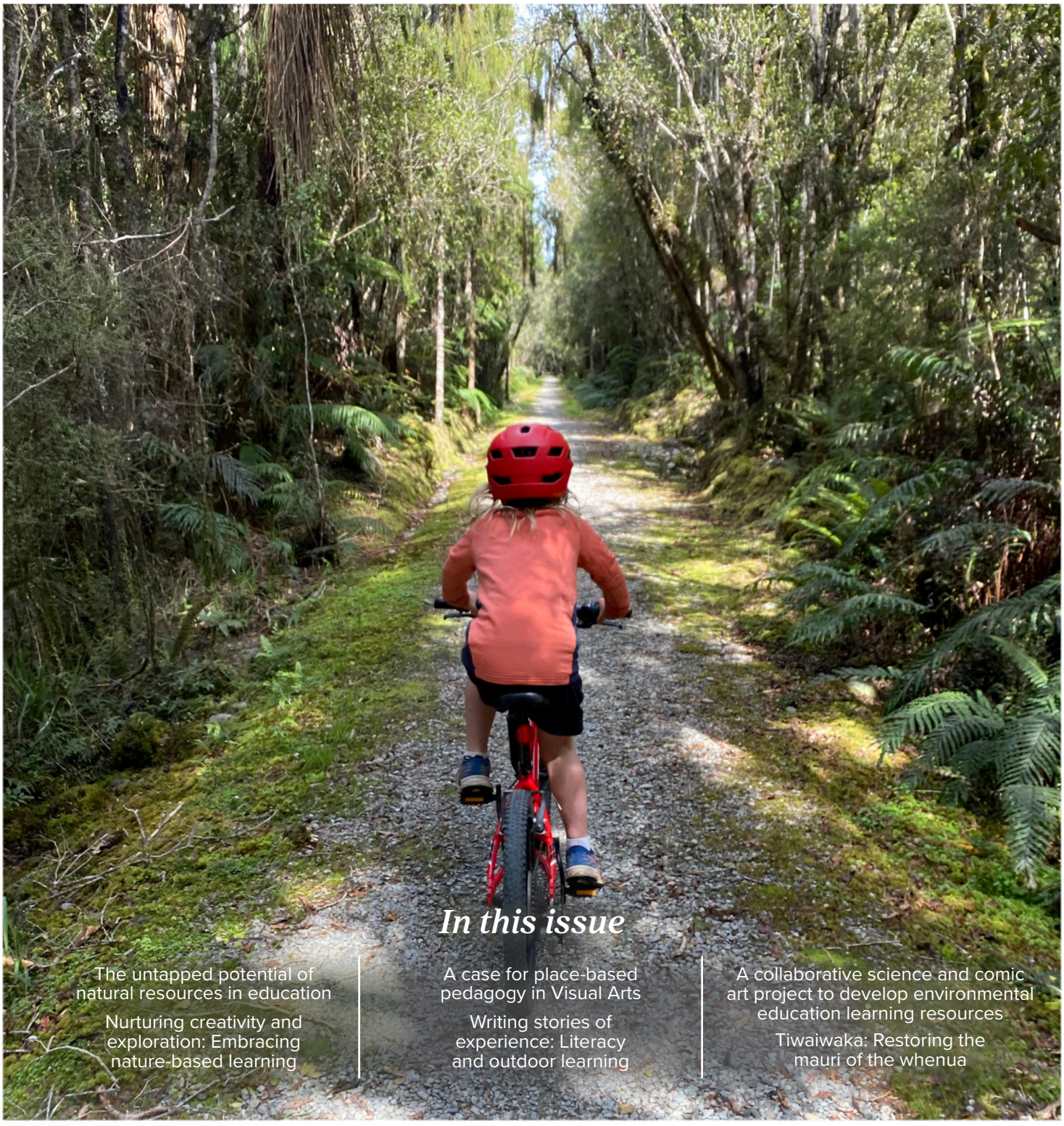

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nzaee

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EONZ

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A review of all articles occurs before publication and blind review can be arranged for academic articles upon request. If you would like support and guidance with your writing we are happy to assist.

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Te Whakatika Purpose statement

Sitting at the nexus of academic inquiry and educational practice, *Te Whakatika* seeks to create a space to share good practice, innovative ideas, and critical engagement in outdoor and environmental learning.

In doing so, *Te Whakatika* seeks to:

- Provide access to the space between academics and practitioners, to connect these spaces.
- Encourage academics to make their work accessible to practitioners through practical application
- Encourage practitioners (teachers and other education providers) to share good practice and innovative ideas from their work through writing articles.
- Encourage strong connections between theory, research, and practice
- Encourage and support high quality learning and teaching in outdoor and environmental contexts.

Te Whakatika Editorial Spring 2024

If I was to describe the operative word for this issue it would be ‘connect’. I say this because when I came to write an overview I realised that in some way or other the authors writing was underpinned by the word ‘connect’, ‘to connect,’ ‘connection,’ ‘connecting’...my online thesaurus gave other words such as join, link, fix, tie, unite, bond, associate, relate, hook up, link up... I looked at the articles and each one could easily use these words when linking their ideas to outdoor learning and to connect learners to the environment. This was an unexpected outcome of my review but one that I felt was appropriate to the intention of this issue of Te Whakatika. The intention was to have articles about creativity in outdoor teaching and learning. So, in this issue we have an exciting range of writing where each article connects to the environment as a centre for learning.

The journal begins with Celia Hogan’s article narrating how a bike ride taught a lesson in resourcefulness and creativity. Celia’s article also highlights how a nature-connected classroom can let students develop their creativity through hands-on learning, especially for ākonga with visual and kinaesthetic learning styles. Helen Upson picks up on a similar theme and tells of how regular visits to a local gully has enabled early childhood learners to develop observational and artistic skills to connect and create among other things a nature-loom.

In an interview with Sian Crowley, an environmental educator, I asked how Sian’s initiative to create nature-based podcasts led to artistic comics drawn by illustrator Maya Templar. Through a chance meeting Sian and Maya have collaborated to create a comic format to support deeper engagement and connection to nature through vibrant visual storytelling. Continuing with visual arts, Julia Johnston’s article explores place-based education. Referencing the new curriculum, Te Mataiaho, Julia describes her pedagogy to build understanding about the effects of a visual arts education rooted in local culture and environment, and intrinsically linked to mātauranga Māori.

At Whenua Iti Outdoors (WIO), Bree Arnott’s insight into the pedagogy of the lead teacher and the impact of an environmental sustainability programme makes for informative reading. Students from secondary schools in the Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough area study in a Level 3 NCEA accredited programme. A key aspect of the programme is to connect students to various ways of contributing to environmental sustainability, whether at home, through volunteering, or in careers. In an article written by myself, Maureen Legge, I connect a research paper where composite stories portray Year 7 & 8 students’ experiences in the outdoors. I note

the quality of student writing and suggest how invaluable outdoor learning is for many reasons but in this case, I suggest a connection to literacy and expressive writing drawn from student participation.

Chris North's research was inspired by hearing teachers and principals' concerns about the impact the Health and Safety at Work Act on EOTC. In this research Chris notes how perception and observance of the law was limiting student access to the rich and diverse educational experiences available through EOTC. The findings suggest some combination of four enabling factors: competent staff, systems to minimise paperwork, a specialised EOTC coordinator to support teachers, a whole-school commitment to EOTC, and attending professional development courses can help teachers address constraints. This means that through careful research and planning EOTC can be programmed to meet educational outcomes while ensuring the safety of participants.

The final article is an interview, by Sophie Hoskins, where Rob McGowan, also known as Pā Ropata, explains and elaborates his publication Tiwaiwaka. This booklet explores the guiding philosophy of a group working to heal the mauri of the whenua. Pā Ropata suggests that the best practice for people wanting to protect the environment, is to care for the places where indigenous species belong and to nurture wonder, and awe to engage connection with Papatūānuku. In the closing part of the journal Sophie Hoskins and Becky McCormack again enrich outdoor learning practice with a range of interesting and relevant resources to hook into when teaching. David Hill an editor from the *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning* (JAEOL) lists an update of research relating to the outdoors.

I hope you enjoy reading and maybe using some of the ideas that emerge from this issue of Te Whakatika. I am always on the lookout for articles to publish and would welcome hearing about your teaching, planning and motivations for outdoor and environmental education. Or perhaps you could pass on a copy of Te Whakatika to a colleague who might be able to contribute. My contact details are below or you can respond to the Expression of Interest, posted on the EONZ and NZAEE websites. As summer approaches I am mindful that water safety practices need to be high on our agenda when engaging in outdoor activities with family and friends. Encourage others to take heed of this advice so that they can enjoy and connect with the outdoors in safe ways.

Ngā mihi Maureen Legge

Editor *Te Whakatika*

The untapped potential of natural resources in education

Celia Hogan

The sound of gravel crunched beneath our bike tyres as my children, and I traversed the Wilderness Trail on the West Coast. The lush ngahere and the sounds of the manu painted a picturesque backdrop for our mini adventure. It was one of those moments where te taiao seemed to cradle us on our pedal-powered adventure. Our destination was just 16 kilometres away, but little did I know that this journey would be marked by an impromptu lesson on resourcefulness and creativity, one that I would reflect on and retell many times. Just halfway into the ride, my daughter's bike chain casing fell victim to a malfunction. I had a 'face palm' moment when I realised, I hadn't packed any zip ties. The thought of walking the remaining 9 kilometres with a 6-year-old wasn't sounding tempting. However, I decided to embrace my inner Bush Woman as I recalled a skill I had honed over the years—making rope from natural fibres. I hadn't seen any ti kouka but I thought I could apply the same principle if I could find another plant resembling tī kōuka or harakeke. I stumbled upon a long, fibrous plant and while it broke apart easily in its original form, with some gentle twisting and a bit of patience, I fashioned it into a surprisingly sturdy length of rope.

With my improvised tool, I secured the chain casing back to the bike and we were off again, laughing and pedalling along the trail. That makeshift rope held up for months, a testament to nature's ingenuity and the power of creative problem-solving. Just like Bear Grylls, this experience illustrated the remarkable capability of using natural resources to provide solutions. It made me ponder how our ancestors thrived using the gifts of Papatūānuku long before the arrival of modern technology.

Chain repaired. (C. Hogan)

The nature-connected classroom

There seems to be a growing sense of detachment from the very world we call home. In our journey on this earth, it feels like we've somehow lost sight of the interconnectedness that binds us to te taiao. Yet, as educators, we find ourselves at a unique crossroads—a chance to rekindle that connection through creative, hands-on learning experiences that utilise the natural resources surrounding us.

Incorporating natural resources into teaching settings brings forth a wealth of potential benefits. When we engage students through experiential learning, we foster connections that move beyond mere observation. Ākonga have an innate curiosity about the world around them, a yearning to investigate, ask questions, and explore the uncharted realms of nature (Gurholt et al.,

Made from natural materials. (C. Hogan)

Woven Fiber (C. Hogan)

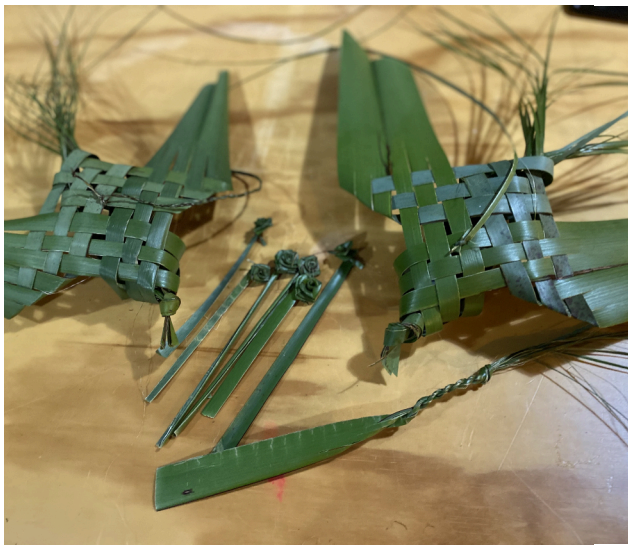
2016). By making learning tangible, we create a space where wonder and creativity flourish. This is especially true for ākonga who resonate more with visual and kinaesthetic learning styles, making education a vivid experience rather than a passive one (Ministry of Education, 2017).

Imagine a classroom beyond the four walls filled with vibrant colours and textures—leaves, stones, shells and other components that enrich sensory experiences and encourage a deep appreciation for the environment. Weaving with harakeke, making kawakawa balm or creating art from branches can lead to discussions about sustainability, creativity, and cultural heritage. Such projects have the power to inspire stewardship and responsibility for our surroundings.

The versatility of natural resources

Among the extraordinary offerings of te taiao, native plants come to the forefront as a treasure trove of potential. Harakeke stands as a brilliant example held in high esteem by Māori for its versatility. Used for making ropes, fishing nets, garments, and much more, harakeke illustrates the strength of relationship between indigenous knowledge and the natural world (Vennell, 2019). Similarly, tī kōuka boasts fibrous leaves valued for their strength. Because tī kōuka fibres didn't shrink in water they were used as anchor ropes (Vennell, 2019). Other uses included fishing nets, paraerae (sandals) and kawe (back straps). When ākonga learn about its applications, they're not just absorbing facts— they're becoming part of a dialogue that spans generations. These natural materials promote exploration and discussion while tying ākonga to the cultural heritage of Aotearoa.

A pūrākau woven into lessons builds context and encourages deeper connections to the history and ecology surrounding them. Pirita or kareao commonly known as supplejack grew from the tail of the eel god Tunaroa. The pūrākau goes that Tunaroa insulted Māui's wife, so Māui ambushed him and hacked him to pieces throwing his head into the moana, giving us sea eels and his body to the awa giving us river eels. When he was hacking Tunaroa blood sprayed around and spatted birds like the pūkeko and kākāriki, and plants such as rimu, tōtara and matai. The tip of the tail took root in the forest and became the supplejack vine which also used to create traps for eels. As supplejack was tough and pliable it



Chain repaired. (C. Hogan)

Bow and Arrow. (C. Hogan)

was excellent for making baskets, sheep hurdles, binding fences together, and canoes and platforms. It could also be hollowed out to make a musical instrument. The story embedded in these plants remind us that every living being has its own whakapapa, and each material can unlock creative potential and as well as historical context.

I recall a moment when relief teaching in Invercargill, I stepped into an unfamiliar classroom with students engaged in free play. I quietly spread out some natural resources, a mix of things I had made of harakeke and tī kōuka alongside a pile of natural loose objects such as, driftwood, shells and different nuts and cones. I stepped back and just observed as most of the class gathered around asked what they were. I just shrugged and gestured with my hands for them to explore. In the absence of instructions, the student's creativity knew no bounds; they explored, imagined, and created. The harakeke balls were scooped up and taken to the kitchen play area; the harakeke headband and a piece of driftwood were placed on one boy's head to make an airplane headpiece with commands being given left, right and centre; and a game was created where the nuts and cones were threaded down a cylinder. I observed that by simply providing an opportunity and promoting discovery without instructions, the children transformed what could have been a stock standard day into a whirlwind of imagination and play.

Practical learning through nature

From early childhood settings to secondary classrooms, engaging with both nature and natural resources can take many forms—be it creating replica mōkihi - a water craft used by Māori to cross the wide awa of the South Island, carving a wooden spoon from driftwood, making natural dyes out of plants, weaving a fishing net from harakeke or even crafting a bow and arrow - there are so many possibilities we are only limited by our own selves and the time we allow. Time to explore, time to fail, time to problem solve and figure it out, all without direct instruction (unless asked for) which helps to nurture resilience, creativity and ingenuity.

How can we, as educators, engage ākonga in projects utilising nature and natural resources? One effective approach is to inspire creativity by modelling inquiry-based learning.

For example, when children ask for a particular item or tool, instead of providing it outright, we can pose a question that opens possibilities: 'How might we create that using what nature provides?' This simple yet profound shift in thinking can uncover boundless creative avenues. This is an invitation to merge creativity with the wisdom of our ancestors and explore the whenua and natural resources, so we might inspire a sense of stewardship and connection to te taiao and engage our youngest of citizens.

About the author

Celia Hogan is the founder of Little Kiwis Nature Play, a provider of professional development programmes focused on embedding outdoor philosophies and nature-based education into ECE centres and primary schools across New Zealand. She is an engaging public speaker and has over 25 years' experience working in outdoor education across ECE, primary, secondary and tertiary.

Happy Rider. (C. Hogan)

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Nurturing creativity and exploration: Embracing nature-based learning

Helen Upson

Introduction

Creativity and exploration go hand in hand. Vincent Van Gogh once said that if you truly love nature, you will find beauty everywhere. When I read his words, I reflect on the tamariki I've educated. In my experience, tamariki possess an innate love for nature; they see beauty everywhere they go. They have a natural ability not to judge, to see things as they are, to explore, to create and to use their imagination. Through this article, I introduce three Art activities using nature based learning that can be implemented in any situation. They do not require a lot of resources.

Hi, my name is Helen Upson I have been an educator for 20 years. Throughout my education journey I have often found myself outside, exploring our local community looking for local outside places to be my classroom. I have now found myself organising excursions into the Mangaiti Gully in Hamilton where we discover both nature and art. I have worked in many early childhood centres with thousands of tamariki, while much has changed over the years, one constant remains tamariki will always be creative no matter where they are. However, we live in a fast-paced world where our tamariki are busy: in busy environments, busy home life, and busy centres – my question is, how can our tamariki find beauty everywhere when they're so busy?

Plows (2017) suggests real-life experiences and excursions are valuable to deepen children's involvement in the wider world and evoke their ongoing curiosity. Brownlee (2007, cited in Plows) highlights the value of real experiences such as smelling the fragrances of different herbs and feeling the texture of a pinecone or a leaf. These moments offer a respite and a chance to explore the local community and embrace the natural environment as an extension of our classroom. To embrace nature-based learning you need to find moments to step outside, breathe, and slowdown, which can be incredibly rejuvenating.

Each week the tamariki from our centre embark on an adventure to the Mangaiti Gully in Hamilton. This fantastic location offers endless opportunities for tamariki to explore, learn, and unleash their creativity. As we journey into the gully our tamariki need to carry their own bags therefore we keep our Art supplies minimal—just a pad of paper, pencils, string, scissors, and of course, a camera. We are very lucky to be able to access the Mangaiti Gully, however, my ideas for nature-based art learning can be applied in most localities such as a community park.

In this article, I share nature based art learning activities developed from excursions to Mangaiti Gully. The activities are a nature loom, drawing from observation and photography. We often need to tailor our art activities to reflect the changing weather and seasons as this can have an impact on the choices of outdoor art. This means we can capture the essence of each season through the eyes of our tamariki. For example, in summertime the gully bursts with vibrant colours to inspire our nature art.

Nature Loom (H. Upson)

Creating a nature loom

To create a nature loom we encourage tamariki to select the biggest sticks they can find and lash them together using string to form a square and thereby create a loom frame. In my experience it never turns out to be perfectly straight so the nature loom can be any shape and size. Once the frame is created, string from top to bottom and from side to side is wrapped to create the warp and weft threads. The next step is searching for natural materials that can be woven into the loom.

This kind of artwork reflects Te Whāriki, (Ministry of Education, 2017). "Weaving a whāriki takes knowledge, skills and time it is almost always done collaboratively" (p.10). Interpreting this concept recognises the importance of developing teamwork, communication and the individual skills of each tamaiti. We encourage tamariki to protect Papatūānuku and be kaitiaki taking care of the environment by gathering from the ground as they collect sticks, leaves, ferns and flowers. After weaving these found natural objects into the nature loom the proud tamariki take it onto the bus and back to the centre where it is hung as their art from Mangaiti Gully.

Observational skills and creative expression

As a kaiako, I often remind myself that 'less is more'. When we venture into the gully with only a pad of paper and a pencil, it allows tamariki to explore the world through their own eyes and express themselves with simplicity and authenticity. By limiting the resources, we allow their creativity to flourish without distractions. Tamariki may create drawings that reflect their unique perspectives, capturing what they see, know, and feel in the moment. One child might carefully draw a map that retraces our exploration path, marking the trees, streams, and landmarks we've encountered, while another might sketch their family, perhaps connecting their experiences in nature with feelings of belonging and comfort. Some tamariki use this time to express their emotions, drawing pictures that mirror how they're feeling on that day, whether it's excitement, curiosity, or calm.

Observational Drawing (H. Upson)

Plows (2017) emphasises the importance of listening to tamariki and allowing their ideas to guide the experience. I've found this especially true during art activities. To facilitate this, it's crucial to create a comfortable and peaceful space where tamariki can find their inspiration. In the gully, we always make sure to find a quiet spot to sit and reflect, providing a calm environment where tamariki feel safe to express themselves. We often bring a tarp to spread on the ground to allow us to sit together comfortably, regardless of the ground conditions and take the opportunity to breathe, slow down and let go of the busy-ness of their lives. Being at ease physically helps tamariki relax mentally, freeing their minds to wander and explore through their art.

In these quiet moments, I make a point of truly listening to what tamariki say and observing what captures their attention (Plows, 2017). Sometimes it's the delicate rustling of leaves in the wind or the way light dances on a stream. At other times, it's the shapes of the trees or the small creatures they spot along the path. I use my observations of the tamariki to guide the creative process. For instance, if a child comments on the vibrant colours of a bird or the intricate patterns on a leaf, I may encourage them to capture that in their drawing or suggest a future art project

that expands on their observations. By being attuned to their natural curiosity, I can better support and extend their creative experiences. This process fosters not only artistic expression but also deepens their observational skills, guiding them to see and appreciate the intricate details of the natural world. Through a minimalist approach to art, tamariki learn that inspiration can come from the simplest things and that beauty is all around them, waiting to be discovered and expressed through their own unique artistic ways.

Children's photographs are captured art

Aurora Opinion (2022) beautifully captures the essence of photography for children, stating, ...taking photos allows children to recognise that the world is filled with beautiful details and that focusing their attention on one particular aspect of it yields beauty (p. 1). This concept resonates deeply with the way tamariki experience the world. Naturally curious and observant, tamariki see beauty in things that adults might overlook. Photography is a remarkable way to provide tamariki with the opportunity to see nature and their environment through a new lens. When a tamaiti holds a camera in their hands, they gain the power to capture moments that matter to them. It may be something as grand as a towering tree or as small and personal as a flower, their friend's smile, or even the patterns on their gumboot. Each click of the shutter is their unique interpretation of the world, a snapshot of how they see and engage with their surroundings. Photographs are a way for them to document an individual journey and perspective.

Photography can also be a medium through which they can express emotions and ideas alongside their relationship with the world. Moreover, in today's digital age, photography is an accessible and modern way for tamariki to engage with it as an artform. Using phones and other devices they are likely to be familiar with a camera making it a natural extension of their everyday lives. However, by giving tamariki the chance to use a camera in an intentional, creative context beyond selfies, we encourage them to see the world around them as a source of artistic inspiration and beauty. Through the lens of a camera, tamariki can frame their vision as Art; patterns on gumboots; light and shadow on leaves, a friends smile or a big tree; bring into focus details that catch their attention to reveal their perspective of the world around them.

In conclusion, outdoor experiences can stimulate the imagination of tamariki as they learn to observe, hear, and feel the natural world. Incorporating nature into an intentional creative and educative practice provides the experience of learning about the natural environment's shapes, colours, patterns, and objects through an artistic framework. In addition, it can broaden the relationship tamariki have with Papatūānuku including recognition of the impact they can have on her. Learning in an empowering guided setting, tamariki have the agency to generate and act on their creative ideas with the added possibility of developing knowledge and skills in areas that have sparked their interest.

About the author

Helen Upson was originally from Rotorua and now lives in Hamilton, where she has dedicated the past 20 years to working in Early Childhood Education. Over the years, Helen has developed a deep passion for outdoor learning, focusing on teaching children and kaiako the benefits of gardening and environmental exploration.

Photo taken by child (H. Upson)

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A collaborative science and comic art project to develop environmental education learning resources

Dr Maureen Legge interviews Sian Crowley and Maya Templer

"An understanding of the natural world, and what's in it is a source of not only great curiosity but great fulfilment."

David Attenborough

What happens when you bring a nature enthusiast and an illustrator together?... You get Learning Pods. I recently had the opportunity to interview two women, Sian Crowley and Maya Templar who have worked collaboratively to create comic art to teach environmental care and protection. I began by asking Sian Crowley - Founder and Programmes Manager at The Seed Pod how it all started.

Sian: I was a nature child, I grew up climbing trees, seeking out the bugs, learning through play and exploration, observing the world around me day-to-day, and taking time to question my observations, and dive deep into my passions.

Maureen: Wow great! Where in Aotearoa New Zealand did you grow up?

Sian: I grew up in the heart of the North Island – Taupō. Living there the environment provided me and my whānau with endless opportunities for nature connection. We had tūī singing beautiful melodies in our garden with Lake Taupō and the Waikato River a short walk away. The forests were where walking, photography and conservation work became favourite pastimes. I think that if it wasn't for my childhood experiences which sparked deep passion and care for nature, I likely wouldn't be where I am today as an environmental educator. I now live in Ōtautahi-Christchurch and have been learning more and more about these new landscapes each day. What I miss the most are the tūī... but they are getting closer to Ōtautahi-Christchurch City with ongoing restoration work taking place in the Port Hills.

Maureen: That sounds wonderful. You said you are now an environmental educator. Where do you do this work?

Sian: I am honoured to be able to work with students and community members here in Aotearoa through various organisations as an environmental educator, programme manager and founder.

I am a Programme Manager of BLAKE in Ōtautahi Christchurch. At BLAKE[1] we utilise 360° videos filmed by New Zealand Geographic, with Virtual Reality (NZ-VR) technology to bring the moana-ocean into the classroom for an immersive marine education experience. The student participants are immersed in several underwater virtual reality experiences comparing pristine marine environments with degraded ones. They also learn about our taonga species under the surface. I present in-school delivery of this programme and liase with teachers and other local educators planning visits and events.

[1] BLAKE is a New Zealand organisation that aims to inspire young New Zealanders to care for the environment through activities and adventures that encourage environmental awareness and leadership and instil a deeper sense of kaitiakitanga.

Maureen: That sounds like an exciting and very relevant programme. Do you do any other work with the BLAKE organisation?

Sian: Yes, we also have BLAKE Inspire programmes nationwide which bring together groups of either teachers or students. This is a week-long, action-packed environmental education and leadership development programme in partnership with the Ministry for the Environment. Throughout the week participants work together with scientists, environmental experts, a diverse range of leaders and other like-minded peers to develop knowledge and skills related to environmental care and protection. Prior to BLAKE I was an Education Coordinator at Kids Greening Taupō[2]. My mahi involved coordinating large-scale multi-year restoration projects, student leadership teams, education programmes in schools and kindergartens, teacher professional development, and establishing and creating online resources (Online Nature Classroom and Nature Connectors).

I was lucky enough to participate in both programmes as a student myself during my year 13 school year. These programmes, as well as the Kiwi Forever programme are what changed my career trajectory completely. Outside of my core mahi I have volunteered a large chunk of my free time working on national projects; namely the NZ Association for Environmental Education, Forest & Bird Youth, and now, The Seed Pod. The Seed Pod was born out of my deep-seated passion for environmental education and my commitment to bridging the gaps I had observed in the sector.

[2] Kids Greening Taupō enables young people to participate in real life projects to connect in a culturally responsive way to their local environment and community, increasing biodiversity, student leadership and educational outcomes, and shaping the future of our Place.

Maureen: Clearly, you bring together a strong background in work related to the environment and the work you now do.

Sian: Yes, I established The Seed Pod because I wanted to create resources that built on my strengths and that were holistic, interconnected, and collaborative that combined the arts and environmental education to enable cross-curricular engagement in nature connection. It started as a podcast, as a place to share personal stories of nature connection, experiences, adventures, emotions, challenges, career paths etc and quickly evolved into a hub which combined stories with education resources, photography, design and community events. Through The Seed Pod, we are not only creating new environmental education content, but we are also collaborating with educators nationally to celebrate, uplift, and strengthen the work of the collective.

Seed Pods. (S. Crowley)

Maureen: So, you are the founder of The Seed Pod.

Sian: Yes, In March 2023 my ‘passion project’, The Seed Pod began as my social enterprise. I drew from my learnings from establishing

Forest & Bird Youth in Wellington, the BLAKE programmes here in Ōtautahi-Christchurch, and my work at Kids Greening Taupō.

Maureen: The Seed Pod name evokes nature and the idea of sowing seeds of learning.

Sian: Exactly right! To sow the seeds, I invite guests to share stories of their childhood, adventures, experiences and favourite nature facts; in essence, the podcasts are a collective space to share our awe of nature. In a world full of challenges, podcasts are a medium to celebrate a connection to the environment, to people, and to our well-being through storytelling. My intent is to take listeners with us, sparking curiosity, admiration, and care for nature; in turn, creating a positive base for action.

Maureen: That sounds exciting!

Sian: Yes, it is. I believe in the power of having passionate educators and guardians who can nourish and support the passions of children and young adults when they are in the pre-to early teen stages of their life and journey.

Maureen: Great, so what else has evolved since the podcasts from The Seed Pod?

Sian: Organically we have grown into the environmental education resource space through the development of our free education resources, "Learning Pods". These new resource collections are aimed at students aged 10-14 years and have been developed to follow on from our podcast stories, engaging our younger audiences in creative ways.

Our Learning Pods provide access for younger students to our podcast stories by featuring short audio bite stories, transcripts, science communication comics, and visually engaging resource sheets with activities and games that get students to play, observe, discover, and share along their environmental education journey. We have now released 12 Learning Pods. These pods build upon stories from our incredible guests during Season 1 of the podcast. Topics covered so far include Archey's frogs, camouflage, habitats, Peripatus-worm-like creatures, rocks, fossils, defence strategies, marine identification, food chains, citizen science, adventure mapping, storytelling, passion mapping, vision planning and goal setting, macroinvertebrates, freshwater tohu-signs, native forest giants, measurement, adaptations, carnivorous plants, identity, worldview, culture and society, performing arts and mating displays.

Maureen: How have you developed the 'Learning Pods'? Are they written resources?

Sian: Our resources are printable physical worksheets and activities which encourage local nature connection and skill development. An educator can bring up a Learning Pod online and play the audio sound bite whilst students read printed transcripts and science communication comics. They can then follow on with a couple of our resources based on those story topics. Our resources were created to encourage students to ask questions, explore local places, and dive deeper into learning, with a place to share personal connections with nature and success stories and span the curriculum. These activities can easily be used in a classroom, or at home, with many students, or individual learners.

Maureen: Do you have a favourite Learning Pod?

Sian: One of my favourite Learning Pods is based on river ecosystems and stories from Spencer Potbury. In this Learning Pod, there is a great worksheet where students cut out visual

tohu that could be observed in a waterway to determine its health. Learners then group these tohu into signs for either a healthy, or an unhealthy waterway, and can use these tohu when observing their local waterway. There are also opportunities to learn through art, science, maths, and English whilst encouraging nature connection locally for example through, physical education, health, and geography.

Maureen: I have had a look at this Learning Pod and in a part that looked like a comic I noticed that Spencer Potbury talks about being diagnosed as ADHD. He makes some very good points about how learning in the outdoors can help children who are neurodiverse. He notes that being outdoors is sensory and can be hands-on, very suitable for someone who can't sit still in a classroom. I am interested in the idea of comic form illustrations that were in this unit. How did that come about?

Sian: Thanks to our talented lead illustrator, Maya Templer, we have science communication comics of guest stories included in half of our Learning Pods. These comics have provided opportunities for deeper engagement in our environmental education through vibrant visual storytelling.

Maureen: How did that happen?

Sian: I was taking part in the Australia/New Zealand youth passion-project micro-grants programme - Blackbird Protostars[3]. By chance, I met illustrator Maya Templer. At the time Maya was working on another project where she had learnt more about breaking down complex ideas through art.

Maureen: Maya, time to bring you into our interview. Quite simply could you please tell me about your involvement?

Maya: I am an illustrator. As an illustrator, I spend a lot of time drawing beautiful things but there is a part of me that is not completely satisfied by these pursuits. When I met Sian at the Blackbird Protostars event, I was very excited by the work she was doing in environmental care.

Sian: Yeah, and as we were both based in Christchurch at the time, we were excited by the prospect of meeting like-minded people.

Comic Pic. (S. Crowley)

Maya: After meeting Sian one chilly day on my morning bike ride, I had an idea. I quickly sent Sian a series of voice messages asking whether she would be interested in collaborating on a series of comics. By then I had listened to a few episodes of The Seed Pod (podcast) and loved the stories within them. I thought creating visuals to go with each episode would add another dimension to the podcast, and of course, I would learn a lot in the process... It felt good knowing that I could use my drawing skills to spread environmental awareness and to educate on issues such as climate change.

Maureen: How does this collaboration work?

3 Blackbird Foundation Protostars is a part of the Blackbird Foundation whose mission is to unleash creativity in young people. Protostars is a micro-grant program for young people with passion projects. We give young people under 25 from AU/NZ, $1000 to work on their passion projects

Maya: Working with Sian is a collaborative and dynamic process. After selecting a section of a podcast, she creates transcripts of story snippets, and I draft an art script that outlines how the comic will unfold visually. There's always a lot of back-and-forth between us—there are always details of nature that I would miss without Sian's feedback. From this script, I create thumbnails and a rough version of the comic.

My illustrations are supported by reference photos. The early drafts evolve into more polished line art and a rough colour pass, but it's at this stage that we often reshape the panels and add new elements to better communicate the main idea. The final step is adding lighting and the finished colours, bringing the comic to life with depth and vibrancy to create an engaging series of illustrations in the form of a science communication comic.

Maureen: I am curious. Why choose comic art?

Maya: My art style has been inspired by two things, my dad who is also an illustrator and watching cartoons in the 2010s. As a child, I watched cartoons, such as Adventure Time and Regular Show on weekend afternoons with my father, while we worked on creative projects. If you compare the work I make now, to that of my father when he was the same age, the way we draw is incredibly similar. However, my style has also changed over time and diverged as I have been influenced by other media.

Maureen: What has been the impact of these resources?

Sian: I feel through the auditory podcasts and Maya illustrating the science comics we have been able to extend our reach into the community. From a pedagogical perspective, the combined free resources offer learners a visual and auditory means to gain knowledge and understanding of the various topics. The colours of the comic illustrations are vibrant and capture details of the topic while portraying it simply.

A wonderful local mum who homeschools her three children told me, "The Seed Pod science communication comics have been a fun way to engage in learning with my children." When I asked her why she thought that, she said, "My son loves graphic novels and really enjoys the comics. Even though he is still learning to read, through the comic illustrations, he can grasp the storylines and ask further questions for comprehension. I think the colour choices used by the artist bring life to the lessons in each comic".

The same mum said that she felt "The Learning Pods work well for homeschooling by offering a weekly focus for science. Through them, my children can cover reading and writing as well as diving deeply into science topics through the variety of resources included in each learning pod. The resources suit the different visual, auditory and kinaesthetic learning needs for each of my children".

Maureen: This mum values the comics for the way they support her children's learning. Do you have any other feedback?

Sian: Yes, the North American Association for Environmental Education has given us high praise mentioning our Learning Pods in a social media post saying, "Ideal for environmental educators seeking inclusive, nature-based learning strategies, these educational tools include comics, worksheets, and passion mapping templates to help students connect deeply with their nature interests".

Secondary school student leaders have also begun to use our resources. Poppy a year 13

student from Hagley College has run events utilising our games/activities. Poppy told us, "Your tracking game is outstanding, thank you so much for creating this! Our Hagley College Year 10 students have a unit on kaitiakitanga this term and these resources fit in perfectly!"

Maureen: You both must feel pleased with that kind of feedback.

Maya: Yes, most certainly. This has been an invigorating art project for me because of the educational aspect and knowing that I'm using my skills in the interest of protecting the planet and inspiring the next generation. The learning opportunities are endless, and educators can take these how they are, or even better... organically grow the learning into areas of interest led by the students.

Maureen: So, do you two have any plans for working together in the future?

Sian: Well, The Seed Pod podcast now has 33 live episodes so there is still a lot of material for us to work from. Our community is an ever-growing hub. I feel inspired to keep up the work we are doing. Meeting Maya and having the chance to work alongside her has opened more possibilities for resource development. My childhood experiences and passions have led me to where I am today, and now I get to nurture these curiosities in the next generation of kaitiaki-guardians, including my child who is currently a wee baby.

Maureen: Wonderful! Where can we find your work?

Sian: To the readers of this article, if you are interested in following along and supporting us on this journey head over to our Linktree

Maureen: I would like to thank both of you for your contribution to this interview. Best of luck for future projects.
Sian: Ngā mihi nui on behalf of Maya and myself.

About the interviewees

Sian Crowley is the founder of The Seed Pod podcast and Learning Pods to engage tamariki and rangatahi in nature connection, conservation and restoration work. She takes pride in inspiring and motivating rangatahi inside and outside of the classroom to become environmental leaders.

Maya Templer currently works on the children's television show, What Now, as a designer. She brings a wealth of experience working on educational content, particularly with a sustainability focus. Maya has won several awards for her comics over the last 3 years

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A case for place-based pedagogy in visual arts

Julia Johnston

How can art enable students to perceive their local environment and culture in fresh and more meaningful ways? At present, the role of the visual arts within the New Zealand curriculum is multifaceted. It's a space for fostering creativity and critical thinking, while building on technical abilities and understanding of art-making processes. Context is almost always present in art making, providing a mode to explore concepts in an interdisciplinary way. The whakapapa of the new curriculum; Te Mātaiaho (Ministry of Education, 2023) emphasises mātaiahikā, a concept rooted in place-based learning through relationships with tangata whenua and local communities. This represents a clear push for a local curriculum that integrates authentic cultural, historical, and environmental knowledge. This article explores place-based education as an endeavour to build understanding surrounding the effects of a visual arts education rooted in local culture and environment, and intrinsically linked to mātauranga Māori.

The transition to Te Mātaiaho, with its emphasis on mātaiahikā, is a nod towards place-based pedagogy. Building a place-centred programme for visual arts can be as simple as using the local landscape as inspiration for art projects or as complex as engaging students in projects that solve community issues (Graham, 2007a). New Zealand research practitioner Jill Smith (2010) notes that when students see the connection between their learning and their immediate world, they are more likely to find meaning and motivation in their schoolwork. A place-based programme for visual arts can promote greater engagement when students work on projects that have tangible outcomes for their community.

An effective strategy for incorporating local content into visual arts is through the use of natural materials. For instance, a North American based study describes how students in an urban outdoor education centre created sculptures using materials found in their local river valley, reflecting their sense of place (Inwood, 2008). Inwood (2008) observed that this type of place-based approach to education transforms the role of the teacher from a conveyor of information to a facilitator of deep, inquiry-based learning. In Inwood's study, the students took the lead in locating materials (natural materials and rubbish) and raising what they considered the most significant features of the river valley. In line with this inquiry, Graham (2007) notes that "a critical pedagogy of place acknowledges that environmental issues are inextricably intertwined with social and political issues and that places have important cultural dimensions" (p.379). Place is personal. It's intrinsic to our identities. This can lead us into a vulnerable space. The adaptability of place-based education to varied environmental and contextual factors is critical (Inwood, 2008). The relationship between an individual and their place is often not uniform; and varies greatly among students (Yemini et al, 2023). This necessitates a more nuanced and sensitive approach to place-based education.

The New Zealand curriculum has long required that students learn about traditional and contemporary Māori art forms. This places a responsibility on teachers to develop an understanding and execute this with sensitivity and integrity. As kaiako, it's our role to critically reflect on often euro-centric practices which are ingrained within art education. Jill Smith (2010) raises the point that teachers in New Zealand face several challenges when teaching visual arts in a context that includes reference to Māori culture. A significant issue is the underrepresentation of indigenous teachers, leading to a reliance on non-indigenous teachers to deliver education about Māori art and culture. This situation necessitates that art teachers not only acquire in-depth knowledge of Māori art forms and their significance but also understand their traditions, practices, and beliefs. To embed mātauranga Māori into a place-based approach takes consultations with local experts. Smith (2010) highlights that there is also a need for teachers to be sensitive to their rights of access to Māori artworks and knowledge and wariness

Art from local sources (J. Johnston)

Rubbish for sculpture (J. Johnston)

surrounding appropriation. The relationships with tangata whenua take time to develop and are integral to ethical practice.

Yemini et al (2023) are critical of place-based curriculum because of its demanding nature. Implementing place-based education isn't just about adjusting lesson plans; it's a comprehensive shift in educational approach. This shift necessitates extensive teacher meetings and deeper collaborations with the local community. In a place-based framework, teachers are often required to lead the design of curricula and materials. The resource question isn't just about time or effort; it's about the broader infrastructure. For place-based education (PBE) to thrive, schools need support systems that aren't always readily available. This includes administrative backing to access local resources and experts because without these, integrating mātaiahikā risks being an idealistic concept rather than a practical, implementable model.

For art educators, the journey into Te Mātaiaho signifies a shift toward a curriculum that recognises and celebrates human connections to place. By connecting mātaiahikā with visual arts, art educators are aiming to create an education that is relevant to students' lives. Our pedagogy is teaching students to reflect on their community and its values. Ideally, sustainable visual arts learning should be about; utilising the materials around us; involving a collective effort; and collaborating across disciplines for an integrated approach to teaching locally based content. The expressions of a locally rooted place and culture within visual arts support a transformative place in education – where learning is not confined, but woven into the fabric of our surroundings, cultivating ākonga who are connected, responsive and resourceful custodians of cultural and environmental legacy.

About the author

Julia Johnston is a recent graduate of the Master of Teaching and Learning programme at the University of Otago (2023) and is currently working as a visual arts teacher in Ōtepoti. She holds a Bachelor of Fine Arts from the University of Canterbury and is passionate about integrating local curricula with outdoor & environmental learning experiences, drawing inspiration from her free-range upbringing on the West Coast.

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Nurturing a love of nature: Insights from the Environmental Sustainability Programme at Whenua Iti Outdoors

Bree Arnott

At Whenua Iti Outdoors (WIO), Rosey Joyce (Bachelor of Sustainability and Outdoor Education), the lead instructor for the Environmental Sustainability programme, integrates a deep appreciation for nature into her teaching. While the curriculum for the 12 secondary students who attended this year's programme focused on key learning outcomes, Rosey's approach centres on fostering a sense of wonder and awe for the natural world. As Marketing and Communications Manager with a deep interest in our environmental programming (holding an MSc. in Geography myself), I saw the student feedback that resulted from this programme and sat down to interview Rosey to find out more about how she was achieving these outcomes through her delivery practice. Rosey was happy to share her process with me for the purpose of writing this article.

The Environmental Sustainability programme's curriculum combines environmental sustainability, conservation practices, and mātauranga Māori through field-based activities. Over four weeks, delivered as four-day block courses across the first two school terms, students earn 20 NCEA Level 3 credits. Rosey thoughtfully weaves activities, discussions, and reflections into the curriculum to encourage students to express their feelings for nature openly. She shared the following key design principles that underpin this programme.

Stepping Outside the Comfort Zone

Students from Nelson, Tasman, and Marlborough schools are brought together for the first time, with an emphasis on the need for establishing good teamwork and building bonds from the start. Activities testing communication, leadership, and teamwork skills help students understand each other's strengths and weaknesses. Rosey recounted that she initiated a deep discussion early in the programme to challenge the students to express themselves and the connection they felt with nature. Rosey reflected on the students' response to this discussion, and acknowledges that "initially, I could see that I made them feel a bit uncomfortable, but that was okay. The idea was to challenge them to be okay outside their comfort zones – not just physically, but emotionally too. I wanted them to feel free to express their love of nature and normalise an emotive reaction to the natural world."

Kolb's (1984) Experiential Learning Theory suggests that stepping outside our comfort zones fosters deeper learning and development. Rosey agrees, saying that encouraging students to express themselves also meant challenging herself and her co-tutors to show their passion for nature consistently throughout the programme to help reinforce this learning to the students.

Taking Ownership

As part of the programme curriculum, students engage in activities such as predator control, trapping, or planting to support local conservation initiatives in Te Tauihu, particularly in the Moutere and Motueka catchments in Tasman District. It's an important component of the programme to

Preparing to Plant. (B. Arnott)

connect students with local initiatives. This year, Rosey wanted to extend the students, by having them develop a new local trapping and planting project in the Moutere catchment. After consulting with landowners, the students designed a new trapline, then planned and started the planting project, selecting appropriate native species. They planted 600 eco-sourced native species from the Whenua Iti Community Nursery. Rosey emphasised giving students ownership to demonstrate their potential. "I wanted to show them what was possible," she said. The students calibrated the traps, then strategically positioned the trapline to protect their plantings and enhance biodiversity. *"It's empowering for the students to see how much they can do and what they are capable of,"* Rosey added.

Authentic Co-Design

The four-week programme allowed for authentic student involvement in its design. Rosey uses a process of planning the first two weeks before the programme starts and then adjusting the final two weeks based on students' interests and strengths. This strengths-based approach encourages students to voice their opinions and showcase their skills, allowing space for personal development and for their leadership skills to evolve. Rosey explained that "adapting to the students on the programme is a real strength. They voted on what they wanted to do, making the experience incredibly valuable." This approach helps students to feel heard and valued, boosting their commitment and engagement, with 80% (n=10) of surveyed students saying this programme helped them to feel valued and heard.

Tree Planting (B. Arnott)

Exploring Potential Pathways

Connecting students to various avenues for contributing to environmental sustainability, whether at home, through volunteering, or in careers, is a key aspect of the programme. "I wanted students to see the different ways to engage their passion for nature, from weekend conservation projects to careers in science and research," Rosey explained.

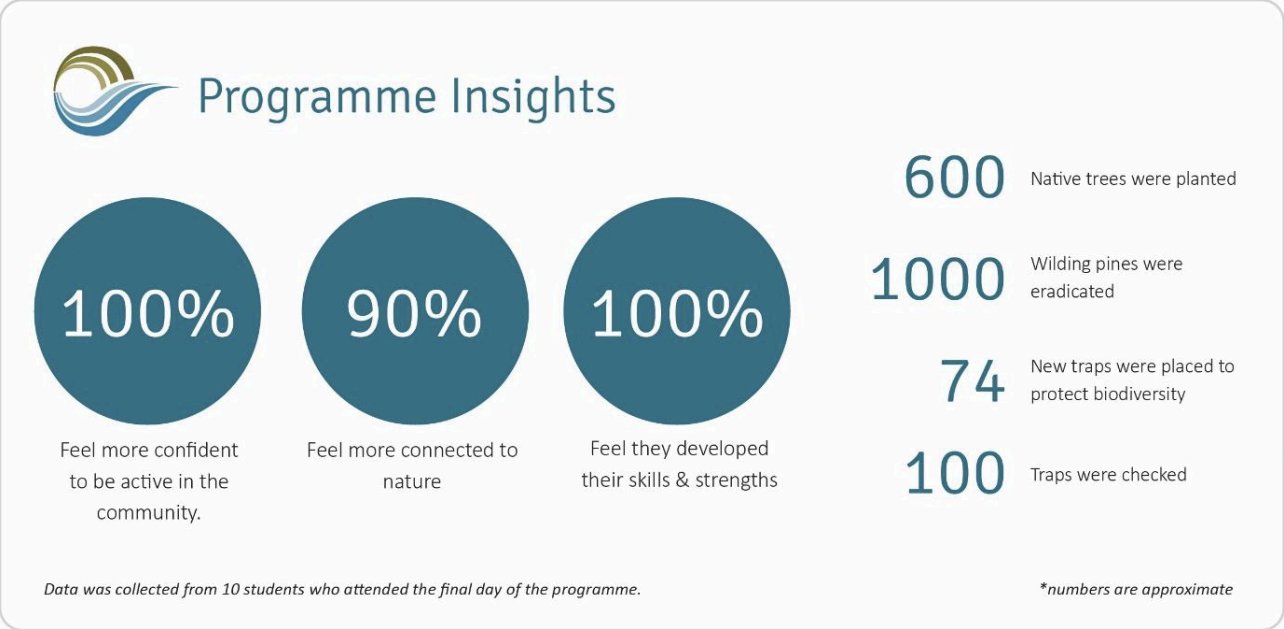
Students interacted with community members and engaged in conservation projects with local groups, the Department of Conservation, and at Kaiteriteri Mountain Bike Park, where they applied herbicide to 600 wilding pines and removed almost as many. A visit to the Golden Bay Sustainable Living Centre helped students consider personal sustainability, such as identifying edible weeds from the community garden.

Leading by Example

Teenagers are perceptive. "If you talk about environmental sustainability while drinking from a single-use plastic cup, they'll notice," Rosey said. She was aware of the need to lead by example, encouraging students to question and come up with ideas to improve systems they interacted with. Rosey related how "the students initiated a discussion about using disposable plastic gloves for poisoning wilding pines. The students questioned why we were using disposable gloves on an environmental programme, seeking alternatives – challenging when working with poisons but great to see them questioning common practices."

What did the students think?

A survey of the student participants on the final day of the programme provided some insights.



"I loved it. Especially the practical experience that you don't get in the classroom and actually making a difference. Instead of talking about it, we were doing it," noted one student from a local high school. Another student, from the same high school, enjoyed the new relationships she made, "It has been good to meet up with like-minded people." A further participant found it good talking with people who have a career that they are passionate about and a career that makes a difference.

The survey (see Figure 1) revealed that 100% (n=10) of the students agreed the programme has helped them to want to learn and 90% feel more connected to nature because of the programme. Importantly, 100% of students felt more confident to be active and involved in the community because of the programme. They all agreed they were positively influenced by the programme, planning to start new hobbies, be more active outdoors, volunteer, pursue new studies, or consider a new career path. One participant has contacted the landowners they worked with on the programme and volunteered to continue checking thetrapline and joined her school's environmental group. A second participant signed up for further study.

Figure 1. Survey outcomes

The Environmental Sustainability programme that Rosey has developed for Whenua Iti Outdoors exemplifies how outdoor and environmental learning practices can incorporate approaches that allow students to take ownership, be authentically involved in co-design and help them explore potential pathways can benefit the students. In this way, a stronger connection for nature is nurtured, while most importantly, empowering them to make a difference.

About the author

Bree has shared loves for learning, the outdoors and living sustainably. In her role at Whenua Iti Outdoors she is focused on communicating the beneficial wellbeing outcomes of Experiential Learning programmes. With a master's degree that focused on environmental science, she has a continued interest in supporting the development of programmes that connect students more deeply to te taiao.

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Writing stories of experience: Literacy and outdoor learning

Maureen Legge

'I have never been off the ground for this long.' These words, written by Candace a Year 8 student, describe her experience on a Flying Fox (Cheng & Legge,2024, p 1). I think Candace's words are profound. They became the starting point for creating composite stories of experience through an interpretive qualitative research project I undertook with Cheng Deng. Cheng had collected essays from eight students, who were in Years 7 & 8 (11-12 years old) at a semi-rural primary school in New Zealand. He had engaged with the school through doctoral study and at the time I was his supervisor. We loved the students' writing and felt it warranted examination to find out more about their experience of outdoor education. The article we wrote is called Writing as a method of inquiry about students' experiences in a New Zealand primary school Outdoor Education programme (Deng & Legge, 2024). In this present article I use aspects of our published article to tell stories of experience and link the writing to classroom literacy.

The essays were written by students who were chosen by their teacher, after attending a three-day school camp facilitated by an outside provider. The teacher did not want to assess the essays but had two purposes: firstly, to develop the students' literacy and secondly to gain authentic input from students about the camp to help develop her pedagogy in preparation for the camp. The teacher also wanted to share the essays with Cheng as part of the wider doctoral research he was doing with her school. The essays depicted participation in three activities: flying fox, caving and an overnight expedition. While the students wrote the essays in their own words we searched the school website, newsletters, and curriculum documents to understand the context.

To analyse the essays, we used the constant comparative method (Glaser & Strauss, 1967/2006). After working independently Cheng and I shared our analysis and discussed our similarities, differences, and individual ideas. By collaborating our analysis of the essays, we established a shared understanding of events to improve 'the rigour and quality of the research' (Barry et al., 1999, p. 26). To unpack the students' experiences and convey the nature of their experience we used writing as a method of inquiry (Richardson & St. Pierre, 2018). This method of inquiry views writing as a way of thinking and expression, just as drawing, dance and other aspects of the arts are representative of thinking in other ways. We thought imaginatively and asked ourselves 'what if'?

To achieve this, we combined quotes from the students' original essays and constructed three composite stories. The reconstruction of the stories accounted for events and were linked to cause and effect. The student authors were recorded in parentheses making the students characters of the composite stories. Here is an example of one of our composite stories drawn from the caving activity.

> *What am I in for? is drifting around in my mind. It was Tuesday, day two of the camp. I asked my friend if she knew what activity we were doing. She did not know. Her words made me really nervous. I wanted to get there to see what we were doing* (Sena). *There was a tiny dark hole that we were entering. I am not going in there I think to myself. I was petrified that there was a drop because the instructor had recently warned us of the drops inside the cave and to be careful* (Elora). *... Shivering on the bankside with goosebumps crawling up my body which felt like prickles stabbing into me. I was wishing and calmly praying that nothing would go wrong. If only I had an idea of what I was getting my true self into, I might not make so many mistakes in life (Calla). 'Right team, is everybody ready?' asked the instructor John. I whispered to my friend, 'No, I am not ready'* (Sena). (Cheng & Legge, 2024, p 5).

Through our reconstruction of the students' writing, we created a story that captured their feelings, anxieties and uncertainties over the potential dangers of caving. Sena felt nervous, Elora 'petrified', and Calla cold and uncertain. The uncertainties brought physical, emotional, and cognitive responses to the fore, creating a sense of fear for them to advance further. The students' writing, as illustrated by their quotes, showed imagination, descriptive words, such as 'goosebumps' that felt like 'prickles', and other intense feelings.

In another composite story, we gained insight into how the students felt about their flying fox experience

> *TERRIFIED! That is how I was feeling* (Filippa). *It was Monday, and we were at Valley Outdoors. We were just about to fly the flying fox* (Jackson). *A shiver went down my spine. 'I am going to die', I thought* (Candace). *'Where is the flying fox?' said Jackson. 'It is over there', said the instructor. We could only see a building, a wooden post and a circle of rocks with a flax bush in the middle* (Filippa). *We trudged and puffed up the big hill's staircase* (Jackson). *Looking down at the rocky cliff, we could see a small, abandoned road. Right above the road was the flying fox wire ... The wire disappeared into a crowd of trees* (Candace). *I was so nerve-rackingly nervous because I was worried ... If only my instructor had told me we were going the whole way, I thought we were only going halfway out* (Jackson). (Cheng & Legge, 2024, p 6).

While fear and angst were captured, in the moment there was also evidence of knowledge and understanding of how to use a harness and take safety measures before an event.

> *I knew it was going to be awesome ... It was my turn. I nervously walked up the stairs with my stomach churning and butterflies flying faster* (Jackson). *I stepped up onto the rotting platform. My fingers trembled around the harness clips ... as I looked at the vast span of nothing* (Phoebe). *I finished putting on my harness by putting all the 'O's' into 'C's'* (Filippa). *My guts were floating in my tummy. I was excited and nervous at the same time* (Jackson). *'Can I trust you?' 'Yes.' 'Is it safe?' 'Yes.' 'Okay here I go', and I stepped off the platform* (Filippa). *Wisps of cold air enveloped my face* (Phoebe). *The wind was whistling past my ears and playing with my hair... I zoomed down the rope and*

> *saw the river raging beneath me* (Filippa). *I opened my mouth to scream, but no sound came out … My mouth was dry and crying out for water* (Phoebe).... (Cheng & Legge, 2024, p 6-7).

Standing and wondering how you will cope with the height, harness, 'flying', and landing builds tension. As each person waits while helmets and harnesses are fitted the delays extend the experience, leading to a charged moment before stepping off the platform to 'fly'. I wonder if you were to read these stories to your students how would they react? Perhaps they would resonate, or it could help them face similar uncertainties while on camp. Not all camp experiences are scary, and neither should they be, but these stories provided a testimony of outdoor education experience. There are other important stories to be told about being a member of the food preparation team, what happens in the dorm or how your clothing and boots affected your wellbeing in the outdoors.

Our writing as a method of inquiry included a commentary that ran through the article and presented relevant literature, other information, evidence, and explanations about the students' experiences of an outdoor education programme. However, my point in sharing the composite stories is to encourage teachers, if they are not already doing so, to consider the rich impact outdoor education experiences can make to students' literacy learning. I am not a literacy teacher, but I am a writer, and I was impressed by how the students wrote. They did not hold back, nor did they receive any assessment for their writing. We constructed composite stories, but the capital letters were Filippa's, in saying so she was able to fit the harness remembering the O's and C's; the alliteration of being 'nerve-rackingly nervous' was Jackson penning his tension. The analogy of the wire disappearing into 'a crowd of trees' was framed by Candace, and Phoebe felt how 'wisps of cold air enveloped' her face. The language was rich and a credit to their imaginations and ability to capture how they felt in those moments of lived experience. Individually the stories were good, but we felt the collective composites gave a greater insight into their experience of the experience. Cheng and I could write composite stories because of the drama of the students' words.

Reflecting on writing composite stories, we used our authorial voice to discuss, critique, and identify how these experiences help to represent the nature of outdoor education in this context. However, we think that against the backdrop of calling for improving students' literacy in New Zealand (Johnston, 2023), writing these stories does more than contribute evidence of the value outdoor education has in the school curriculum. The stories show that well-structured outdoor education offers tangible experiences that can be used to develop students' storytelling and writing abilities.

In *School News* (2024)[1] Professor Peter O'Connor, whose work is focused on creativity and education, said that imagination is at the heart of learning and all knowledge systems. He also noted that we learn best through reflection on experience. To support teaching, the composite stories show how outdoor education activities allowed learning that combined the body, senses, mind and heart, enabling a rich foundation for student reflection and empathy. Students' experiences in the outdoors can be integrated into a literacy learning task.

[1] https://www.schoolnews.co.nz/2024/09/the-role-of-imagination-in-learning/

The stories here are excerpts from a published article which is listed in the references below. While I wrote this article here to share stories of adventure and outdoor experience, I want the reader or listener to hear the words, imagine the scene and live the moment as the Year 7 & 8 authors experienced the experience. Consistent with previous findings in New Zealand (Hill et al., 2020) our article also showed the students' learning experiences; uplifted their positive emotional and affective responses; and engaged them with the environment, nature, and peers, and teachers. Outdoor education can enrich the school curriculum by taking students away from their day-to-day lives. Teachers can make pedagogical choices to use these moments of lived experience, so their students write and reflect, and develop literacy skills to tell exciting stories and gain more meaning from their experience. As Peter O'Connor (School News, 2024) suggests this is teaching where meeting the required standard is not the only goal or where student learning comes from the experience rather than a prescribed outcome.

About the author

Dr Maureen Legge is semi-retired. She works as the editor of Te Whakatika and is a part-time teaching fellow in the Faculty of Education and Social Work, University of Auckland. Her research focuses on cross-cultural understanding, teacher education, health, physical education, outdoor education, using auto ethnography and narrative inquiry. She is a keen sailor, motor homer and developing artist.

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Legal risk and more paperwork: do health and safety laws threaten the great Kiwi school trip?

Chris North
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Most of us will remember a school trip – that sense of excitement and anticipation of days spent outside the classroom, away from school and home, making new friends, appreciating teachers and parents in a new light.

Indeed, what is known as "education outside the classroom" (EOTC) provides some of the most important and memorable school experiences. Along with field trips, theatre performances, noho marae and international exchanges, "school camp" can add so much depth to educational experiences.

In 2020, a national study showed more than 96% of schools saw EOTC as an important part of school life. They valued the way it enhances learning and engagement, enriches the curriculum, develops relationships between students and staff, and works for different types of learners.

But school trips also demand a lot of teachers, on top of what we already expect of them. As well as the duty of care to their students, there are the legal requirements governing school trips to consider.

In fact, our research was inspired by the concerns we began hearing from teachers and principals worried about the impact the Health and Safety at Work Act may have on the EOTC experience.

Our newly published research shows how anxiety about legal liability and the burden of paperwork are affecting teacher attitudes to EOTC. Already busy, many feel overworked and under-trusted. At the same time, some schools continue to run EOTC at similar or even higher levels than previously. We wanted to know what differences exist between these schools.

Risk and reward

EOTC trips take students into environments far less controlled than classrooms. Busy roads, swimming pools, machinery and outdoor hazards all contribute.

So, EOTC is not without its dangers. In the past 24 years, there have been 22 fatalities during school trips in New Zealand, with 20 of those drownings.

International studies of fatalities on school and youth group excursions conclude most could have been prevented. Clearly it's important teachers plan these trips carefully.

The purpose of health and safety law is that everyone comes home healthy and safe. The law creates expectations that all practicable steps will be taken to avoid accidents. And it allows for fines or imprisonment for serious breaches.

These penalties can be applied to school board trustees, principals, teachers, parents and even students in some situations.

As with all laws, of course, those governing EOTC can have a variety of effects. They can make people think and act differently, or they can encourage the appearance of compliance without real behavioural change.

How schools are responding

Importantly, we found strong evidence teachers and principals cared deeply for the learning and safety of their students and school children on a bus. They spoke of their anxiety when "driving other people's babies" and how they lost sleep when their students were away on trips.

In short, they did not take the responsibility of EOTC lightly.However, the Health and Safety at Work Act adds legal and bureaucratic responsibilities to those natural human anxieties. We found three responses to this from teachers and principals.

1. Stop offering EOTC
In our survey, 44% of schools indicated the law was reducing EOTC, while only 35% said EOTC was not affected

Stopping EOTC obviously removes the safety risk, fear of legal liability and need for extra paperwork. But it also deprives students of valuable learning experiences.

2. Put little effort into paperwork
The time between filling out forms and the actual school trip can be considerable, and some teachers found it difficult to see the links between paperwork and any benefit to students. Some saw it as simply "butt covering and box ticking".

While understandable at one level, this clearly raises concerns about depth of engagement. If an incident were to occur and the paperwork didn't show proper planning, or was not relevant to what was actually happening on the trip, it could contribute to legal liability.

3. Continue to run EOTC programs
We found around a third of teachers and principals were now offering EOTC at the same or a higher level than they had in the past.

In these cases, there was some combination of four enabling factors: competent staff, systems to minimise paperwork, a specialised EOTC coordinator to support teachers, a whole-school commitment to EOTC, and attending professional development courses.

Saving the school trip

Schools are influenced in different ways by health and safety law, with secondary schools less affected than primary or intermediate ones. We think larger school size and more staff, including specialistteachers, may explain some of this difference.

For small or rural schools, limited staffing can make EOTC more challenging. Schools in the highest 20% of socioeconomic areas had fewer concerns. This may be due to them having more resources, but further research into this is needed.

We understand the law governing EOTC adds to the workload on teachers and principals already struggling with resource constraints and other demands on their energies.

But the research shows how perception and observance of the law is limiting student access to the rich and diverse educational experiences available through EOTC. There are ways to overcome this, however.

As well as focusing on the four enablers referred to above, schools can keep trips more local and focus on lower-risk activities.

About the author

Chris North is an Associate Professor, Outdoor and Environmental Education, Te Kaupeka Oranga Faculty of Health, University of Canterbury. This article was originally published on The Conversation and can be accessed here:
Legal risk and more paperwork: do health and safety laws threaten the great Kiwi school trip?

Tiwaiwaka: An interview with Pā Ropata (Rob McGowan)

Sophie Hoskins

When we see the Tiwaiwaka (fantail) flutter past, we are reminded that 'ka ora te Whenua, ka orate tangata - when the Earth is well, I am well'. This message is of hope and underpins the principles of my publication Tiwaiwaka

(McGowan (Ropata), 2021).
Pā Ropata (2024) personal communication.

Tēnā koutou, I'm Sophie Hoskins, the Outdoor Education kaiārahi for Education Outdoors New Zealand. I first had the privilege of meeting Pā Ropata, also known as Rob McGowan, ata rongoā wānanga, in September 2020 at Aongatete Lodge in the Bay of Plenty. He had us all captivated as soon as we began, soaking up all the amazing mātauranga he was sharing. *"Don't take notes"* he said, *"if you're meant to learn it, you will"*.
Pā explained things in ways that just made perfect sense, *"the most important thing is connection, if you can connect, the whenua will teach you"*. Four years on and I've found myself lucky enough to have been in the company of Pā a few more times since then, attending another of his rongoāwānanga, having him speak at the EONZ outdoor education teachers' regional hui and even getting to visit his incredible rongoā garden and native nursery, abundant in all sorts of native plants from all over Aotearoa. Pā kindly gave me more of his time for an interview about 'Tiwaiwaka', a set of principles and a collective of people committed to restoring the mauri of the whenua.

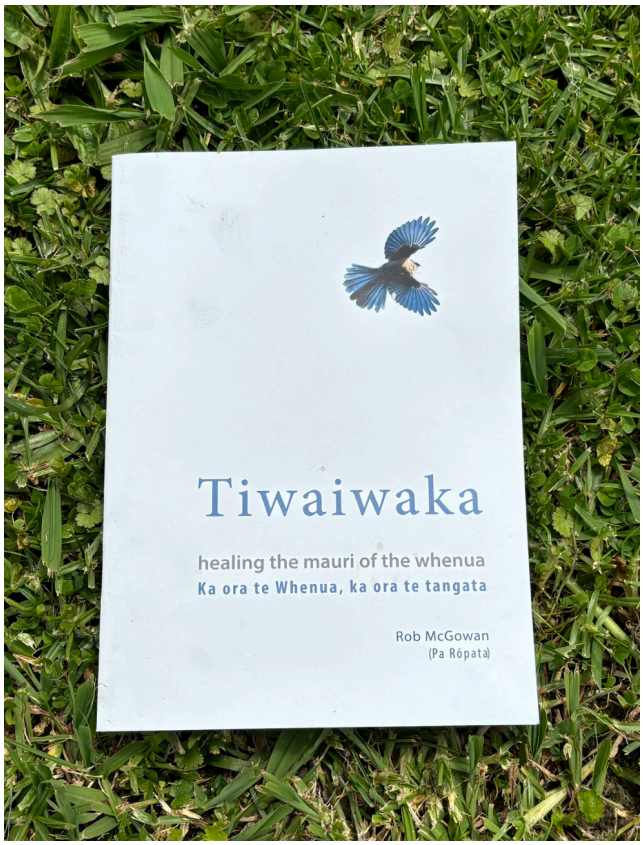
What is Tiwaiwaka? Where has the idea come from and what do you see as its purpose?

Well, the best way to answer it is at the very beginning of the Tiwaiwaka book. It's a collective of people working together to heal the mauri of the whenua. The key thing is the collective, all sorts of people. The origins are Māori in many ways, but it's for us who belong to Aotearoa. The best ways to solve climate issues are to work together. We keep saying

with Tiwaiwaka, the differences that we find are not obstacles, they are the gifts that we bring. If we respect each person for who they are and recognise what's special about them, well, we can do all sorts of things.
Tiwaiwaka came out of the fact that lots of people were saying they could hear Papatūānuku crying. You know more and more people have the sense that the planet is struggling. That was the driving force to set it in motion. There's lots and lots of people dealing with climate change but what was very apparent is that those people were not working together. The trigger point for me to publish the little booklet was a wonderful meeting I went to with all these very passionate people telling us what we must do, but they never listened to each other, and I thought, well, what's needed is something to weave people together. So often, you find the people who should be working together are sometimes so busy arguing amongst themselves that the message is lost and that gives people who don't want to be involved or concerned an excuse to do nothing. So, I suppose the primary role of Tiwaiwaka is to help weave together all these different people and groups, so we have a collective way forward to look after Papatūānuku and in doing that, secure our future. The other big thing is lots of people, especially young people say there's no hope, they say the planet is stuffed, sometimes they get angry but mostly they just feel sad. So, the whole idea of Tiwaiwaka is to get people working together in a way that gives people hope.If we've got hope, we can do anything.

How is Tiwaiwaka growing traction?

Well, I only told one or two others and when I went back to the people that taught me and told them what was happening, they basically said *"just get on with it"*, you know, and then we had a hui about four years ago and it's been quietly growing since then. I hear stories like someone has made a video about Tiwaiwaka or they've taken the principles of Tiwaiwaka and shared them in the workplace or they've got them stuck up on the wall. It doesn't belong to us, it doesn't belong to anybody, we haven't put



any copyrights on things. The whole idea is people will see Tiwaiwaka and think it makes sense. What we're trying to do now is connect all those people and really get us working together much more. We have been holding wānanga and online hui. The other big thing is how do we get that into government policy? But we're making progress on that too!

What's the best practise for those wanting to use this framework?

If we keep doing things the way we've always done things, we're not going to find the solutions. Tiwaiwaka is a starting point based on a different set of priorities. Everything depends on the earth, all our life comes out of Papatūānuku, and the most important thing is to look after her. That's much more important than fixing the economy, especially in NewZealand our wellness depends on the wellness of Papatūānuku, so let's make sure the earth healthy. We must remember that we are not the centre of the universe but part of it. Wedon't own the world. Under a Māori way of looking at things, we are the last of Tāne's children. There are so many people who feel

they don't belong, but the trees and the birds and everything, they're all family and we do belong to this family. This gives people a sense of belonging.

Mauri is found in connections which enable life to thrive. If any of those connections are weakened or broken the mauri is less able to sustain life. We can help repair those connections. For example, instead of just saying I'm planting 5000 trees next year to care for our river, let's say what does the river need, what's missing, what's not going well? and then repair the connections that makes the river thrive. Our job as people is to look after the connections. If you have two people who argue with each other, if you can join them together, then you've healed something. Healing isn't about lowering your blood pressure.It's about restoring the balance that we need to be well. The only way we're going to survive is to work together, some people think if they accumulate enough riches, they can isolate themselves from the realities that are crushing everybody else. Well, it's like building a sandcastle, the sea will eventually come in and the walls will collapse. So, let's just say, we're all in this together, and let's work together. We say to people - all life begins with microbes and all life depends on microbes, and so most of all we've got to look after the tiniest living creatures. Tiwaiwaka is about how we're going to do things because we believe into the future.The principles are very clear and every time a person sees a fantail flutter past, they'll think *'ka ora te whenua, ka ora te tangata'*, (when the Earth is well, I am well). Just to keep reminding us! That's why we've used the Tiwaiwaka as a symbol (well there's more to it than that) but just to remind us that, let's look after Papatūānuku so we can all be well.

How have people incorporated Tiwaiwaka into their way of life or their workplace?

All sorts of different ways, you know. If you google Tiwaiwaka, you'll get the principles and a whole lot of kōrero about it. The thing about this is it's not prescriptive. Everybody finds their own way of expressing it. I remember walking into the Koanga Gardens and there was Tiwaiwaka stuck up on the on the wall and I did a Zoom with the Centre for Health here inTauranga and one of the staff whom I've never met said *"that's stuck up in the office and we look at it every day"*.
Some researchers have re-framed their research because it really makes sense to them. For example, one person looking at the shellfish in Ohiwa Harbour has said 'What does the harbour need to be well?' rather saying 'What do we do to try and get more pipi?'. The job of the pipi is not to feed us, it's to clean the water that comes through and take out all the all the paru. So 'how do I actually help to make Ohiwa well?', and that is a different approach. So much of what we do is all about 'ME' the human because of our sense of entitlement. Tiwaiwaka is about that basic respect for other living beings.
So often people say to me *"I've always thought that you've just put into words what's always been buzzing through my mind"* and that probably is quite an amazing reaction. We say to people we're going to try and infect the whole country with Tiwaiwaka and it's beginning to happen, infect the country with hope.

How could facilitators or educators or those who work with young people share or incorporate Tiwaiwaka into what they're doing?

You've got to find a spark that they react to and build on it. For some kids you can show them something which fascinates them and that can be the beginning. As a 5-year-old I'd go up to the bush with the family and with an old gentleman that was guiding us there. He gave us a piece of Nikau to eat and ever since then I've been fascinated by trees.
Kids are born with a sense of belonging to the

earth and as we get older, we gradually lose that perspective so for kaiako with their kids, to focus on getting them to notice, to touch, to feel, to listen. Sometimes we take people into the bush and say, we're going to a do a karakia here, it's going to have no words, let's be quiet and stop all the busyness in our brains, all the things buzzing around in there and just be very quiet, breathe and just listen, and that has a profound effect on so many people.
The best way that teachers can work is to live what they're trying to teach. It's not a question of putting some more information into heads. Education is about teaching people how to learn, teaching people how to connect. We treat our brains like computers trying to input more data into there. What we've got to do is teach them to notice, to sense, to feel, to smell, to hear, and see themselves as part of that network. To see a spider web and all the design in it, or when you stand underneath a tree that is at least 500 years old. To share the wonder of these places, they're impressed by that, teachers are very influential people.Sharing with kids those connections so they feel part of those connections.

I've just written my paper to the conservation network about mauri, saying to them the way to care for endangered species isn't to collect seed, it's to care for the places where those plants belong. You know, how do you make a child a good child, make sure they grow up in a good, warm, caring environment, it's not how much you teach them, it's how much they feel they belong. Maybe the most important thing looking at young teenagers is to give them the sense that this sort of caring is okay because so often that is what inhibits kids. Opening their eyes, opening their ears and opening their hearts so they can learn to care for living things. Teaching them to be kind, teaching them to respect and then when they do that, notice it and encourage them to keep doing.

Have you seen any schools incorporating Tiwaiwaka into the way they do things?
Lots of people who are teachers say they're doing this. We are constantly amazed by wonderful things. It is amazing when people that I've never, ever seen before coming up tome and telling me all about it, and this is happening so much. It's very reassuring. When you plant a tree, it doesn't cast much shade in the beginning, but it's growing, and Tiwaiwaka is growing and growing. We bring together our all our talents, regardless of language, culture, religion, belief, anything, we all work together. That's something that we don't do enough of these days. When people do that, they are amazed at how well it goes. Too often people are hesitant, and we just say let's be brave about this, let's do something wonderful.
Ropata, Pā. Personal communication 19 October 2024.

Interviewers Note: This interview really is only the tip of the iceberg and for more information about Tiwaiwaka, Pā and the other mahi he does, I encourage the reader to goto the website. https://tiwaiwaka.nz/

About the author:

Sophie Hoskins is the EONZ Kaiārahi providing curriculum support and advice to fore ducation outside the classroom and outdoor education. Sophie has expertise in curriculum design and helping find pedagogical solutions to support kaiako to make connections and build networks to engage with local places. Sophie has been involved with the NCEA change programme as a member of the Outdoor Education Subject Expert Group.

Reference:

Tiwaiwaka healing the mauri of the whenua. Ka ora te Whenua, ka ora te tangata. R.McGowan (Pā Ropata). 2021. Tiwaiwaka. www.tiwaiwaka.nz Creative Commons *under Attribution*-NonCommercial.

Support for Educators: Resources and Professional Learning

Becky McCormack and Sophie Hoskins

We're here to help you access relevant and effective resources, support and professional learning opportunities. Both EONZ and NZAEE receive funding through the Networks of Expertise initiative, with a focus on peer-to-peer delivery to build capability and support kaiako throughout Aotearoa.

In this section we outline and provide links to the support available from our organisations and highlight some recommended resources to read, watch and listen to.

New Zealand Association for Environmental Education

Visit our website www.nzaee.org.nz to find resources and support for teaching environmental and sustainability education including:

— Resource Catalogue

Find teaching resources for all levels, across a range of learning contexts, with a focus on environmental and sustainability teaching and learning in Aotearoa. You can search using keywords, or use the filters for education level, context and region.

— Professional Learning Resources

Access research, articles, webinars, books and guides to support your personal and professional learning. These are updated regularly and include collections related to current issues or priorities, such as local curriculum and climate education.

— Providers Database

With over 300 listings for organisations, programmes and groups around Aotearoa, you can filter by location and learning context to find support near you.

— Spotlights: Stories and Curated Collections

We also share inspiring stories and highlight providers and resources related to seasonal events and other relevant themes.

— Events

We have a dedicated space to promote events that are relevant for educators, including online and in person opportunities. Please get in touch if you'd like us to share your event (contact@nzaee.org.nz).

To stay in the loop about new content and upcoming webinars or networking events, you can sign up to our newsletter through our website or follow us on Facebook: https://www.facebook.com/NZAssociationforEnvironmentalEducation

Education Outdoors New Zealand (EONZ)

EONZ Website

On the EONZ website you can access a range of wonderful resources including:

EOTC templates and tool kits (see updated version in our News Flash above); gender equity in the outdoors; materials to support revisioning school camps; video interviews sharing good practice stories; EOTC research; Te Ao Māori; Unit Standard assessment materials; and much more.

Visit https://eonz.org.nz/ to sign up for PLD, access resources and find details of how EONZ can support you with all things relating to education outside the classroom.

We offer a range of Professional Learning Development (PLD) opportunities including:

— Revisioning School Camps and DIY camping

Our popular 'Revisioning school camps' (RSC) and 'DIY camping' DIY PLD have now been rolled into one PLD package.

During the RSC workshop you will learn about four important concepts that will help your school to develop localised, place-responsive, and student-centred school camps. The DIY workshop brings the ideas shared in the first workshop to life.

— Mātauranga Māori in Outdoor Education

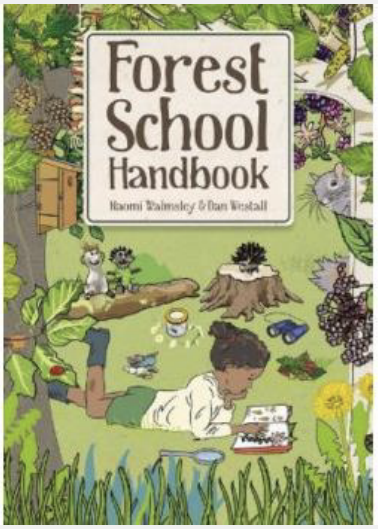
This PLD is for Outdoor Education teachers wanting to develop their understanding of mātauranga Māori. It has a focus on exploring significant local places, their history and pūrakau along with gaining a deeper understanding of some Te Ao Māori concepts. Support is given to help with planning programmes to intertwine mātauranga Māori and Outdoor Education.

— EOTC and Effective Safety Management Systems

The PLD supports school staff to understand and implement good practice processes in EOTC and to embed the processes in programmes and school-wide safety systems.

— Embedding Good Practice Systems for EOTC

This 1-Day workshop, drills down and critiques participant schools' EOTC processes using self-review and the sharing of practice. There is a strong focus on three key areas: Testing your system; Refining your system; Supporting your system.



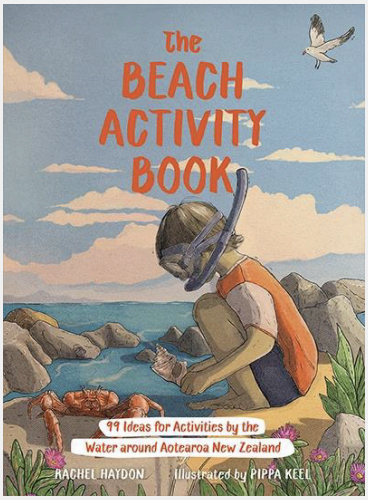
What We're Reading...

Forest School Handbook

By *Naomi Walmsley* and *Dan Walmsley*

This handbook is a lively collection of activities, crafts, bushcraft skills and nature-based play which will inspire kids to thrive outside. Packed with ideas and activities for children of all ages, there are bushcraft basics, survival skills, nature crafts and ideas for both energising and peaceful outdoor play. Encouraging controlled risk taking, boosting social skills, wellbeing and a healthy resilience. Build a shelter from what you find around you, design a natural collage, tie useful knots, get to know a tree, light a fire, filter dirty water, make charcoal, go on a night walk, make a bug hotel, create a mini village, whittle a stick and much more. Buy it at your local bookstore (check on Book Hub here) or check out your local library to borrow a copy.

The Beach Activity Book: 99 Ideas for activities by the water around Aotearoa New Zealand



by *Rachel Haydon*, Illustrated by *Pippa Keel*

The activities in this immersive book for children aged 7 to 14 range from experiments and observation to conservation and mindfulness. Developed to inspire curious young minds to explore and appreciate our beaches, lakes, rivers and streams. It is also designed to be taken out into natural environments and to be drawn and written in. Written by a children's learning expert, all sorts of learning styles are recognised, with each activity being open to children who like to draw and those who like to write. The book's journal-like format and activities that range across the seasons make it a long-term and much-treasured companion. Mātauranga Māori concepts and the theme of nature connectedness are an integral part of the activities.

What We're Listening To...

Ko Papa Ko Rangi: Ahi Kaa podcast from The Spinoff

Hosted by Nadine Hura and Ruia Aperahama.

This podcast series features Te Kōmata o Te Tonga | The Deep South National Science Challenge research. They explore questions such as: What does it take to keep the home fires burning in Aotearoa, and why is the term "land back" synonymous with climate action?

What We're Watching...

Here the Wild Things Are: A global race to discover the wild hidden in our cities

Short documentary from Loading Docs, by Kelly Gilbride and Madison Smith

Here the Wild Things Are is not your typical nature documentary—it's a fast-paced, joyful exploration of urban wildlife hidden in our cities. Centred around the 'City Nature Challenge,' once a year, New Zealand joins a global competition where thousands of ecologists and enthusiasts from Wellington, Christchurch and other cities race to photograph urban wildlife. The film follows a diverse group of ecologists and citizen scientists over the course of three days as they delve into urban areas, from pavement cracks to treetops, capturing the often-overlooked beauty of the natural world. This inspiring quest highlights how conservation begins with noticing what's right in front of us

A world travellers year at home

TEDx Talk by Alastair Humphreys

After years of expeditions all over the world, adventurer Alastair Humphreys spends a year exploring the small map around his own home. Discovering more about nature and wildness than in all his years in remote environments, he learns the value of truly getting to know his neighbourhood. This talk is an ode to slowing down, a celebration of curiosity and time outdoors, as well as a rallying cry to protect the wild places on our doorstep.

About the Authors

Becky McCormack, NZAEE Learning and Content Curator

Becky finds and curates resources and stories on the NZAEE website, with a focus on seasonal and relevant content to inspire and support educators around Aotearoa. She also facilitates online professional learning, including webinars, communities of practice and NZAEE's national conference. With a background in secondary science and biology education (nine years) and environmental education (seven years), Becky brings a wealth of experience and knowledge to her role. She loves books, connecting with nature and sharing stories of integrated, place-based learning.

Sophie Hoskins, EONZ Kaiārahi

Since 2018 Sophie has provided curriculum support and advice to kaiako for education outside the classroom and outdoor education. Sophie has expertise in curriculum design and is passionate about helping find pedagogical solutions to support kaiako to make strong connections and networks to engage with local places. Sophie is also a secondary school teacher of outdoor education and has been involved with the NCEA change programme as part of the Outdoor Education Subject Expert Group. She is excited to be involved with quality PLD for kaiako in this subject.

Research News

Check out some of the latest cutting-edge research and news from the Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning.

Rethinking art education through integrating outdoor learning practices as sites of memory

Megan Wonowidjoyo,
Multimedia University - Cyberjaya, Malaysia:

This paper explores how outdoor learning can encourage students to engage in deeper critical thinking during art making. By using various spaces like nature, urban settings, and galleries, it aims to shift the focus from purely technical skills to fostering a Malaysian identity and personal expression in art.

Looking back: the lasting impact of outdoor education for adolescent girls

Shannon McNatty,
University of Otago, Dunedin, New Zealand:

The research reveals four key narratives that shape long-term impacts: nature as a source of nourishment, the benefits of living simply, the balance of support and independence, and the development of a confident female identity. These findings emphasise the enduring positive influence of extended outdoor experiences during adolescence.

‘Release them into the wild, but how far can they go?’ Improving social and emotional mental health through teaching bushcraft skills to children with special educational needs and disability: a preliminary case series evaluation study.

James Tonks
Haven Clinical Psychology Practice Ltd, Bude, UK:

This study highlights the potential of bushcraft programmes to support the mental, social, and emotional health of children with SEND. By engaging in a five-week outdoor programme, participants showed improvements in self-concept and reduced stress, indicating that this approach is both effective and beneficial for this group.

Attending 12 weekly sessions of Forest School sessions improves mood and cooperation in 7–8-year-old children.

Annie Hepworth
University of East London, London, UK:

This study investigates the impact of Forest School programmes on children’s mood, cooperation, and cognitive skills.Results showed that children who attended Forest School reported feeling happier, calmer, and more cooperative compared to those in a classroom setting, though spatial cognition and self-esteem showed limited changes.

Building resilience and teaching learners about sustainable living through outdoor swimming and water safety learning.

Torbjørn Lundhaug
Western Norway University of Applied Sciences, Bergen,Norway:

This study explores how a new curriculum in Norway integrates outdoor swimming and water safety to promote sustainable living among students. Through observations and interviews with teachers, it highlights the role of experiential learning in building resilience, emphasising the importance of student engagement and control over their learning process in enhancing wellbeing.

Thinking of publishing an article in 2025?

Check out the link here and stay in touch with us for all of the latest research in Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning. Written by David Hills on behalf of the JAEOL editorial team: PatMaher, Barbara Humberstone, Chris North and Jelena Farkic. The Journal of Adventure Education & Outdoor Learning is an official publication of the Institute for Outdoor Learning and has a 25-member editorial board from 12 different countries. The main purpose of the journal is to provide a central point and place of reference for the publication and dissemination of research and scholarship on adventure and the outdoors.

A call for Contributions to Te Whakatika Autumn Issue April 2025

With a commitment to two issues a year, we are already thinking about articles for the Autumn issue in April 2025. The focus will be on general interest articles about learning, teaching, researching, and enjoying the outdoor environment at all levels.

In this spirit, we invite contributions from the NZAEE and EONZ communities. Your article may provide diverse perspectives on how you and others are learning in, about, for, and with the outdoors.

Please follow the guidelines for writing and submitting your article as noted below.

If you have any questions or would like assistance with a potential article idea, please reach out to the editor or one of the editorial board members.

Guidelines for writing

— Word count is between 600 to 1500 words long with a limitation of five to six references.

— Include 1-3 photos that must be sent separately as jpegs. Include a brief title and reference to the source of the photo. You must have permission to use the photos in the public domain. Do not embed photos in your text.

— Use of Māori in text – Does not need to be italicised as it is not a foreign language. Do not mark plurals of Māori with an s. Use macrons on long vowels or a double vowel.

— Submissions must be in Microsoft Word

— Manuscript is 1.5 spacing in A4 format

— Font Calibri Size 12

— Format for references is APA style. See link below for guidance. https://www.waikato.ac.nz/library/guidance/referencing/apa

— Submit via the EONZ website or a link to EONZ from the NZAEE website or directly to editor@eonz.org.nz

— Articles will be accepted on or before 15 February 2025

— Once your submission has been received the editor will email it to a reviewer who will check out the article. They may give feedback and return the article to the editor. The editor checks the feedback and forwards it to the author to consider and rewrite aspects if that is required. The author then returns the article to the editor who prepares it for publication.

Ngā mihi ki a koutou.

Dr Maureen Legge
Editor Te Whakatika
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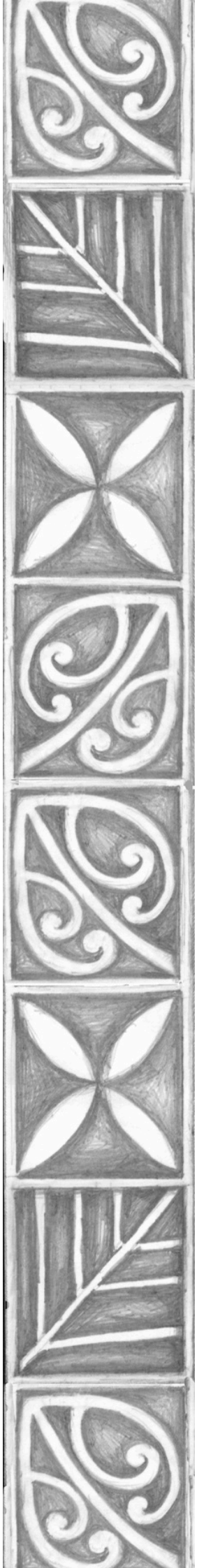

Te Whakatika (formerly known as Out and About) describes the start of a journey (to set out), but also means to make correct (to amend and prepare).
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