

# A budding archaeologist

Logan, knowing your interest in archaeology, I wanted to share a couple of my photos that I took in January at two archaeological sites near X'ian, in China. The first one is really old, and what they are finding dates back to 151 BC, still thousands of years after dinosaurs though, and the second is of the second digging site of the famous terracotta warriors. Both of these are active sites, and won't be completed for many years. It's really exciting and interesting, but to my knowledge, they have found a few human bones, but no dinosaurs or fossils.

When I was looking around at the shop Nature's Window at St Luke's, I discovered these blocks with dinosaur bones inside that you have to dig out very, very carefully with a scraper and brush, just like the archaeologists in China, so you don't damage the bones or whatever you are looking for in your dig, or archaeological site. As soon as I saw them, Logan, I thought of you and your love of dinosaurs and I remembered you saying that you wanted to be an archaeologist when you grow up.

You started this archaeological dig on Tuesday, 29 March. You were so excited as you started uncovering bones. When you discovered the second one, you called out and told me, "I've found another bone right over here. It's a triceratops I think." Your friend Matthew was really interested in what you were doing, and filmed some of this video footage before going to the science area to work with Joyce. After you had discovered another bone, which now made three, you took the slab over to show Matthew and Joyce.

I was really impressed with how patient and gentle you were being, and also how you explained to your friends what you were doing. This archaeological dig was taking a very long time, and by the end of the



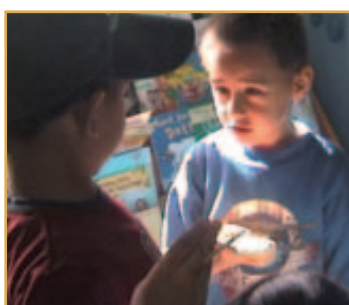
session you hadn't completed it, so you had to continue the next day.

The next morning you arrived fresh and ready to go again. When you completed uncovering all the bones, they were covered in mud, so under your friend Ezekiel's supervision, you scrubbed them very carefully in a bowl of water, using a cotton bud. You were very particular, working to get every scrap of dirt off, and Eze pointed out any specks that you had missed. After cleaning all the bones, but before you threw out your scrapings, you checked the bones by laying them on the table to make sure you had them all.

With all the pieces of the skeleton present and accounted for, you tried putting them together, but it was very frustrating as the legs and tail kept falling off. We tried to think of ideas that might solve this problem, and I suggested that using the glue gun to fix the bones together might do the trick. You thought that was a very good idea, and asked Jewels if she would help you.

When you finished it, you called to me, asking me to come and look at your triceratops skeleton. It was awesome, but looked a bit sleepy because it kept falling over, but you soon sorted out that problem by gluing it to a block of wood.

You were so proud of the result of all your hard work, and took it round the kindergarten to show everyone. You wanted everyone to be able to see your skeleton, but were worried that they might touch it and break it, so you asked if it could be put in the locked display in the science area. You did a great job Logan. We are very impressed with your knowledge and your eagerness to share it with all of us – thank you.



### What learning has happened?

Through this activity Logan was able to practise some of the knowledge that he had gained from books and documentaries. Logan's use of language while digging for the dinosaur bones was amazing, as was his prediction of the species of dinosaur very early in the dig. The manner in which Logan shared his knowledge during this activity was inspirational. It was at times similar to that of a lecture or documentary.

Logan discovered that, just as on a real archaeological dig, one has to be extremely gentle and careful, as he found the bones were very easily broken, after breaking one of the leg bones. He was very disappointed when this happened, and immediately slowed down and took much more care.

29 and 30 March  
Teacher: Sally



### What's happening here?

The teacher, recognising Logan's interest in archaeology and dinosaurs, shares her own photos from archaeological sites in China and provides an interesting experience for him.

### What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using an Exploration/Mana Aotūroa lens)?

This long contribution to Logan's portfolio is by a teacher who shares Logan's passion for archaeology. The short-term review describes the aspects of exploration that this exemplar includes: reinforcing knowledge gained from books and documentaries, using scientific language, predicting, sharing the knowledge, being careful, and learning from mistakes.

Logan also uses problem-solving skills to stabilise and protect his fragile construction. He glues it to a block of wood but is aware of the need to make it available for others to see and so requests that it be placed in the locked display cabinet.

### How might this documented assessment contribute to Exploration/Mana Aotūroa?

This exemplar documents a sharing of interests between the teacher and the child: the teacher has included her own photographs and communicated her excitement about actual archaeological sites in China. This is a shared story, and both Logan and the teacher (and Logan's family and whānau) will retell the story and add to it in subsequent conversations.

### What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

The teacher reminds Logan that this activity is what archaeologists do in the "real" world, and she clearly implies that through his interest and his skill he *belongs* to that wider community.