

Te haeata – Dawn

Child's name: Tia

Date: 16 August

Teacher: kuia (grandmother)

A Learning Story		
belonging mana whenua	Taking an Interest	<p>Tia woke at 6.30 a.m. I met her in the hallway and asked her if she wanted to come into my bed upstairs. She said yes. I told her there was a surprise up there for her and she was to leave the light off. We climbed into bed and I asked her to look out the window. The surprise was the Southern Cross pointers, which were still bright in the sky. I told her the traditional names of the stars and she repeated them. She was in awe of what she could see, I believe. I have introduced her to the evening star on many occasions and this was the first opportunity for me to show her the morning stars. As dawn broke the stars became more faint until they disappeared. I told her the stars were going to sleep because the sun was rising. We watched the sun rise and I sang the karakia to welcome the sun. She has a special relationship to the stars and the moon and often points out the moon during the day.</p> <p>As the dawn was breaking the morning chorus began. Tia was asking, "What's that?" I told her it was the birds singing to the dawn, welcoming the sun.</p> <p>In her bedroom is a large painting that features a bird from the ancient cave drawings. I explained what it was. She repeated the names after me.</p>
well-being mana aha	Being Involved	
exploration mana aotūroa	Persisting with Difficulty	
communication mana kōwhiri	Expressing an Idea or a Feeling	
contribution mana tūāwhiri	Taking Responsibility	

What's happening here?

Tia's grandmother shows her the morning stars and teaches her their traditional names. She also teaches Tia the name of the bird in a painting in Tia's bedroom.

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

This story is about Tia learning about stars, the moon, and a bird from her grandmother, who comments that Tia "has a special relationship to the stars and the moon". The grandmother sings a karakia to welcome the sun, demonstrating that knowledge includes a spiritual dimension. Linda Tuhiwai Smith says that "Many indigenous creation stories link people through genealogy to the land, to stars and other places in the universe, to birds and fish, animals, insects and plants. To be connected is to be whole."¹⁷

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

This story has probably been written down for the teachers at Tia's early childhood centre. It will be shared among the teachers and exemplifies Tia's sense of relationship to the stars and the moon and her familiarity with spiritual rituals (karakia) for different occasions, such as the rising of the sun.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

Although this exemplar is about different forms of knowledge and knowing, it also represents a view of *belonging* to the wider world, in this case the natural world of stars and the universe, as well as the world of birds, fish, animals, insects, plants, and the land.