

Sofia the reader

8 August

Pamela has told me about how much Sofia loves her books. They go to the library on a regular basis and Pamela reads to Sofia often.

Today when I went to visit Pamela and Sofia, I was able to see this for myself.

Sofia was sitting near her basket of toys and began to take some out. She chose books and there were quite a few in there. She didn't just take the first book though. She looked through each one until she came to the one that she wanted, which was *Thomas the Tank Engine*. She then proceeded to open the book in the correct way, the right way up, and to turn the pages from left to right! She also pointed to some of the pictures and made some sounds.

When she had finished that book, she did the same thing again and chose another story, *Brown Bear, Brown Bear*. It wasn't the first book she saw either.

It was great to watch Sofia reading her stories and revisiting experiences that she has had. It is wonderful for such a young child to be so interested in books and show such an understanding of the way that they work.

We know children are learning when we see them practise old things and take an interest.

Sofia enjoys returning to her favourite books and the enjoyment that they bring.

(Te Whāriki, Communication/Mana Reo.)



What's happening here?

Pamela is a home-based provider who has recognised Sofia's love of books. The home-based co-ordinator wrote this story after visiting Sofia and Pamela in the home-based setting.

What does this assessment tell us about the learning (using a Communication/Mana Reo lens)?

This exemplar is about Sofia, an infant, being a reader. The co-ordinator records in detail the skills of knowing about books, and loving books, that Sofia demonstrates. This inclination and the skills associated with it include: choosing books rather than other toys; choosing specific books rather than any book; opening the book in the correct way, the right way up; turning the pages from left to right; and pointing to some of the pictures and making accompanying sounds. The commentary also points out that Pamela and Sofia go to the library on a regular basis and Pamela reads to Sofia often.

How might this documented assessment contribute to Communication/Mana Reo?

The audience for this assessment will include

Pamela, Sofia's family, and Sofia. The assessment is an affirmation of Pamela's practice (it is implied that the What next? will be more of the same), and for Pamela and Sofia's family, the assessment gives specific information about the characteristics of an emergent reader and about Sofia's achievements and interests. In the future, Sofia will be able to revisit this assessment and "read" the photographs of herself reading *Thomas the Tank Engine*. The assessment demonstrates for her (as observer and the one observed) that this is something she does, even though she will not yet understand the words "being a reader".

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

This documented assessment has highlighted some of the routines followed in this home-based setting – there are regular trips to the library, and Sofia and Pamela often read books together. In this sense, the assessment also demonstrates elements of Belonging/Mana Whenua.