

# Joshua's mana reo

Joshua has a pretty good understanding of what is going on around him. He can recognise different faces and he expresses his feelings through body language and facial expression.

Joshua is very vocal and he will babble away while he is playing with toys and during interaction with his peers.

We have been encouraging Joshua to sound out simple kupu like “kia ora”, “hōmai”, “inu”, “kai”, “pakipaki”, “ihu”, “waha”, etc. He can understand and respond to simple instructions like “pakipaki”, “pūkana mai”, “kanikani”, and “Kei hei to ihu?”

Joshua enjoys waiata and music. He knows the actions to some of the kōhanga songs and his favourite songs are:

- “Pakahia o ringa” – Joshua recognises the tune and the words.
- “Pakipaki” – he will clap his hands whenever the song is being sung while bobbing up and down.
- “Kei runga te rākau” – Joshua also recognises the tune to this song and he will automatically put his hands up to his eyes (like a ruru) when he hears the first line of this song being sung – “Kei runga te rākau i te pō, ki mai te ruru kua awatea ...”



Joshua likes watching the older boys doing the haka and loves showing off his own pūkana.

## **Link to Te Whāriki:**

The programme includes action games, listening games, and dancing, all of which use the body as a means of communication.

Over the past 3 weeks Joshua has shown an interest in books. He will pick a book and give it to a whaea to read, often getting her to read the same book over and over again. He likes to spend his afternoons chilling out and reading books for a good hour and a half. He particularly likes the hard-covered books because he can turn the pages by himself.

I have tried a few exercises with Joshua over that time by reading him one book about four times, slowly sounding out key words and names of animals. I then asked him simple questions about each page, for example, “Kei hea te **ngeru**?” “Kei hea te **kuri**?” “Kei hea te **panana**?” Joshua will answer by pointing to the pictures on pages.

On 1 August Joshua said “nana” while pointing to a picture of a “panana” in a book that we had been reading.

Reading books is an excellent way to develop and extend Joshua's language skills, starting with visual recognition and pronunciation. Once he is able to sound out words, the next step would be to extend his vocabulary by introducing a wider range of books.

## **Link to Te Whāriki:**

Adults are prepared to read the same story again and again.

Strategies: Teachers will use repetition, sounding out words slowly and encouraging Joshua to repeat after us where appropriate.

Continue to sing his favourite kōhanga songs to him and introduce new waiata.

### What's happening here?

In this assessment, Joshua's growing understanding of receptive language (sometimes shown through waiata) and his attempts at communicating are noted. Ngā kaiako notice his new interest in books and see this as another opportunity to further both his receptive and expressive language in Māori.

### What aspects of noticing, recognising, and responding to literacy learning does this assessment exemplify?

Letting others know of Joshua's favourite songs may lead to his being provided with opportunities for practising these in other contexts, for example, with his family. Joshua's enjoyment of waiata is seen as a major stimulus to his language development. There is a reminder to "continue to sing his favourite kōhanga songs to him and introduce new waiata". Ngā kaiako recognise the value of repetition and practice to Joshua's language and literacy learning. The assessment gives a clear indication to readers of Joshua's current competencies, with some explicit suggestions of what can be done to support his growing Māori vocabulary.

### What does this assessment tell us about literacy learning (using a *Te Whāriki* lens)?

By having stories read to him "over and over again" when he asks for them and by being encouraged to point out the animals or the banana in the illustrations, Joshua is learning that his participation in this bilingual community is

supported. He is developing the knowledge that he makes a valued contribution, an aspiration of *Te Whāriki* for all young children. Learning te reo is important, and books and waiata are regarded as rich resources for facilitating this. The early childhood centre is supporting the whānau's commitment to te reo. "An appreciation of te reo as a living and relevant language" is a learning outcome of the Communication/Mana Reo strand of *Te Whāriki*.<sup>17</sup>

### How does this assessment exemplify developing competence in literacy?

Joshua enjoys communicating through gesture and song as well as being in the company of the early childhood community.

Books have become a source of interest and delight for Joshua. He is motivated to "read" and "reread" them, either alone or with an adult. He knows how to get a story read to him (by giving the book to a whaea), and in doing so, he is taking responsibility for his literacy learning. By having the same book read several times, he is coming to understand about the permanency of the words and illustrations on the pages.

He understands words, phrases, and questions in Māori and is beginning to use these himself ("nana").

Reading is a shared process in which he makes a contribution to the story. Joshua's interest in and enjoyment of stories is giving him plenty of experience and practice with books, which in itself will facilitate further literacy learning.