

Rangitoto



Today Kauri's mum told us the story of how Rangitoto got its name.

Back in the days of early migration when the great ancestral waka came to settle in Aotearoa, many of the landmarks that were discovered were named not only according to appearance but about incidents that occurred there. Such is the case of Rangitoto. The Te Arawa waka captained by Tamatekapua arrived on the volcano. It was closely followed by the Tainui waka. Horouta was the captain. He had been in pursuit of the Te Arawa waka for some time. It is told

that Tamatekapua had stolen Horouta's wife, which enraged him enough to follow Te Arawa all the way across the Pacific to Aotearoa. It was on Rangitoto that he caught up with Tamatekapua and a fight broke out in which Horouta made Tamatekapua's nose bleed. It is for this reason that the volcano was named Ngā Rangi-Toto-a-Ihu-a-Tama-Te-Kapua. This means "the day of the bleeding (nose) of Tamatekapua". The two humps we can see either side of the tall one are known by some Māori as lizards guarding Rangitoto.

Story as told by Janine Dewes



What does Rangitoto look like?

"Children develop knowledge about the features of the area of physical and/or spiritual significance to the local community, such as the local river or mountain."

Te Whāriki, Belonging – Goal 1



Painting Rangitoto

April

Today William and his friends painted Rangitoto from our view from the playground. William's painting closely resembled what he could see. He even asked me for some light grey paint for the clouds, which were definitely light grey. He looked up frequently to have a look at Rangitoto. William showed real perseverance because he was painting this for about half an hour until he was completely happy with it.



Our mosaic sign – A learning story

The Orakei Kindergarten sign has evolved from the children's ongoing interest in mosaics. To further extend their learning we set out to find a long-term project that would be meaningful to the children.



The plan helps the children to imagine what the finished sign will look like.



Manaaki and Katie glue on the pieces they have just cut to size.



Jacqueline, Kate, Gabriella, Eden and Rebecca cut out and stick on the large pieces.



William finds the big pieces fill the white space quickly.



William S. thought the dark blue tiles should go down the bottom where the sea is deeper.



Archer, Claire, Tracy and Kate wipe the excess glue off the next day and make the tiles "really shiny". They are careful but sometimes a piece of tile falls off.



George, Claire, Hamish and Rebecca look for curved pieces of yellow tile for the sun's eyes and match the curved shapes to the lines of the board.



Meg and William brought a paua shell from home to glue in the sea.



Meg and William's paua shell.



Meg found a triangle piece of tile that she thought looked like a whale's tail. I cut out a whale's body to go with it. And we glued it on in the "deep blue sea".



Jimmy shows where he decided to put the "blue bubbles".



Hamish thinks carefully about where to put his piece.



Jimmy looked through a catalogue and saw some "glass bubbles" that he suggested we use for the mosaic. He showed us where he wanted them to go and George carried them on all the way across the sky.

Summary of the children's learning

The children are learning early maths concepts such as matching and comparing shapes. They are problem solving by moving tile pieces around until the best place is found, and they need to consider leaving a space around each piece for the grout. The children continually make observations about the size, shape and texture of their pieces. They frequently express their delight when observing a pattern they have purposefully, or sometimes accidentally, made. They are increasing their vocabulary by hearing and using words like, "shiny", "rough", and "reflective" to describe textures, or "straight", "curved", and "triangle" to describe shapes (*Te Whāriki*, Communication, Goal 2). There has also been much discussion about the different media we use and their properties (for example, how quickly the glue dries and how easily the different thicknesses of tile can break).

The children are learning to follow a plan that is stapled next to the sign. Some children independently refer to the plan to see where a certain coloured tile piece might go (*Te Whāriki*, Exploration, Goal 3).

Along our journey there has been a lot of discussion about the purpose of the sign, for example, for people to look at when they drive past. And there has been a growing awareness of where Rangitoto is in relation to the kindergarten, and what grows on the mountain (*Te Whāriki*, Exploration, Goal 4). The project has given the children many opportunities to contribute to the making of the sign (*Te Whāriki*, Contribution, Goal 1). We now have a core group who are keen to work on the sign every time the tools come out. They have also been learning about keeping themselves safe by using the tools appropriately. Some children are confidently showing the less experienced children what to do. For example, newcomers are quickly told to put an apron on before they pick up a gluing knife. The children have opportunities to work alongside their peers. Many have brought special things from home to add to the sign (*Te Whāriki*, Belonging, Goal 1).

What next?

We will invite a visitor from the marae to talk to us about the local significance of Rangitoto in our community.

We will invite the children to explore how the sign should be erected and where it should go.



What's happening here?

The development of a large mosaic sign showing the Orakei Kindergarten's name evolves from the children's interest in making mosaics. To further this interest, the teachers set out to find a long-term project that they feel will have meaning and purpose for the children, and so the idea of a mosaic sign is born. This project is a collaboration between teachers and children. They discuss and develop ideas about what might be the focus of the sign. As Rangitoto is visible from the kindergarten, it is agreed that this will be the focus of the sign. Kauri's mum comes to the kindergarten and tells the story of how Rangitoto got its name. Photos taken on Rangitoto are displayed for additional motivation. In the initial phase, the painting easels are set up in the playground from where Rangitoto can be seen. From this vantage point, the children paint their own images of Rangitoto. Following this, the children and teachers together construct a plan of the mosaic sign and start to create it.

What aspects of noticing, recognising, and responding to learning in the arts does this assessment exemplify?

The teachers respond to an established interest of the children, and they recognise that creating a sign will provide a learning opportunity for a large group of the children. A number of specific aspects of the pedagogy of noticing, recognising, and responding are exemplified in this story.

Kauri's mother tells the story of how Rangitoto got its name, a story that dates back to when the great ancestral waka came to settle in Aotearoa.

A teacher visits Rangitoto and photographs the island to provide the children with information about its features. These photos are used to motivate the children to paint the island and to inspire their paintings.

The painting easels are placed in a position that allows the children to view the island as they paint.

During the process of creating the mosaic, a child looks through a catalogue and sees some "glass bubbles" that he suggests purchasing for the sign. Teachers respond to this request, and he explains later where he wants the bubbles to go. Many of the children bring special things from home to contribute to the sign.

What does this assessment tell us about learning in the arts (using a *Te Whāriki* lens)?

The learning in this exemplar spans all five strands of *Te Whāriki*. The summary of the learning, written by one of the teachers, makes these links. Most importantly, this is an opportunity to contribute to the making of a permanent sign for the kindergarten. The project is an authentic, purposeful project that makes a significant contribution to the life of the kindergarten.

How does this assessment exemplify developing competence in the arts?

Within this exemplar, we see the participation of an ever-widening group of children as the mosaic sign project progresses. There is also increasing competence as the children learn more about the symbol systems and tools they are using. As the children explore their ideas and thoughts about Rangitoto, they observe their environment more closely and listen to the ideas of others. They have opportunities to play with the ideas and materials as they begin to paint and draw Rangitoto and design a sign for the kindergarten. Along the way, some children are able to suggest alternatives and make choices while contributing to the project. Teachers provide opportunities for children by initiating the project and by providing first steps in the techniques of painting and mosaic making. The teachers focus some of the art teaching on guiding, challenging, stimulating, motivating, and prompting the children. They organise the environment so that the children can develop expertise and confidence in using exciting art media and techniques over a sustained period.