

Maria's passion for kōwhaiwhai

15 April

Maria returned after the holidays keen to continue experimenting with koru patterns. She uses a range of drawing resources to create her koru patterns. Each time she makes a different drawing, Maria shows me her designs.



6 May

Maria showed me her work with koru patterns (using pencil). She went back to the office table and began to draw another range of koru patterns using coloured pens. The book "How Māui Slowed the Sun" by Peter Crossage was nearby. Maria identified spiral patterns in the illustrations. Zoe joined Maria at the table and said, "Look, I'm doing spirals." Maria replied, "I'm doing lots." Zoe asked, "How many? Thousands?" Maria went on to comment, "You know what, teacher, we made koru paintings." (She was referring to the white paint on black paper designs some of the children made on 18 April.)



Short-term review

Maria continues to pursue her strong interest in creating koru designs. She practises her patterns independently in different curriculum areas and using a range of different media.

What next?

We will continue to encourage Maria's involvement in accessing a range of media to extend her interest in the visual arts.

Child's voice – Maria's feedback about her kōwhaiwhai designs

10 June

I showed Maria her portfolio, which contained all of her kōwhaiwhai designs. She was very excited to see all of her work displayed and looked through her work, examining it closely. Maria looked at her PVA printing work and recalled the process: "I stuck the paper on there [on top of the printing block] and rolled it."

Maria looked at the sketches and recalled when she had drawn them. (One was drawn at the marae and the other one at kindergarten.) Maria observed the similarities of the designs she had drawn – they were all kōwhaiwhai patterns. Maria went on to examine her photos and noticed the photo of one of her paintings. She noted that she had "coloured it all in". She then looked closely at the actual painting and noticed that a very small section of the design hadn't been painted!



Maria noticed the information sheet from the Māori clip art kōwhaiwhai patterns and identified the kaperva pattern as being the same as the patterns Frances had painted. Earlier in the morning, Maria drew my attention to the pink top she was wearing. "Look," she said, pointing to the koru-shaped patterns. Maria finds patterns throughout the environment.

Parent's voice

12 June

Ever since Maria has started to draw kōwhaiwhai patterns, she has started to recognise them anywhere. For example, when she came to my work one day, she noticed some kōwhaiwhai stencils on the desk and straight away knew exactly what she was looking at. "This is what I draw at kindy, these kōwhaiwhai patterns."

Maria is not only interested in kōwhaiwhai patterns, but she is also developing her artistic skills quite well at a young age. I do believe that this is one of her greatest talents and skills and try to encourage her in every way by buying the things she needs to help further her skills, and as Maria gets older, she will be a great artist.



Teacher's voice

Maria's passion for the visual arts (particularly those incorporating kōwhaiwhai) has developed and deepened over the last four months. Her ongoing interest in exploring the extensive range of visual art media has motivated others to become more actively involved. This was very evident when I videotaped Maria working on a painting over two days. After the children viewed this, they returned the next morning eager to start working on their own paintings. Maria was driving the curriculum! I wonder where this passion will lead.

What's happening here?

These excerpts from Maria's portfolio illustrate developments in her art over four months, with a particular focus on kōwhaiwhai. The teacher writes:

Kōwhaiwhai painting has been an effective way of drawing the children's focus to traditional art forms. This was reinforced by Maria's interest. We displayed picture and photo resources to provide motivation and references for the children when displaying their patterns. The visit to the museum provided the opportunity for them to observe the kōwhaiwhai paintings in the whare whakairo at Hotuni. We also provided sketching materials when visiting Tūtahi Tonu Marae (5 May). Over the term, we made available a range of media (white paint, black paper, black PVA, printing inks, and a range of paint colours) to enable the children to explore the different effects. We videotaped and photographed the process to create a resource.

What aspects of continuity does this assessment exemplify?

Two voices sum up the continuity illustrated here.

Maria's mother: "Maria is not only interested in kōwhaiwhai patterns, but she is also developing her artistic skills quite well at a young age."

Maria's teacher: "Maria's passion for the visual arts (particularly incorporating kōwhaiwhai) has developed and deepened over the last four months. Her ongoing interest in exploring the extensive range of visual art media has motivated others to become more actively involved."

Maria's mother also comments on the continuity between Maria's artwork at the early childhood centre and her interest in kōwhaiwhai patterns elsewhere.

How might this assessment contribute to continuity?

The assessments in Maria's folio are work in progress. On June 10, the teacher comments: "I showed Maria her portfolio, which contained all of her kōwhaiwhai designs. She was very excited to see all of her work displayed and looked through her work, examining it closely." Maria recalls when she drew the sketches, notes similarities, comments critically on an incomplete painting, and comments on the information sheet that the teacher has included in the portfolio. When Maria reviews previous work in this way, it will inform her current and future work.

What might this tell us about informal noticing, recognising, and responding in this place?

The teachers here also have an interest in the visual arts. Videotaping Maria's painting enables them to record an individual painting as a sequence of moments of work in progress. The discussion with Maria supports this viewpoint of a portfolio as work in progress, allowing Maria to see the continuity (and maybe the discontinuity) in her work in one particular field, the visual arts.