

MINISTRY OF EDUCATION
Te Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga

The Strands of *Te Whāriki*: Communication

Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira ki
Te Whāriki: Mana Reo

14

Kei Tua o te Pae
Assessment for Learning:
Early Childhood Exemplars



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Project Co-directors: Margaret Carr, University of Waikato, and Wendy Lee, Educational Leadership Project;
Project Administrator: Carolyn Jones;
Project Co-ordinators: Keryn Davis, Lesley Dunn, Stuart Guyton, Maggie Haggerty, Ann Hatherly, Anita Mortlock, Lesley Rameka, Vicki Sonnenberg, and Sarah Te One;
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Authors of text and compilers of books: Margaret Carr, Wendy Lee, and Carolyn Jones, advised and assisted by Rita Walker and Bronwen Cowie
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Kei Tua o te Pae
Assessment for Learning:
Early Childhood Exemplars

The Strands of Te Whāriki:
Communication

Ngā Taumata Whakahirahira ki
Te Whāriki: Mana Reo

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Introduction

He kupu whakataki

Indeed, it was in this [research] process that we came to recognize – in practice as well as in theory – the critically important role of dialogic knowledge building in fostering the dispositions of caring, collaboration and critical inquiry that are at the heart of our vision of education.¹

This book collects together early childhood exemplars that illustrate the assessment of learning that is valued within the curriculum strand of Communication/Mana Reo, keeping in mind that:

Exemplars are examples of assessments that make visible learning that is valued so that the learning community (children, families, whānau, teachers, and beyond) can foster ongoing and diverse learning pathways.²

Although these exemplars have been annotated with a Communication/Mana Reo lens, in many cases the lens of another strand could have been used. The principle of Holistic Development or Kotahitanga set out in *Te Whāriki* is a reminder that the curriculum “strands” are a construction, and in any episode of a child’s learning, these areas are inextricably intertwined and interconnected.

Assessment for Communication

Aromatawai mō te Mana Reo

The exemplars in this book illustrate possible ways in which assessing, documenting, and revisiting children’s learning will contribute to educational outcomes in the curriculum strand Communication/Mana Reo.

- Assessment portfolios provide teachers and children with something interesting to talk about together and with families and whānau.
- Children are able to “read” and respond to some of the documentation to do with their learning because photographs and other visual cues support the documentation.
- Assessment practices contribute to making the early childhood setting a place where children with English as an additional language feel comfortable communicating. Iram Siraj-Blatchford and Priscilla Clarke (2000) suggest that a supportive environment for such learners would have the following characteristics:
 - close relationships between teachers and family;
 - opportunities for pairs and small groups to work and play together;
 - a wide range of activities that encourage communication;
 - evidence of support and integration of the children’s own cultural and linguistic backgrounds;
 - language that the children can understand, that is meaningful to them, that is based on their concrete experiences, and that is supported by visual materials;
 - frequent interactions with adults and children;
 - support and feedback for children, encouraging their developing confidence in communicating;
 - focus on the meaning of the communication rather than the form of communication.³
- Assessments include transcripts of children’s comments (often written soon after the event) and indicate that teachers have listened carefully to children’s voices.
- Assessments indicate that adults have observed carefully and noticed, recognised, and responded to children’s non-verbal communication. Adults acknowledge any uncertainty about the meaning of non-verbal communications in the assessments, and documentation avoids speaking for the child.

- One of the indicative outcomes for this strand is that children develop the expectation that verbal communication can be a source of delight. Assessments include examples of mutually delightful comments, such as the following, from an assessment not included in *Kei Tua o te Pae*: “Max and Izrael and I were moving bark and Max told me ‘I cut my leg and there was lots of blood and Mum drove like the wind to get me to the doctor.’”
- Multiple ways of expressing ideas and feelings are represented in these assessments, including artwork, mathematics, music, drama, dance, and information communication technologies.
- Families will “bring their wisdom into the classroom”, and stories will be helpful modes of encouraging talk.⁴

The four domains of Communication

Ngā rohe e whā o te Mana Reo

Te Whāriki elaborates on the Communication/Mana Reo strand as follows:

Ko tēnei mea ko te reo he matapihi e whakaatu ana i ngā tikanga me ngā whakapono o te iwi ... [Ko te] tūmanako mō te mokopuna ... Kia mōhio te mokopuna ki tōna ao, ki te ao Māori, te ao o nāianeī, me te ao o āpōpō, mā te reo Māori.⁵

The languages and symbols of their own and other cultures are promoted and protected. Children experience an environment where: they develop non-verbal communication skills for a range of purposes; they develop verbal communication skills for a range of purposes; they experience the stories and symbols of their own and other cultures; they discover and develop different ways to be creative and expressive.⁶

The four interwoven domains of Communication/Mana Reo are described (as goals) in the English text of *Te Whāriki*, and each domain includes indicative learning outcomes.

The exemplars presented in this book can each be allocated to one of these four domains.

Non-verbal communication skills for a range of purposes



Non-verbal communication skills include expressing feelings, ideas, and questions in a wide range of ways. Teachers who know the children well learn to “read” the signs of infants and toddlers. Children learn to communicate using a wide range of media: the exemplar “Drawing and chanting together” gives examples. “Introducing the computer” is an exemplar about children being introduced to one type of information technology. More exemplars about information technology are included in Book 20, and further exemplars about non-verbal communication are included in books 16–19.

Verbal communication skills for a range of purposes

Assessments value the interactions between adults and children and with peers. They are specific about those aspects of verbal communication that the children are developing. The exemplar “Starting with photos” illustrates how powerful photographs are in initiating a network of other communication modes and in maintaining a connection with the home.



Working theories developed by teachers are relevant here; one teacher’s working theory relates to the value of te reo Māori.⁷ All early childhood teachers in Aotearoa New Zealand have the responsibility of recognising that te reo Māori is the poutokomanawa of mana Māori. This recognition and a range of responses to it should be evident in assessments. The exemplars “Leo and te reo Māori” and “Tapahia me ngā kutikuti – Cutting with scissors” (in Book 13) are two examples of different ways teachers recognise and respond to the importance of Māori language in the early childhood setting. “Rahmat and the snakes” is about communicating with a child for whom English is an additional language.

Lous Heshusius has commented on the difficulty that adults sometimes have in “truly” listening to children.⁸ She writes:

It became clear that when I thought I was listening, most of my attention was with myself: I wondered how the other person’s message applied to myself; I had vague images about what I would rather be doing than listening to this person; I wondered about what I should be saying, given my particular role (e.g., as teacher, mother); I thought about what I could say next to the person to steer the topic into another, more interesting, direction. Not that I did all this deliberately and consciously; these modes of listening (or rather, partial listening, or not listening) play themselves out as habits of which we are hardly aware.

The exemplar “Fuka, Colette and Fea” illustrates continuity in communication over time, especially in regard to the children’s developing facility with language as evidenced by their storytelling.⁹ Fuka’s learning story is also an example of personalising documentation, with the joint recording of the story “The Day Fuka’s Hen Came to Kindergarten” mediating the development of communication competence.

Stories and symbols of their own and other cultures

In *Te Whāriki*, one of the indicative outcomes for the domain of Communication/Mana Reo is described as follows:

Children develop an understanding that symbols can be “read” by others and that thoughts, experiences, and ideas can be represented through words, pictures, print, numbers, sounds, shapes, models, and photographs.

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Assessments where the “one hundred languages”¹⁰ of children are highlighted as domains of learning are covered in more detail in books 16–20 of this series.

Assessments note children’s dispositions, understandings, and skills in recognising symbol systems and using tools to make meaning and communicate. They also suggest further directions. Examples of documented assessments in books 11–15 support Paul Black and Dylan Wiliam’s research finding that promoting a culture of success is an effective formative assessment strategy (see Research findings in Book 10).

Russell Bishop, Mere Berryman, Sarah-Jane Tiakiwai, and Cath Richardson’s research with year 9 and year 10 Māori children concludes that teachers’ “deficit theorising” has contributed to low expectations for Māori children. Their research suggests that when teacher–student relationship and interaction patterns change as a result of supportive professional development, a number of changes can be seen to occur in student behaviour:

students’ on-task engagement increases, their absenteeism reduces, their work completion increases, the cognitive levels of the classroom lessons are able to increase, and their short-term achievements increase; in many cases, dramatically so.¹¹

Narrative assessments that resist “deficit theorising”, and are often dictated by children, can in the same way raise expectations for all children and contribute to successful learning outcomes.

The exemplar “Te marae” illustrates the children at one kindergarten revisiting some of the stories and symbols of Aotearoa New Zealand. “Sofia the reader” chronicles how Sofia is learning about books and reading, while in “Phoebe’s puzzling morning”, Phoebe and a teacher make meaning together from the symbols and text implicit in some jigsaw puzzles.

Different ways to be creative and expressive

This domain relates to the topics of music, art, drama, and dance. It links closely with the Exploration/ Mana Aotūroa strand, especially where it refers to pretend or dramatic play. The dramatic play in “Harriet’s mermaid” illustrates a number of ways to be creative and expressive, including making a movie, while “Jorjia’s imaginary turtle” documents a two-year-old’s imaginary play.



Exemplars in other books

Ngā tauaromahi kei pukapuka kē

The following exemplars in other books can also be viewed from a Communication/Mana Reo perspective.

- Book 1:** Blinking and clicking on the changing mat; Where's Kirsty?; Tēnā kupu, āe, tuhia!
- Book 2:** "Those are the exact words I said, Mum!"; Jet's mother contributes to the assessment; Zahra and the donkey; Assessments in two languages; Bella and Nina dancing; A shadow came creeping; Toddlers as teachers; Mana reo
- Book 3:** Pihikete's learning; Te Aranga responds to a photograph; Hatupatu and the birdwoman; Pierre's learning; Jace and the taiaha; A bilingual "parent's voice"
- Book 4:** "Oh, no! That's not right!"; "I know, you could write all this down!"; Alexandra corrects the record; Your brain is for thinking; Tayla and "what next?"; Jack's interest in puzzles; Ray learns to draw fish
- Book 5:** Nanny's story; Exploring local history; Sharing portfolios with the wider community; The flying fox
- Book 6:** Not happy with the wheel; Sahani's drawing; Readers, carers, and friends; Immy dancing; "Did they have alarms at your centre?"; Skye in a box
- Book 7:** Daniel's new grip; Greer's increasing confidence; George makes music; Fe'ao
- Book 8:** Ruby and the supermarket; Haere mai, Sam
- Book 9:** Elaine's stories; James and the puppets; Sherina sings hello; Reading the portfolio; Fred's stories.

These additional exemplars provide teachers who wish to reflect on the analysis and assessment of learning outcomes within the Communication/Mana Reo strand with a comprehensive collection of exemplars for discussion.

Exemplars

Ngā tauaromahi

Non-verbal communication skills for a range of purposes

Drawing and chanting together

11 August

Mūmū Te Āwha na Whaea Re-nee



Mūmū Te Āwha was watching Mira drawing on the whiteboard. She picked up a pen and began to draw alongside Mira, glancing over her shoulder to see what Mira was drawing then continuing with her own picture. After a short period Mūmū Te Āwha decided to use two pens, one in each hand, then changed to both in one hand. She drew circles with great concentration holding the two pens. She was very impressed with the outcome and asked Mira to look at her work. Mira smiled at Mūmū Te Āwha and carried on drawing. “Like this,” said Mūmū Te Āwha. She started to sing to Mira, “Porohita, porohita.”

Mira watched Mūmū Te Āwha as she made big strokes on the whiteboard then began to sing along with Mūmū Te Āwha, “Tapawhā, tapawhā.” Mira’s strokes became wider and longer

as they sang, a lot similar to Mūmū Te Āwha’s drawing. They carried on like this for a few minutes then put their pens away and went off to play in the sandpit.

I love to watch Mūmū Te Āwha do any type of art as I find her interesting as she goes through the motions. She is peaceful and takes care in what she is producing. Everything she creates has a purpose and has a meaning to her. In this instance Mūmū Te Āwha used singing as a stimulant to encourage Mira to draw the way that makes her happiest and is most satisfying. She wanted to share that feeling with Mira as she showed such a positive interest in Mira’s work. We will expose you to a great lot more art experiences Mūmū Te Āwha and let your mind run free. He kōtiro rangimārie koe.

What’s happening here?

Two young children are communicating with each other by drawing, chanting, and smiling to each other when they make eye contact.

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

At least three “non-verbal” communication modes or “languages” are evident in this learning story. Mira is drawing, and Mūmū Te Āwha joins her at the whiteboard. Mūmū Te Āwha accompanies her drawings of circles with a chant: “Porohita, porohita.” Mira replies by chanting “Tapawhā, tapawhā”, and Mūmū Te Āwha joins in as they both shift to drawing wide and long strokes. The assessment notes that “Mira smiled at Mūmū Te Āwha”, recognising the unspoken communication that is occurring between these two children.

Combining drawing and chanting appears to be a very creative way of using the whiteboard. It

may be common practice at this early childhood service to make such “holistic” connections.

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

This documentation offers considerable detail about what and how Mūmū Te Āwha is drawing as well as the interactions between the two children. It will provide a reference point for reflection as the children’s ways of interacting with each other change.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

Mūmū Te Āwha is taking the initiative here, and there is an element of Contribution/Mana Tangata, taking responsibility and relating to others. Mūmū Te Āwha is drawing circles with “great concentration”, which is an aspect of Well-being/Mana Atua – trusting the environment enough and being confident enough to totally engage in an activity, oblivious to all that is going on beyond that activity.

Introducing the computer

Child: Kaeleigh

Date: October

Teacher: Kimberly

		Examples or cues	A Learning Story
belonging mana whenua	Taking an interest	Finding an interest <i>here</i> – a topic, an activity, a role. Recognising the familiar, enjoying the unfamiliar. Coping with change.	<p>Today we had a special visitor named Jo, who came in to talk to our teachers about ICT in our centre. Jo had a few spare minutes after lunch, so she brought her laptop out for us to play with. At first, we were looking at her photos on the laptop, and we all took turns at pressing the buttons to rotate through the photos. Then Jaimee asked if we could use the computer to write our names. Jo asked, “Should I put a page up so you can write your name? This is called Kid-Pix, which the children at my kindy use.”</p> <p>When it was your turn, Kaeleigh, you typed the K and the A, but when you went to press the E, it typed EEE. You knew that there are not three E’s in your name, but you didn’t know how to fix it. Jo showed you where the delete key was, and you were away again, typing your name all by yourself.</p> <p>Later on, when Jaimee was having a turn, she accidentally put in four A’s. You remembered how to delete the letters and showed Jaimee what to do to fix up her name.</p>
well-being mana atua	Being Involved	Paying attention for a sustained period, feeling safe, trusting others. Being playful with others and/or materials.	
exploration mana aotūroa	Persisting with Difficulty	Setting and choosing difficult tasks. Using a range of strategies to solve problems when ‘stuck’ (be specific).	
communication mana reo	Expressing an Idea or a Feeling	In a range of ways (specify). For example: oral language, gesture, music, art, writing, using numbers and patterns, telling stories.	
contribution mana tangata	Taking Responsibility	Responding to others, to stories, and imagined events, ensuring that things are fair, self-evaluating, helping others, contributing to the program.	



Short-term review	What next?
<p>Kaeleigh, the teachers have learnt so much from Jo today, and I was really glad to see that you were learning some new things as well. You learnt how to do something new on the computer, and you were able to use this knowledge to help someone else when it was their turn.</p> <p>Tino pai Kaeleigh</p>	<p>Kaeleigh, I’m sure that you would like to have another turn on the computer, and one idea we have had is to help you make a talking book on the computer. Does this sound like something you would like to do? We will talk about it and see what other ideas you have.</p>

What’s happening here?

Teachers and children (in this case, Kaeleigh and Jaimee) at this early childhood centre are learning from a visiting expert how to use the computer.

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

Information communication technologies are another mode of communication literacy. Here Jaimee and Kaeleigh are being introduced to the keyboard of Jo’s computer and to the Kid Pix program. They are learning how to find the letters of their names on the keyboard. Jo teaches Kaeleigh how to use the delete button, and Kaeleigh then teaches Jaimee how to delete letters when Jaimee puts four A’s in her name.

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

The What next? section is addressed to Kaeleigh

and suggests further steps she might like to follow in developing her skill with this new communication tool.

In the Short-term review section, the teacher comments that it is not only the children who have learned about ICT today – the teachers have as well, and this documentation is a reminder that teachers also learn new things.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

Kaeleigh takes on the responsibility of teaching Jaimee how to delete letters from the screen. This generation of children will often also teach their parents and grandparents about ICT. This demonstrates an aspect of the Contribution/Mana Tangata strand of Te Whāriki.

Verbal communication skills for a range of purposes

Leo and te reo Māori

Child: Leo

Date: April

Teacher: Janine

A Learning Story

Today, at changing time, Leo put his legs up in the air. I said, “Tō waewae ki runga” then followed this sentence with “Tō waewae ki raro” (Put your legs down). Leo did not respond, so I gently pushed his legs down. I repeated, “Tō waewae ki runga” and he lifted his legs up, smiled and waited for the next command, “Tō waewae ki raro”, and down Leo’s legs went. Leo initiated this game later in the week and repeated the last two words of the sentence.

Short-term review

I was impressed with how quickly Leo picked up te reo Māori. Over the last 10 weeks I have observed Leo and his language in te reo Māori, which has been pronounced clearly and confidently. Ka pai Leo!

What next?

Encourage Leo’s understanding of te reo Māori.

Parent’s voice

Child’s name: Leo

Parent’s name: Andrea

Date: May

We are very interested in Leo learning Māori language and culture and are pleased to see it being introduced at pre-school. We believe that learning another language at this age makes later language studies easier.

We live in a community that is racially and culturally mixed and Leo has already shown interest in kapa haka because of its relationship to music and dance.

We believe NZ, though becoming multicultural, is a country (traditionally and legally) centred around a dialogue taking place between Māori and Pākehā and that the language of people strongly illustrates the ideologies and ways of viewing/understanding the world by a culture. Understanding these different views allows Leo to begin to understand and be comfortable with difference.

Introducing Leo to Māori language and ideas at this age will help widen the options available to him to understand and position himself in the world and to understand there are different ways to do this.

What’s happening here?

Leo is being introduced to te reo Māori. In this learning story, he is on the changing table, and the teacher is introducing the phrases “Tō waewae ki runga” and “Tō waewae ki raro”.

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

This observation takes place over a week. The teacher adds that Leo “initiated this game later in the week and repeated the last two words of the sentence”. She is very specific about what Leo is learning. Leo’s mother, Andrea, adds a comment, offering a wider view of Leo’s learning: “Introducing Leo to Māori language and ideas at this age will help widen the options available to him to understand and position himself in the world and to understand there are different ways to do this.”

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

A Parent’s voice has already been written in response to the documented assessment of Leo’s learning, setting out a community-wide view of the implications of this episode. No doubt, other examples and discussions about Leo’s learning of te reo Māori will be added to Leo’s portfolio as a result of the teachers’ and parents’ awareness of Leo’s developing language skills.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

The Parent’s voice recognises how this episode links to Leo’s sense of Belonging/Mana Whenua and his development in the areas of Exploration/Mana Aotūroa and Contribution/Mana Tangata. The parent writes about the wider community dialogue between Māori and Pākehā, about different ways of knowing, and about being comfortable with difference, and she explains this in relation to Leo’s development: “Understanding these different views allows Leo to begin to understand and be comfortable with difference.”

Starting with photos



Connor brought some photos from home to share with his friends.

They were about his dad's machinery that he uses when he works in the bush.

*The Logging Industry
Connor Shares His Knowledge*



Connor showed the photos to his friend Daniel.

"This is a harvest line hauler. It pulls out logs off the hills into the skid. My daddy's skidder pulls out logs from the bushes, too. It has chains or else it will get stuck in the mud."



"They use waratahs in the bush and grapples and skidders. A waratah cuts the branches off trees – they have knives. I am making a crane to lift stuff up. They lift big trailers or a house that is about to be built."



"They put logs on the stacks, then they go on the logging trucks. The bulldozer has a steel rope, which is heavy, to pull out logs. These letters on my harvest line hauler say 'Ribbonwoods'."



Today Connor changed the eye bolts on the swing frame as they were worn. With help from Barry he soon had his safety harness on and set to work. D shackles were in place, too, when he had finished 2 hours later. I heard Connor organising others and asking them "Where are those washers?" and "I need a nut to put on now."



Connor often initiates working on his interests in different areas of the kindergarten and in different ways, through construction, artwork, pretend play or helping Barry to construct real physical challenges for the children, using ropes, pulleys and the climbing net.



Connor made STOP signs, using long pieces of timber to construct them.

He wrote "STOP" on them, using another sign to copy the letters and made sure they were well hammered into the steps to complete his work.

Connor's work has shown over a period of time that he has many learning dispositions, skills and attitudes, too, which make him a competent and a confident learner.

- He will persist with his task even when it becomes difficult.
- He experiments with resources, using them in many different ways.
- He sees himself as a resource for others.
- He asks adults and other children to help.
- He is able to direct others to get an outcome.
- He can express his ideas and feelings verbally.
- He can express his ideas through his work.
- Most importantly, Connor has the disposition to want to go on learning. He is so keen to achieve.

Links to *Te Whāriki*

I have linked Connor's learning to the four guiding principles of *Te Whāriki*, which are the framework for the curriculum.

Empowerment/Whakamana

Our curriculum empowers Connor to learn and grow by focusing on his skills and interests and recording these in a way that enables Connor to see himself as a capable and competent learner.

Holistic Development/Kotahitanga

Our assessment of Connor's learning sees Connor as a whole person. His responses and behaviour reflect respect, curiosity, trust, confidence, a sense of belonging, independence and responsibility.

Family and Community/Whānau Tangata

Connor's family and the kindergarten form a two-way partnership in Connor's learning.

Relationships/Ngā Hononga

Assessment of Connor's learning reflects the responsive relationships between staff and Connor, the kindergarten as a place of learning and the resources provided.

What's happening here?

The presentation begins with Connor bringing photographs of his dad's machinery to share and discuss with the other children at this early childhood service.

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

Connor is "orchestrating" a complex network of resources and assistance for communication purposes. Just as teachers are using photographs to communicate events and ideas in their assessment learning stories, so too does Connor when he brings photographs from home as a communication device, to start conversations about the work his dad does. The photographs are accompanied by complex verbal explanations from Connor, explanatory drawings, and a demonstration, using ropes, pulleys, and a climbing net. Barry (a visiting expert) facilitates Connor's learning by providing him with access to climbing equipment. There are also opportunities for painting, and resources are made available for Connor to construct a STOP sign.

This exemplar also demonstrates how Connor is making connections between the wider community of home (his dad) and the work environment.

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

This documentation adds narrative text to the many other mediating resources that Connor is using competently. The text will be read back to him, and the language and ideas will undoubtedly be extended by Connor, his family, and the teachers.

What other strands of *Te Whāriki* are exemplified here?

Communication/Mana Reo is interwoven with the Exploration/Mana Aotūroa strand throughout Connor's portfolio. There is a reciprocal relationship between these two domains: the explorations connect with the photographs and the explanations, and artefacts of communication (the STOP signs) contribute to Connor's constructions and explorations.

Rahmat and the snakes



I noticed Rahmat was calling to me and gesturing for me to come over to his easel. He was painting on the far side of the easel and I couldn't see his creation from where I was.

I went over. "WOW! Snakes." "All have tongues and eyes," he said. "Beautiful snakes," I said. "Do you have snakes in Afghanistan?" I asked. "Yes, and in Pakistan too." I began to write about his snakes on the painting – my version.

Rahmat listened respectfully to me. I could sense he was not satisfied with my ideas. He called to Sadia. Sadia is a teacher from Afghanistan who speaks Dari, the same Afghani language as Rahmat. He had some discussion with her. She listened. She began to write his story in Dari as Rahmat dictated.

He asked her to explain to me. She then explained that Rahmat's story goes like this:

The little snake ate lots of food and grew bigger, and then he ate lots and lots more food and he grew bigger still, and then he ate lots and lots and lots more food and he grew huge.

It is so fortunate that Rahmat can access Sadia and through her clarify his thinking for me. He wants me to know what he is thinking. He is not prepared to accept a watered-down version of his thoughts and he knows there is a way in this centre for that not to happen. I definitely had it wrong. Sorry, Rahmat. But you know how to teach me and graciously remind me that we are friends and that I am a learner. We belong to a community of learners.

Robyn. June.

What's happening here?

Rahmat is painting, and the teacher begins to write an accompanying commentary. He is not satisfied with the teacher's interpretation of his work and calls to another teacher who speaks his home language. This second teacher translates Rahmat's commentary for him, revealing that his painting tells a story.

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

For Rahmat, English is an additional language. He can communicate in English, but a complex story, like this one about snakes, can be told only in his home language. As the teacher comments, "It is so fortunate that Rahmat can access Sadia [the translator] and through her clarify his thinking for me." Robyn, the teacher, is aware that without this assistance to overcome language barriers, teachers run the risk of documenting "watered-down" versions of children's communications.

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

This assessment sends out a reminder to teachers to listen carefully and, where possible, to elicit interpretations or translations from speakers of the children's home languages.

However, there are practice and policy implications about the availability of home-language speakers in early childhood centres where there are families for whom English is an additional language. There can be no straightforward solution to this issue, since the communities of some early childhood centres include fifteen or more different home languages.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

This exemplar is also about a child's sense of *well-being* and *belonging*. In this early childhood centre, Rahmat can tell stories to the teacher in his home language – an opportunity that makes it clear that home culture and cultural identity are valued, respected, and connected to this place.

Fuka, Colette and Fea

Child: Fuka

Date: October

Teacher: Karen

A Learning Story		
belonging mana whenua	Taking an interest	<p>What great excitement today. Fuka brought her hen to kindergarten.</p> <p>I grabbed the video camera and began recording Fuka's excitement and her friends' excitement as she chased the hen around the kindergarten playground with her friends. As children arrived at kindergarten Fuka told them, "My chicken", and then Fuka giggled and giggled and giggled, as did her dad when he was telling me about Fuka the hen.</p>
well-being mana aua	Being Involved	<p>I asked Fuka where she got her hen from and Fuka told me, "Car come to kindergarten." Fuka's dad then explained to me that Fuka's hen brings Fuka to kindergarten every day! Usually the hen stays in the car but today Fuka decided to bring her hen into kindergarten.</p>
exploration mana aotioroa	Persisting with Difficulty	<p>I asked Fuka what her hen's name was and she replied Fuka! I thought I had misunderstood her but her dad confirmed that indeed the hen was also called Fuka!</p>
communication manareo	Expressing an Idea or a Feeling	<p>How exciting – we had Fuka the girl and Fuka the hen at kindergarten. Fuka the hen stayed for mat time and we gave her some birdseed but she didn't eat it. Some children had a hold of Fuka's hen and some patted her feathers. Fuka was in her element. She showed such delight, smiling from ear to ear as she shared her hen with her friends and teachers at kindergarten.</p>
contribution manatangata	Taking Responsibility	<p>After mat time we waved goodbye to Fuka the hen and she went home with Fuka's dad.</p> <p>We hope Fuka the hen can come and visit again another day!</p> <p>We had such fun!</p>



Short-term review

What a great surprise! Fuka's hen visiting kindergarten.

Today Fuka took an active role in contributing to the programme. (*Te Whāriki*, Belonging, Goal 2.1)

Fuka has increased her own sense of belonging by sharing something that is important to her (her hen) with her friends and teachers. (*Te Whāriki*, Belonging, Goal 2.4)

It was magical to see Fuka's excitement!

What next?

We recorded Fuka's story into a book so she can revisit her experience and share it with her family.

Fuka and her friends can record their thoughts about the hen's visit.

Can Fuka the hen visit again?

The Day Fuka's Hen



Came to Kindergarten

by the Morning Children
November



Karen was talking to Trevor
and out the corner of her eye
she saw Fuka coming in the
door.

Fuka was carrying a hen!



Fuka's dad brought Fuka's
hen to kindergarten.
This is Fuka and the hen
with her friends George and
Aminiasi.



The hen is with Aminiasi, Fuka
and George.
Aminiasi is patting the hen's
head and saying "Hello".



The hen was funny. She came
inside.

Fuka the hen ran all around
our kindergarten.

Fuka the hen walked around
the mat. She didn't want to
eat the birdseed.

She made a cluck, cluck, cluck
sound.



We fed the hen. Bailee gave
the hen some fruit but she
didn't eat it.



Fuka's hen is not eating the
birdseed.

Fuka's hen likes bread not
birdseed.



Fuka is holding the hen and
her wing is showing.



Fuka's dad took the hen home
to Fuka's house.

Fuka the hen waved goodbye.

Child: Fuka

Date: October

Teacher: Karen

A Learning Story

The day after the visit from Fuka the hen!

Today Fuka bounced in the door and began talking about her hen Fuka.

"My chicken, car, kindergarten," Fuka told me.

"Fuka, did your hen come with you to kindergarten in the car?" I asked.

"Yes, chicken come kindergarten," replied Fuka.

At morning mat time Fuka joined in the discussion and brought up the topic about her hen. She shared her ideas with her friends again.

After mat time we watched the video footage of Fuka the hen's visit and Fuka and some of her friends revisited yesterday's experience. Once again, this was a great joy for Fuka and her excitement was contagious. Fuka enjoyed sharing her hen again with her friends and teachers.

Fuka and her friends took turns sharing their ideas and wrote a page each for Fuka's book. Fuka watched as each page came off the printer and jumped up and down with delight! We made two copies, one for Fuka to take home and one for our kindergarten library.

Short-term review

It seems to me that Fuka now feels her friends and teachers share a common interest (her hen). This has given Fuka the confidence to talk and initiate conversation with her friends and teachers. Fuka has fostered her own sense of belonging and this has empowered her to join group discussions. English is an additional language for Fuka and it is fantastic to see her excitement when she shares her interest with us.

What next?

Continue to increase Fuka's confidence and extend her verbal communication through her interest, Fuka the hen!

Fuka the hen to visit again!

Colette beats the sneaky voice

Child: Colette

Date: December

Teacher: Jane

A Learning Story



I had phoned Colette at her home the previous day. We spoke about various topics, one of which was about what Colette had been watching on television that day. Colette said that she had been watching *Sesame Street* and that she really liked that programme. I told her that I had some *Sesame Street* socks and that I would bring them the next day. I asked Colette if, when she came to the kindergarten the next day, she could remind me what I had to show her. Colette said that she would “remind me”.

The next day Colette and I approached each other and I asked her what it was that I was going to wear that day. Colette pointed at my feet. I wasn’t wearing any socks and I asked Colette if she could use her words and tell me. I said different words beginning with the letter ‘s’, except for the word “sock”. Colette shook her head each time I said the wrong word.

I asked Colette if she could tell me the word and then I would be able to show her the socks.

Colette then tried to “cough” the word out and I could see that she was really trying to say something. I suggested that perhaps she would like to come with me into the office where it was quieter and then she could tell me. She nodded.

We went into the office and I asked her to tell me what I had to wear. Colette very quietly said, “Yes.”

I put the socks on and asked Colette who she could see on them. “Ernie and Bert” she replied, this time in a louder voice. I gave her a choice of stamps to have. She asked for the “smiley faced one”.

I continued to ask her questions throughout the day, in a quiet area of the kindergarten, and Colette continued to talk to me.

The following day Colette brought her mum and dad in to show them “her talking to the teachers”.

Colette showed me her “sneaky voice” book and she told me that “I have beaten the sneaky voice and I will beat him again every day.”

Short-term review

It is “fantastic” to hear Colette talking to us at kindergarten. Some of the children have also remarked on her “talking”. They were very excited as were I and the other teachers.

Colette is quickly gaining confidence in having conversations with the teachers and talking to them about her artwork. She is also initiating the conversations, and has lots of things to talk about.

Well done, Colette, on “beating that sneaky voice”.

What next?

Encourage Colette to talk to the children as well as the teachers.

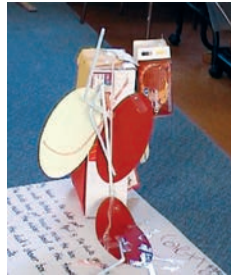
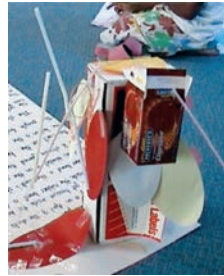
Give Colette the opportunity to talk at mat time – when she feels comfortable and confident enough to do this.

Colette's duck house

Child: Colette

Date: February

Teacher: Karen



A View from Each Side

Short-term review

Today Colette worked independently on the task she set herself – creating a duck house. Colette shows great skill and confidence with the process of art and craft and often uses this medium to represent her ideas. (*Te Whāriki*, Communication, Goal 4.2)

Colette is very aware of the power of print and often requests that her stories be recorded. (*Te Whāriki*, Communication, Goal 3.2)

Looking back over Colette's past stories, it is clear to see the journey Colette has been working through. Colette is now confident to share her thoughts and stories with her teachers.

What next?

Support Colette on the next stage of her journey – to foster friendships and share her fantastic ideas with her friends at kindergarten. Next term we hope to have chickens hatch at kindergarten. This is an interest of Colette's that may spark some sharing of ideas with her friends.

What next?

My house is the sticker part.
The ducks' birthday is on April 9th. The ducks' garden is under the gate.
The ducks have got treasure inside the box.
The straw inside the rubber band is the timer.
The rubber is the ducks' shower box.
The ducks' blanket is on the gate.
The 2 straws joined together make the ducks warm.
You can't see the big ducks. The big black duck and the big white duck.
The button is the blue window.
The purple feather is the window.
The straw is washing 1 duck.
The yellow ovals, the white ovals and the red ovals have baby ducks inside the eggs.
The gate is for the ducks to come in and go out.
My mum and me open the gate for them.
The strings are holding the eggs.
The box is the ducks' roof. The straw is for moving the roof so the ducks can't jump out.
The paper cups are the ducks' beds.

Child: Colette

Date: Term 4

Teacher: Karen

A Learning Story

belonging mana whenua	Taking an interest	<p>At the moment the children have a real passion for singing and dancing to the Vengaboys' song "Shalala Lala".</p> <p>Today was no exception and the children were in full swing performing on a makeshift stage outside.</p> <p>Colette was edging her way towards the group and looked as if she was keen to join in. I was handing out wooden blocks for microphones and offered one to Colette. Colette put her hand out for one. I then took her by the hand and slowly led her up to the stage.</p> <p>I asked Colette if she would like to join the children on the stage and she nodded her head "Yes." The children made room and Colette took her position on the stage and there she stayed for many songs, moving to the music.</p>
well-being mana atua	Being Involved	
exploration mana aotioroa	Persisting with Difficulty	
communication manareo	Expressing an Idea or a Feeling	
contribution manatungā	Taking Responsibility	



Short-term review

Colette is stepping outside her comfort zone. It is great to see her joining a group and becoming involved.

What next?

Continue to encourage Colette to join groups and establish friendships.
Teachers to ring Colette after each session and chat about her day on the phone.

The Day Colette's Ducks



Came to Kindergarten



The ducks want to play. The ducks don't lay eggs at my house - only my black chicken does. The ducks like to play. The ducks are happy at my house. The ducks love to eat snails and worms at my house. One of the ducks laid lots and lots of baby eggs but she couldn't lay lots of baby ducks.



The ducks are fun to play with at my house. The ducks can come out of their house and garden with me and my mum.

The ducks are funny and the ducks liked coming to kindergarten. The ducks were excited.



The ducks were hiding. The ducks liked me. The ducks played with my mum. The ducks like to play.



The ducks are underneath the tree. The ducks like to play. They dig in the mud. The ducks swim - sometimes they swim and sometimes they don't.



The ducks are fun to play with. The ducks are going to go in the gate so they don't run away. The ducks are going to take me home. The ducks took me home very early.



The ducks are drinking lots of water. The ducks love to drink. My ducks are called David and Dorothy. There are more ducks at my house.



My ducks don't clean like that at home. They jump into the water and splash themselves. At kindergarten they clean themselves with their beaks. The ducks love to play.



The ducks had lots of fun. The ducks liked to have lots of fun.

Learning Story

Child: Fea

Date: Term 4

Teacher: Karen

A Learning Story		
belonging mana whana	Taking an interest	<p>A couple of weeks ago Colette brought her two ducks to kindergarten for a visit. Colette's ducks were called David and Dorothy and they stayed for the morning session.</p> <p>Today Fea watched the video we had filmed of the duck visit and chose the photo for her story.</p> <p>Fea told her story while I typed it on the computer. Fea used two and sometimes three words to tell her story. I put Fea's words into a sentence and then read it back to her.</p> <p>When Fea had finished her duck story she said "Fuka's Hen". Fuka's hen had visited last year and the children had all contributed their stories to a book. While Fea was very involved with the visit, she hadn't taken an active role in writing the book. Rather she had taken the role of an observer.</p> <p>"Would you like to write your own hen story about Fuka's hen's visit?" I asked. "Yes," Fea replied. Luckily we still had Fuka's hen book on the computer and we were able to revisit it. When I opened the hen book document and Fea saw the pictures she said, "Just Fea." I knew what Fea meant; she only wanted the pictures that she was in for her story. We found the pictures and Fea also chose a picture of the hen for her story. We then began to record her hen story, Fea sometimes forming her own sentences and sometimes me role-modelling sentences back to her, using her words.</p> <p>Fea was so pleased with herself that she sat by the computer waiting for each page to be printed out. She proudly put them in her file, and for the rest of the morning walked around with her file clutched under her arm.</p>
well-being mana aua	Being Involved	
exploration mana aotua	Persisting with Difficulty	
communication mana kō	Expressing an Idea or a Feeling	
contribution mana tangata	Taking Responsibility	

Short-term review

Today Fea took control of her own learning, set her own task and became fully involved in the kindergarten programme (*Te Whāriki*, Belonging, 2.1). Fea asked for the opportunity to revisit something she previously didn't have the confidence to be involved in – writing Fuka's hen book. She now has the confidence to express her own ideas and thoughts and knows these can be recorded to form a story.



What next?

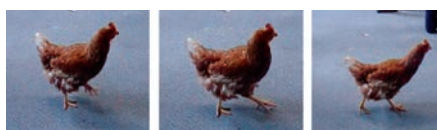
Continue to build on Fea's previous What next? Record Fea's stories! Encourage Fea to share her stories with her friends at mat time, further developing Fea's confidence in her own ability. Read, read, read stories to Fea in Tongan and English, creating discussion about the story and pictures.

We have Tongan books at kindergarten that Fea can take home and share with her family.



Fea's Story

The ducks are drinking.
The ducks are playing with the water.
The ducks are hungry.
The ducks come to school.
The ducks are looking at the school.
The ducks are going to have a shower.
They are playing.
The little duck lost the key.
It's raining outside.



The chicken is walking on his tippy-toes.
He goes to the other side.



I want to take the chicken home.
He drives the car. Fuka takes it home in the car.
The chicken is hungry.
Fuka holds the bowl.
Fuka holds the chicken.
He's hungry.



We are going to get the chicken. He went that way to get the mail.

What's happening here?

This exemplar includes a selection of assessments involving three children (Fuka, Colette, and Fea). The stories of these three girls are woven together to form a rich mat of experience, enabling all three to strengthen their participation in and communication at the centre.

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

The children are developing skills with a number of resources that facilitate communication. These include: "reading" books made from the video documentation of their experiences, contributing to the text of those books, dictating stories to go with digital photographs, talking on the telephone (bridging home and early childhood setting), and beginning to talk to adults and peers about the books. In each case, the teachers have documented what the children have said or dictated.

Fuka

Fuka arrives at the kindergarten with her hen. This elicits high excitement and is promptly the subject of much video footage. Studying the footage later results in the development and publication of a book about Fuka's hen. Although many of the children are involved in a range of activities to do with the development of this book, it is of particular value to Fuka. She begins to communicate verbally with the teachers and with other children in four-word sentences.

Colette

When Colette first arrived at kindergarten, she did not communicate verbally, although the teachers were well aware that she was a capable and competent English-language speaker in her home environment. Earlier stories illustrated her working independently and silently in the kindergarten environment. This selection from Colette's portfolio records the pathway that emerged, enabling Colette to communicate in the early childhood setting in a range of ways. Initially, Colette was encouraged to use the telephone at kindergarten to communicate with her mother. Later, she would talk to the teachers on the phone from home, telling them what she was doing. They used this information to establish continuity in conversation across the two environments. Colette begins to contribute at the early childhood centre both in one-to-one conversations and also in the larger group discussions. She "brought her mum and dad in to show them 'her talking to the

teachers'". The story she dictates about her duck house is recorded in this exemplar.

Fea

This documentation records the development of Fea's verbal communication, inspired by the collective story-writing about Colette's duck visit. Fea watches the video of the duck visit and chooses a photo for her dictated story. Fea uses two and sometimes three words to tell her story to the teacher, Karen. When this story is finished, Fea communicates her desire to include details from a story book the children had developed about an earlier visit by Fuka's hen. Fea says "Fuka's Hen" to the teacher, clearly expressing her interest in and memory of that earlier story. Fea had not contributed to this earlier book that the children developed. Now she is ready to make a book and dictate a commentary. So Fea goes on to make her own book, dictating her own story about the ducks and the hen.

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

The initial video involving Fuka and her hen was a powerful mediating tool that contributed to greatly increased communication by Fuka, Colette, and Fea. The video and the making of the book enabled the children to revisit the experience both within the kindergarten and in their homes. This exemplar clearly shows that sharing the documentation gave Fuka confidence to talk and initiate conversations with other children. The book was also taken home and shared with family members in her first language. The book became part of the kindergarten library accessed by other children. This began a culture of book-making in the kindergarten, with children's stories becoming visible for all and available for all in the kindergarten community to revisit. These multi-media strategies become pathways for Colette and Fea, allowing them to explore their developing communication skills and their growing confidence in communicating in the kindergarten environment.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

In all these stories, there are increasing levels of *contribution* as each child begins to take the initiative and greater responsibility for her own learning. Also, all three stories mark the children's increasing sense of *belonging* to the kindergarten setting as their growing confidence allows them to make links between the two settings of home and kindergarten.

Stories and symbols of their own and other cultures

Te marae

The story so far... Over the past year the kindergarten has been involved in a programme of bicultural development as part of our special focus on biculturalism. During this time the children have been involved in kapa haka and have demonstrated their learning through performances at Te Waitawa House and at the kindergarten for the new entrants class from school. We have also been becoming familiar with a range of Māori stories from the past and te reo me ngā tikanga Māori.

Last year we were fortunate to have our pouako mātauranga, Pip working alongside us at the kindergarten. We had discussed taking the children to visit a marae this year, and then Pip began a new job based at Murihiku Marae. We decided to go for a visit ...



Getting ready

We talked with the children about some of the things they would see and hear on our trip, and the tikanga that would need to be observed on the day.

We listened to a karanga at the beginning of the National Anthem CD and talked about what a karanga is, why it is important and what it says. We discussed not wearing shoes or eating inside the whareniui, and listening to the speeches. We talked about hongis and modelled to the children how to do this. We borrowed a video showing a school group taking part in a pōwhiri at an Otago marae and watched it as a group, then put it on for the children to watch again if they were interested during the session. We looked at photos of different marae. We began to practise "Te Aroha" regularly and talked about how this would be the waiata we would sing to support our kaikōrero (speaker).

We took a bus to the Murihiku Marae and waited in the car park. We were supported by Sheryl, Sonny (our kaikōrero) and Sheree (our kaikaranga). We assembled at the arch and waited. The kaikaranga (caller) for the tangata whenua (local people) began to call us on. We followed Sheree as she answered and led us up to the whareniui (large meeting house).



When the karanga was finished we went up to the whareniui, took off our shoes and went inside and found a seat. It was wonderful to see Whaea Pip sitting with the tangata whenua. We listened to the whaikōrero (speech) and waiata (song) of the tangata whenua and the reply by Sonny on our behalf. Then it was time to line up for the hongis.

We went through to the wharekai (dining room), where we had a delicious morning tea after listening to the karakia kai. Afterwards we went up on stage and put on a performance for the wera ringa (kitchen workers), with Whaea Pip playing the guitar for us.

We went back into the whareniui and Whaea Peggy told us about the inside of the whareniui, the poupou (carvings) and tukutuku panels on the walls and what some of them stood for. She explained that these are like photographs we have in our houses and remind them of their ancestors. Then the children did some colouring in of bird outlines with Māori designs while Whaea Peggy talked to the parents about the significance of the rest of the poupou and tukutuku.

We had some time left before the bus came back to get us so we went outside to play some games before singing "E Toru ngā Mea" to Whaea Pip and Whaea Peggy to thank them for letting us come to visit.

The teaching

The teachers have used describing, demonstrating, reading, singing and instructing as strategies for preparing for our trip to the marae. They have used documentation as a tool for co-constructing (forming meaning and building knowledge about the world around us with each other).



The learning

The children are gaining knowledge about the stories and symbols of the Māori culture and making meaningful connections between the songs, language and stories they hear at kindergarten and a marae. The children are learning about the dual cultural heritage of New Zealanders. This enhances their linguistic development and their understanding of their world.



What's happening here?

As part of a long-term programme of bicultural development, the children at this kindergarten visit their local marae.

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

To prepare for the visit, the children become familiar with Māori stories from the past and with te reo me ngā tikanga Māori. This includes becoming familiar with karanga, hongi, pōwhiri, and waiata. The children learn the tikanga that they will need to observe when they visit the marae and practise a waiata to support their kaikōrero. They also look at photos of different marae.

When they reach the marae, Whaea Peggy explains the meaning of the poupou and tukutuku panels, and she then gives a more detailed explanation to the accompanying parents.

Finally in the exemplar, the teacher summarises the children's learning, acknowledging that they are gaining an understanding of the dual cultural heritage of New Zealanders and are making meaningful connections between the songs, languages, and stories they hear at kindergarten and those they hear at the marae. This enhances their linguistic development and their understanding of their world.

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

The stories and symbols of tikanga Māori are documented in detail in this exemplar. The marae visit is a learning experience, and revisiting the documented version is a continuation of that learning. People, places, and events from the meaningful context of the marae visit (for example: "kaikōrero", "kaikaranga", "tangata whenua", "wharenuī", "whaikōrero", "wharekai", "karakia kai", "wera ringa") are written down in te reo Māori to be read back, recognised, and understood.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

This exemplar is also about Belonging/Mana Whenua – belonging to a wider community than the kindergarten, in this case, the country of Aotearoa New Zealand. This documentation reflects not only an interest but also an informed valuing of and respect for learning and experiencing something of te reo me ngā tikanga Māori. In terms of Exploration/Mana Aotūroa, the documentation also acknowledges the role of knowledgeable experts (Whaea Pip and Whaea Peggy) as sources of information and wisdom in cultural matters.

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.

Phoebe's puzzling morning

The busy puzzling morning – Part 1

Phoebe often enjoys setting herself the task of solving puzzles. Today she carefully tips out an interesting puzzle that shows lots of pictures about te ao Māori – the Māori world. She turns the pieces over and then is soon absorbed in studying the features of the puzzle. She holds up a comb piece and puts it into the appropriate place, commenting to Ann that she has combs at her house. As she selects hei tiki she wrinkles

her nose in perplexity and wonders what this one could be? Ann talks about the tiki – how it is often made of pounamu (greenstone) and is worn as a necklace. She talks about how the tiki is special. Phoebe is very pleased with this and confides that she wears necklaces sometimes and they are at home.



Phoebe is keen to work from left to right today and sifts through the pieces remaining on the floor for the two fish-hook pieces (hei matau). She holds them up to show Ann, one in each hand. Ann smiles and tells Phoebe she has noticed that Phoebe has chosen two matau for her puzzle – two fish hooks. Ann shows Phoebe the pictures of hei matau on our kindergarten walls and she laughs – “They’re the same! What are they for?” Ann replies that they could be used for fishing – or worn like a necklace – some are made of bone and some of greenstone.

Phoebe nods and says that she likes the colours and the green one on the wall is “sort of swirly” and Ann agrees the photos show how the milky white one is shiny and the green one is a bit more “see-through” than the puzzle shows us.

She explains to an engaged Phoebe that if these sorts of carvings are worn a lot, they absorb oils from your skin and are supposed to take on some of the special spirituality of the person who wears them. She goes on to show Phoebe that some of them are decorated

to show respect for the sea and its creatures. Phoebe comments that it looks beautiful and returns to the task at hand. She puts the toki poutangata – the ceremonial adze – into place and then scans the walls for one like that. “Look there’s one!” and Ann agrees that Phoebe’s careful eyes have found another toki poutangata for digging or making the houses or waka. Phoebe puts in the last shaped piece and stops to look at it closely. “That’s funny – what do you do with it?” Ann tells her that the wahaika is a club or a weapon that important Māori chiefs would have used in the old days when fighting a war or defending themselves, but these days it is worn to symbolise trying hard at something that is tricky – like solving puzzles! Phoebe says “I am nearly finished my puzzle” and sets about placing the words in by trial and error to find where they will fit.

Phoebe puts the last piece in, grinning from ear to ear, and notices that Ann has the camera sitting next to her. “I worked hard,” she confides to Ann – “I’ll take a picture of this puzzle.” Ann reminds her how to look at the screen and push the button, which she does.

What learning was happening here?

Phoebe you have taken an active interest in artefacts of Aotearoa that were unfamiliar to you. You showed some interesting strategies to make sense of the visual and auditory information you were interacting with. You could make links between things that were the same at home and at kindergarten. You could compare what was the same and what was different. You



used great skills to engage further with this interest – asking questions, listening closely and explaining your perceptions using descriptive language. You engaged with the task that you set yourself and demonstrated an awareness of the value of finishing it by commenting about this and documenting the finished product with a photo. The photo is great! As you were exploring commonly found traditional artefacts, you were demonstrating a developing sense of yourself as part of New Zealand's bicultural nation.



The busy puzzling morning – Part 2

Phoebe is having a “puzzling” morning today!

She replaces her taonga Māori puzzle on the shelf and selects herself a puzzle with an array of people pictured. She tips all the pieces out and turns them over – looking at the pieces very carefully. She begins to group the people on the carpet outside the puzzle frame in twos and threes – matching a male and female and then adding one other to the pair – usually a child. When they are all allocated she studies it and then moves some around. When satisfied with her sorting, she begins to replace them in the frame – making assumptions about where they might fit and using trial and error strategies to find the corresponding hole if it didn't fit ... and then she takes a photo of it when it is finished!



She then gets out a puzzle she has been working on a lot this week – on her own, with the teaching team and with Charlotte – depicting lots of vegetables. “These are healthy,” she comments to Ann as she sets about taking out the pieces, one vegetable at a time, until she has three out each time. She then sets about reassembling the removed vegetables upside down on the carpet. Each vegetable has three pieces and she assembles them all face down – which was quite tricky! Sometimes she peeks at the face of a piece to help her, and sometimes she looks at the hole in the frame to give herself some clues.

What learning was observed today?



Phoebe is using a wide range of criteria to sort and compare information as she takes great interest in the subject matter being depicted and makes the decisions required to solve puzzles. She defines her own criteria and organises the pieces based on shape, subject matter and family groupings. She is using a lot of her prior knowledge to assist her in this work. Phoebe is practising her skill in making spatial judgments in this fine motor activity and is gaining confidence and accuracy. Phoebe you worked very hard today!

What's happening here?

Phoebe is solving puzzles, and she communicates her exploration, her learning about puzzles, and her learning about the elements shown on the puzzles with the teacher, Ann. When she has completed the puzzles, Phoebe takes a photograph of what she has achieved for her portfolio.

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

Phoebe is engaged in tipping out and replacing three puzzle boards: one relates to artefacts of te ao Māori, one is of people, and one is of vegetables. In each case, Phoebe is “reading” the pieces, often in discussion with Ann, the teacher who is writing the learning stories. The pieces might be seen as a symbolic language, like words, that Phoebe is discussing with Ann; together they are making meaning from the visual image in the puzzle. With the people puzzle, Phoebe is telling her own story, creating her own text, by grouping the people pieces in twos and threes before replacing them in the correct spaces on the puzzle board. With the vegetable puzzle, she recognises the message: “These are healthy.”

The way that Ann and Phoebe discuss the meaning of the te ao Māori artefacts is a good example of “bridging” and “structuring”. These are two processes of guided participation that Barbara Rogoff¹² suggests appear to be worldwide. (See also the annotation for “Self in the mirror”, Book 13 of *Kei Tua o te Pae*.)

Ann and Phoebe are mutually involved in “bridging” meaning. For Phoebe, the meaning of the task is not just (if at all) about getting the pieces to fit the spaces, and she indicates this by asking questions (wondering what the hei tiki could be and asking “What are they [hei matau] for?”) and making connections from her own experience (commenting to Ann that she has combs at her house). Ann provides information from her own understanding, answering Phoebe’s questions and adding comments. Ann also makes an analogy between the wahaika as a symbol of challenge and the tricky task of solving puzzles. The puzzle provides a “structuring” for a conversation about artefacts of te ao Māori, and pictures on the walls assist with this.

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

“Recounting of narratives”¹³ is also a structuring activity – returning to the learning and setting up an opportunity for more conversation. This exemplar presents such a structuring activity as a narrative about the construction of meaning from puzzle pieces.

Ann is very specific about the valued learning; she lists the skills that Phoebe demonstrates: asking questions, listening closely, explaining her perceptions using descriptive language, being engaged, commenting on (valuing) the finished product, taking a photo, using a wide range of criteria (and she lists the criteria) to sort and compare, and making spatial judgments.

Ann also highlights continuity when she comments that Phoebe had been working a lot on one of the puzzles that week, sometimes on her own, sometimes with teachers, sometimes with another child (Charlotte).

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

This exemplar demonstrates elements of Exploration/Mana Aotūroa as Phoebe explores ideas and makes spatial judgments as well as communicating with Ann. One of the indicative outcomes in that strand is that “Children develop the knowledge that trying things out, exploration, and curiosity are important and valued ways of learning”, and Phoebe is illustrating these strategies here.

Different ways to be creative and expressive

Harriet's mermaid



Harrie came to me today and said she wanted to make a mermaid pool. She had painted her face and was a mermaid. She had wonderful ideas – the pool was to have glitter and flowers and water! So we went on a hunt for the items required and soon lots of other children joined in – excited by her idea.

What next?

Harrie wants to make a mermaid outfit.



Harrie told me she wanted to make her mermaid outfit. "OK – it would be a good idea to draw a plan – so you know how you want it to look," I suggested. She soon returned with her fabulous plan. We went on a material hunt and got started. Harrie drew a perfect circle on the fabric after first assessing her chest. "It's got to be big enough to cover my nipples!" she said. Then she carefully sewed on beads, bells and straps! What a top!



Harrie's mermaid outfit has been an inspiration to several other girls – now lots of children are wanting to make lovely costumes!!!! Harrie was very capable – I held the material and did the knot to start and end – otherwise the work was all her own.

She wore her gorgeous top all morning – and was the belle of the ball!

I think the next chapter will be working on the tail – now I bet that will really be something special!



Harrie you are so clever and so creative!

Once Harrie had finished her wonderful outfit she said "Now we could make a movie about it!" "Fantastic – let's do it," I said. We sat down together and I wrote down Harrie's script ideas – fantastic story – she has a clear idea of story structure – the beginning, middle, and end – some conflict and resolution.

Harriet's movie idea

"A magical mermaid was swimming in the water – but she had never been seen. One day she found a fine mermaid to play with and they became friends. And then one day – the mermaid who was her friend died – she got eaten by a shark – she was her best friend – she felt very very sad. (This could actually be a true story!)

Elizabeth – the magical mermaid – she found a magical crystal ball – with lots of dots on it – then she found the shark and she made a magical spell and the shark died and the mermaid came out – and she just came right the same – and they lived happy again."

It was raining but that didn't put us off – the camera crew took shelter under an umbrella! I followed Harrie around with the camera – the movie unfolded without any direction from me – Harrie knew what she was doing! She was great – she took her role on fully and I loved the part where Elizabeth the magical mermaid was sad about her friend being eaten by the shark – fabulous acting!

Harrie joined me at the computer for a while – watching as her movie was downloaded. What a fantastic project this has been!!! I have so enjoyed being part of Harrie's crew! She has great ideas and is a joy to work with.

Parent's voice

Bridget and I are so delighted with all the learning and fun Harrie is having at kindy, all beautifully documented here, evidenced when we drop in, and related to us by a happy Harrie. Loved the movie! Many thanks to all at kindy.

Later ... Today Harrie told me she wanted to make a cat costume!!! I suggested she draw a plan – she drew an AMAZING plan and off she went to find the materials she needed – WOW – I wonder what will evolve out of this – CATS! – THE MOVIE?! FANTASTIC – I can't WAIT!



Harrie drew this wonderful picture. It's a plan for a cat costume.

Cat Costume!



What's happening here?

This exemplar is about Harriet's pretend play and the modes of communication she uses to express her ideas and to enact a story she creates.

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

The modes of communication and expression Harriet uses in this exemplar include: painting her face, decorating the "stage" (the pool), designing a mermaid outfit, and sewing her costume. Harriet also decides to make a movie. She dictates ideas for the script to the teacher and acts out the play while the teacher records it on the camera – "the movie unfolded". Harriet then watches the movie being downloaded onto the computer, increasing her learning experience of the process of communicating through video recording.

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

Following the success of her first acting endeavour, Harriet decides to make a cat costume and a cat movie. The documented assessment shows Harriet's progress with designing the

costume, sewing it, and then modelling the completed costume.

Harriet also has the mermaid movie to refer back to, and perhaps by revisiting the movie and contemplating the process she followed to create that movie, as well as revisiting the dictated movie script, she will be able to confirm her role as a movie maker who is able to successfully communicate her ideas to others.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

Other children, drawn by Harriet's enthusiasm, become involved in Harriet's plan to make costumes. This shows Harriet's growing ability to *contribute* to the early childhood centre environment and affirms that Harriet's emotional *well-being* is nurtured in this environment – Harriet's sense of self-help and general confidence are expanding and she is capable of changing the curriculum.

Jorjia's imaginary turtle

Child's name: Jorjia 2.2yrs

Date: September

Teacher: Caroline

		Examples or cues	A Learning Story
belonging mana whenua	Taking an interest	I was sitting down by the reels, writing in the infants' daily books. Jorjia came over. Jorjia: "See my turtle."	
well-being mana atua	Being Involved	Caroline: "You've got a turtle," as she carefully laid "the turtle" in my hands. Jorjia: "Look, my turtle." Caroline: "What shall we do with your turtle?" Jorjia: "Put it here," pointing to the plank.	
exploration mana aotūroa	Persisting with Difficulty	I placed it down carefully. Jorjia: (excited) "Look, it's running." She ran alongside the plank. "Going fast."	
communication mana reo	Expressing an Idea or a Feeling	Jo came over to invite Jorjia to go for a walk to the toddlers' centre around the corner. Jorjia carefully scooped up her turtle and we looked for a pocket to put it into. Jo suggested that it could go under her shirt and she carefully tucked it inside, holding it there with her hand and off she went! When she returned, I asked about the turtle.	
contribution mana tangata	Taking Responsibility	Jorjia: "I left it there," and in a matter of fact way went off to play elsewhere.	

Short-term review

We had a lovely time as Jorjia drew me into her imaginary play. It was a delightful interaction, particularly watching Jorjia gently care for her "turtle". I'm left wondering how/what Jorjia knows about turtles. Mum/Dad, are there home experiences that you know about for us to build on?

Query? Are we seeing wider examples of Jorjia involved in imaginary play?

What's happening here?

Two-year-old Jorjia sustains some imaginary play and initiates her teachers' involvement in her play.

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

This is an example of Jorjia being creative and expressive in pretend play. She is imagining a turtle and sustaining the imaginary play over time ("Look, it's running") and place (taking it for a walk). She includes the teacher in the elaboration, and she and another teacher assist Jorjia to make the play more complex by asking for an action ("What shall we do with your turtle?") and suggesting that Jorjia keep the turtle safe in her shirt during the walk.

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

The teachers clearly value these episodes of imaginary play, and Jorjia and her family will know they value this play because it is documented.

The short-term review has two audiences.

The teacher asks the family if there are home experiences (about turtles) that they can build on. She also addresses the second teacher, asking for other examples of Jorjia's imaginary play. When the teachers share Jorjia's portfolio with Jorjia or amongst themselves in future, this question may be answered and continuity may be documented. That continuity may relate to turtles (we don't have a record of the family's response) or to Jorjia's imaginary play.

What other strands of Te Whāriki are exemplified here?

Jorjia's episodes of imaginary play also have links to the Exploration/Mana Aotūroa strand of Te Whāriki. Book 13 of *Kei Tua o te Pae* emphasises the value of the creative and the imaginative for innovative exploration. Imaginative play is a valuable disposition for *communication* as well because when children can imagine the viewpoint of others, communication can become genuinely reciprocal.

Reflective questions

He pātai hei whakaaro iho

How does the documentation here contribute to language and storytelling?

Are documented assessments revisited, with the opportunity for adults and teaching peers to give feedback on the learning and for children to express their ideas?

What evidence is shown in assessments that te reo Māori is recognised as a poutokomanawa?

Do children have a voice in the documented assessments?

Are assessments clear about the languages and modes of communicating that are valued here?

Do documented assessments show continuity of communication for learners?

Are home languages represented in documented assessments?

Endnotes

Kōrero tāpiri

- ¹ Gordon Wells (2002). "Inquiry as an Orientation for Learning, Teaching and Teacher Education". In *Learning for Life in the 21st Century: Sociocultural Perspectives on the Future of Education*, ed. Gordon Wells and Guy Claxton. Oxford: Blackwell Publishing, p. 205.
- ² Early Childhood Learning and Assessment Exemplar Project Advisory Committee and Co-ordinators, 2002.
- ³ Iram Siraj-Blatchford and Priscilla Clarke (2000). *Supporting Identity, Diversity and Language in the Early Years*. Buckingham: Open University Press, pp. 56–59.
- ⁴ Vivian Gussin Paley (2001). *In Mrs Tully's Classroom: A Childcare Portrait*. Cambridge, Mass.: Harvard University Press, p. 83. See also endnote 9.
- ⁵ Ministry of Education (1996). *Te Whāriki: He Whāriki Mātauranga mō ngā Mokopuna o Aotearoa/ Early Childhood Curriculum*. Wellington: Learning Media, p. 36.
- ⁶ *ibid.*, p. 72.
- ⁷ Arapera Royal Tangaere (1997). *Learning Māori Together: Kōhanga Reo and Home*. Wellington: NZCER.

On page 6 of this publication, Arapera Royal Tangaere writes about the survival of te reo Māori and the birth of the kōhanga reo:

"The birth of the kōhanga reo movement emerged from the *hui kaumātua* (gathering of tribal elders) convened by the Department of Māori Affairs, at Waiwhetu, near Wellington, in 1979. Māori elders at that gathering were also concerned that, based on Benton's study (1978), the Māori language would rapidly become extinct. From that meeting it was affirmed that the Māori language was a *poutokomanawa*, the centre pole, of mana Māori and therefore Māori people needed to 'take control of the future destiny of the language and to plan for its survival' (Government Review Team, 1988, p. 18)".

[References cited in this quotation:

Richard Benton (1978). *The Sociolinguistic Survey of Language Use in Maori Households*. Wellington: NZCER.

Government Review Team (1988). *Government Review of Te Kohanga Reo: Language Is the Life Force of the People/Te Whakamatua a te Kanawa: Te Kohanga Reo*. Wellington: New Zealand Government.]

- ⁸ Lous Heshusius (1995). "Listening to Children: 'What Could We Possibly Have in Common?' From Concerns with Self to Participatory Consciousness". *Theory into Practice*, vol. 34 no. 2, pp. 117–123.

⁹ Paley (2001), op. cit.

Vivian Gussin Paley writes about a child in a childcare centre who has never spoken and suddenly starts. Vivian asks the supervisor why she thinks this happened: “Why now?” Mrs Tully (the supervisor) explains: “Her dad came. Maybe that’s it. He had lunch with us twice, in fact, and he was very talkative with the kids. He must have repeated every story Vassi ever brought home with her. The red chair story, Mike’s rabbit trying to climb the mountain, Mitya’s cat, the whole thing ... He’s the father. A parent knows his child.”

¹⁰ In the Reggio Emilia programmes in northern Italy, symbol systems and tools are described as “one hundred languages” for making meaning and communicating (Carolyn Edwards, Lella Gandini, and George Forman (1998). *The Hundred Languages of Children*. Westport, Conn.: Ablex.) The Hundred Languages of Children was the name of an exhibition conceived by Loris Melaguzzi and his colleagues as a “visual documentary on their work in progress and its effects on children” (page 9).

¹¹ Russell Bishop, Mere Berryman, Sarah-Jane Tiakiwai, and Cath Richardson (2003). *Te Kōtahitanga: The Experience of Year 9 and 10 Māori Students in Mainstream Classrooms: Report to the Ministry of Education*. Wellington: Ministry of Education, p. 2.

¹² Rogoff, Barbara (2003). *The Cultural Nature of Human Development*. Oxford: Oxford University Press, pp. 285–292.

¹³ *ibid.*, p. 287.