

Pierre's learning

Date: 30 August

Teacher: Lorraine

Learning story

Pierre discovered a shape puzzle that seemed to fascinate him. He sat manipulating the shapes for about ten minutes. Each time he touched one, he'd look up and say, "Da, da." I gave him the name for each shape in English and te reo. He carefully examined each shape before attempting to place it on the puzzle — a very reflective, studied approach! Although it was a wet day and there was considerable activity around him, he persisted at his task, undeterred by the noise and action!

Short-term review

What amazing concentration, especially given the clamour around him. Pierre, I'm impressed! This puzzle had discreet geometric shapes and was brightly coloured. Pierre was able to manipulate these shapes and place the pieces in the puzzle correctly after careful experimentation. He was quite happy without my participation, yet as I provided language labels for him, he looked up with anticipation to hear the next name. He is gathering connections between language, objects, and events. I hoped that providing te reo for each shape would support the language interaction Pierre experiences at home.

Date: 18 September

Teacher: Jo

Learning story

It was early in the morning, and we were in the main playroom. Pierre moved around the room, looking at different play equipment. He approached the bookshelf, reached out, and chose three different books. He carried them over to Caroline, doing very well as the books were heavy and quite a struggle! He handed the books to Caroline, who said, "Would you like me to read a story?" Pierre's smile lit up his face.

He laughed. He then proceeded to sit down, backing carefully onto Caroline's lap. She held the story in front of him and started to read. Pierre stared intently at the book, and his eyes moved, following the pictures. Pierre was happy

to share his book with another child who approached and didn't mind involving other children in this special time.

Short-term review

Pierre shows great interest in books and initiated a wonderful shared learning experience.

Date: 9 April

Whānau voice

We appreciate and commend you guys for your timeless efforts, always reinforcing what we do at home as well as offering him many new life experiences. Nō reira, kia ora koutou mō te mahi ako.

Date: 8 May

Teacher: Lorraine

Learning story

I picked up a book that had been lying on the ground. Noticing this, Pierre zoned in from the other side of the lawn. He beamed his characteristic smile, especially noticeable where books are concerned, and requested, "Book! Book!" We found a comfortable spot and began to read. The book was already very familiar, judging from the way Pierre responded to the text and pictures. We read the words in Māori and then in English, and as we did so, I guided his finger around the shape: "He porohita whero: a red circle; he tapawhā kākārīki: a green square" and so on until we finished.

Pierre has great book skills. He turned the pages in sequence and listened intently as he matched the spoken word with the text and picture. He's been interested in shapes for a long time, and I recall a learning story when he was in "crawling mode" that showed his intense concentration with a shape puzzle. At that stage, we were already using te reo and English to name the shapes, and he responded by looking at me, waiting for the language label, then acknowledging this with a positive-sounding babble. No need this time to fathom his private language as he repeated the phrases after me, at first a little tentatively and then quite clearly. We had plenty of time to explore the book and read it through at least three times.

Teacher's voice

While half an hour later I'd moved on to other things, Pierre still had his special book tucked under his arm. Later that day, when his father came to collect him, we discussed Pierre's intense interest and involvement with this particular book. As we chatted, Kim (a colleague) told me that earlier that morning Pierre had been very focused on a book called *We're Going on a Bear Hunt* by Michael Rosen and that she had a learning story in progress. We found both books and offered them to Pierre to take home so that he could enjoy them again with his parents. As we flipped through *He Kaui* by Manu Te Awa, Marty, Pierre's father, made the comment that the text and illustration were very clearly linked. I had previously been very thankful for this as it made it easier for me to translate without constant referral to the glossary at the back. Marty gave me some helpful tips on grammar, linking the way we would usually construct an English sentence with the form in Māori. I found this really useful.

Many times when I move tentatively into things "bicultural", I do so uneasily as the last thing I want to do is offer a token gesture. Yet to do nothing is worse. Using te reo in natural, meaningful ways is one avenue, but having ongoing dialogue with families keeps the learning fresh and relevant as we find out together what is important.

What's happening here?

Pierre's stories in this exemplar cover seven months. They document his interest in shapes and books and the teacher's use of te reo Māori.

What aspects of bicultural assessment does this exemplify?

In the May 8 contribution, the teacher comments on the assistance that Pierre's father is giving her with te reo Māori. She uses the assessment to share her sense of uncertainty at moving towards biculturalism. However, she also expresses her commitment to do so and to work collaboratively with Pierre's family. Although it is not discussed in this exemplar, the continuing journey for these teachers includes becoming confident at using the Kei a wai? games with the support of Pierre's mother. These games move between home and centre, supporting Pierre's interest in te reo. The teachers are also becoming confident at reading the Huia Bilingual Readers series in te reo Māori.

How might this assessment contribute to bicultural practice here?

The teacher puzzles about what to do and seeks advice from whānau. This is another record of bicultural work in progress. Such records support teachers on their pathways to bicultural assessment practice.

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

A number of contributions to children's portfolios show teachers initiating or noticing and recognising opportunities for a bicultural curriculum. Some also use the portfolios as opportunities to ask whānau for guidance. This exemplar is an example of this.