



INNOVATIVE LEARNING TOOLKIT

PROJECT TITLE: Tikanga Maori, Cultural Learning Activities

Tags; tikanga Maori, kaitiakitanga

Tikanga Maori and cultural learning activities are related to the stories, creative practices, and understandings found within different ethnic groups particularly in relation to water, the land and the environment. Often these come from a very different perspective, or world view, than traditional mainstream environmental education, or traditional methods of learning. Hence they provide an opportunity not only for intercultural understanding, but also a way of building capacity to critically reflect on assumptions and think in more systemic ways.

Kaitiakitanga

Kaitiakitanga embodies the concepts of responsibility and stewardship over the land, water and environment and the importance of nurturing nature for now and for future generations. See the link <http://www.kaitiakitanga.net/>.

From the website: "Kaitiakitanga is a different way of looking at our world; where we know we do not own the earth (or the plot of land we think we have title to) to exploit as we wish. Instead we understand that we and all life is created from Papatuanuku (Mother Earth) and supported by her in a very inter-connected way.

Kaitiakitanga is something that starts from within ones own self and spreads outwards when we realise that it is our responsibility and the job of our families, communities and all nations to look after all the richness of our world for future generations; a role where we are assistants to our Gods and our ancestors. This is not just about our physical environment and all its species, but also includes the values, language, culture and wisdom that has been reliably passed down to us over hundreds of generations.

Our job is to pass this on to all in a state better than we found it - just like when we pass the batten in a relay race, only this time there is much more to lose if we drop it."

See also:

[Systems thinking and common ground](#) by Dr John Peet, University of Canterbury, NZ which relates Maori values and processes to multidisciplinary scientific systems thinking.

Also a paper by Te Kipa Kepa Brian Morgan, University of Auckland Engineering School - "[A Tangata Whenua perspective on Sustainability using the Mauri Model](#)" which quotes "Mauri is considered to be the essence or life force that provides life to all living things. Water also has mauri. Mauri also establishes the inter-relatedness of all living things. The linkages

between all living things within the ecosystem are based on the whakapapa or genealogies of creation. This establishes the basis for the holistic view of the environment and our ecosystem held by the Tangata Whenua."

The Tipu Ake leadership model is also based on these concepts, see <http://tipuake.org.nz/index.php>



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EXAMPLES AND CASE STUDIES

Project Twin Streams

Project Twin Streams has a number of activities based around cultural learning. These involve [storytelling](#) and [encounters with nature](#), as well as introductions to the cultural practices of local iwi.

Cultural advisor Riki Bennett works alongside PTS coordinators to demonstrate a range of cultural practices, artefacts and stories, related in the [hands on tikanga Maori](#) case study.

PTS Opanuku have created a [Pa Harakeke](#) (flax garden) where heritage weaving cultivars could be grown, protected and made available for cultural harvest and educational purposes.

Te Kawerau a Maki and Waitakere City Council have worked in partnership to develop an innovative educational DVD [Guardians of the Mauri, nga Kaitiaki o te Mauri](#), as a classroom resource aimed at children under twelve years old.

OTHER REGIONAL, NATIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL EXAMPLES

[Te Rangatahi o te Whenua Trust](#) on the East coast near Opotiki involves local rangatahi (youth) directly in an education programme about the significance of the land, and empowers them to take control of their resources and their destiny.

[Whaingaroa Harbour Care \(WHC\)](#) is a community based catchment management programme that has resulted in increased viability of traditional Maori medication through protection of rongoa plants, reduced pest damage to commercial crops, income generating employment opportunities for the community, and new business opportunities.