

Civics and Citizenship Education

Teaching and Learning Guide



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Introduction

This teaching and learning guide supports primary and secondary school teachers to develop their understanding and practice in relation to effective civics and citizenship education in Aotearoa New Zealand.

The guide provides:

- an overview of civics and citizenship education in Aotearoa New Zealand
- curriculum approaches that support civics and citizenship education in social studies (years 1-10)
- examples of civics knowledge that contributes to the development of critically-informed and capable citizens
- factors that contribute to effective civics and citizenship education, including strategies for exploring controversial issues.

The guide includes four exemplars of civics and citizenship learning experiences from primary and secondary schools in Aotearoa New Zealand and a table that covers curriculum approaches to civics and citizenship education and an overview of suggested learning experiences for years 1 to 10.

In this resource, a distinction is made between civics education and citizenship education.

Civics education involves students developing their knowledge and understanding of their rights and duties as citizens and of civic processes, for example, how laws are made, the roles of formal institutions, and common civics activities such as voting in elections.

Citizenship education involves students developing the dispositions, knowledge, and skills they need to be active citizens. This includes having opportunities and experiences of being, belonging, and participating in a community, in ways that teach students how to listen respectfully to the views of others and how to effect change in the communities and societies they belong to.

To become active, engaged, and informed citizens, students need both strong civics knowledge and experiences of real-life decision making on issues that matter to them and to their communities.





Civics and citizenship education in Aotearoa New Zealand

New Zealand is one of the world's oldest democracies and was the first country to give women the vote. By global standards, we have a robust democracy. However, the resilience of our democracy can't be taken for granted. Around the world, democracies are grappling with things such as growing inequality, environmental degradation, eroding trust in the media and in political processes, and ongoing issues of social, political, and ethnic conflict and discrimination.

Here in Aotearoa New Zealand, not all citizens feel an equal sense of belonging, agency, and enfranchisement. On a more positive note, children and young people are increasingly recognising the important role they have to play in shaping communities and influencing decisions. Recent examples in Aotearoa New Zealand include young people standing for and being elected to local councils, organising protests against levels of action to prevent climate change, making submissions to select committees about voting rights, and creating petitions that urge young New Zealanders to better understand our complex past.

A 2009 [International Civic and Citizenship Education Study \(ICCS\)](#) indicated that New Zealand students generally have a good working knowledge of civics and engagement with activities that contribute to the well-being of their communities such as community volunteering, cultural group participation, and collecting money for a cause. This short [UNESCO New Zealand video](#) certainly challenges the myths about youth political engagement.

However, although New Zealand students achieved some of the highest scores for civics knowledge, many scored some of the lowest and no other country had such a wide distribution of results.

Seed Waikato's 2019 digital survey, *Local Politics: Enhancing Youth Engagement*, found that two in five Waikato young people aged 15–34 didn't know how to cast a vote in the 2019 local body elections, and eight out of 10 felt disconnected from their council.

The 2009 ICCS study also indicated that while New Zealand teachers feel confident teaching topics that relate to cultural identity, equality, human rights, and the environment, they feel less confident teaching those linked with legal, political, and constitutional issues.¹

As a result, there is considerable variability in the extent to which learning experiences at school promote active citizenship and support students to develop a robust understanding of political institutions, processes, and systems. This includes the rights and responsibilities of Treaty partnership and the ongoing legacy of colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand.

This guide supports teachers to develop their capabilities and confidence in these important areas.

For further information on civics and citizenship education in Aotearoa New Zealand, see:

- [Citizenship Education in New Zealand: Policy and Practice](#)
- [Our Civic Future](#).

Belonging and participating in te ao Māori

In Aotearoa New Zealand, explorations of civics and citizenship need to incorporate Māori concepts of belonging and participation.

In te ao Māori, responsibilities and relationships are governed by concepts and values that shape how Māori “make sense of, experience, and interpret the world”.² These core values form the basis of ethics and principles that guide decision making on marae, within hapū and iwi, and in other spheres of everyday life.

¹ Rachel Bolstad, *Participating and Contributing? The Role of School and Community in Supporting Civic and Citizenship Education. New Zealand Results from the International Civic and Citizenship Education Study* (Wellington: Ministry of Education, 2012, p. 12).

² Māori Marsden, *Resource Management Law Reform: Part A, The Natural World and Natural Resources: Maori Value Systems and Perspectives*, paper 29 Part A (Wellington: Ministry for the Environment, 1988).

“Using a Māori values approach means we take those cultural concepts that are considered to be fundamental to being Māori and infuse them with the curriculum of the individual school. There is no one set of Māori values that are prescribed as the most important; however, there is certainly a group used commonly by a range of organisations and institutions, for example:

Manaakitanga – showing respect, generosity and care for others

Whanaungatanga – reciprocal relationships

Kaitiakitanga – guardianship, stewardship, trusteeship

Rangatiratanga – leadership

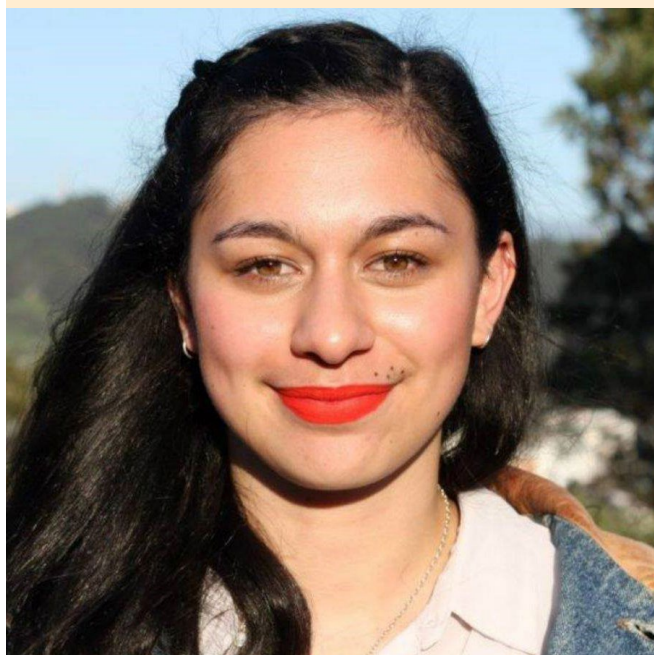
Wairuatanga – spirituality.

So a citizenship model based on a Māori-values approach would ensure that students understand what these values mean and how they are enacted in everyday life. Furthermore, the links between these values and the various tikanga, knowledge, and cultural practice within a Māori worldview would be clear.”³

You can read more about Māori concepts of belonging and participating in:

- [set 2016: no. 3 \(NZCER\)](#)
- [Whose Citizenship Anyway?](#) by Morgan Godfery.

In this video, 2019 Victoria University of Wellington Student Association President Tamatha Paul discusses [the way te ao Māori values shape her approach to leadership](#).



Young people as active citizens

This guide is based on the notion that children and young people have an active role to play in community decision-making and are not simply ‘citizens in waiting’.

While many may think the role and responsibilities of citizens begins at age 18, evidence shows that children and young people can develop and express citizenship skills long before that.

To quote from Te Whāriki:

“In Māori tradition children are seen to be inherently competent, capable and rich, complete and gifted no matter what their age or ability. Descended from lines that stretch back to the beginning of time, they are important living links between past, present and future, and a reflection of their ancestors. These ideas are fundamental to how Māori understand teaching and learning.”⁴

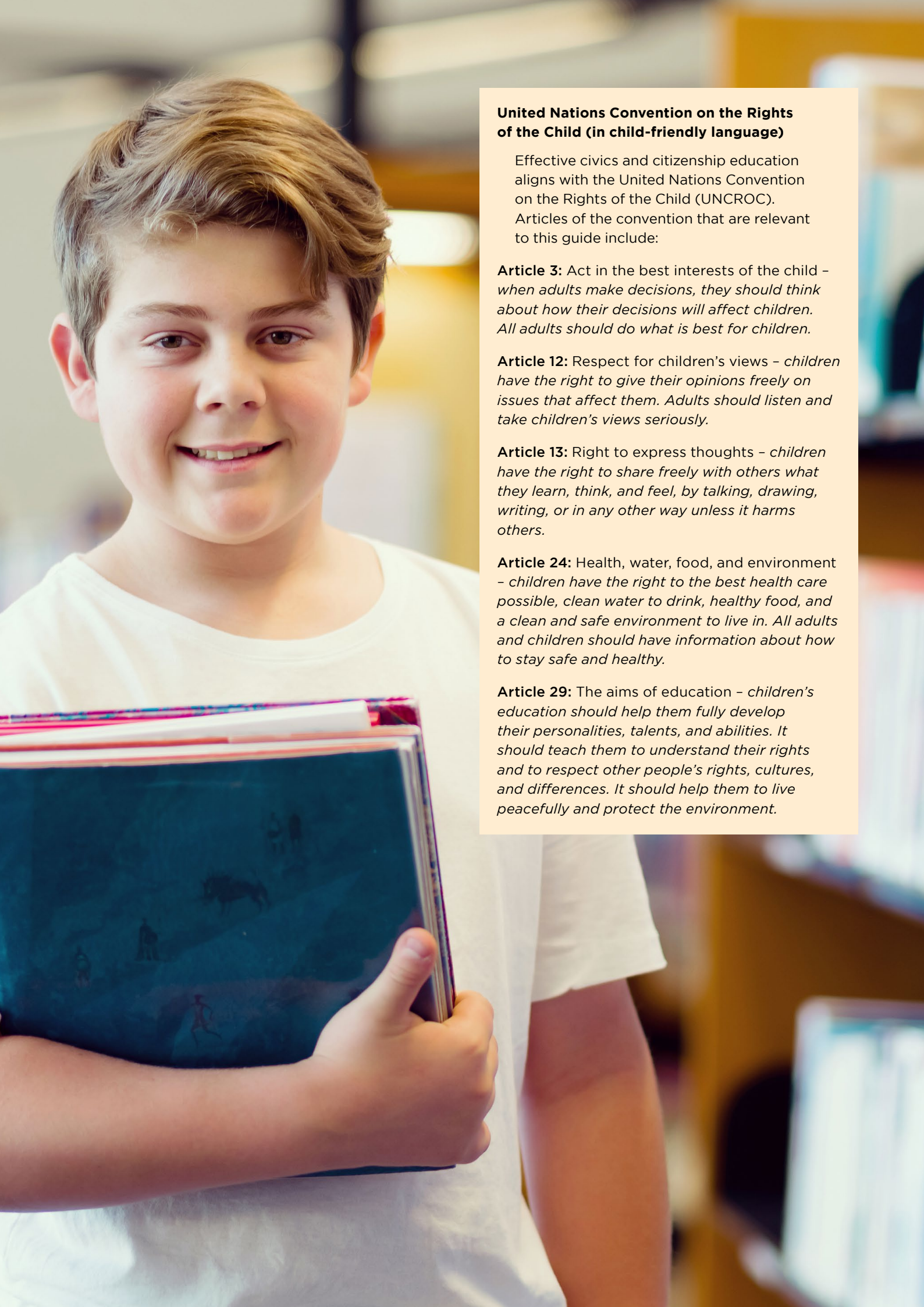
The 2012 set article “Social Studies Integrity in an Integrated Inquiry Unit” (NZCER) provides a case study of students in a new entrant and years 1–2 class engaging in social action to enhance a community sign that the children felt was unwelcoming. The action was a response to a social inquiry into the ways people work together to make a community.

The children worked collaboratively to design a new sign and used voting as a mechanism to achieve consensus on the design elements. The children then played a prominent role in organising a trip to the local council, where they quizzed the mayor and two councillors about their roles and responsibilities to the community and presented their ideas for a new sign. After the visit, a councillor wrote to the class, encouraging them to organise a petition to promote their ideas.

Initially the council lined the main road through the suburb with flags rather than replace the sign, consulting the children on their design. However, a few months later, the council erected two new welcome signs. These experiences showed the children that they could make a difference in their community and had provided an opportunity for them to participate in a political process in an authentic, meaningful way.

³ Nathan Mathews, [Māori Cultural Citizenship Education](#), set 2016: No. 3 (Wellington, NZCER).

⁴ Ministry of Education, *Te Whāriki: He whāriki mātauranga mō ngā mokopuna o Aotearoa: Early Childhood Curriculum* (Wellington, New Zealand, 2017), p. 12.



United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (in child-friendly language)

Effective civics and citizenship education aligns with the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child (UNCROC).

Articles of the convention that are relevant to this guide include:

Article 3: Act in the best interests of the child – *when adults make decisions, they should think about how their decisions will affect children. All adults should do what is best for children.*

Article 12: Respect for children's views – *children have the right to give their opinions freely on issues that affect them. Adults should listen and take children's views seriously.*

Article 13: Right to express thoughts – *children have the right to share freely with others what they learn, think, and feel, by talking, drawing, writing, or in any other way unless it harms others.*

Article 24: Health, water, food, and environment – *children have the right to the best health care possible, clean water to drink, healthy food, and a clean and safe environment to live in. All adults and children should have information about how to stay safe and healthy.*

Article 29: The aims of education – *children's education should help them fully develop their personalities, talents, and abilities. It should teach them to understand their rights and to respect other people's rights, cultures, and differences. It should help them to live peacefully and protect the environment.*



Civics and citizenship in the curricula of Aotearoa New Zealand

Citizenship goals are embedded in the visions, principles, and learning goals of our national curricula.

Te Whāriki, New Zealand's early childhood curriculum, has a vision to support children's mana and to empower them as active citizens through the development of a strong sense of belonging and well-being and through active participation in making decisions and relating to others.

In *Te Marautanga o Aotearoa*, the main aim of the learning area Tikanga ā iwi is:

“te tū tangata o te ākonga i te ao Māori, i te ao whānui anō hoki kia kaha ai tōna uru mōhiohio, uru haepapa atu ki ngā mahi waihanga porihanga”.

Hēmi Dale, the principal writer of one of the Māori-medium curricula, explains:

“The first part of the main aim states that students will stand tall in the Māori world and in the wider world. This is a long-held Māori aspiration. The emancipatory element of the main aim is the final part, which talks of enabling informed students who are constructively critical and able to engage responsibly and in an informed way in shaping society. The subtext is an emphasis on the actualisation of tinorangatiratanga through active citizenship.”⁵

Citizenship goals are embedded in the vision, principles, values, future-focused themes, and key competencies of *The New Zealand Curriculum*. Commitments to developing “knowledgeable, active, and critical citizens” are evident in a number of learning areas, for example, science and health and physical education.

Citizenship education is also supported through co-curricular activities such as Model United Nations and learning opportunities that create connections between the school, community, society, and the wider world.

Why focus on social studies?

While citizenship is an important cross-curricular theme, social studies is the primary vehicle for citizenship education in Aotearoa New Zealand, with its aim that students explore “how societies work and how people can participate as critical, informed, and responsible citizens” (*The New Zealand Curriculum*, page 30). In other words, the development of citizenship skills, dispositions, and understandings is at the heart of social studies.

In social studies, themes are explored using a conceptual approach to learning that focuses on students making connections between contexts, concepts, ideas, and information. Learning experiences centred on a conceptual theme or structure shift the focus of learning away from facts and topics to a deeper, more transferable understanding of big ideas. This enables learners to better understand their social world and the ways they can participate in it.

You can read more about [Approaches to Building Conceptual Understandings in the Social Sciences](#) on TKI.

Equipping children and young people with the knowledge and skills they need as citizens broadly involves the exploration of two key themes: how we live together as democratic citizens in a diverse society and how we organise ourselves to make decisions and operate fairly in a democracy.

These themes align with the Identity, Culture, and Organisation conceptual strand of the social sciences learning area, through which students “learn about society and communities and how they function. They also learn about the diverse cultures and identities of people within those communities and about the effects of these on the participation of groups and individuals” (*The New Zealand Curriculum*, page 30).

Concepts are embedded in all the social sciences achievement objectives and are an essential part of teaching and learning in social studies. Drawing heavily on the key concepts within the social studies achievement objectives in *The New Zealand Curriculum*, the two citizenship themes can be framed as:

Processes of decision making and government: This theme explores how people participate together to make decisions about issues of social significance.

⁵ Hēmi Dale, *Te whanaketanga o te wahanga ako o te Tikanga ā Iwi; Mai i te kore, ki wheiao, ki te ao marama*; The development of the Tikanga ā Iwi learning area: From nothingness, to half-light, to the full light of day. In M. Harcourt, A. Milligan, & B. E. Wood (Eds.), *Teaching Social Studies for Critical, Active Citizenship in Aotearoa New Zealand* (Wellington: NZCER, 2016, pp.20–39).

It includes learning about processes of government decision-making in Aotearoa New Zealand, how we are governed by rules and laws, and how our democratic system compares with other forms of government.

Belonging and living together in Aotearoa

New Zealand: This theme explores the rights, roles, and responsibilities people hold as members of whānau, groups, and communities in Aotearoa New Zealand. The emphasis is on how people can work together to create a caring and inclusive society that acknowledges and values diversity. This includes recognising the special status of tangata whenua and te Tiriti o Waitangi.

The New Zealand Curriculum identifies five key competencies that people use to “live, learn, work, and contribute as active members of their communities.” (page 12)

The key competencies “Relating to others” and “Participating and contributing” have strong connections to the two citizenship themes.

Relating to others is about interacting effectively with a diverse range of people in a variety of contexts. This competency includes the ability to listen actively, recognise different points of view, negotiate, share ideas, and be aware of how words and actions affect others.

Participating and contributing is about being actively involved in communities at a local, national, or global level, with participation grounded in a sense of belonging and confidence. It includes understanding the importance of balancing rights, roles, and responsibilities, and of contributing to the quality and sustainability of social, cultural, physical, and economic environments.

NZCER’s [Key Competencies for the Future](#) explores ways to build these key competencies and others using ‘wicked problems’ that support students to become proactive and confident ‘future-builders’ who are equipped to handle the challenges of an uncertain future.

Curriculum approaches to civics and citizenship education

The [Curriculum approaches to civics and citizenship education table](#) explains the ways concepts are used to support the development of enduring and transferable knowledge, and the social inquiry approach that provides the framework for exploring values and perspectives, considering responses, reflecting on understandings, and working together to take informed social action.

The table focuses on levels 1 to 5 of *The New Zealand Curriculum* because social studies is a compulsory learning area for all students in years 1-10. Learning at each level should build on the conceptual understandings developed at previous levels and establish a foundation for exploring key ideas at subsequent levels. The table fleshes out a pathway of learning so teachers can see what students should have covered at previous levels and understand where their current learning is heading. The table is also a useful planning tool for teachers across the levels.

The structure of the curriculum approaches table

In the first two rows of the table, achievement objectives from *The New Zealand Curriculum* are organised to show how explorations of the two themes of **Processes of decision making and government** and **Belonging and living together in Aotearoa New Zealand** develop across levels.

The table shows how the concepts embedded within the social studies achievement objectives embody progress in learning about civics and citizenship. These concepts have been highlighted in bold throughout the table.

In the third row of the table there are examples of key questions derived from the achievement objectives that could be used as the basis of rich social inquiries. These questions contribute to the exploration of values and perspectives and encourage active, informed responses. Note that these questions are not intended to be prescriptive.

For further information about establishing rich social inquiry questions, see: [What is a social inquiry? Crafting questions that lead to deeper knowledge about society and citizenship](#).

Social inquiry processes

The New Zealand Curriculum introduced the social inquiry process as a key approach to learning in the social sciences. While all inquiry learning involves a process of setting up questions, researching, and processing ideas, a social inquiry focuses on understanding social issues and how society works. It includes an emphasis on exploring and analysing the values and perspectives of people and groups, and its goal is to enable students to participate more effectively as active, informed democratic citizens.

For further information on the social inquiry process, see [Approaches to Social Inquiry](#). You can download a [social inquiry planning tool](#) from Social Sciences Online.

The Curriculum approaches to civics and citizenship education table outlines the processes of social inquiry that lead to deep learning, active participation, and transferable knowledge.

Essential social inquiry processes outlined in the table include:

- **Finding out information:** developing an in-depth understanding of an issue, asking questions, evaluating sources, and processing and communicating ideas. Developing conceptual understandings is included in this row, but they can also be covered in the next two rows.
- **Exploring values and perspectives:** understanding different values and perspectives related to social issues and practising different ways of listening to and discussing differences; identifying narratives and perspectives that may have been marginalised or are missing.
- **Considering responses and decisions:** working together to create positive change in response to an issue and demonstrating perseverance.
- **Reflecting and evaluating:** assessing possible solutions and the effectiveness of social action.

The final row of the table provides examples of civics knowledge that contribute to the development of critically-informed citizens. Teachers are encouraged to actively integrate civics knowledge into learning programmes in order to set students up with a rich understanding about how society operates, how people live together, and how they can participate as citizens. Civics knowledge can be woven into various units of work across more than one year – it would be counterproductive, and likely impossible, to cover all this knowledge in one unit.

(The Curriculum approaches to civics and citizenship education table is in [Appendix 1](#). An A3 version for printing is available online [here](#).)





Important civics knowledge

“Maintaining a healthy democracy is not just about attending to civic culture, it is also about paying attention to transparency and fairness of political processes, the impacts of social inequality and the legacy of colonisation.”⁶

This section of the guide provides examples of areas of civics knowledge that contribute to the development of critically-informed citizens. These areas of knowledge have strong links to the two themes: **Processes of decision making and government** and **Belonging and living together in Aotearoa New Zealand**. Additional examples of civics knowledge are provided in the [Curriculum approaches to civics and citizenship education table](#).

A series of activities for acquiring civics knowledge can be downloaded [here](#). Student-led and directed, they are designed for use in senior classes, with minimal input from teachers but are able to be adapted for exploring civics within a broader social studies programme that has been developed from the achievement objectives in *The New Zealand Curriculum*.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi

Te Tiriti o Waitangi plays a central role in civics and citizenship education in Aotearoa New Zealand. As well as being one of our most significant constitutional documents, te Tiriti o Waitangi provides rich opportunities for exploring concepts such as cultural interaction, social justice, protest, and power relations.

Te Tiriti o Waitangi is a point of intersection between the themes of belonging and living together and processes of decision making and government. It reflects the tension that exists between tino rangatiratanga and Crown expressions of sovereignty and raises questions about how the rights of tangata whenua can be realised within a democratic system in which Māori are a minority in their own country.

In this 10-minute video, [Margaret Mutu speaks about the need for constitutional transformation](#) as a way to restore the balance between mana Māori motuhake (Māori ‘sovereignty’) and British kawanatanga (governance over British and other immigrants).

Like other aspects of civics and citizenship education in Aotearoa New Zealand, the depth with which te Tiriti is explored varies greatly across schools. Teacher confidence, knowledge, and interest in the Treaty story plays a key role in how well it is taught. For example, in some schools, students learn about the guarantees of te Tiriti and then apply their understanding to contemporary issues such as Māori representation on local boards; other schools don't go much beyond a basic description of the events of February 1840.

In this video, teacher Ricky Prebble discusses [approaches to teaching the Treaty](#), including the importance of exploring different perspectives on the past and recognising the broader, global context in which te Tiriti was signed.

Effective Treaty education involves the following:

- Inclusion of Māori content, such as tribal and hapū histories. Learning about te Tiriti creates opportunities to engage with Māori communities to learn about local rohe, mountains, rivers, and place names. The [Māori History](#) website supports teachers to develop place-based learning experiences and provides a link to [Te Takanga o te Wā – Māori History Guidelines for Years 1-8](#).
- Exploring the context in which te Tiriti was signed, including the significance of He Whakaputanga, the 1835 Declaration of Independence.
- Exploring the differences between the Māori and English texts of te Tiriti and the implications of these in the practical application of te Tiriti, legally and constitutionally. This includes debating the bicultural nature of Aotearoa New Zealand and how the role of te Tiriti can be more fully realised.
- Including a focus on Māori-Crown relationships, supporting students to understand the obligations of Treaty partnership and the ways these have not been fulfilled.

⁶ *Our Civic Future: Civics Citizenship and Political Literacy in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Public Discussion Paper*, (NZPSA, p.1).

- Learning about the New Zealand Wars, including the confiscation of Māori land.
- Understanding the Treaty settlement process, ideally with a focus on local settlements.

The following resources can support teachers and students to develop their understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi:

- This Kaupapa on the Couch video provides background information about [He Whakaputanga – Declaration of Independence](#). Further information is available at [Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand](#).
- [He Tohu](#) includes clips of well-known New Zealanders offering a wide range of perspectives about te Tiriti and He Whakaputanga. These videos intentionally offer a range of perspectives.
- [Network Waitangi Otautahi \(NWO\)](#) has a range of Treaty resources, including the 'Treaty of Waitangi Questions and Answers' resource, which covers historical and contemporary issues.

In-depth explorations of te Tiriti will naturally touch on the place of the Treaty and its principles within New Zealand law and our constitution. Understandably, teachers will have varying degrees of confidence when talking about such subjects. Due to the importance of te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi as Aotearoa New Zealand's constitutional document, additional guidance and information on its legal status is provided in Appendix 2.

Systems of power

Systems of power, both visible and invisible, shape our everyday lives. Learning how power operates, where it comes from, and how it is exercised can support students to become more critically aware of the world they live in.

The Ted Talk [How to understand power](#), by University of Washington lecturer Eric Liu, outlines six key sources of power: physical force, wealth, state action, social norms, ideas, numbers. Note that the video depicts an individualistic viewpoint, and it's worth discussing with students whether it accurately depicts how power operates in our society and around the world.

Exploring systems of power allows students to learn about the importance of transparent, inclusive decision-making, as well as essential checks and balances such as the separation of power between the three branches of government (the Legislature, the Judiciary, and the Executive).

For further suggestions of important civics knowledge, see the examples in the [Curriculum approaches to civics and citizenship education table](#).

Exploring our democratic heritage

Exploring our democratic heritage provides opportunities for students to learn about the actions people took in the past, which have contributed to the rights and freedoms we take for granted today. This includes learning about the wider historical contexts that gave rise to resistance movements.



An important angle in exploring our democratic heritage is touched on in [Māori Women Rule](#), a Kaupapa on the Couch episode that highlights the rights Māori women exercised long before women's suffrage was introduced in 1893. The video discusses Meri Te Tai Mangakāhia, who challenged the Māori Parliament in 1893 to not only give women the vote, but the right to be members of the Māori Parliament. (The section on Meri Te Tai Mangakāhia begins at 2:24 minutes, but it is worth watching the entire episode to learn about strong Māori role models, which could form the basis of a unit of work.)

To explore our democratic heritage, students could:

- investigate the history of Māori seats in parliament, the impacts of Māori being a minority voice in a democracy, and the history of the Māori Parliament and the Kingitanga movement
- investigate the process by which suffrage was extended to different groups in Aotearoa New Zealand, including why and how some groups were included or excluded from exercising this important civic right (for example, although women won the right to vote in 1893, Chinese New Zealanders only became eligible to vote in 1952)
- use the story of women's suffrage as a springboard for exploring other areas of gender inequality and the ways people of all genders are working together to create change (for example, this [He Tohu social inquiry](#), which focuses on unconscious bias and the gender pay gap).

In 2019, senior social studies students from Wellington High School [presented a submission to a select committee that called for prisoners to be given the right to vote](#). They argued their case by referring to the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, Supreme Court rules, and statistics showing that Māori are disproportionately impacted by the current ban.

Voting

Learning about the process of voting is often covered in year 9 and 10 social studies programmes. However, primary school students are perfectly capable of understanding how an election operates. Learning about the process of voting (along with other ways of appointing leaders) aligns with the Level 4 achievement objective: “Understand how the ways in which leadership of groups is acquired and exercised have consequences for communities and societies.”

By Level 5, students should be able to explain how MMP works, including the history and purpose of the Māori seats.



According to the Electoral Commission, only 62.7% of enrolled voters aged 18–24 voted in 2014, compared with 86.3% of enrolled voters aged 60 and older. Moreover, only 66.4% of 18–24-year-olds enrolled in 2014, compared with 97.3% of those aged 60 and older.

(The New Zealand Electoral Commission provides curriculum-based [teaching and learning resources](#) for students in years 5 to 10.)

The examples below illustrate the variability of civics and citizenship learning experiences at secondary schools – students in one school used the context of a general election to explore the policies of different political parties, while students at another school formed parties and tried to persuade classmates to vote for them.

Mike Taylor, a lecturer at Victoria University of Wellington, writes:

“In one secondary school, students connected the policies and statements of the 2017 political parties and their candidates to overarching political ideologies. This involved closely examining arguments connected to issues that dominated the campaign, such as economic growth, taxation, poverty and dirty rivers. Students appreciated that party policy was sometimes coherent, while at other times there were ideological tensions. They reported being able to follow debates in the media and join in discussions at home.

In another school, I saw students create their own political party and try to woo their classmates to vote for them. The party theme was typically frivolous, including design of a party symbol, a party song, with a few soundbites of what they would do if they were elected. Teachers indicated that this hypothetical approach was an attempt to avoid controversy and mollify parents who wanted to keep politics out of the classroom.

Both these approaches to civics education were responding to the perceived need of their community, yet far more substantive political engagement was evident in one than the other. I have little doubt which approach is likely to be most successful in ensuring young people grapple with political ideas and in encouraging civic participation. That participation is an important outcome of social studies teaching, and often requires students to engage with society’s contested thinking. This is the heart of democratic education.”⁷

⁷ Mike Taylor, [Political Engagement Starts at School](#), *Newsroom* (27 September,

Aotearoa New Zealand within the Pacific

As a Pacific nation, Aotearoa New Zealand has strong cultural, economic, and political links with other Pacific countries. Based on 2018 figures, Pacific peoples comprise around 8.1 percent of the New Zealand population, and there are more than 40 Pacific ethnic groups in Aotearoa New Zealand, each with its own culture, language, and history. Many New Zealanders are unaware that people in Tokelau, the Cook Islands, and Niue, who were born before 2006, are citizens of Aotearoa New Zealand. (Conditions apply for those born after 2006.)

The Realm of New Zealand is made up of New Zealand, Tokelau, and the Ross Dependency, along with the self-governing Cook Islands and Niue. The Queen of England is the sovereign of the Realm. Aotearoa New Zealand is the most significant country of the Realm because it advises the sovereign and has constitutional and legal responsibilities for the Realm's other countries. For example, Aotearoa New Zealand is responsible for supporting foreign affairs and defence in the Cook Islands and Niue.

Sāmoa is not part of the Realm, but it has a Treaty of Friendship with New Zealand. Contexts such as the struggle for Sāmoan independence provide rich opportunities for exploring concepts such as colonisation, injustice, collective action, citizenship, and the ways decision making impacts on communities.

Key events in Sāmoa's battle for independence relating to **processes of decision making and government** and **belonging and living together** include:

- the colonisation of Sāmoa by Germany and then New Zealand
- the unjust use of laws to control and oppress indigenous people
- the impact of poor decision-making, with one-fifth of the population dying as a result of the influenza epidemic
- the use of unnecessary force against protestors peacefully asserting Sāmoa's right to self-determination
- the Treaty of Friendship between Sāmoa and New Zealand
- the legal battle won by Falema'i Lesa in 1982 for people born in Western Sāmoa between 1924 and 1948 (the period of New Zealand administration) and their children to be granted New Zealand citizenship
- the 1982 Citizenship (Western Samoa) Act, that excluded people born in Sāmoa before 1949 and their children from this right, which was introduced in New Zealand in response to Lesa's case and remains a source of contention for many Sāmoan people
- the formal apology by the New Zealand Prime Minister in 2002 for the actions New Zealand took in Sāmoa between 1918 and 1929.

There are plenty of contemporary contexts that students can use to develop their knowledge and understanding of Aotearoa New Zealand's role within the Pacific, for example, by [exploring climate-related migration](#).

An example of students contributing towards change in their communities includes Aorere College student Aigagaglefili Fepulea'i-Tapua'i speaking about the impacts of climate change ([Waiting for Water](#)) in the Pacific.





Global citizenship

Young people are growing up in a world facing increasingly complex global issues, for example, climate change, which is threatening our oceans and the environment; peace and security; and concerns about variable access to global markets. Global citizenship education supports learners to become “proactive contributors to a more peaceful, tolerant, inclusive, and secure world”⁸ by critically examining global challenges. Exploring global issues can be highly engaging for students, especially if they present issues that are personally significant.

A rules-based international order is a shared commitment by all countries to adhere to “international law, regional security arrangements, trade agreements, immigration protocols, and cultural arrangements”.⁹ Aotearoa New Zealand is an active global contributor in areas such as human rights, development assistance, economic and environmental issues, and peace and security. Our international human rights engagement is prioritised

on “issues of importance to New Zealand, and on initiatives that strengthen the global rules-based system. These include the rights of persons with disabilities, abolition of the death penalty, gender equality, and freedom of expression alongside other civil, political, economic, social and cultural rights. New Zealand also actively engages in human rights discussions on country situations where there are issues of concern, particularly in the Asia-Pacific region.”¹⁰

[Being Part of Global Communities](#), which is in the Building Conceptual Understandings in the Social Sciences series, includes three unit outlines that follow a social inquiry approach.

UNESCO Global Citizenship Education provides links to a range of resources, including [materials for exploring sustainable development goals](#). GCED also offers different perspectives on global citizenship including:

- [a Māori perspective](#)
- [a Pasifika perspective](#)
- [an educator's perspective](#).

⁸ [United Nations, Global Citizenship Education](#).

⁹ United Nations Association of Australia, *The United Nations and the Rule-Based International Order*, p. 3.

¹⁰ [The United Nations Association of New Zealand](#).



Effective civics and citizenship teaching and learning

International and national research indicates that effective civics and citizenship education requires:

- An open learning environment that encourages students to critically debate and engage with contemporary social issues. This includes students actively following current events, discussing controversial issues, and evaluating ways to create positive change in their communities or wider societal groups in response to these issues.
- Learning experiences structured around social issues (local, national, or global) that students care about and that are personally significant.
- A balance between civics knowledge and opportunities to actively respond to issues that are important to students and their communities. Active forms of citizenship can build students' understanding of political processes and contribute to the likelihood that they will continue to be active citizens as adults. Teachers have a critical role in ensuring that citizenship experiences contribute to deep learning, where students can critically analyse issues and contribute towards positive change.
- Flexible, inclusive notions of citizenship that allow for diverse expressions of participation and value the range of citizenship experiences students have outside the classroom. This involves critically exploring the ongoing impacts of colonisation and how the citizenship rights of Māori and other groups have been excluded or minimised in Aotearoa New Zealand.
- An emphasis on social inquiry skills, including critical thinking, navigating diverse perspectives, and empathy. Social inquiry processes invite students to critically engage with issues and find ways to actively shape the well-being of their communities.
- Access to networks and civic role models beyond the classroom, for example, NGOs or people in the community who are effecting change.

For a summary of recent international and New Zealand literature, see [Our Civic Future: Civics, Citizenship and Political Literacy in Aotearoa New Zealand: A Public Discussion Paper](#), page 12.

The following subsections outline strategies that support effective teaching of civics and citizenship education. Drawn from international and local research, they aim to equip teachers with successful strategies and resources.

Exploring controversial issues

Effective citizenship education requires a willingness to explore current and controversial issues that involve multiple, sometimes contradictory, views, values, and perspectives. Listening to other perspectives, learning how to disagree respectfully, and knowing how to work towards consensus are important skills in a democracy.

Exploring controversial issues develops the key competency 'relating to others'.

Some teachers are hesitant to explore controversial issues with their students, perhaps lacking confidence in their ability to navigate issues in ways that are safe for all students or worrying about disparities between what is being explored at school and the views of their local community. However, controversial issues can resonate strongly with students and encourage them to respect multiple values and perspectives, make reasoned judgements, and resolve conflicts. Controversial issues provide rich opportunities for developing critical thinking skills, as well as strengthening values such as empathy and respect.

To develop the capabilities to critique and participate in community decision-making, students need opportunities to test their ideas in learning environments that encourage critical thinking and in-depth discussion. A key consideration is how to create a learning environment where everyone can freely express their ideas while feeling respected and culturally safe.

Teachers play a central role in fostering an environment where students listen to each other and value the knowledge, ways of knowing, and experiences of others.

Strategies for discussing controversial issues

[Teaching Controversial Issues](#), an Oxfam International resource, supports teachers to develop skills that allow learners to constructively discuss their own values and ideas, while respectfully listening to the views and values of others. It includes guidance, classroom strategies, and practical activities for learners aged 5 to 16. The guide makes the point that five-year-olds need to develop skills for engaging in challenging conversations just as much as senior students.

Two additional strategies for exploring controversial issues are Structured Academic Controversy (SAC) and Socratic Seminars.

Structured Academic Controversy

Structured Academic Controversy is a highly structured group discussion that supports deep understanding of varied, and at times conflicting, responses to an issue. SAC shifts the focus beyond a binary debate that has winners and losers towards a more open deliberation that may, or may not, lead to consensus. This process encourages students to use evidence and logic as a basis for forming their own opinions.

The SAC process involves students working in small groups divided into two teams (A and B). Each team researches a different response to a complex issue (which may differ from their personal position), striving to understand and then articulate key ideas that relate to it. Team A presents their findings to Team B, whose members take notes, ask questions and then summarise Team A's position. The roles are then reversed.

The group then discusses the issue to see whether they can reach a consensus. Following this, students write a personal response that explains and justifies their position.

- Watch Elizabeth Robbins use [Structured Academic Controversy](#) in her social studies classroom. (NB: this is the second video on the website.)
- [PBS Newshour](#) provides an overview of the SAC process and a note-taking guide.



Socratic seminars

Socratic seminars are another approach to discussing controversial topics. Like SAC, they encourage students to listen to different perspectives, disagree respectfully, and seek common ground. Before engaging in a Socratic seminar, students choose and study a text about an issue. During the seminar, they sit in a circle and pose open-ended questions for one another. The purpose is not to assert opinions or prove an argument; instead the focus is on listening, making meaning together, and critical thinking.

A common approach is to set up two concentric circles. Students in the inner circle discuss an idea, while students in the outer circle observe the interactions and contributions of their peers.

The following websites provide further information about Socratic seminars:

- [Facing History and Ourselves](#) (includes the types of questions students might ask and questions that promote self-reflection)
- [National Paidelia Center Socratic Seminar](#) (includes student handouts and an evaluation form).

Being aware of cultural dominance

Discussing controversial issues often results in expressions of cultural dominance. Pākehā students in particular may be unaware that their views are culturally defined and that expressing culturally dominant views can diminish the rights of other students to feel safe and respected.

It is equally important that young people are not expected to speak on behalf of an entire culture. The [Education Matters to Me: Key Insights](#) report summarised responses from over 1,500 young children and people to questions about their education and what school is like for them. Some children and young people shared how disempowering it can be for young Māori to be expected to speak on behalf of their culture when they do not feel comfortably connected to their cultural identity. Young people said that this can make them feel they are not 'Māori enough' and leave them with a sense of whakamā and embarrassment.

*"Tamariki and rangatahi Māori ... can sometimes feel pressured by teachers if they are expected to know tikanga and other aspects of their culture or te reo Māori because their teacher sees them as Māori and therefore as experts on all things 'Māori'."*¹¹

¹¹ Office of the Children's Commissioner, *Education Matters to Me: Key Insights*, 2018.



The following excerpt from an *e-Tangata* article and the writer's response to it illustrate the ways that conversations about indigenous rights in Aotearoa New Zealand can create discomfort and disempowerment for some students. The excerpt also reveals the pressures created by a school system that requires many Māori students to straddle the norms and expectations of two very different worlds.

"I remember a conversation with a talented Māori student called Selina. We talked after a class discussion about making te reo Māori compulsory in New Zealand schools. Most of the students had recoiled at the idea. They'd argued that Māori wasn't relevant to them personally, and it wasn't spoken in other countries. They had their OE travels to think about, after all.

While this issue generated a lot of discussion among the Pākehā students, Selina and two other Māori girls at her table were quiet. Towards the end of one of my big spiels about biculturalism and notions of partnership, Selina yelled out: "It'll never happen, Miss."

Afterwards, when the rest of the class had gone, Selina spoke about how it felt to sit between cultures — and to feel torn. She told me that she didn't fit the school's perception about what it means to be Māori, so she'd resolved to think of herself as a Kiwi."¹²

The writer's response to the article:

"I think for me the excerpt identifies that Selina felt 'voiceless' on two fronts: one, Māori cultural heritage is not valued in the same way by the dominant culture, and two, Selina's experience of being Māori is not valued in the school system.

Many Māori students like Selina do not fit a preconceived notion of what it means to exist 'as Māori' in schools. That is, if you don't do kapa haka, take te reo Māori classes, speak, act, or look a certain way, you get mistaken by the school community for thinking you're not interested in Māori issues or don't want to identify with this aspect of your ethnic background (which couldn't be further from the truth). The school system is structurally designed to oversimplify the complexity of a lived Māori existence – I think that this is the bigger issue that non-Māori teachers need to recognise."

Tellingly, the teacher who wrote this article is Māori, and it's debatable whether the student would have felt comfortable expressing her feelings to a non-Māori teacher with a vastly different lived-experience.

Tātaiako: Cultural Competencies for Teachers of Māori Learners (Ministry of Education, 2011) is a Ministry of Education resource that describes several cultural competencies based on knowledge, respect, and collaborative approaches to Māori students, their whānau, and iwi. Each of these competencies plays an integral role in creating a culturally responsive learning environment.

¹² *e-Tangata* (February 18, 2018).

Reframing questions to reflect a societal, rather than an individual, focus

One way to approach issues that may generate a culturally dominant response is to reframe them from a societal, rather than an individual, perspective. This can create useful, and important, parameters for class discussions.

Using this approach, the question “Should it be compulsory to learn te reo at school?” could be reframed as:

- What is the relationship between enabling/promoting the use of te reo Māori and Treaty partnership?
- How has society responded to efforts to increase people’s capabilities in te reo Māori? What values and perspectives underpin these responses?
- What roles do students/whānau/communities play in determining what is taught in schools in Aotearoa New Zealand? Why do some people react against te reo Māori becoming compulsory when they accept the compulsory nature of other learning areas?
- What roles have society/the state played in prohibiting the use of te reo in schools? What impact has this had and what responsibility does society/the state have to address this injustice?

Societal frameworks that are useful for reframing questions include a:

- te Tiriti-partnership framework (ways that the Crown and Māori can fulfil the promise of Treaty partnership)
- human rights framework (ways to respect the dignity of all people)
- legal framework (the responsibilities of the state to protect the rights of citizens)
- social responsibility framework (exploring roles of individuals, society, and the state in relation to addressing issues such as inequality).



Creating democratic learning environments

To establish a genuinely open, inclusive learning environment, teachers need to “critically examine whose knowledge is being taught and valued in order to balance and enhance power-sharing within collaborative relationships”¹³. This requires “a culturally responsive pedagogy of relations” where “power is shared between self-determining individuals within non-dominating relations of interdependence; where culture counts, where learning is interactive, dialogic and spirals; where participants are connected to one another through the establishment of a common vision for what constitutes excellence in educational outcomes”¹⁴.

Most teachers will be familiar with the concepts of the ‘hidden curriculum’ and the ‘iceberg model of culture’. Both concepts remind us that observable elements of culture (“the way things are done”) are underpinned by below-the-surface beliefs, attitudes, interpretations, worldviews, and taken-for-granted ways of doing things (the ‘why’ of what we do). The hidden curriculum and iceberg model are also useful in understanding how social structures and power relationships can influence the learning environment.

Observable elements can include the:

- contexts for learning experiences
- relevance of contexts, for example, within diverse cultures
- things that are said and who says them
- power relations between teachers and students and between students and other students (groups and individuals)
- strategies used to scaffold students towards growing awareness.

Professional development can support teachers to recognise how social structures and power inequalities can influence what takes place within the learning environment.



Ways to address hidden barriers to inclusive, democratic learning environments include:

- noticing who speaks most often or whose views are shared more often in the class and school community
- providing opportunities to reflect on how a teacher’s cultural identity, values, and assumptions may influence expectations or interactions
- learning how to identify subtle, often unintentional acts of casual racism, sexism, homophobia, patronising comments about culture or appearance, closed body language or disdainful looks, and then reflecting on the negative impact on students.

Other interventions that can encourage more inclusive, democratic learning environments for teaching civics and citizenship education include:

- identifying students’ prior knowledge and experiences, and ensuring that diverse identities, aspirations, concerns, and connections are known, valued, and woven into learning experiences
- supporting teachers and the school community to listen to, and value, the experiences and insights of community and whānau
- providing opportunities for teachers and the school community to recognise, reflect on, and address the impacts of privileging some voices and experiences over others
- professional development to understand and recognise stereotypes and unconscious biases related to race, gender, sex, disability, or body type.

¹³ Ministry of Education, *Tapasā: Cultural Competencies Framework for Teachers of Pacific Learners* (p.15).

¹⁴ Russell Bishop, *Freeing Ourselves* (Rotterdam, Sense Publishers, 2011, p.xiv).

Education matters to me

Critical reflection plays an important role in fostering a collaborative, inclusive learning environment, but the real experts on what schools are like are the students. In 2018, the Office of the Children's Commissioner published a series of reports called *Education Matters to Me*. The initial report [Education matters to me: Key insights](#) identified six key insights about how students experience school and what could improve in the education system.

1. Understand me in my whole world

Children and young people talked about how they want to be seen for who they are, and to be understood within the context of their home, life and experiences.

"I am a library, quiet but filled with knowledge – it's dumb [that I'm not asked]." (Student in alternative education unit)

2. People at school are racist towards me

Many children and young people told us they experience racism at school and are treated unequally because of their culture.

"Racism exists – we feel little and bad." (Student in alternative education unit)

3. Relationships mean everything to me

Children and young people talked about the range of significant relationships that either enable them to achieve or prevent them from achieving. Many told us that they cannot begin learning unless they have a trusted relationship with their teacher.

"Good teachers, teachers who are helpful, they make the difference between me achieving and failing." (Student in alternative education)

4. Teach me the way I learn best

Children and young people want their teacher to teach them according to their strengths and unique abilities. Learning content was also important, some want to be learning things that they see as relevant to their lives, and their futures.

"When people recognise me and my skills, I feel I can do better and achieve more." (Student in secondary school)

5. I need to be comfortable before I can learn

Children and young people from all different learning environments stressed the importance of feeling happy and comfortable before they can learn and the impact that their learning environment has on their well-being.

"At college a teacher would stand over my shoulder, that never happens at TPU, ever!" (Student in teen parent unit, Pākehā)

6. It's my life – let me have a say

Children and young people experience a lack of choice or participation in decision making about their own lives and schooling. They really want to have a say in their education, and they want teachers to involve them in their learning.

"Teachers being more understanding and actually listening to students' reasonings for their decisions." (Secondary school student)

Strengthening media literacy

Media literacy is a framework through which children and young people learn how to access, analyse, evaluate, create, and interact with messages in different forms. It involves understanding the role of media in society as well as developing essential skills of inquiry and self-expression.

Examples of key media literacy questions include:

- What makes something news?
- Why is it important to be able to access accurate and trustworthy information in a democracy?
- How can we evaluate the accuracy and reliability of a news article?

- What factors limit or enhance people's access to reliable information?
- What influence can news reporting (reliable or unreliable) have in a community or nation?

To encourage critical thinking, the US National Association for Media Literacy Education (NAMLE) suggests asking the following [questions when critiquing a news story](#):

- Who made this?
- Why was it made?
- What is missing from this message?
- How might different people interpret this message?
- Who might benefit from this message?
- Who might be harmed by this message?



A key media literacy skill is being able to identify whether information in an article is factual, opinion-based, or news analysis. A simple way to develop this skill is to give students a range of articles and have them highlight examples of:

- facts, including whether they are accurate and verifiable
- opinions, including the expertise of the person or group providing an opinion
- news analysis, including how facts have been interpreted and what background information in the article helps readers make their own decisions.

The Australian Broadcasting Corporation (ABC) [Fact vs Opinion vs Analysis](#) provides videos, talking points, and quizzes that students can use to develop their understanding of these key concepts.

Useful resources on media literacy

- The [Australian Broadcasting Corporation \(ABC\)](#) provides a range of media literacy activities, videos, and interactives.
- [Media and politics](#) on Te Ara Encyclopedia describe the relationship between democracy and freedom of the press, including shifts in the relationship between the government and the media in Aotearoa New Zealand and the protections that journalists have under the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990.
- The BBC video [Why 'fake news' is actually good news](#) explains the role journalism plays in modern society and its relationship with power.
- Students can use the [New Zealand Media Council Principles](#) to help them evaluate the accuracy, fairness, and balance of a news story.

Exemplars for civics and citizenship education



This section provides four annotated exemplars of learning experiences where students and teachers participate in and contribute to their communities. While the contexts are aimed at years 6 to 10, the annotations are relevant to teachers at all levels.

There are two types of annotations, which highlight:

- support for citizenship learning through social inquiry
- the acquisition of civics knowledge.

The exemplars are:

- **Bridge builders (Year 6)** – A teacher has a flash of inspiration on her way to work that leads her and her students on a course of action to effect change in their community. The teacher enlists the help of a council-funded organisation to help guide her class's inquiry. Developing an idea into a unit of work takes time and energy, but the rewards for students and the community can be rich.
- **Dawn raids (Year 8)** – Building on a previous inquiry into what makes a strong community,

a class explores the dawn raids of the 1970s, focusing on the work of the Polynesian Panthers to fight racism and create a just society. The context stemmed from several opportunities, including a local exhibition on the dawn raids, *School Journal* resources on the Polynesian Panthers, and the 'My New Zealand Story' *Dawn Raid*.

- **Contributing to change (Year 9)** – A teacher guides her students through the process of making a submission to the city council in response to a proposed policy. Their inquiry explores local history and learning about the impact of colonisation on te reo Māori. This exemplar shows how learning about te Tiriti o Waitangi and the role of the Waitangi Tribunal can be woven into a social inquiry.
- **Takapuna trees (Year 10)** – A class uses the context of a grove of ancient pōhutakawa trees at Takapuna Beach to explore how making decisions about the environment can be contentious. After this initial inquiry, including an analysis of how the issue was presented in the media, students examine another controversial local issue.

Bridge builders (Year 6)

This exemplar outlines the process a year 6 class followed to address a local issue: creating a safe way to cross a stream in a reserve near the school. The context provided an opportunity for a learning experience based on an issue of personal significance to the class. The students were supported by Partners Porirua, who helped them to work with their local marae, the council, and businesses to get a bridge built across the stream.

At level 3, a key focus for civics and citizenship learning is the processes people use to make decisions and how these processes differ amongst groups. In this example, the students explored and contributed to decisions made at school, by local and regional councils, and at a local marae.

The unit built upon prior learning at curriculum level 2 about roles and responsibilities within groups and the special status of tangata whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand, and provided a foundation for learning at level 4 about the ways people can participate individually and collectively in response to community challenges.

Achievement objective

- Understand how people make decisions about access to and use of resources (level 3)

Key question

- How can people, including children, engage in decision making to bring about change?

Key concepts

- Decision making; Resources

Subsidiary concept

- Community challenges

Key civics knowledge

- The roles of local and regional government
- Processes of decision making within marae and local government
- The ways tangata whenua make decisions about resources



Bridge builders (Year 6)

Acquiring civics knowledge



Students discovered that there are legal limits to what councils can do.

Acquiring civics knowledge



Students can explore how agencies work to influence and bring about change.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Working on a local environmental issue provides opportunities to explore place-based histories along with values and perspectives.

A local issue

The school in this exemplar backs on to reserve land that has a stream running through it. The reserve is used as a thoroughfare, both by school students and the general public, providing quick access between a local marae and the main road. In winter, the stream often flooded, making the route unsuitable for school children. The alternatives were an additional 20-minute walk or getting a lift from a family member, often resulting in students being late to school.

Makeshift bridges had been created over time (e.g., by placing a cable drum in the stream or using logs as a bridge). However, none of these options lasted for long and some of them damaged the stream.

The school had approached the council several years earlier requesting that a bridge be built over the stream, but were unsuccessful because the reserve is not part of council land.

Safe crossings

While on her way to work one day, Cheryl, a year 6 teacher, noticed a new street sign indicating a safe crossing zone for ducks. She decided to contact the Mayor of Porirua to draw attention to the contrast between providing a safe crossing for ducks and children having to contend with a hazardous stream.

The mayor put Cheryl in touch with Partners Porirua, a council-funded organisation that “connects businesses, community, and individuals to young Porirua people who are looking for opportunities to explore what the world has to offer and what they can give in return”.

Partners Porirua

A representative from Partners Porirua visited the class to discuss the situation. They gave the children advice on how to find out who owned the land and suggested some next steps for their project. Partners Porirua would continue to provide advice and guidance throughout the project.

Common goals

The students discovered that the reserve land belongs to a local marae. They arranged a meeting with the people from the marae (many of whom were family members of the students) and through this discovered that the marae had a plan for the stream. Both the marae and the students shared the goal of wanting to preserve and enhance the health of the stream, as well as creating a better thoroughfare.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Researching the causes that underpin a situation and why a solution has not been found earlier can be a rich source of learning about power and decision making.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Who funds agencies and why they fund them are important citizenship-based questions.

Students can use these questions to explore values, perspectives, and decision making.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Civics and citizenship learning includes exploring who makes decisions and how decisions are made. Here students were learning about the values and processes that underpin decision making at their local marae.

Bridge builders (Year 6)

Acquiring civics knowledge



Students can compare and contrast the roles of local and regional councils.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Questions for the teacher and students to explore here were:

What citizenship skills and competencies did the students learn through this experience?

How might these be applied in another context?

The marae leaders were keen for the students to get involved. The students took notes on what the people at the marae wanted for the bridge and stream.

Planning a bridge

The students checked whether any funding was available through the city council. Through Partners Porirua, the council agreed to fund some of the bridge, with the school covering a third of the cost.

The students enjoyed developing creative plans for the bridge, including a slide and a taniwha. A representative from the Greater Wellington Council visited the school to talk about the need for the bridge to be well-scaffolded and a certain height above ground level due to flooding. The children learned that creativity sometimes needs to give way to practical and legal considerations.

Making it happen

The children visited Mitre 10 to investigate potential costs and worked together to get sponsorship for the bridge, including donated time and materials.

The students presented their ideas to their whānau at the marae for input and approval.

Parents and other people from the marae cleared the bank of the stream and dug out the steps that were needed. The council donated gravel to place on the steps.

Celebrating success

Once the bridge had been approved and built, the students organised a blessing and celebration that brought together people from the marae, the school community, and representatives from the groups and organisations that had been involved in the process. As well as organising waiata, the students were tasked with organising a hākari (feast) appropriate for the gathering.

The new bridge doesn't just help students get to school on time and with dry feet; it is well used by members of the public. The students feel a strong sense of achievement from what they were able to achieve through working with others.

Acquiring civics knowledge



Although regulatory and legal constraints made the process of designing the bridge less creative, making decisions in accord with existing constraints (and understanding the purpose of those constraints) was a useful learning experience.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Here students were developing strategies to influence adult allies. They were also learning the importance of actively involving key stakeholders in decision-making processes. Determining and developing community-building opportunities is an important part of citizenship education.

Dawn raids (Year 8)

In this exemplar, a year 8 class explored the challenges faced by Pacific communities in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1960s and 70s and how groups such as the Polynesian Panthers worked to fight injustice and create change.



The unit was supported by the teacher and her class reading *Dawn Raid* by Pauline (Vaeluanga) Smith, a fictitious diary of a 13-year-old girl set in 1976. Through the diary entries, the students learned about bias in the media, the Polynesian Panthers, prejudice against Polynesian citizens in Aotearoa New Zealand, and the experience of the dawn raids. The book offers a child's perspective on the events that took place and provides important additional support for tackling a sensitive and troublesome chapter in Aotearoa New Zealand's history.

At level 4, key focuses for civics and citizenship learning are the impact that decision making has on communities and the ways people work together to respond to community challenges. Learning about the Polynesian Panthers and the dawn raids provided rich opportunities for students to explore both of these conceptual understandings.

The unit built upon prior learning at curriculum level 3 about the movement of people affecting cultural diversity and interaction in Aotearoa New Zealand, and provided a foundation for learning at level 5 about the ways people define human rights and the impact cultural interaction can have on communities.

Achievement objectives

- Understand how formal and informal groups make decisions that impact on communities (level 4)
- Understand how people participate individually and collectively in response to community challenges (level 4)

Key question

- How have groups worked together to respond to community challenges and to make Aotearoa New Zealand society more just?

Key concepts

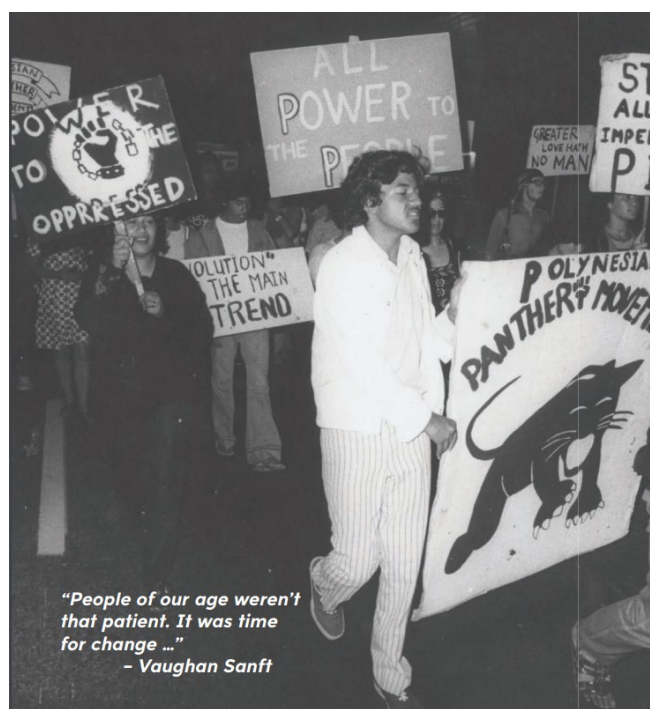
- Decision making; Rights; Participation; Community challenges

Subsidiary concepts

- Rights; Discrimination; Injustice; Social action

Key civics knowledge

- Actions people have taken to change laws that are perceived as flawed or unjust
- Relationships between Aotearoa New Zealand and other Pacific communities, and how these relationships have changed over time
- Ways people can participate in political decision-making (e.g., lobbying, direct action, emailing an MP, creating a petition)



Dawn raids (Year 8)

Acquiring civics knowledge



Here the teacher was assessing her students' understanding of how laws can protect people's rights.

Acquiring civics knowledge



Here, and in other stages of the unit, students were learning that local issues are often connected to national or global events and movements.

Introducing the concepts

The teacher introduced the concept of rights by having students discuss in pairs whether the following situations are acceptable and, if not, why.

- You are treated badly by a teacher based on your gender, religion, race, or culture.
- You aren't allowed a lunch or morning tea break at work.
- A police officer tries to arrest you because you don't have any identification with you.
- A news article targets one group of New Zealanders in an unfair and biased way.

The teacher explained that all of these challenges were experienced by a community of people in Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1960s and 70s, and that the class would be exploring how groups worked together to change this.

The teacher asked the students to brainstorm the ways people are protected from things like this happening in Aotearoa New Zealand, and what they could do if they experienced any of them. The students' answers tended to focus on 'telling the prime minister' or 'telling the news'.

Community challenges

The teacher projected "[Once a Panther](#)" (*School Journal Story Library*, March 2019) onto the board and the class read through pages 1–8 together. The teacher asked students to identify and discuss the community challenges that were evident in the story. She paused at the end of page 8 to find out whether anyone knew about the dawn raids. (Several students thought they had heard of them but couldn't provide any further detail.)

The teacher explained why many Pacific peoples migrated to Aotearoa New Zealand in the 1950s and 60s and the role the government played in encouraging them to come. Many of the people who came had New Zealand citizenship (those from the Cook Islands, Tokelau, and Niue), and the government turned a blind eye to people from Sāmoa and Tonga staying longer than their visas allowed because workers were needed.

However, despite moving to Aotearoa New Zealand to provide new opportunities for their families, the work and living conditions were terrible for many who came – for example, they lived in homes without hot water and worked long hours with no lunch breaks. Racism was experienced in schools, neighbourhoods, and workplaces, and was evident in the media.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



To build conceptual understandings, it's important to share key concepts at the start of a unit and refer to them throughout.

Acquiring civics knowledge



This context provided an opportunity for students to learn about the Pacific Realm and relationships between Aotearoa New Zealand and other Pacific nations.

Dawn raids (Year 8)

The teacher explained that things took a turn for the worse in the 1970s because global events meant that there were fewer jobs here and some New Zealanders, including politicians, used Pacific people as scapegoats.

The class watched the first five minutes of [Polynesian Panthers](#) (2010, available on NZ On Screen) to get a sense of the era and the people involved.

Students used sticky notes to write down any questions they had and added these to a 'Who, What, Where, Why, When, How' chart on the classroom wall.

Discrimination

The teacher introduced the poem "[Brave Flower](#)" (*School Journal*, Level 4, November 2018), giving each student a copy to read. Students discussed in pairs how the poem made them feel, the images it created in their minds, and what they thought it was about.

The teacher projected pages 9–12 of "Once a Panther" and had students reread the poem to make connections between the two texts.

The class discussed the basic human right of being treated with dignity, and what this right looks like in the context of their school and wider community.

The teacher explained the concept of discrimination as treating a person or a group of people differently because of factors such as their race, gender, religion, ethnicity, or sexual orientation. She explained that most overstayers at the time were from Great Britain, Australia, and South Africa, with only a third of overstayers coming from Pacific countries. Despite this ratio, 86 percent of people arrested for overstaying were Polynesian.

The teacher read students this quote by former Prime Minister Helen Clark from the *Dawn Raids* documentary:

"The dawn raids were shameful because, in essence, they set out to pick up anyone who didn't look like a Pākehā or Palangi New Zealander. They swooped on people who were Māori, they swooped on many Pasifika people who had absolutely lawful residence in New Zealand."

The teacher gave students copies of "[Rise Up: The story of the Dawn Raids and the Polynesian Panthers](#)" (*School Journal*, Level 4, November 2018). Working in groups, students highlighted examples of people not being treated with dignity and examples of discrimination.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Displaying, adding to, and revising key questions as an inquiry unfolds provide opportunities for students to reflect on their growing understanding of the context and of key concepts.

Acquiring civics knowledge



The students could have explored other examples of raids in Aotearoa New Zealand (e.g., the Urewera raids).

Dawn raids (Year 8)

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Here students were learning that addressing a systemic issue, such as discrimination, requires action on a range of fronts.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



This activity supported students to develop their understanding of how formal and informal groups make decisions that impact on communities.

Creating change

The class read through pages 13–15 of “Once a Panther” together, using the pictures and words to identify the ways in which the Polynesian Panthers began to take a stand against how Pacific people were being treated. The students shared their ideas about what the raised fists meant, and the teacher showed the class images of the Black Panthers in the United States.

The class watched two further excerpts from *Polynesian Panthers* and identified examples of the ways the Polynesian Panthers worked together to create change (Part 1, 9:30–11:00; Part 2, 1:40–5:00).

The teacher gave students the following list of actions taken by the Polynesian Panthers:

- lobbying the council to create a safe crossing on Franklin Road after two children were killed in car accidents
- setting up education centres
- organising visits to people in prison
- delivering community newspapers to raise funds
- holding fundraisers
- visiting people in retirement homes
- keeping a watch on police who were harassing Pacific people
- providing loans
- setting up a foodbank that supported around 600 families
- setting up organisations to inform tenants of their rights
- publishing Aotearoa New Zealand’s first legal-aid booklet outlining people’s rights
- challenging negative stereotypes in the media
- helping to collect signatures for a petition to make te reo Māori an official language of Aotearoa New Zealand.

The class sorted the actions into different categories:

- actions to support the Polynesian Panthers as an organisation
- actions to meet people’s needs and build strong communities
- actions to fight racism and discrimination.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Students could have also explored the intersections between the Polynesian Panthers and other groups fighting for human rights (e.g., Springbok tour protestors and protestors at Bastion Point).

Dawn raids (Year 8)

The teacher explained that the Polynesian Panthers weren't the only group that put pressure on the government to stop discrimination against Pacific people – church groups, unions, anti-racism groups, and Opposition politicians also played a role. These formal and informal groups educated people about racism and campaigned for fairer policies that would protect people's rights.

The students used Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand to identify other [groups that fought against racism in the 1970s](#).

Rights in Aotearoa New Zealand

The teacher asked students to discuss what current measures protect against discrimination occurring. The students agreed that there must be laws that protect people's rights, and were surprised to learn that many of those laws didn't exist in the 1970s.

The students watched the first four minutes of [Youth Law 101](#), a video on the rights of young people, which focuses on the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child and the areas of discrimination it prohibits.

The teacher explained two important laws: the Human Rights Act 1993, which makes it illegal to discriminate on grounds such as race, sex, religion, or ethical beliefs, and the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990, which guarantees people's civil and political rights, such as the right to peaceful protest and the right to freedom from discrimination. The teacher used this as a springboard for exploring how laws are made in Aotearoa New Zealand, and how people, including children and young people, can contribute to the decisions Parliament makes.

The teacher explained that when a new Bill is being passed in Parliament, it needs to be checked to ensure that it meets the requirements of the Bill of Rights Act 1990.

The students ended the unit with a visit to an exhibition on the dawn raids at a local museum.

Reflection

The students shared what they had learned about how the Polynesian Panthers and other groups had worked together to create change, and they discussed how they might apply their learning within their own lives and communities.

Acquiring civics knowledge



Here the teacher was supporting students to understand the connection between rights and laws and that creating or changing a law that supports people's rights can have long-term impacts.

Contributing to change (Year 9)

This exemplar outlines a year 9 inquiry that focused on participating and contributing. After learning about local history and the history of te reo Māori, students were supported to make a submission to their local council about a draft Māori language policy.

Key focuses at level 5 are the impact of cultural interaction on cultures and societies, and systems of government. The inquiry supported students to understand the impact of colonisation on te reo Māori and to explore local government responsibilities and decision-making processes, including how citizens of any age can participate in them.

The unit built upon prior learning at curriculum level 4 about the ways people can participate individually and collectively in response to community challenges, and provided a foundation for learning at level 6 about how individuals, groups, and institutions work to promote social justice and human rights.



Achievement objectives

- Understand how cultural interaction impacts on cultures and societies (level 5)
- Understand how systems of government in New Zealand operate and affect people's lives, and how they compare with another system (level 5)

Key questions

- How do mechanisms and structures within local government enable change?
- What impacts has cultural interaction had in Aotearoa New Zealand?

Key concepts

- Democracy; Responding; Taking action

Subsidiary concepts

- Active citizenship; Participating; Contributing

Key civics knowledge

- How people can contribute to political decision-making
- The responsibilities the Crown and tangata whenua have to each other as Treaty partners
- How the Crown has breached and made steps towards meeting its obligations
- The ongoing impacts of colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand
- The roles, functions, and limitations of organisations such as the Human Rights Commission and the Waitangi Tribunal



Contributing to change (Year 9)

Introducing the context

The teacher introduced the unit to her class as “Participating and contributing to decision making in Te Whanganui-a-Tara”.

At the start of the unit, students discussed the concepts it would cover, including active citizenship, participating, contributing, and democracy. They defined the concepts in their own words, identified synonyms, provided examples, and used them in sentences.

The teacher explained that the context of the inquiry would be the use of te reo Māori in Wellington City and the opportunity to contribute to *Te Tauihu – Te Kaupapa Here Hukihuki Te Reo Māori* (the city’s draft te reo policy). She introduced the policy using a [Wellington City Council video](#) inviting people to make submissions on the draft.

The teacher explained that New Zealand’s system of local government democracy provides ways for citizens to have a say in shaping the local laws, policies, and plans that affect them.

She emphasised the importance of being well-informed about an issue before making a submission, through talking to other people, exploring different perspectives, reading a proposal carefully, and understanding the factors that have shaped it.

Exploring local history

Guided by the teacher, the students explored the history of their local area, including sites of significance near the school such as:

- Pukeahu, a former pā used as a site of a colonial prison; in the 1880s, men from Parihaka were held at the prison before being taken to the South Island
- pā sites along Wellington’s waterfront shown in a New Zealand Company map of 1840 as proposed land plots for investors
- the site of the signing of te Tiriti o Waitangi in Wellington.

A hīkoi around the city

The teacher and students went on a hīkoi around Wellington to identify and document sites where te reo Māori was visible and to identify any opportunities to strengthen its visibility.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Students could also have explored how these concepts can be understood differently.

Acquiring civics knowledge



Learning about language revitalisation provides opportunities for connecting with how the kohanga reo movement has inspired other language revitalisation initiatives around the world.

Acquiring civics knowledge



This activity provided opportunities for students to explore the ongoing impacts of cultural interaction, by learning about local history and by examining factors that have contributed to the ways the cultural environment of Te Whanganui-a-Tara has changed over time.

Making connections between language and culture

A Māori language teacher at the school visited the class to explain the multi-faceted meanings of terms such as mana, ahi kā, haukāinga, tangata whenua, tūrangawaewae, and mana whenua. She spoke about her own journey with te reo and the challenges her grandparents and parents faced as a result of losing their language.

The students watched a video from the [He Tohu exhibition](#) where people talk about the importance of te reo Māori.

Treaty promises

The teacher projected pages 8–9 of the comic “[Te Tiriti o Waitangi](#)” (*School Journal Story Library*, June 2018) onto the board, and explained that Article 2 in the te reo version guaranteed Māori total control over all their taonga, which to them included intangible possessions such as language and culture.

Using material on the NZ History website for support, the teacher explained the [Māori language claim](#) that was made to the Waitangi Tribunal in 1985. The students discussed the role of te Tiriti o Waitangi as “ensuring a place for two peoples in this country” and the questions the Waitangi Tribunal raised as to whether this could be achieved “if there is not a recognised place for the language of one of the partners to the Treaty. In the Māori perspective, the place of the language in the life of the nation is indicative of the place of the people.”¹⁴

Exploring the history of te reo Māori

The students used information from NZ History and Te Ara Encyclopedia of New Zealand to explore the history of te reo Māori in Aotearoa:

- [History of the Māori language](#)
- [Te reo Māori – the Māori language](#).

Acquiring civics knowledge



Students could also explore the practical application of te Tiriti o Waitangi in law and society, including the principles of the Treaty.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Here students were developing in-depth background knowledge and understanding about a social issue.

Acquiring civics knowledge



Here students were learning about the guarantees and responsibilities of Treaty partnership. The following learning experiences explore how the principles of Treaty partnership apply to a local issue.

¹⁴ Waitangi Tribunal, [Report of the Waitangi Tribunal on the Te Reo Māori Claim](#), Wai 11 (Wellington: The Tribunal, 1986, p.25).

Contributing to change (Year 9)

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Students could have extended this exploration by considering the following key questions:

How did these active citizens mobilise others to bring about change?

What political systems did they engage with?



A 1980 march on Parliament in support of te reo Māori having equal status with English.

The students identified examples of active citizens (individuals and groups) and recorded how they contributed to the revitalisation of te reo Māori in Aotearoa New Zealand.

Exploring views, values, and perspectives

The students were introduced to five common perspectives that underpin attitudes and beliefs about te Tiriti o Waitangi, with examples of statements that relate to each perspective. The perspectives are:

- monoculturalism
- biculturalism
- multiculturalism
- postcolonialism
- nationalism.

The students read comments made in response to a Stuff news article about the draft policy and identified evidence of different perspectives.

Learning about submissions

The teacher explained the purpose of making a submission to local government and the importance of decision makers hearing the views or opinions of the people they represent.

Students brainstormed the reasons why people might make a submission. They compared their ideas with a list the teacher provided, which included:

- having a strong opinion or special interest in an issue
- wanting to support all or some parts of a proposal
- being affected (personally or as a whānau) by a proposal

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Here students were learning how to identify and explain other people's values and perspectives.

Acquiring civics knowledge



Here students are learning how citizens can participate in government decision-making at a local level.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Understanding the 'what' and the 'why' of a public policy contributes to the development of in-depth background knowledge about an issue, which enables students to clearly explain why they support or oppose a proposal.

Contributing to change (Year 9)

Acquiring civics knowledge



Many students will be unaware that council decision-making is heavily influenced by political ideologies and perspectives.

- wanting to speak on behalf of those who are unable to speak for themselves
- having knowledge or expertise to contribute
- wanting to show that a view is widely held.

The teacher explained that the decisions councils make are influenced by different factors including:

- evidence for and against a proposal
- advice from council officials
- views of the people who will be most affected by a proposal
- the range of views on an issue
- the number of people holding a view
- the knowledge and expertise of people who make submissions.

The teacher also clarified that council decisions are not based solely on numbers and that the arguments for and against a policy and the strength of evidence should drive good decision-making.

Understanding the Tauihu policy

The teacher gave students copies of the Tauihu draft policy. In pairs, they highlighted 'what' the Wellington City Council wanted to achieve and 'why' it wanted to implement the policy.

The students identified examples of different perspectives within the policy. In groups, they shared their ideas on how they would respond to the policy.

Writing an effective submission

The teacher and students discussed the factors that contribute to an effective public submission, such as:

- stating clearly what you want to happen or not happen
- supporting statements with explanations, reasons, and evidence
- checking that the facts you provide are correct
- keeping the submission brief and to the point
- asking someone for feedback on the submission before sending it.

Using these guidelines, the students worked in groups to create joint submissions that they then peer-reviewed. The teacher provided writing frames to scaffold students who needed additional support.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Questions that could be explored here are:

What weight should the council give to the evidence for and against a proposal?

What factors might influence this weighting in practice?

Acquiring civics knowledge



Students could explore governmental processes that demonstrate cultural biases (for example, favouring written submissions over oral submissions).

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Reflective questions that would have helped students to make connections with the focus of their inquiry are:

How has this inquiry developed my understanding of ways to participate in society?

How has this inquiry developed my understanding of cultural interaction in Aotearoa New Zealand?

Having a voice

The students followed the council process for making their joint submissions. They then invited the mayor to visit the school to hear their ideas.

Reflection

The students used the key concepts to make connections between the focus of the inquiry and their roles as citizens of Wellington.

They reflected on their inquiries using the following questions:

- What three things did I learn through this inquiry?
- How has this inquiry changed or challenged my thinking?
- How has this inquiry challenged or reinforced my worldview?

Takapuna trees (Year 10)

This exemplar outlines a year 10 social inquiry that focused on responses to a local issue and the ways the issue was presented in the media. In groups, the students explored a contentious issue of their choice, identifying the values and perspectives of different stakeholders and exploring ways to resolve issues when rights are in conflict.

This inquiry was part of an integrated unit that combined achievement objectives from English and social studies. The focus within this exemplar is on the social studies component.

Key focuses at level 5 include the impact of cultural interaction on cultures and societies and human rights. This inquiry focus provided opportunities for students to explore the ways decisions are made when the rights of tangata whenua are in conflict with the (perceived) rights of property owners.

The unit built upon prior learning at curriculum level 4 about the ways people pass on and sustain culture and heritage, and provided a foundation for learning at level 6 about how people interact with natural and cultural environments and the consequences of this interaction.

Achievement objectives

- Understand how cultural interaction impacts on cultures and societies (level 5)
- Understand how people define and seek human rights (level 5)

Key question

- How do we resolve situations in which 'rights' are in conflict (e.g., rights of the environment, rights as tangata whenua, rights of local government, rights as private individuals)?

Key concepts

- Rights; Cultural interaction

Subsidiary concepts

- Decision making, Wāhi tapu, Contentious issues

Key civics knowledge

- The responsibilities the Crown and tangata whenua have to each other as Treaty partners
- How people can contribute to political decision-making
- The ongoing impacts of colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand



Takapuna trees (Year 10)

Introducing the context

The teacher introduced the unit by showing the students a picture of an ancient pōhutukawa tree and asking why some people might react strongly to the suggestion that it be cut down. Working in pairs, students shared examples of trees (real or symbolic) that are important to them or have community or cultural significance. For example:

- Tāne Mahuta, the giant kauri tree in the Waipoua Forest
- the pōhutukawa tree on the headland of Te Rerenga Wairua, the departing point for spirits returning to Hawaiki Nui.

The teacher used [Tuki's map](#) to illustrate the significance of rākau (trees) within te ao Māori.

Tuki's map, from 1793, is one of the earliest known maps drawn by Māori. It illustrates social, political, and spiritual information important to Tuki's world and includes a drawing of the pōhutukawa tree at Te Rerenga Wairua.

The students discussed which people or groups might have an interest in ensuring that this tree is protected.

The teacher explained that the key question for the unit was: How do we resolve situations in which rights are in conflict (e.g., rights of the environment, rights as tangata whenua, rights of local government, rights as private individuals)?

He asked students to write down their understanding of the key concepts: rights, cultural interaction, decision making, wāhi tapu, and contentious issues.

Trees as a contentious issue

The teacher showed the students the headline of this Radio New Zealand article: [Polarised views on boardwalk through tapu trees in Takapuna](#), eliciting their ideas to clarify the meaning of the terms 'polarised' and 'tapu'. In pairs, students discussed what they thought the article would be about, giving reasons for their predictions.

The teacher gave students copies of the article, and in pairs, they highlighted:

- what decision needs to be made
- the groups or individuals involved
- examples of factors that might shape people's views.

Acquiring civics knowledge



Here the teacher was emphasising the Māori history of Aotearoa New Zealand, as well as grounding the inquiry in the understanding that rākau can hold deep cultural significance.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Students will explore cultural interaction in the present-day, and the ongoing impacts of cultural interaction in the past.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



A key focus of civics and citizenship education is not just the ways society has changed, but how those changes occurred.

Students can explore how and why society has changed in terms of tangata whenua having a voice in decision making and how our society has not changed in this regard.

Takapuna trees (Year 10)

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Working together to develop a better understanding of our complex past is central to citizenship education. The challenge is to move through the painful aspects of our history towards greater understanding, tolerance, and respect.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Analysing the headlines of articles and recognising potential bias is an important media literacy skill, which can be used as a starting point for exploring views, values, and perspectives.

The students used sticky notes to identify any areas they needed clarifying, by their peers or the teacher, and recorded any questions they had about the issue.

The students discussed the significance of the trees as an ancient burial place. The teacher explained that wāhi tapu (a term used in the article to describe the grove of trees) is a complex term that doesn't have a direct translation in English, and is used to describe places that are sacred to Māori in traditional, spiritual, religious, ritual, or mythological senses.

The class's exploration of cultural interaction and wāhi tapu was supported in English when the students analysed the poem [Our Tūpuna Remain](#). This poem gives voice to the pain and resilience of a people who have experienced dramatic changes as a result of cultural interaction in Aotearoa.

Exploring media representations of the issue

The teacher gave the students abridged copies of two additional articles about the trees:

- [The pōhutakawa and the Takapuna apartment dwellers](#)
- ['Sacred' pohutukawa trees turn into a menace.](#)

The students identified that the actual issue was access to the beach for the people living in apartments near the grove rather than public access.

The teacher explained that the Spinoff article was originally called "The sacred pōhutukawa grove that wealthy Takapuna apartment dwellers want to trample." The students discussed whether this was an appropriate headline and why the website or writer might have changed it.

What makes an issue contentious?

The teacher gave students the Oxfam definition of a contentious issue and asked them to identify, with a partner, which aspects are evident in the boardwalk issue. Students used specific examples to support their ideas.

The students wrote a short summary of the Takapuna trees issue using the key concepts (rights, cultural interaction).

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



Exploring the different ways an issue is presented can reveal how the media can contribute to, or even create, a contentious issue.

Takapuna trees (Year 10)

Finding common ground

The teacher asked students to discuss whether they thought that the iwi groups and the apartment residents would have shared any common ground. He then gave them a summary of the [resident and iwi feedback from the Devonport-Takapuna local board report](#) (pages 8–9), and they highlighted the areas of agreement and disagreement.

Making decisions

The students looked at Table 2 on page 10 of the Devonport-Takapuna Local Board report, and they discussed the original four proposed options to see whether they could reach a consensus on a preferred option.

Next, the teacher informed the students that council staff had undertaken research for each option on:

- a tree management plan and a risk assessment
- cost estimates
- advice on the impacts of climate change.

The teacher provided students with summaries of the tree management plan options and the revised concept options that were sent out for consultation (Table 4, page 11). They then discussed which outcome they thought the council would choose, giving reasons for their responses.

Applying learning to another context

The teacher reintroduced the focus question: How do we resolve situations in which ‘rights’ are in conflict (e.g., rights of the environment, rights as tangata whenua, rights of local government, rights as private individuals)?

The students worked in groups to identify a contentious issue (current or historic) that they wanted to explore in response to this question.

To demonstrate their learning, they had to:

- provide examples of why the issue is or was contentious
- find two sources that provide different perspectives on the issue
- identify rights that groups or individuals claim are in conflict
- explore and evaluate the processes that are being used (or have been used) to resolve the issue.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



It's important students recognise that areas of consensus and common ground are often ignored when exploring contentious issues.

Acquiring civics knowledge



This inquiry provided an opportunity for students to understand the different factors councils consider when making decisions.

Acquiring civics knowledge



This activity raises questions about the power councils have to set the parameters of consultation and decision making.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



This inquiry would lend itself to students using a Structured Academic Controversy to explore values and perspectives, and consider their own and others' responses and decisions related to a social issue.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



A student-led inquiry provides opportunities for students to explore issues in which they have personal connections.

Takapuna trees (Year 10)

Issues that the students explored, included:

- a proposal to develop a local carpark into a residential apartment
- banning cars on Takarunga/Mount Victoria, a volcano in Devonport
- the track built on Te Mata Peak without iwi engagement or permission.

After investigating their issues, students presented their findings to the class, identifying key stakeholders, explaining the rights claimed by each, and providing suggestions for ways to resolve the issue.

Citizenship learning through social inquiry



A reflective question that would have helped students to make connections with the focus of their inquiry was:

How has this inquiry developed my understanding of the ways to resolve situations in which rights are in conflict?



Appendix 1: Curriculum approaches to civics and citizenship education

		Level 1 (Y1–2)	Level 2 (Y3–4)
Theme 1: Processes of decision making and government	Achievement objectives in the NZC Students will gain knowledge, skills, and experience to:	Understand how belonging to groups is important for people. Understand how people have different roles and responsibilities as part of their participation in groups.	Understand that people have social, cultural, and economic roles, rights, and responsibilities .
Theme 2: Belonging and living together in Aotearoa NZ		Understand how the cultures of people in New Zealand are expressed in their daily lives.	Understand how the status of Māori as tangata whenua is significant for communities in New Zealand.
Processes of social inquiry that lead to deep learning, active participation, and transferable knowledge	Key questions to explore (derived from the achievement objectives)	In what ways do people experience belonging and participating ? How do we recognise the special status of tangata whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand? What roles and responsibilities can we take to help people feel like they belong and can participate? How do people play their part (roles, rights, and responsibilities) in sustaining and shaping their communities? What are the roles, rights, and responsibilities on a marae and within a hapū? What roles and responsibilities do we have beyond our shores, including the Pacific?	
	Finding out information	Finding out information about social issues/ideas and developing background knowledge and understandings. Using concepts to develop questions about society. Identifying reliable sources. Processing and communicating ideas effectively.	
	Exploring values and perspectives	Explaining their own values and the values of others. Considering why people hold different values and perspectives. Learning to listen to and talk about other people's views.	
	Considering responses and decisions/ Reflecting and evaluating	Considering their own and others' responses and decisions about a social issue or community challenge. Establishing a process for evaluating possible solutions. Working together to take social action in response to a social issue or community challenge. Persevering in the face of challenges in creating change.	
Examples of learning experiences that develop civics knowledge and contribute to the development of critically-informed citizens		Students could: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • identify actions and attitudes that create a sense of belonging • explore the importance of place in relation to a sense of belonging • identify the ways that rules and laws can protect and breach people's rights and the rights of the environment • identify roles and responsibilities within whānau, school, and/or community groups • develop a class treaty • identify shared beliefs and values that underpin cultural expressions and practices (for example, the importance of whānau, caring for the environment, valuing traditions) • explore ways to honour the status of tangata whenua within school and wider communities • strengthen the ways that the contributions of diverse cultures within school and wider communities are valued and recognised. 	

		Level 3 (Y5–6)	Level 4 (Y7–8)
Theme 1: Processes of decision making and government	Achievement objectives in the NZC Students will gain knowledge, skills, and experience to:	Understand how groups make and implement rules and laws . Understand how people make decisions about access to and use of resources .	Understand how the ways in which leadership of groups is acquired and exercised have consequences for communities and societies. Understand how formal and informal groups make decisions that impact on communities.
Theme 2: Belonging and living together in Aotearoa NZ		Understand how early Polynesian and British migrations to New Zealand have continuing significance for tangata whenua and communities. Understand how the movement of people affects cultural diversity and interaction in New Zealand.	Understand how people participate individually and collectively in response to community challenges .
Processes of social inquiry that lead to deep learning, active participation, and transferable knowledge	Key questions to explore (derived from the achievement objectives)	<p>How are decisions made within different communities and contexts in Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific? How do hapū and iwi make decisions about access to and use of resources?</p> <p>How are rules and laws developed and exercised within hapū and rūnanga?</p> <p>How have decisions, rules, and laws affected people and communities in different places and times?</p> <p>In what different ways is leadership acquired and exercised within different communities and contexts in Aotearoa New Zealand and in the Pacific?</p> <p>How can we determine whether a rule or law is just or unfair? What can we do if we think a rule or law needs to be changed?</p> <p>How do rules, laws, and decision making enable diverse communities in Aotearoa New Zealand to live together? What challenges exist?</p> <p>How can people, including children and young people, participate in response to challenges in order to effect change?</p>	
	Finding out information	<p>Undertaking research into social issues/ideas and developing background knowledge and understandings.</p> <p>Making connections between concepts while undertaking research.</p> <p>Identifying and critically evaluating reliable sources.</p> <p>Processing and communicating ideas effectively to different audiences.</p>	
	Exploring values and perspectives	<p>Explaining their own values and the values of others, including groups and organisations.</p> <p>Considering why people hold different values and perspectives and examining how these impact on the decisions they make and the actions they take.</p> <p>Considering whose perspectives are left out.</p> <p>Practising strategies for listening to and discussing different views, values, and perspectives.</p>	
	Considering responses and decisions/ Reflecting and evaluating	<p>Considering their own and others' responses and decisions about a social issue or community challenge.</p> <p>Evaluating the effectiveness of possible solutions.</p> <p>Working together to take social action in response to a social issue or community challenge and evaluating its effectiveness.</p> <p>Persevering in the face of challenges in creating change.</p>	
Examples of learning experiences that develop civics knowledge and contribute to the development of critically-informed citizens		<p>Students could:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore the ways people can participate in political decision-making (for example, lobbying, taking direct action, emailing an MP, creating a petition) explain the roles and functions of local, regional, and central government and ways to participate in these explore how laws are made and how people, including children and young people, can contribute to the legislative process explain how democratic elections function to elect leaders in Aotearoa New Zealand explore the processes groups use to make decisions (for example, consensus, majority rules, adhering to guiding principles, etc.) investigate actions that people have taken to change rules and laws that are perceived as flawed and/or unjust explore the ways tangata whenua make decisions about access to and use of resources in their rohe, including the extent to which tangata whenua have an active role in this process compare and contrast ways to attain and exercise leadership in different cultural contexts explore the way nations interact within the realm of the Pacific, including the relationships between Aotearoa New Zealand and other Pacific communities and how these relationships have changed over time identify treaties and other international agreements that Aotearoa New Zealand is a signatory to, along with the events and contexts that led to these agreements. 	

		Level 5 (Y9–10)
Theme 1: Processes of decision making and government	Achievement objectives in the NZC Students will gain knowledge, skills, and experience to:	Understand how systems of government in New Zealand operate and affect people's lives, and how they compare with another system. Understand how people define and seek human rights .
Theme 2: Belonging and living together in Aotearoa NZ		Understand how cultural interaction impacts on cultures and societies. Understand how the Treaty is responded to differently by people in different times and places. Understand how the ideas and actions of people in the past have had a significant impact on people's lives.
Processes of social inquiry that lead to deep learning, active participation, and transferable knowledge	Key questions to explore (derived from the achievement objectives)	How has our system of democracy been influenced by the ideas and actions of people in the past? How could it change in the future? How do mechanisms and structures within our system of democracy function to accommodate difference and enable change? What challenges exist within this system? What changes do we need to make to become a society based on genuine te Tiriti partnership? How do we resolve situations in which rights are in conflict (for example, rights of the environment, rights as tangata whenua, rights of the government , rights of groups and organisations, rights as private individuals)? What impacts has cultural interaction had in Aotearoa New Zealand and the Pacific? How can recognising the needs, rights , and aspirations of tangata whenua in Aotearoa New Zealand be strengthened? How can recognising and valuing the contributions of diverse communities in Aotearoa New Zealand be strengthened?
	Finding out information	Undertaking research into social issues/ideas and developing in-depth background knowledge and understandings. Understanding how concepts can be interpreted differently. Identifying and critically evaluating reliable sources and examining potential bias or distorted reporting in the media in order to critique and understand its potential impact. Using appropriate social science conventions to process ideas and communicate effectively to different audiences.
	Exploring values and perspectives	Explaining their own values and the values of others, including groups and organisations. Considering why people hold different values and perspectives and examining how these impact on the decisions they make and the actions they take. Considering whose perspectives are left out, and why and what could be done about this. Practising effective strategies for listening to and discussing different values, views, and perspectives.
	Considering responses and decisions/ Reflecting and evaluating	Considering their own and others' responses and decisions about a social issue or community challenge and considering the intersection of local and global processes and responses. Evaluating the effectiveness of possible solutions. Working together to take social action in response to a social issue or community challenge and reflecting on the strengths and limitations of a social action. Persevering in the face of challenges in creating change.
Examples of learning experiences that develop civics knowledge and contribute to the development of critically-informed citizens		Students could: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore the responsibilities the Crown and tangata whenua have to each other as Treaty partners; identify ways that the Crown has breached and made steps towards meeting its obligations; identify the ways that te Tiriti o Waitangi is applied through laws in Aotearoa New Zealand describe Aotearoa New Zealand's constitutional arrangements, including debates about potential transformation of these; explain the role of te Tiriti o Waitangi in Aotearoa New Zealand's constitution explain the three branches of government (the Legislature, the Judiciary, and the Executive); identify their respective functions (making and passing laws, interpreting laws, administering laws); justify the importance of separating power in a democracy explain the features of our government electoral systems (local and central), including how MMP works and the history and purpose of Māori seats; explore political parties, including how they are formed, the values that underpin them, and the policies they promote compare and contrast other systems of government such as autocracy, oligarchy, totalitarian democracy, and theocracy explain the ways people can contribute to political decision-making, the role of criticism of government, the right to peaceful protest in a democracy, and applications of the New Zealand Bill of Rights Act 1990 analyse factors that shape the historic and contemporary relationships Aotearoa New Zealand has with other nations, particularly in the Pacific recognise and explore the ongoing impacts of colonisation in Aotearoa New Zealand explain the role, function, and limitations of organisations such as the Human Rights Commission and the Waitangi Tribunal explain the role of transnational agreements, relationships, and systems of governance such as the UN, Pacific Island Forum, IPCC, and APEC.



Appendix 2: Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Its principles, and their place in Aotearoa New Zealand's law and constitution

Te Tiriti o Waitangi/the Treaty of Waitangi is an agreement made in 1840 between the British Crown and around 540 Māori rangatira. Many rangatira chose not to sign or were not provided the opportunity to do so.

There are nine Treaty sheets (eight sheets in te reo Māori version and one in English) that were signed between February and September 1840 all around the country between the Far North and Otago.

Both the Māori and English language texts of te Tiriti/the Treaty have a preamble and three articles.

Article	Māori language text	English language text
1	Māori gave the British Crown 'kawanatanga'	Māori ceded 'sovereignty' to the Crown
2	The Crown agreed to protect Māori 'tino rangatiratanga' over their 'taonga'. Māori also agreed to sell land to the Crown	The Crown guaranteed to Māori their 'undisturbed possession' of their 'lands, estates, forests, fisheries and other properties'. It also provided for the Crown's exclusive right to purchase Māori land
3	Māori were guaranteed all the rights and privileges of British citizens	Māori were guaranteed all the rights and privileges of British citizens

Translation issues

The English text was written first and translated into te reo Māori by European missionaries. There has been significant criticism of the translation by scholars of te reo Māori.

- The word 'sovereignty' in Article 1 of the English text is translated as 'kawanatanga' (a transliteration for governorship) in the te reo Māori text, whereas many scholars believe 'tino rangatiratanga' (used in Article 2) would have been a more appropriate or accurate translation for 'sovereignty'.

- Instead, 'tino rangatiratanga' was the term used to translate 'undisturbed possession'. Many scholars consider that 'undisturbed possession' denotes something less than the Māori concept of 'tino rangatiratanga'.
- Additionally, the word 'taonga' denotes more than 'lands, estates, forests, fisheries and other properties' as it includes metaphysical possessions, such as language and culture.

The oral explanation of te Tiriti/the Treaty was arguably more important for the understanding of those rangatira who signed it, though there are few records of those explanations aside from those given at Waitangi on 5 February 1840.

Sovereignty

British and indigenous Māori legal concepts are not always transferable or compatible. 'Sovereignty' has a specific legal definition within British law informed by centuries of British cultural and legal discourse. The same can be said about rangatiratanga within tikanga Māori. Both are equally legitimate.

- One of the main points of disagreement around te Tiriti/the Treaty is whether it legally transferred sovereignty (in the British legal sense) from Māori to the British Crown.[1]
- In 2014, the Waitangi Tribunal concluded in its report on He Whakaputanga/the Declaration of Independence and te Tiriti/the Treaty that Māori did not cede sovereignty to the Crown in 1840. Rather, they agreed to share power and authority with the Governor.[2]
- Today, the New Zealand Government, New Zealand Courts, and the Waitangi Tribunal all recognise that the Crown is 'sovereign' in New Zealand.[3]
- There are different views around how sovereignty may have been transferred.
- However, the fact that the Crown is sovereign does not mean that Māori do not exercise rangatiratanga. The Crown and many Māori agree that a balance must be struck between sovereignty and rangatiratanga within the Tiriti/Treaty partnership.

The legal status of te Tiriti/the Treaty

Beliefs and opinions around legal status of te Tiriti/the Treaty have changed over time and continue to change. Historically, many Māori sought for New Zealand courts to uphold te Tiriti/the Treaty, however were unsuccessful because the te Tiriti/the Treaty had not been formally incorporated into New Zealand domestic law.[4]

In the (now controversial) 1877 case *Wi Parata v The Bishop of Wellington* (following the New Zealand Wars), the Supreme Court held that Māori were too 'primitive' to possess sovereignty and therefore could not have ceded it in a treaty. As a result, the Supreme Court considered that te Tiriti/the Treaty was a legal 'nullity'. This view held in the Courts and in Government well into the twentieth century, until the legal and constitutional force of te Tiriti/the Treaty was more fully recognised by the Courts and Parliament.¹⁵

¹⁵ For example, see *New Zealand Māori Council v Attorney-General* [1987] 1 NZLR 641.

Today, te Tiriti/the Treaty is understood as an international law treaty between the British Crown and Māori whereby the British Crown and Māori agreed to grant and protect specific rights, as well as adhere to specific obligations towards one another. In addition, te Tiriti/the Treaty has been explicitly incorporated into New Zealand law. There have been and continue to be divergent views on the exact nature and scope of those rights and obligations.

The Waitangi Tribunal has advised that considerable weight should be placed on the te reo Māori version of te Tiriti/the Treaty.[5]

The Waitangi Tribunal

In 1975 Parliament established the Waitangi Tribunal as a permanent commission of inquiry.[6] The Waitangi Tribunal was formed to investigate Māori claims against the Crown for breaches of te Tiriti/the Treaty, and to make non-binding findings and recommendations to the Crown regarding those breaches.

The preamble to the Treaty of Waitangi Act 1975 reads as follows:

Whereas on 6 February 1840 a Treaty was entered into at Waitangi between Her late Majesty Queen Victoria and the Maori people of New Zealand:

And whereas the text of the Treaty in the English language differs from the text of the Treaty in the Maori language:

And whereas it is desirable that a Tribunal be established to make recommendations on claims relating to the practical application of the principles of the Treaty and, for that purpose, to determine its meaning and effect and whether certain matters are inconsistent with those principles.

In 1985, Parliament extended the Waitangi Tribunal's mandate to investigate Crown action dating back to 1840 and it began conducting historical inquiries which continue today.

The Tribunal has subsequently gained binding powers to require the Crown to take back ownership of former State-Owned Enterprise land and return it to Māori claimants.

In 1989, the Crown began direct negotiations with Māori claimants. At present Te Arawhiti, The Office for Māori Crown Relations, continues this work.

The Waitangi Tribunal plays an important role in the settlement process and in holding the Crown accountable to its obligations under te Tiriti/the Treaty.

The principles of te Tiriti o Waitangi/ the Treaty of Waitangi

Due to the differences in interpretations of te Tiriti/ the Treaty, the Crown, the Waitangi Tribunal, and the Courts have made various attempts to define and explain the principles of te Tiriti/ the Treaty. The Treaty principles have evolved over time as the nature of the Treaty partnership evolves and there is no comprehensive list of agreed principles.

The principles of the Treaty of Waitangi are legal principles (derived from both the te reo Māori and English Treaty texts) that assist with the practical application of rights and obligations arising out of te Tiriti/ the Treaty in law and in day-to-day community life.

Treaty principles which have been identified by the Courts and the Waitangi Tribunal include:

- Good faith and partnership between Māori and the Crown are generally considered overarching Treaty principles that are at the heart of te Tiriti/ the Treaty.
- Reciprocity between Māori and the Crown is the principle that the exchange in te Tiriti/ the Treaty should be to the advantage of both parties.
- The principle of autonomy relates to the Māori right of self-determination which is guaranteed by the second article of te Tiriti/ the Treaty.
- Active protection is also a principle derived from the second article as the Crown's obligation to actively protect the rights and interests of Māori in their taonga.
- The principle of mutual benefit is that colonisation of New Zealand should benefit both Māori and settlers, including the retention of sufficient land and resources for Māori.
- Māori have a right to redress for the Crown breaches of its Tiriti/ Treaty obligations.
- Under the principle of equal treatment, the Crown has an obligation to treat all Māori groups equally, and to treat Māori equally with other New Zealanders.
- The Crown has a duty to consult Māori and obtain the full and informed consent of the correct rights-holders in any land transaction.
- The principle of options is that Māori have the choice to continue their tikanga, assimilate to the new society and economy, or combine aspects of both.

Since the passage of the 1986 State-Owned Enterprises Act, more than 40 pieces of legislation refer to the 'principles of the Treaty of Waitangi'.

Resources for further information

- [Waitangi Tribunal](#)
- [Te Arawhiti \(Office for Māori Crown Relations\)](#)
- [Te Paparahi o Te Raki \(Northland\) Inquiry information and reports](#)
- Orange, C. (1987). *The Treaty of Waitangi*. Wellington, New Zealand: Allen & Unwin.
- Mulholland, M., & Tawhai, V. (2010). *Weeping waters: The Treaty of Waitangi and constitutional change*. Wellington, New Zealand: Huia Publishers.
- Ross, R. (1972). Te Tiriti o Waitangi: Texts and translations. *The New Zealand Journal of History*, 6(2), 129-157.
- Buick, T. L. (1976). *The Treaty of Waitangi: How New Zealand became a British colony*, 3rd ed. Christchurch, New Zealand: Capper Press.
- Belgrave, M., Kawharu, M., & Williams, D. (Eds.). (2005). *Waitangi revisited: Perspectives on the Treaty of Waitangi*, 2nd ed. Auckland, New Zealand: Oxford University Press.
- *New Zealand Maori Council v Attorney-General* [1987] 1 NZLR 641.

[1] This is one of the focuses of the Waitangi Tribunal's Te Paparahi o Te Raki (Northland) Inquiry.

[2] Refer to The Report on Stage 1 of Te Paparahi o Te Raki Inquiry (Waitangi Tribunal: 2014), pp. 526-527

[3] Refer to The Report on Stage 1 of Te Paparahi o Te Raki Inquiry (Waitangi Tribunal: 2014), pp. 432-442.

[4] New Zealand law typically holds that international law treaties cannot be enforced until they are incorporated into New Zealand domestic law.

[5] Refer to The Report on Stage 1 of Te Paparahi o Te Raki Inquiry (Waitangi Tribunal: 2014), p. 522.

[6] The decision to establish the Waitangi Tribunal was made against the backdrop of a wave of Māori protest about injustices such as the acquisition of Māori land, which reached a high-point in a hīkoi/land march.

