

# Mahinga Kai Crusaders

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## Overview

“Mahinga Kai Crusaders” explains two very different approaches to keeping the tikanga of mahinga kai alive – one through hunting and food gathering and the other by posting videos on a website.

This article:

- describes mahinga kai – the growing, harvesting, preparing, and sharing of traditional Māori food
- provides opportunities for students to think critically about abstract

concepts and ideas related to valuing tikanga and the environment

- includes many commonly known Māori words that are not explained in the text.

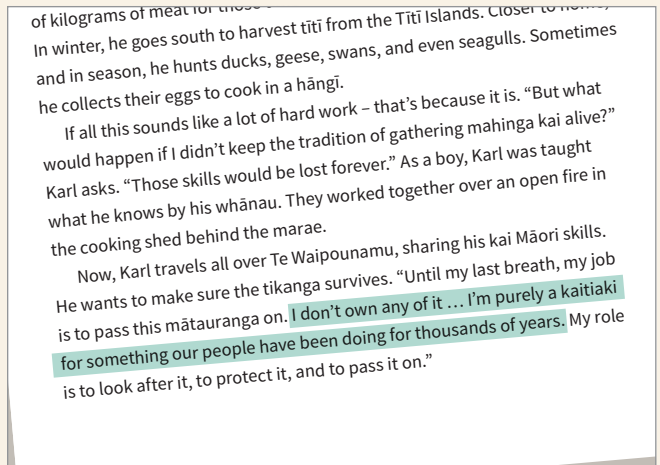
A PDF of the text is available at [www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz](http://www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz)

**Texts related by theme** “Pōha: A Clever Way of Storing Food” SJ L2 Aug 2014 | “Pacific Paradise” SJ 4.2.10 | “Surviving Rekohu” SJ 4.3.10

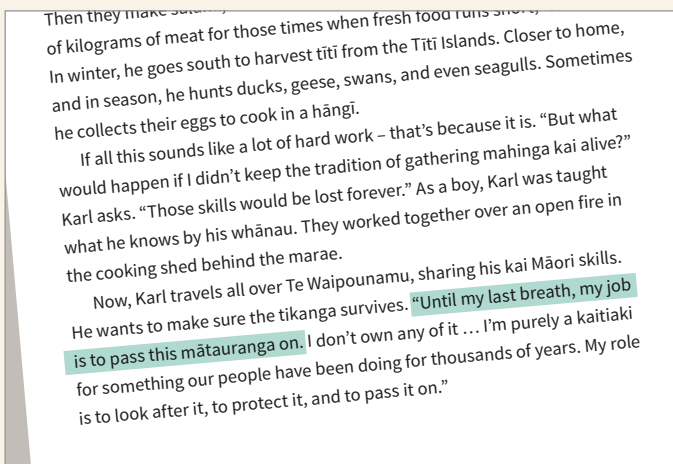
## Text characteristics from the year 6 reading standard



abstract ideas, in greater numbers than in texts at earlier levels, accompanied by concrete examples in the text that help support the students' understanding



some ideas and information that are conveyed indirectly and require students to infer by drawing on several related pieces of information in the text



figurative and/or ambiguous language that the context helps students to understand



Reading standard: by the end of year 6

## Possible curriculum contexts

### SOCIAL SCIENCES (Social Studies)

Level 3: Understand how people make decisions about access to and use of resources.

### ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 3 – Structure: Show a developing understanding of text structures.

### ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 3 – Structure: Organise texts using a range of structures.

### Possible reading purposes

- To find out about mahinga kai and what two men are doing to keep it alive
- To compare the two approaches to keeping mahinga kai alive.

### Possible writing purposes

- Prepare questions and interview grandparents or someone in your extended family about the food they collected when they were children
- Write an article about what they collected based on your interview notes.



## Text and language challenges

### VOCABULARY:

- Possible unfamiliar words and phrases, including “a direct approach”, “harnessing the Internet”, “ensure”, “kai crusader”, “seasonal traditions”, “irrigators”, “constantly”, “creative”, “international electronic arts symposium”, “interactive”, “preserve”, “international potential”, “cultural exchange in cyberspace”, “indigenous”, “conversations”, “evolving”, “contributing from an artist’s point of view”
- Colloquial expressions: “sucking them dry”, “That’s the bottom line”
- The use of te reo Māori, including names of places and kaimoana; word associations, including mahinga kai, whare kai, kaimoana, kaitiaki, kaihaukai; and local dialect, such as tuaki.

### Possible supporting strategies

Some of these suggestions may be more useful before reading, but they can be used at any time in response to the students’ needs.

- Identify vocabulary that your students will need support with. Provide them with some activities to support their understanding, for example, shared tasks to match words with meanings or synonyms, or tasks to work out the meaning of phrases using their prior knowledge of the words and their use in other contexts.
- Before reading, give pairs posters with some of the photographs in the middle and ask the students to brainstorm and write any associated words or phrases (including those in languages other than English). After a set time, ask the pairs to pass their poster to another pair. Have the pairs discuss what’s on the poster and add their own ideas. Continue until each pair has written on each poster. Display and discuss the posters.
- If necessary, discuss the literal and figurative meanings of colloquial expressions.
- For some students, most words will be familiar in oral vocabulary and can be looked up or confirmed in a Māori dictionary. Prompt students to use their knowledge of familiar base words to work out the meaning of some vocabulary.
- Use concise definitions, images, video clips, and so on to support your students’ understanding of new vocabulary. See ESOL Online, Vocabulary, for examples of strategies to support students.
- Select some words for a vocabulary learning focus. The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.

### SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED:

- Knowledge of the place of traditions in our lives
- Awareness of Ngāi Tahu and their place in the South Island
- Some knowledge of the concept of whakapapa
- Understanding or experience of foraging for food
- Some knowledge of the impact of environmental change on food availability
- Knowledge of seasonal influence on the availability of particular foods.

### Possible supporting strategies

- Discuss traditions students are familiar with to build their understanding of why people still value them.
- Build knowledge of the cultural concepts in this article, such as keeping the local traditions of food gathering alive, sharing the catch with whānau, and sharing tikanga (knowledge) with others.
- Encourage students to share their experience and knowledge of gathering food in their local area. Discuss when it happens and what affects the food they can get.
- Provide opportunities for students who share a first language other than English to explore through reading or listening and/or discussing the topic in this language.

### TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE:

- A combination of explanation and description
- A clear format – introduction providing the context and main concepts, and then dividing into two sections to describe each man’s approach to passing on the tikanga
- An abstract title and figurative headings that summarise the picture of each man
- Quotes from the two men that clarify and exemplify the information in the surrounding sentences.

### Possible supporting strategies

- During the introduction to the first reading, discuss the title and support the students to think about the context of the article and the concept of mahinga kai. Have them use their prior knowledge of the literal meaning of the words to predict what the text might be about. Establish that the first page is the introduction and prompt them for what an introduction to an explanation will provide.
- The abstract ideas and phrases, particularly in the last section of the text, may need supported analysis in a subsequent reading to gain meaning.
- If necessary, review the purpose of dialogue in an explanation and discuss what it might show about someone’s ideas.
- For information about language for explaining and ideas on how to support students, see Supporting English Language Learning in Primary Schools: A Guide for Teachers of Years 5 and 6.
- The DVD Making Language and Learning Work 3: Integrating Language and Learning in Years 5 to 8 shows how the teacher incorporates support for language within a mainstream classroom lesson. You can watch this at ESOL Online, Making Language and Learning Work, DVD 3.



# Instructional focus – Reading

**Social Sciences** (Social Studies – Level 3: Understand how people make decisions about access to and use of resources.)

**English** (Level 3 – Structure: Show a developing understanding of text structures.)

## First reading

- Prompt the students to use their prior knowledge of the title to predict, with a partner or the group, what the article might be about. Remind them to check their prediction as they read.
- Remind them to use problem-solving strategies such as using the context and the surrounding text to work out the meaning of words and phrases they are unsure of.
- Prompt students to make connections to their prior knowledge and experiences of hunting and gathering food as they read about Karl Russell's description of mahinga kai (foraging for food).
- Tell the students to read pages 36–37 and then discuss the ideas with a partner. Remind them to note any questions they have before they read on.
- Encourage students to share their reflections at the end of the reading session. Have them share and discuss any questions they still have.
- For students who need support, preview the content and use a jigsaw reading approach to break it into manageable chunks for the first reading (see ESOL Online, Jigsaw reading). Read page 36 together. Focus on the second paragraph as introducing the specific focus of the text. Divide the students into two groups. Have the students who are more confident with the text read about Karl Russell and the less confident students read about Simon Kaan.

### If the students struggle with this text:

- break it into manageable sections according to the students' needs
- support them to use strategies to clarify the meaning of key vocabulary they are attempting to work out
- model how to go from the literal meaning of a word to other meanings in order to help them understand some of the more difficult phrases
- remind them that some words, such as the food names, can be found in a dictionary after reading
- draw their attention to sentences that will help their understanding of key ideas such as Karl's description of mahinga kai at the top of page 38.

## Subsequent readings

### The teacher:

Direct the students to reread the introductory paragraphs on page 36 to review what is important to the two men.

- What are they determined to keep alive?
- What do the phrases “a direct approach” and “harnessing the Internet” tell us about what they are doing?

### The teacher:

Ask questions as the students read so they can draw on several pieces of information to understand what Karl shows with his direct approach.

- What does “living off the land” mean for Karl?
- Where does he find food?
- Why is knowing about seasons important?
- What happens to the kai that Karl gathers?
- What information on page 39 helps you work out what Karl means when he says, “That’s the bottom line”?

### The teacher:

- Turn to a partner and discuss why Karl lives like this.
- What does he like about the way he lives?
- What makes Karl a rich man?
- Why does he keep going when it's so hard?

Model your own critical thinking.

### The teacher:

Have the students reread the last section, “Riding a Global Wave”. Prompt them to focus on information that will answer questions they have about the meaning.

- What connections do the terms “global wave”, “professional artist”, “creative”, and “interactive website” have with mahinga kai?
- What does the description of the special video tell us about what can be found on the Kaihaukai website?
- How does the comment about learning through the eyes of others help clarify his ideas for the website?

### METACOGNITION

- What phrases did you have difficulty understanding? What strategies did you use to work out their meaning?
- What helped you to decide what made Karl a rich man?
- How did rereading the article help you find answers to your questions from the first reading?

### The students:

- Draw on prior knowledge of cultural traditions and both men being Ngāi Tahu to make inferences about why they want to keep mahinga kai alive.
- Make connections to information from the first reading to clarify their questions about the meaning of the two phrases “taking a direct approach” and “harnessing the Internet”.
- Think critically about how the approaches are different.

### The students:

- Draw on information in the text to decide what they understand about living off the land and what makes it hard work.
- Make connections to where the food is found and their own experiences to infer that access is important.
- Locate several pieces of information about when food is collected to summarise how seasons impact on some food gathering.
- Connect ideas (as they read) about what happens to the food that is gathered to the whole idea of storing and sharing as part of mahinga kai.
- Integrate the information on environmental change to realise that the overuse of water is making some food scarce, and people may not be able to continue to live off the land.

### The students:

- Infer from what Karl says that he enjoys what he does and he likes the food and sharing it.
- Make connections between the heading and what Karl says about money and good food to infer he's rich because he can live so well off the land and the sea.
- Make connections between what Karl says about sharing and the mātauranga he learned from his whānau to see that this is something he must do.

### The students:

- Make connections with their experiences of art and their knowledge of the Internet to see that he is working in a very different way from Karl, but he is still helping people share and learn.
- Analyse the example and notice how it creates the opportunity for others to share their local knowledge of mahinga kai.
- Use the last sentence of the top paragraph to help with understanding Simon's idea about “cultural exchanges” as the website's “international potential”.
- Integrate ideas from across the text to work out that Simon needs to connect to the water as part of his Ngāi Tahu identity and this allows him to do his best work.

**GIVE FEEDBACK** to reinforce students' reading processes and strategies, for example:

- Keeping your questions in mind as you reread the text helped you to get a better understanding of the meaning of some of those tricky phrases.
- You integrated information from different parts of the text to build your understanding of each approach. Remember what you did to integrate all that information next time you read a non-fiction article.

 **Reading standard: by the end of year 6**

 **The Literacy Learning Progressions**

 **Assessment Resource Banks**

# Instructional focus – Writing

**Social Sciences** (Social Studies – Level 3: Understand how people make decisions about access to and use of resources.)

**English** (Level 3 – Structure: Organise texts using a range of structures.)

## Text excerpts from “Mahinga Kai Crusaders”

Several times a year, Karl and his whānau head into the hills to hunt game. They catch rabbits, hares, pigs, goats, deer, chamois, and thar. Then they make salami, saveloys, sausages, and bacon. “We store hundreds of kilograms of meat for those times when fresh food runs short,” Karl says. In winter, he goes south to harvest tītī from the Tītī Islands.

Karl lives on the marae at Arowhenua, near Temuka. His whānau have hunted, gathered, and traded there for generations. “I call this paradise for one simple reason,” Karl says, waving his arms in a big, wide circle. “Within two hours of my whare, I can collect all the kai I want. This place is my supermarket.”

### MAKING KAI CRUSADERS

Although the tradition of mahinga kai is fast disappearing, two Ngāi Tahu men are determined to keep it alive.

Now, Karl travels all over Te Waipounamu sharing his kai Māori ... our people have been doing for thousands of years. My role is to look after it, to protect it, and to pass it on.”

The Kai Hau Kai project is evolving all the time. Who knows ... Whatever happens, Simon hopes that the website will be around for a long time.

## Examples of text characteristics

### RESEARCH AND PLANNING

*The questions an interviewer asks will provide the content that can help to write an informative, detailed, and interesting article. At the planning stage, deciding what information is needed will help to form the best questions.*

### QUOTATIONS

*Using quotes adds authenticity to writing. They can give an insight into someone’s thoughts, their character, and/or other important details.*

### TITLES

*Creating a title that gives the readers a clue about the text immediately engages them in forming hypotheses about its relevance. A play on words is one way to create an engaging title.*

*It is usually easier to create a title when the writing is finished or almost finished so you know it is relevant to the text.*

### ENDING AN ARTICLE

*There is no “one way” to end an article. The writer might choose to summarise the main points, finish with a final point, or perhaps end with a question. It is usually easier to create a title when the writing is finished or almost finished so you know it is relevant to the text.*

## Teacher

(possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Explain the link between the purpose for writing and their interview questions.

- Before you decide on the questions for your interview, you need to plan what information you would like for your article.
- Discuss with your partner the main points of your article.
- Use the excerpt to support your thinking.

Model examples of interview questions that build on each other and lead to more detail.

- What food do you remember collecting when you were a child?
- What was the most fun you had doing that?
- How did you get the shellfish?
- What problems did you have while you were digging?

Have students work with a partner to develop some paired questions.

Remind them to ask questions that can’t be answered by yes or no.

Have them practise their questions to check the speaker has to tell them something, not just give a yes or no response.

Prompt the students to share their thinking about how quotes can convey greater detail and interest.

Use the excerpt to prompt their thinking.

- What information is Karl adding for the reader?
- What words are memorable in the quote from Karl?
- What else can the reader learn about him from what he says?
- Share your ideas with the group.

Prompt the students to review their writing.

- Can you find a place where you could use a quote to add something interesting?
- Could you replace something from your writing with a quote?

Discuss why a title can be more effective when it is chosen closer to the end of the writing rather than at the beginning.

Ask questions to explore the use of engaging titles

- How does this title draw you into the text?
- What are these nouns describing?
- Can you write a title using two nouns to give a clue about the person you are writing about?

Explain that the ending of an article depends on what a writer wants the reader to remember or think about. Discuss the two endings and draw out from students what the writer wants to leave the reader with.

- What ideas do you want your readers to have?
- Is there an important point you want to finish with?
- Do you have a question?
- Do you want to summarise the main points?
- What kind of ending will suit your writing?

### GIVE FEEDBACK

- Your title made me want to read your article. I wanted to find out why the Blackberry Princess was important.
- The quotes you used really helped me picture Nana when she was a girl. I could almost taste the berries as she described the juice running down her chin.

### METACOGNITION

- What did you learn about interviewing that will help you another time?
- Which of your interview questions got the best information? Why?
- How did rereading your article and reviewing your interview notes help you decide how to shape your ending?



Writing standard: by the end of year 6



The Literacy Learning Progressions