

Coronation Forest

by Fiona Terry

Breanna and her classmates spread across the steep hillside. They carry digging tools and bags of seedlings. It's a sunny September morning, and the students have come to this special forest in Nelson to plant pine trees.



First, they dig holes. Then they gently place one seedling in each hole. The students must be very careful because the roots of seedlings can be easily damaged. Finally, they put the earth back around the tiny trees.





Students planting trees in Coronation Forest in the 1950s



Starting a Forest

Students have been coming to Coronation Forest for sixty years. A man named Arnold Cork came up with the idea of planting the forest to celebrate Queen Elizabeth II becoming queen.

Arnold Cork worked for the Education Board. He hoped that a forest would help students to understand the importance of the forestry industry. He also wanted them to remember Arbor Day (a day when people all over the world make a special effort to plant and care for trees).

Although Queen Elizabeth's coronation took place in 1953, the forest wasn't planted until 1954. Back then, students at Nelson schools were given seeds instead of seedlings. They planted the seeds at school. A year later, they took the seedlings to the forest and planted them. The **tradition** has continued ever since. Now, over forty thousand children have planted trees in Coronation Forest.



Sixty Years On

These days, the trip includes lots more than just planting trees. The students go on a nature walk through the forest. They learn things such as what it takes to make a good timber tree. Trees need to be tall, strong, and straight to make useful wood. Knowing how to grow trees like that takes skill – and maths!

Heather Arnold from the forestry company shows the students how to measure the **diameter** and height of the older trees. Forestry workers use these measurements to work out the amount of wood the trees will produce and the best time to cut them down.



“The place where the trees are planted is very important,” says Barry Walsh, who has been helping students to plant trees since 1974. “The amount of sunlight and the kind of soil affects how quickly they grow,” he says. “Pine trees don’t need fertiliser when they’re first planted. They grow just about anywhere. When they’re four or five years old, we test them to see if they need fertiliser. Usually they don’t.”

Breanna’s dad, Peter, has come along with the students. He planted trees here when he was Breanna’s age. Now he’s a builder. The wood he uses might come from Coronation Forest – maybe even from the trees he planted.



Breanna’s dad, Peter, helping the students to plant the seedlings

Three Generations

Patricia Meade was at the very first tree planting at Coronation Forest in 1954. She was ten years old then – and the day was very different. “I remember it was winter. It was very cold,” she says.

Patricia has come back to celebrate the forest’s sixtieth anniversary. Her return trip to the forest is even more special because her son David is here too. So are Bradley and Olivia, two of her grandchildren. They’ve all planted trees in Coronation Forest.

“It’s amazing to think about how many years ago it is that I was here as a child and planting trees myself,” Patricia says. “The ones I planted will have been well and truly used by now. It’s wonderful to see the next generation so keen to be involved.”



Using the Wood from Coronation Forest



1 The trees are cut down.

3 At sawmills, the bark is taken off the logs.*

5 Wood that can't be used for boards is made into **engineered wood**.

2 Their branches are cut off.

4 The logs are cut into boards ready to be used.

6 The sawdust is burnt to make heat to dry the boards.

* Most of this bark is used for gardening or landscaping.

Coronation Forest is mostly made up of radiata pine, a type of **exotic** tree. Exotic trees are very important for New Zealand's economy. They grow quickly compared with native trees. Their timber is used in New Zealand and also sent overseas to earn money for our country.

Around 1.6 million hectares of land in New Zealand is covered in **commercial** forests. That's an area over 26 times the size of Lake Taupō. Most of these trees have to grow for around thirty years before they are ready to be cut down.

The trees planted in Coronation Forest will mostly be used for building. In the past, the lower branches were taken off to stop knots forming. These days, most of the wood used in building is covered up, so the branches are left on the trees as they grow.

Glossary

commercial	intended to make money
diameter	the distance through the centre of a circle from one side to the other
engineered wood	boards made from chips of wood that are pressed together using a special glue
exotic	introduced from another country; not native
seedlings	very young, small trees
tradition	something that has taken place for a long time

Coronation Forest

by Fiona Terry

Text copyright © Crown 2015

The images on page 22 are used with the permission of: Archives New Zealand/Te Rua Mahara o te Kāwanatanga [Image references: aaQT 6506 W3347/32 (r2422555) M3553 and aaQT 6506 W3347/32 (r2422555) M3564]

All other photographs and illustrations copyright © Crown 2015

For copyright information about how you can use this material, go to: <http://www.tki.org.nz/Copyright-in-Schools/Terms-of-use>

Published 2015 by the Ministry of Education
PO Box 1666, Wellington 6140, New Zealand.
www.education.govt.nz

All rights reserved.

Enquiries should be made to the publisher.

ISBN 978 0 478 44655 5 (online)

Publishing services: Lift Education E tū

Series Editor: David Chadwick

Designer: Jodi Wicksteed

Literacy Consultant: Melanie Winthrop

Consulting Editors: Hōne Apanui and Emeli Sione

Coronation Forest

by Fiona Terry

Breanna and her classmates spread across the steep hillside. They carry digging tools and bags of seedlings. It's a sunny September morning, and the students have come to this special forest in Nelson to plant pine trees.



SCHOOL JOURNAL

NEW ZEALAND
CERTIFICATION
LEVEL
2

MAY 2015



SCHOOL JOURNAL LEVEL 2, MAY 2015

Curriculum learning area	English Social Sciences
Reading year level	Year 4
Keywords	conservation, environment, forestry, trees