

Te Whakatika

The Aotearoa New Zealand Professional Practice
Journal for Outdoor and Environmental Learning.

Issue 43
Spring 24



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natural resources in education

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Tiwaiwaka: Restoring the
mauri of the whenua

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A review of all articles occurs before publication and blind review can be arranged for academic articles upon request. If you would like support and guidance with your writing we are happy to assist.

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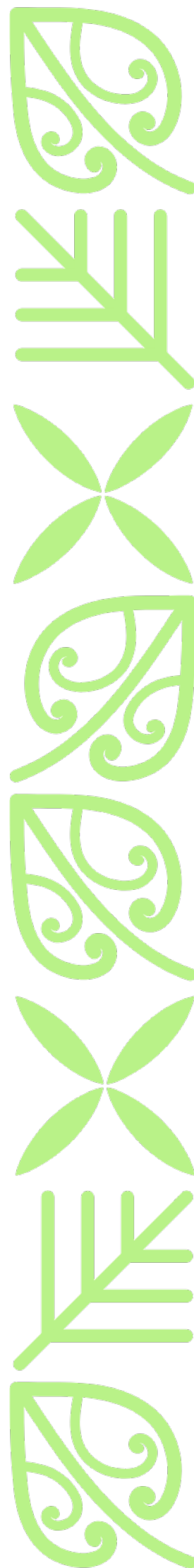
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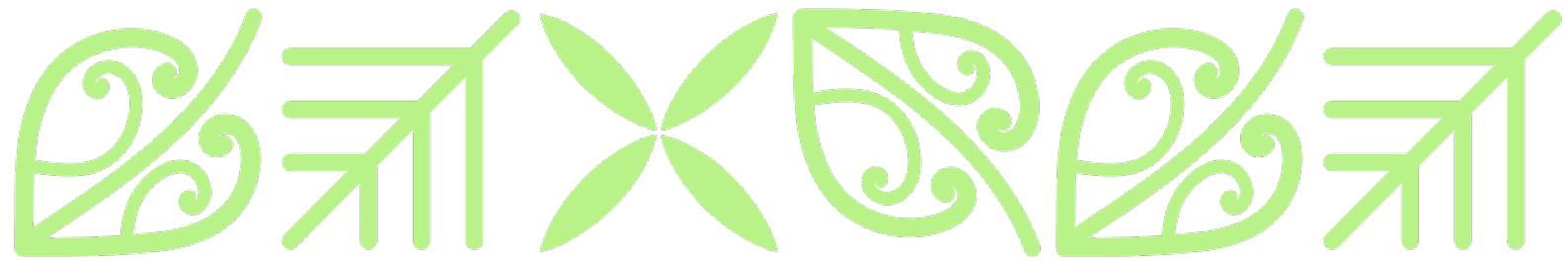
Te Whakatika Purpose statement

Sitting at the nexus of academic inquiry and educational practice, *Te Whakatika* seeks to create a space to share good practice, innovative ideas, and critical engagement in outdoor and environmental learning.

In doing so, *Te Whakatika* seeks to:

- Provide access to the space between academics and practitioners, to connect these spaces.
- Encourage academics to make their work accessible to practitioners through practical application
- Encourage practitioners (teachers and other education providers) to share good practice and innovative ideas from their work through writing articles.
- Encourage strong connections between theory, research, and practice
- Encourage and support high quality learning and teaching in outdoor and environmental contexts.





Te Whakatika Editorial Spring 2024

If I was to describe the operative word for this issue it would be 'connect'. I say this because when I came to write an overview I realised that in some way or other the authors writing was underpinned by the word 'connect', 'to connect', 'connection,' 'connecting'...my online thesaurus gave other words such as join, link, fix, tie, unite, bond, associate, relate, hook up, link up... I looked at the articles and each one could easily use these words when linking their ideas to outdoor learning and to connect learners to the environment. This was an unexpected outcome of my review but one that I felt was appropriate to the intention of this issue of Te Whakatika. The intention was to have articles about creativity in outdoor teaching and learning. So, in this issue we have an exciting range of writing where each article connects to the environment as a centre for learning.

The journal begins with Celia Hogan's article narrating how a bike ride taught a lesson in resourcefulness and creativity. Celia's article also highlights how a nature-connected classroom can let students develop their creativity through hands-on learning, especially for ākonga with visual and kinaesthetic learning styles. Helen Upson picks up on a similar theme and tells of how regular visits to a local gully has enabled early childhood learners to develop observational and artistic skills to connect and create among

other things a nature-loom.

In an interview with Sian Crowley, an environmental educator, I asked how Sian's initiative to create nature-based podcasts led to artistic comics drawn by illustrator Maya Templar. Through a chance meeting Sian and Maya have collaborated to create a comic format to support deeper engagement and connection to nature through vibrant visual storytelling. Continuing with visual arts, Julia Johnston's article explores place-based education. Referencing the new curriculum, Te Mataiaho, Julia describes her pedagogy to build understanding about the effects of a visual arts education rooted in local culture and environment, and intrinsically linked to mātauranga Māori.

At Whenua Iti Outdoors (WIO), Bree Arnott's insight into the pedagogy of the lead teacher and the impact of an environmental sustainability programme makes for informative reading. Students from secondary schools in the Nelson, Tasman and Marlborough area study in a Level 3 NCEA accredited programme. A key aspect of the programme is to connect students to various ways of contributing to environmental sustainability, whether at home, through volunteering, or in careers. In an article written by myself, Maureen Legge, I connect a research paper where composite stories portray Year 7 & 8 students' experiences in the outdoors. I note



the quality of student writing and suggest how invaluable outdoor learning is for many reasons but in this case, I suggest a connection to literacy and expressive writing drawn from student participation.

Chris North's research was inspired by hearing teachers and principals' concerns about the impact the Health and Safety at Work Act on EOTC. In this research Chris notes how perception and observance of the law was limiting student access to the rich and diverse educational experiences available through EOTC. The findings suggest some combination of four enabling factors: competent staff, systems to minimise paperwork, a specialised EOTC coordinator to support teachers, a whole-school commitment to EOTC, and attending professional development courses can help teachers address constraints. This means that through careful research and planning EOTC can be programmed to meet educational outcomes while ensuring the safety of participants.

The final article is an interview, by Sophie Hoskins, where Rob McGowan, also known as Pā Ropata, explains and elaborates his publication *Tiwaiwaka*. This booklet explores the guiding philosophy of a group working to heal the mauri of the whenua. Pā Ropata suggests that the best practice for people wanting to protect the environment, is to care for the places where indigenous species belong

and to nurture wonder, and awe to engage connection with Papatūānuku. In the closing part of the journal Sophie Hoskins and Becky McCormack again enrich outdoor learning practice with a range of interesting and relevant resources to hook into when teaching. David Hill an editor from the *Journal of Adventure Education and Outdoor Learning* (JAEOL) lists an update of research relating to the outdoors.

I hope you enjoy reading and maybe using some of the ideas that emerge from this issue of *Te Whakatika*. I am always on the lookout for articles to publish and would welcome hearing about your teaching, planning and motivations for outdoor and environmental education. Or perhaps you could pass on a copy of *Te Whakatika* to a colleague who might be able to contribute. My contact details are below or you can respond to the Expression of Interest, posted on the EONZ and NZAEE websites. As summer approaches I am mindful that water safety practices need to be high on our agenda when engaging in outdoor activities with family and friends. Encourage others to take heed of this advice so that they can enjoy and connect with the outdoors in safe ways.

Ngā mihi Maureen Legge

Editor *Te Whakatika*