

The Remarkable Reti

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School Journal
Level 3, October 2015
Year 5



Overview

A reti is a fishing device, used by Ngāti Pāhauwera to catch kahawai on the Mōhaka River. The iwi regard the reti as a taonga, and the article provides a great example of how traditions, along with stories and waiata, are handed down through the generations.

Ngāti Pāhauwera kaumātua, Colin Culshaw, lives near the Mōhaka and teaches children at Mōhaka School about the cultural significance of the reti. Photos in the article show Colin at the river, passing on his knowledge. The article ends with a waiata in Māori and English, written by another kaumātua who was taught how to use the reti by his koro.

This article:

- includes the themes of traditions, culture, practical skills, and environmental awareness
- provides opportunities for students to share and compare traditions from their own experiences
- gives students opportunities to develop skills in recording their own stories.

A PDF of the text is available at www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz

Texts related by theme “Mahinga Kai Crusaders” SJ L3 Sept 2014 | “Pōhā: A Clever Way of Storing Food” SJ L2 Sept 2014

Text characteristics from the year 5 reading standard

A Way of Life

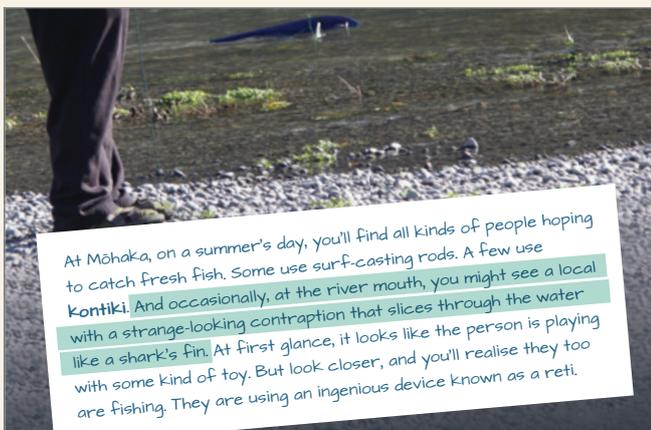
For Ngāti Pāhauwera, fishing with a reti is a way of life. The tradition has been passed down through generations, though it's hard to say exactly when reti were first used. Some people say their origin can be traced back to pre-European times, maybe even to Polynesia, where fish were caught from outrigger canoes using a fishing line and a lure.

But what exactly is a reti?

A reti is a fishing device controlled from shore by a hand-held line. The reti board is designed to move against the current, dragging a lure and hook. This board looks like an oddly shaped skateboard with no wheels – or perhaps a surfboard for a small dog. Some people say reti boards resemble fish, like kahawai or tāmure (snapper).

Although reti look unusual, they should never be underestimated. They are specially designed to catch kahawai and other predatory fish that swim in the Mōhaka River. This unique design is essential. As all

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



At Mōhaka, on a summer's day, you'll find all kinds of people hoping to catch fresh fish. Some use surf-casting rods. A few use kontiki. And occasionally, at the river mouth, you might see a local with a strange-looking contraption that slices through the water like a shark's fin. At first glance, it looks like the person is playing with some kind of toy. But look closer, and you'll realise they too are fishing. They are using an ingenious device known as a reti.

sentences that vary in length and structure (for example, sentences that begin in different ways and different kinds of complex sentences with a number of subordinate clauses)

He has lived near the mouth of his life. Colin agrees that it's important to know about the fish in your rohe (territory).

“You definitely want to know what you're after and the best way to catch it,” Colin says. “Take kahawai, for example. Because they're predators, they stay near the surface chasing smaller fish. This is why reti have lures. They look like small fish shimmering in the water, and this catches the attention of the kahawai. We don't even need to use bait.”

Colin remembers his aunties using the reti at the mouth of the Mōhaka River, and his older sister Hazel was “quite the expert”.

Given his family's long association with the reti, Colin is often quizzed about them. “People are



some information that is irrelevant to the identified purpose for reading (that is, some competing information), which students need to identify and reject as they integrate pieces of information in order to answer questions

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



Reading standard: by the end of year 5

Possible curriculum contexts

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Level 3 – Understand how people remember and record the past in different ways.

ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 3 – Ideas: Show a developing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

ENGLISH (Writing)

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

Possible reading purposes

- To enjoy learning about a traditional way of fishing
- To make connections between the text and your own experiences of traditions and skills that are passed down
- To find out how children in Mōhaka learn to fish
- To explore the structures and features of a non-fiction article.

Possible writing purposes

- To write about a skill or tradition that has been passed down to you
- To explain or describe another method of fishing
- To recount a fishing experience.



Text and language challenges

VOCABULARY

- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, including “surf-casting”, “river mouth”, “contraption”, “origin”, “outrigger”, “resemble”, “kahawai”, “tāmure (snapper)”, “underestimated”, “predatory”, “Arripis trutta”, “edible”, “elongated”, “kaumātua”, “rohe (territory)”, “shimmering”, “association”, “quizzed”, “replicate”, “adamant”, “mana”, “cultural significance”, “waiata”, “taonga”, “mokopuna”, “retain”, “simplicity”, “guarantee”, “landing”, “afloat”
- Names and terms in te reo Māori, including the waiata, which is translated into English
- The expressions “quite the expert”, “take pride in”, “The late ...”
- The bolded words that appear in the glossary.

Possible supporting strategies

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

- Familiarise yourself with any te reo Māori vocabulary that is new to you. Depending on your students’ knowledge, provide support for the vocabulary.
- You could request support from local experts in your community to read the waiata aloud to the class.
- Identify words or phrases that may challenge your students. You may wish to chart words related to fishing and traditions. Students can add related words that they already know. It may be beneficial to show pictures to students who are English language learners to help define some of the unfamiliar vocabulary.
- Prompt students familiar with smart phones and tablets to understand the broader meaning of the word “devices” as it’s used here.
- *The English Language Learning Progressions: Introduction*, pages 39–46, has useful information about learning vocabulary.
- See also *ESOL Online, Vocabulary*, for examples of other strategies to support students with vocabulary.

SPECIFIC KNOWLEDGE REQUIRED

- Some knowledge of fishing and the methods of fishing
- Knowledge of how traditions, stories, songs, and expressions are passed down through generations
- Some understanding of the concept of “taonga” and “mana” and why an iwi would need to protect the mana of their taonga
- Related knowledge of the concept of “cultural significance”
- An awareness that all creatures have preferred habitats and that all species are different
- Familiarity with waiata.

Possible supporting strategies

- Ask students to share their experience of fishing. Through discussion, draw out words that they will encounter in this article.
- During reading, pause to allow the students to make connections between the shape of a reti and that of a shark’s fin, a skateboard, and a surfboard.
- Have students share stories of other traditions that are passed down in their families, for example, those to do with special occasions, places, and events. Support students to understand the important roles of grandparents and parents in teaching children “how we do things”. This may be an opportunity for students from other countries to share their knowledge and culture.

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE

- An explanation with a simple introduction and clearly sequenced information supported by headings
- A waiata, translated into English, about the reti
- A diagram of a kahawai with a scientific-style caption
- Some complex sentences containing a lot of information
- A glossary
- The example of school children learning about reti.

Possible supporting strategies

- Skim and scan the article with the students to help them get a sense of its structure and purpose. Prompt students to use the photographs, illustrations, and headings to get the gist of its content. Encourage them to pose questions about the text. These could be recorded on a whiteboard or chart. Prompt them to use the text features during reading to locate information that answers their questions.
- Discuss the dictionary definition style of the caption on the kahawai drawing.
- Support the students to identify that the article is about a specific iwi, and as well as being about fishing, it concerns Māori cultural themes and concepts.
- Ideally, the waiata could be read aloud by a student or an adult who is fluent in te reo Māori.



Instructional focus – Reading

Social Sciences (Level 3 – Understand how people remember and record the past in different ways.)

English (Level 3 – Ideas: Show a developing understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.)

First reading

- Review the information the students gained from their first skim and scan of the text. *What questions do you have about the article?*
- Share the purpose for reading, then direct the students to work in pairs to read the introduction on page 10. *What is the man in the photograph doing? What words and ideas in the introduction are new to you? How have you worked out what they mean? If you know a lot about fishing, what connections can you make to the ideas in this section?*
- Direct the students to continue reading, pausing at the end of each section to discuss with their partner any words or ideas they need to clarify.
- Ask questions to support the students to reflect on their purpose for reading and the questions that still need clarification. For example: *Why are reti only made by members of the Ngāti Pāhauwera iwi? Where did you find that information? Why does Colin Culshaw teach children to make and use reti? Why do you think the article ends with a waiata? How did the photographs help you understand the text and find answers to your questions?*

If the students struggle with this text

- Chunk the first reading into shorter sections.
- Model how to use the headings to anticipate the content of each section.
- Prompt the students to read the heading to understand the big idea of that section.
- Remind them to make connections between the text and things they know themselves.
- Encourage students to jot down notes or questions as they are reading.

Subsequent readings

The teacher

Ask questions that encourage students to reread the text closely to identify facts about reti.

- Who invented reti? Does the text tell you? If not, what did you find out about where the idea came from?*
- Does the text tell you what a reti is made from? Why not? What is your best guess?*
- How or why does a reti help you catch fish? Can you catch any kind of fish with a reti? Explain why or why not.*
- What other facts have you learnt about reti?*

The teacher

Invite the students to consider the importance of reti to Ngāti Pāhauwera.

- Reread page 13 carefully. What connections can you make with the way this iwi protects and passes on their traditions?*
- Do you have similar traditions you can share with the group?*
- What does “cultural significance” mean here? Discuss this in your group and suggest some other items that have cultural significance to Māori or to other cultural groups.*

The teacher

Remind students of the purpose for reading, for example, to understand how the ideas in this text relate to similar ideas they’ve read about.

- Kahawai are an important food for Ngāti Pāhauwera. What connections can you make between this text and other articles about catching or gathering food?*
- The article also has a message about passing on traditions: what connections can you make between this text and others you’ve read in which a tradition or taonga is passed on?*

The students:

- reread to locate information that will answer their questions
- draw on what they already know about Māori history and migrations from Polynesia to understand that the origins of the reti are unknown because of the huge amount of time that has passed
- make connections within the text to recall that reti construction is secret and that is why it is not explained here
- use the illustration and their knowledge of skateboards and surfboards to infer that the reti floats and is probably made of timber or some other rigid but light material
- locate information in the text and make connections with what they know about the different behaviours of species to understand that reti and their lures have been designed to catch the fish in a specific habitat (the Mōhaka River mouth).

The students:

- reread to identify any connections that they can make between this iwi and their own iwi, whānau, or family traditions
- share their connections and discuss similarities with those of Ngāti Pāhauwera
- integrate information from the text, their own experience, and the shared discussion to reach a deeper and broader understanding of the term “cultural significance”.

The students:

- recall and discuss other texts with similar themes or content (for some examples, see “Texts related by theme”)
- make connections between these texts to integrate information and ideas about the importance of traditions and of passing information down through generations.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- I know you love fishing, so it was useful to compare reti fishing with your experience of rod fishing from a boat.*
- Miriama and Nina shared their different traditions and compared the special whānau or family gatherings they had attended. Although they were different, the big ideas were the same.*
- You’ve provided a good explanation of cultural significance by sharing your experience of a special fishing technique and integrating it with information in the text. Integrating our own experiences with what we read is one way of learning new things and seeing the world in a different way.*

METACOGNITION

- When you read about something you know well, is it easier to understand the text? Why is that?
- What questions do you still have about reti? How could they be answered?



Reading standard: by the end of year 5



The Literacy Learning Progressions



Assessment Resource Banks

Instructional focus – Writing

Social Sciences (Level 3 – Understand how people remember and record the past in different ways.)

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

Text excerpts from “The Remarkable Reti”

A reti is ... controlled from shore by a hand-held line. The reti board is designed to move against the current, dragging a lure and hook. This board looks like an oddly shaped skateboard with no wheels – or perhaps a surfboard for a small dog. Some people say reti boards resemble fish, like kahawai ...

They are using an ingenious device known as reti.

Although reti look unusual, they should never be underestimated. This is because they are specially made to catch kahawai and other predatory fish that swim in the Mōhaka River.

... it's important to know about the species in your rohe (territory).

“To Ngāti Pāhauwera, the reti is a taonga – an important treasure”, he says.

Examples of text characteristics

EXPLANATION

Explanations generally tell how something works or why something happened.

DESCRIPTION

When writers describe something their readers may not have seen, they often give readers support by using a simile. The simile likens the object to something readers probably know.

VOCABULARY

Writers choose words that help make their work interesting and accurate.

USING TE REO MĀORI

Writers who draw on their own (non-English) language and culture may want to use words and expressions to convey their purpose, even though some readers will not understand them. Those writers can help readers in a variety of ways, such as:

- ensuring the context makes the meaning clear
- adding a translation in brackets
- putting the word into a glossary
- providing a complete translation of a longer passage.

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Support the students as they decide on a structure for their writing. Depending on their choices, review the key features and structures of different text types, such as explanations. Provide examples from texts they have read in the past or charts you have made to support them to use different text structures.

Model the way you used the simile in this extract to understand what reti look like.

- I'd never heard of a reti, but I know what skateboards and surfboards look like. This explanation helps me form a mental image of a surfboard for a small dog. Check any places in your writing where a simile might help your readers understand a difficult idea.*
- Do you need to add an illustration or photograph?*

Prompt students to consider their word choices.

- In these extracts, the writer could have written, “They are using a thing called a reti.” Using the word “ingenious” tells us it's a very clever thing, and “device” is a more accurate word than “thing”.*
- As you make changes, check that you are sure the new word has the precise meaning you intend. How can you do that?*
- Ask a partner to give feedback on your word choices.*

Ask questions to support any students who wish to use their own language in their writing.

- What is your purpose for using words that some readers may not understand? How will doing this help achieve your purpose?*
- How will you provide support for readers who don't know these words?*
- Check with a writing partner. Do you need to add more support? Can you use more of your language without losing your readers?*

GIVE FEEDBACK

- The words you've used in your explanation tell me exactly what was involved. The way you linked your ideas made it easy to follow.*
- Thank you for adding the translations of the words in te reo Māori. They were words I hadn't come across before, so you've helped me increase my Māori vocabulary. It will help your other readers too.*

METACOGNITION

- As you planned and wrote, you've had to make a lot of decisions. Tell me about some of them.
- Tell me about your revision process. Who or what helps you? How do you know when to stop?

Writing standard: by the end of year 5

The Literacy Learning Progressions