CURRICULUM ACTIVITY:
Puzzle Area

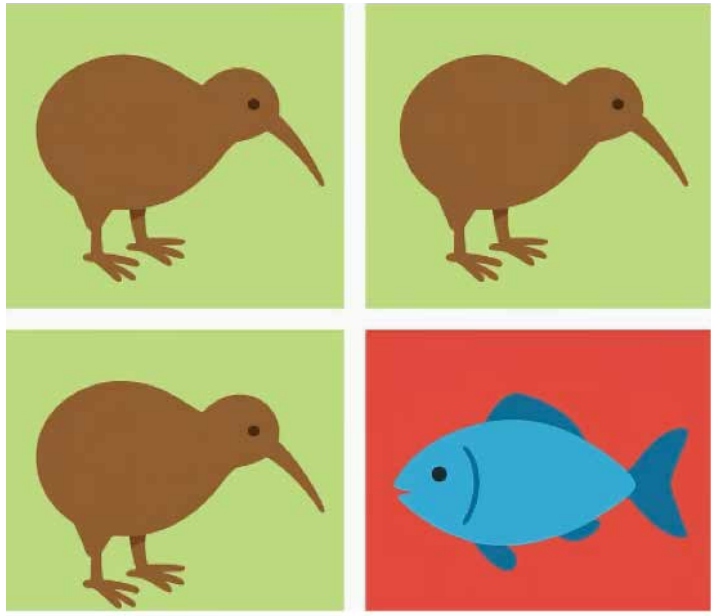
Tamariki work together to complete jigsaw puzzles, noticing shapes and spatial relationships. Kaiako ask questions about positioning and encourage tamariki to predict where pieces fit. Mōhiotanga is demonstrated as tamariki develop knowledge, problem-solving, and an understanding of relationships in their environment.

Tikanga Practices: Mātauranga can be seen through:

- Purposeful thinking: Tamariki apply logic and reasoning to identify how pieces fit, learning through observation, testing, and persistence.
- Mahi Ngātahi Problem-solving together: Working together, tamariki share strategies and insights, building collective knowledge and social understanding.
- Whaiwhakaaro Reflecting: Kaiako prompt tamariki to explain their reasoning, encouraging awareness of how they learn and make connections.

Kaiako: Questions for Reflection

1. How did you foster children's ability to reason and explain their thinking as they worked?
2. In what ways did collaboration enhance the learning process?
3. How can you extend this activity to support deeper spatial and relational understanding?



WAIATA: TE REREKĒTANGA

(Kaitito: Ngaroma M. Williams)

Te rerekētanga o ēnei mea
Te rerekētanga o ēnei mea
Te rerekētanga o ēnei mea
Ko tēhea te mea rerekē?

One of these things is not like the other
Which one is different?

Scan for link to waiata

Ngā Taonga Whakaako Tikanga Māori — Theory and Practice

Early Childhood Education Contexts

MŌHIOTANGA KNOWLEDGE

UC UNIVERSITY OF CANTERBURY | Te Kāhui Pā Harakeke Child Well-being Research Institute

Ako AOTEAROA

Authors: Ngaroma M. Williams, Tracy Dayman, Lana R. Williams, 2025.

MŌHIOTANGA
KNOWLEDGE

Mōhiotanga refers to knowledge, awareness, and knowing. In teaching and learning, mōhiotanga represents the stage where learners develop understanding through the accumulation of information, facts, and concepts. It involves recognising, recalling, and applying knowledge gained through observation, instruction, or experience.

Mōhiotanga is often seen as the foundation that supports deeper inquiry, critical thinking, and the eventual development of māramatanga (insight). Within a Māori worldview, mōhiotanga is not static; it grows through interaction with others, the environment, and the spiritual realm. Effective teaching fosters mōhiotanga by creating rich, meaningful learning contexts where learners actively engage, question, and build connections across knowledge systems.

Scan to find out more about these resources

CURRICULUM ACTIVITY: Early numeracy: Mathematics and Patternmaking

Tamariki create patterns using beads, blocks, or natural materials inspired by tukutuku panels. Kaiako support discussions about sequencing, repetition, and symmetry, linking practical tasks to mathematical understanding. Mōhiotanga is expressed as tamariki develop awareness, reasoning, and knowledge of relationships within their environment.

Tikanga Practices: Mātauranga can be viewed as:

- Observing and recognising patterns: Tamariki identify order and repetition in their designs, learning that structure and balance exist naturally in both art and ECE setting.
- Learning through shared exploration: Kaiako and tamariki engage in dialogue about their patterns, strengthening collective reasoning and shared understanding.
- Empowering through understanding: As tamariki describe and explain their patterns, they gain confidence in articulating their thinking and developing conceptual clarity.

Kaiako: Questions for Reflection

1. How did you support tamariki to articulate what they noticed and understood about their patterns?
2. In what ways did you connect this learning to cultural knowledge such as tukutuku or kōwhaiwhai designs?
3. How can you build on these observations to extend the children's mathematical reasoning?

CURRICULUM AREA: Early Literacy: Process Cooking

Tamariki and count ingredients while making playdough or baking, noticing patterns and quantities. Kaiako guide discussions about more/less, bigger/smaller, and sequencing steps in the recipe. Mōhiotanga is enacted as tamariki apply reasoning and observation skills to solve practical, hands-on problems.

Tikanga Practices: Mātauranga can be seen through:

- Learning through doing: Tamariki engage their senses and reasoning as they measure, pour, mix, transforming practical activity into applied knowledge.
- Mathematical reasoning in action: Kaiako prompt tamariki to notice patterns quantities, and relationships, strengthening early mathematical understanding.
- Sharing emerging understandings: Tamariki discuss what they notice and predict outcomes together, reinforcing learning throughout communication and collaboration.

Kaiako: Questions for Reflection

1. How did you make mathematical thinking visible and meaningful during the hands-on-activity?
2. In what ways did you encourage tamariki to reason and problem-solve independently?
3. How can you link this practical experience to broader concepts of measurement and pattern?