



INNOVATIVE LEARNING TOOLKIT

PROJECT TITLE: Hands on Tikanga Maori

Tags; Tikanga Maori, storytelling, music

Maori cultural expert Riki Bennett has worked extensively alongside PTS coordinators introducing various community groups to a range of different cultural practices, artefacts and stories.

Detail:

Some examples of these fantastic activities include:

Stream-side workshops on Rongoa Maori (Maori medicine), and other traditional Maori uses of native plants – hands-on demonstrations of the various uses of different native plants including brewing Kumarahou tea for bronchial complaints, using Titoki leaves for insect stings, making an anti-dandruff shampoo by boiling Ngaio leaves, etc. In this case, participants take part by touching and tasting the plants, trying out the brews and rubbing the Kumarahoe flowers into their hands as soap, etc. Riki shows the group how to identify each of the plants and relates stories about some of them to bring them to life (eg the story of the Mamaku fern that looks like a woman hanging her head and weeping, with her hair falling in front of her face).

Workshops to demonstrate how to make and play traditional Maori flutes where participants carve their own flute and learn how to play it. At the same time, Riki plays his flutes and they all listen to the natural sounds of the bush.

Fire-making workshops where participants learn how to light a fire using traditional Maori techniques and rubbing certain sticks together. At the same time Riki relates the legend of Mahuika the fire goddess and how she gave the gift of fire to Maui.

In each of these examples, traditional teaching methods are interwoven with Maori stories and legends, music and hands-on participation. The workshops have been used both to demonstrate specific skills but also to discuss the deeper significance of nature within a Maori worldview, and the importance of protecting the environment for future generations.

The main message these sessions seek to impart is around the importance of caring and nurturing the environment for future generations, and the start of that is now and will always be now with each generation that comes along.

These sessions have proven very popular, and are in high demand as a result.

Also, see the Pa Harakeke case study, and information on Kaitiakitanga for further information.