



## INNOVATIVE LEARNING TOOLKIT

### **PROJECT TITLE: Flanshaw Road Primary School**

#### **Tags; art, school, book**

This snapshot is an example of working with school children to create an art project, and a book, inspired by the local stream. It is a great example of art being used for educational and community engagement purposes, and of a resource being created by children for children.

#### **Details**

In early 2005 Gilbert Brakey (Community Co-ordinator for Henderson Creek) approached Flanshaw Road School about getting children to participate in a planting day on Henderson Creek, coupled with an art initiative.

Janet Holt, Community Arts Coordinator for Project Twin Streams, became involved with teacher Tracey Woolley and the children.

First the children visited Henderson Creek where they participated in planting native trees as part of PTS. On the second visit they learned about native flora and fauna from biologist Neil Henderson (KeepWaitakere Beautiful).

At school the children studied artist Kay George's painting on fabric entitled 'Rock pools and the Sea (1998)', a vibrant and colourful work. The children talked with their families about symbols that represented their own cultures, and discussed Henderson Creek and their own history to it.

Tracey Woolley and other teachers worked with the students over a term of 10 weeks with each piece of art work taking up to 10 hours to produce. The children were encouraged to create a pastel landscape, based on Henderson Creek, that told a story. The work was to reflect the environment and also their culture, through colour and symbols.

They made a pencil sketch that incorporated symbols that were meaningful to them. The children then worked with chalk on large pieces of paper (64cms by 48cms) which they divided into six segments. Finally, they did the colouring and patterning in pastels. The idea was to weave together the segments like a tapa cloth to reflect their feelings about Project Twin Streams and what it means to them to be part of Waitakere.

The finished pastels were mounted on card and displayed at an art exhibition at Tui Glen during the Henderson Creek Celebration Weekend in 2005.

The artwork was so well received that it was decided to put together a book to showcase the artwork. The book is intended to be a useful resource for schools and the vehicle for spreading the word about the great work that is resulting from Project Twin Streams



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working in tandem with the school community. [extracted Our place – Henderson Creek, Flanshaw Road School, Waitakere City Council 2006: 57 – 59]

Later the school created a mural using tiles that each child created. The mural contains nikau trees and the twin streams running through the centre. The overall shape depicts the essence of a taniwha or guardian of the stream.

Inspired by this work, the school was invited to put together a 20min skit as part of joint PTS arts performance at a festival. The school were so enthusiastic about this they later turned this skit into a much larger whole school production with different segments of the school performing different parts, and every child involved in some way. One section of this larger production was then performed at Storyfest.

Janet Holt noted that the Principal sat down afterwards and asked "whats next.....?."