



**Te Puni Kōkiri**  
REALISING MĀORI POTENTIAL

## Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board Adult Literacy Initiative



### CONTEXT

#### Programme Title

Tūwharetoa Adult Literacy Initiative.

#### Provider

Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board has an agreement with Literacy Aotearoa<sup>1</sup> to provide this programme. Hei Ara Kōkiri Tūwharetoa Education Initiative, the educational arm of the Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board, provides a number of educational services to learners living within the tribal boundary of Ngāti Tūwharetoa.

#### Location

Taupō/Tūrangi

#### Funding

Tertiary Education Commission, from the Foundation Learning Pool.

#### Programme Description

This programme provides foundation literacy and numeracy support to learners in the Taupō region, in order to facilitate employment, or further training, and enable learners to participate fully in society.

Te Kāwanatanga o Aotearoa

This case study highlights a Tūwharetoa workforce literacy and numeracy initiative identified as achieving positive outcomes for Māori.

**"Three things make the programme effective for Māori learners – trust, relationship and respect."** *Tutor: Tūwharetoa Adult Literacy Initiative.*

In total, Te Puni Kōkiri undertook four case studies of workforce literacy and numeracy initiatives. These case studies were undertaken between March and June 2008, and were current at that date.

The case study provides practical illustrations of good practice features that relate to:

- Programme design;
- Programme delivery; and
- Programme results.

### PROGRAMME DESIGN

#### Consideration of Māori Needs and Aspirations

The provider, the Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board, is strategically planning 25–50 years out, cognisant of the requirement for transferable skills in the job market – which is seriously compromised by the lack of foundation skills.

#### Consideration of Barriers to Access by Māori

The programme is open to any person who has left school and, because of literacy or numeracy difficulties, needs support to achieve their employment, educational or personal goals. As well as self-referrals, there can be referrals from Tūwharetoa iwi, the Accident Compensation Corporation, Work and Income New Zealand, marae, and mental health agencies. Participants can be in employment or unemployed.

Classes can be held in individual learner's homes or in the tutor's office. Where there are transport problems, the tutor will collect the learners and take them to her office.

### CASE STUDIES METHODOLOGY

Case studies were chosen based on recommendations from State sector agencies, and the availability/accessibility of participants. Te Puni Kōkiri liaised with the respective providers to seek permission to conduct on-site focus groups, or one-to-one interviews, with:

- Māori learners;
- Their tutor/s; and
- The provider and /or employer.

In addition, Te Puni Kōkiri requested any relevant documentation that would be useful as background information to our on-site visits.

The service is free and confidential. This is important as learners are often unable to afford fees; and may be embarrassed that they have literacy and numeracy needs.

#### Consideration of Barriers to Māori Retention and Achievement

Each person in the programme receives up to 4.15 hours tuition per week, over 16 weeks, after which their individual learning plan can be revisited and extended throughout the year if need be. There is flexibility in the scheduling of those hours, which means that students can participate in sessions at a time that is suitable to them. Learners have the option of individual or small group tuition. In the latter, the tutor aims for homogeneity of need, age and (if appropriate) gender.



Sustainability of learning is possible through the tutors making themselves available to support the learners in any subsequent educational pathways. The 'investment' made by spouses and whānau is also important. For them, the learners' acquisition of new literacy and numeracy skills means that responsibilities can be shared.

## PROGRAMME DELIVERY

### Responsive to Māori Culture

There are two paid tutors, one contracted by the Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board and the other by Literacy Aotearoa. The tutor contracted by the Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board was interviewed as part of these case studies. The tutor and learners work in a 'partnership' model, exemplifying the essence of ako (teach and learn). This model encourages the tutor and student to learn from, and respect each other – with both moving forward together.

There is recognition of the experiences and knowledge that Māori learners bring to the learning situation. Cultural capital is valued and used as a way of progressing learning. Teaching content focuses on knowledge that is relevant to the learners' culture.

There is learner autonomy, in the spirit of tino rangatiratanga, as evidenced in the learners setting their own goals. The tutor uses a student-centred approach, giving ownership to her learners in terms of what they want to learn, how and when.

The tutor is able to pronounce Māori words properly and integrate aspects of tikanga Māori.

### Providers and Tutors Are Skilled and Capable

The tutor creates a non-threatening learning environment, using praise and positive feedback to instil feelings of success. She is a skilled planner, with a passion for learning, and caters to students' individual needs and interests.

The tutor uses an eclectic range of teaching strategies. She also maximises the learners' own experiences and interests, as a basis for their writing and reading. Aspects of information technology are incorporated as requested/ needed.

Relationships are critical. As expressed by a member of the Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board, "relationships are the essence of the success of the programme." A trust relationship exists between the tutor and the learners. There is mutual respect. The learning environment is non-threatening.

The tutor's initial training was through Literacy Aotearoa, resulting in Level 3 New Zealand qualifications accreditation. Through Literacy Aotearoa, the tutor receives four days professional development annually.

The tutor has gained a Certificate in Adult Literacy Tutoring and works autonomously for the Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board, having had 15 years prior experience delivering literacy and numeracy programmes for Literacy Aotearoa (formerly ARLA<sup>2</sup>). She is a national trainer for Literacy Aotearoa and in this capacity she trains other tutors. The tutor is also the voluntary chairperson of Literacy Taupō.





Photo: Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board

### Contextualised Learning and Resources

After an initial assessment of each learner's needs/goals, an individual learning plan is negotiated. The tutor writes a lesson plan for each lesson, based on the individual learning plan. Her task-centred/ problem-centred approach is based on each learner's real-life needs, for example driver licence tests.

The tutor ensures that resources are both age and culturally-appropriate. Examples of resources used include local myths and legends; whakapapa (genealogy); New Zealand authors; marae events; local history; traditional cooking methods; *Mana* magazines; famous local people; and a Māori dictionary (for incorporating Māori words into their daily English language writing). Planned improvements to Tūwharetoa's literacy programme include the development of Hapū resources. There is also a desire to integrate more Māori language into the literacy programme.

The tutor embraces the significance of ako (teach and learn) by acknowledging the learners' interest in, and knowledge about, a certain topic – then researching it further with the learner. She teaches what is relevant and of interest to them.

### Collaboration with Whānau and Between Authority Figures

The tutor of this programme is part of the wider community, with credibility in the field of adult literacy and numeracy tuition. As a result, she is able to 'broker' relationships with other social services, for example the food bank; Work and Income New Zealand; lawyers; and social workers.

Hapū and iwi networks are maximised, allowing for a more coordinated, holistic approach through the different Tūwharetoa Māori Trust Board initiatives, for example health/social services, alternative education, and te reo Māori provision. Literacy referrals come from regular, multidisciplinary hui of those different entities, as they seek to address whānau needs.





## RESULTS

### The Programme Contributes to Improved Māori Literacy and Numeracy

The most obvious benefits of the programme are improved reading, writing, spelling, maths, and interpersonal/communication skills. Learners even start to read for pleasure, especially in their area of passion, for example boating/car magazines.

In the words of the tutor, improved literacy and numeracy skills allow people to "break out of their restricted world." They become more independent, for example after gaining their drivers licence. As a result, they have increased confidence. For example, they are more able to deal with someone kanohi ki te kanohi (face to face) when they speak or engage in workplace conversations with superiors and participate in social settings, or make decisions about their future.

### Māori Access the Programme

There are approximately 40 learners who receive this service annually. On average, about 70% of the yearly intake of learners is Māori. The demographics of the students vary greatly. Some learners are employed in part or full-time work with a mix of ages and gender. Others are unemployed.

### Skills Learnt Assist Māori to Enter the Workforce or Improve Their Current Employment Position

For those who are unemployed, the feelings of success gained from completing the adult literacy and numeracy course are a springboard to finding employment or going on to further education. Those who are employed report being more confident about seeking work promotions.

### Flow-on Effects

During the course, students gain life-long learning strategies, for example setting goals and developing plans. In addition, they have developed important critical literacy skills – enabling them to understand what they read, and deduce the implications for their own lives.

There are spin-offs for whānau members too, as the learner builds self-confidence (albeit in small steps). These feelings are a good platform for building positive home-school partnerships.

- 1 Literacy Aotearoa provides nationwide literacy and numeracy tuition. (Literacy Aotearoa, <http://www.literacy.org.nz/page.php?id=12>).
- 2 ARLA, was the Adult Reading and Learning Association, which has since been renamed Literacy Aotearoa. ARLA was a provider of literacy and numeracy programmes. (Literacy Aotearoa, <http://www.literacy.org.nz/te-koruru.php?PHPSESSID=8ef10ea5586d44c1e7e18635d28d2db7>)

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