



Overview

This TSM contains information and suggestions for teachers to pick and choose from, depending on the needs of their students and their purpose for using the text. The material provides many opportunities for revisiting the text.

Megan and Lita are cousins who belong to the Tongan community in Wellington. This article describes how every week they come together with their mothers, grandmother, and other women and girls to learn about Tongan culture and how to make ngatu (tapa cloth). It explains the process of making ngatu and the significance of the cloth, and it demonstrates how such traditions are passed down through the generations.

This article provides opportunities for Pacific students to share their experiences and knowledge of ngatu or tapa and will have particular relevance for students with a Tongan heritage. All students will be interested in the theme of family and culture and the taonga that connect us.

This article:

- reflects Tongan identity, language, culture, and history
- explains how to make ngatu and its importance in Tongan society
- builds an awareness of how traditional Tongan cultural practices are sustained in a New Zealand urban environment
- has photographs to illustrate the text
- includes a list of Tongan vocabulary.

A PDF of the text and an audio version as an MP3 file are available at www.schooljournal.tki.org.nz

Texts related by theme

“A Vanishing Art” and “Tomorrow’s Tapa” *Connected 3* 2007 | “Nia’s Hair” SJ 1.3.10 | “Mele’s Money Dance” SJ 1.1.10 | “Tivaevae” SJ L3 April 2013 | “The Sons of Ma’afu” SJ L2 October 2015 | “The Mysterious Stones of Tonga” SJ L2 August 2017

Text characteristics from the year 4 reading standard

We have retained the links to the National Standards while a new assessment and reporting system is being developed.

For more information on assessing and reporting in the post-National Standards era, see: <http://assessment.tki.org.nz/Assessment-and-reporting-guide>

Ngatu is made from the bark (**tutu**) of the paper mulberry tree (**hiapo**). Making ngatu is called **koka’anga**. Ngatu is very important in Tonga. It is used for blankets, mats, clothes – and even kites.

“Our mother started teaching us to make ngatu when we were five or six years old. Now we are passing on what we learnt to our daughters and granddaughters,” says Uoleva. “Megan and Lita were born in New Zealand, so it’s very important they learn our traditional Tongan ways.”

some abstract ideas that are clearly supported by concrete examples in the text or easily linked to the students’ prior knowledge

Ngatu is made from the bark (**tutu**) of the paper mulberry tree (**hiapo**). Making ngatu is called **koka’anga**. Ngatu is very important in Tonga. It is used for blankets, mats, clothes – and even kites.

“Our mother started teaching us to make ngatu when we were five or six years old. Now we are passing on what we learnt to our daughters and granddaughters,” says Uoleva. “Megan and Lita were born in New Zealand, so it’s very important they learn our traditional Tongan ways.”

some words and phrases that are ambiguous or unfamiliar to the students, the meaning of which is supported by the context or clarified by illustrations, and/or written explanations

There are many steps to make the ngatu.



In Tonga

1. After the hiapo is cut down, women and girls peel the bark from the tree.
2. They hang the bark in the sun to dry.
3. They soak the dried bark in water to make it soft.
4. They beat the bark with a wooden tool called an **ike** to make it thinner.

other visual language features that support the ideas and information, for example, text boxes or maps

mother and grandmother. “I like doing art and spending time with my nana and mum. I will be very proud and happy when my family sees the exhibition and what we have done.”

Megan is excited about taking photos of the ngatu. She will send them to her godmother in Tonga. When her godmother sees the photos, she will know that Megan is learning about Tongan culture and helping to keep alive the tradition of making ngatu.

“One day, I want to teach my daughters and granddaughters how to make ngatu – just like my nana has,” Megan says.

some compound and complex sentences, which may consist of two or three clauses



Reading standard: by the end of year 4

VOCABULARY

Possible supporting strategies

- Possibly unfamiliar words and phrases, including “traditional”, “workshops”, “Kingdom of Tonga”, “Tongan community”, “elders”, “guide”, “special occasions”, “royal ceremonies”, “mulberry”, “line up”, “backing material”, “design”, “exhibition”
- The names and words in lea faka-Tonga that are translated or explained in the text: including “Ngatu”, “lea faka-Tonga”, “Lita”, “Uoleva”, “Mele”, “taukei”, “Tatakamotonga”, “tutu”, “hiapo”, “koka’anga”, me’etu’upaki, “ike”, “feta’aki”
- The glottal stop in “feta’aki” and “koka’anga”
- The action words and phrases in the procedural text, including “cut down”, “peel”, “hang”, “soak”, “beat”, “dry”, “cover”, “line”, “paste”, “lay”, “press”, “carry”, “paint”
- Before reading, identify words or phrases that may be unfamiliar to your students. Provide opportunities to clarify their meanings while exploring the knowledge required to read the text.
- If necessary, familiarise yourself with the lea faka-Tonga words and how to pronounce them. Depending on the knowledge of your students, provide accurate support for pronunciation and meanings. You could use the knowledge of your students, other staff, or experts in your community and the vocabulary list. Use the audio version to support correct pronunciation. You might also draw from the lea faka-Tonga resources on the Pasifika Education Community.
- Point out the glottal stop in “feta’aki” and “koka’anga”. Play the audio so that the students can hear how it impacts on pronunciation.
- To become more familiar with the action vocabulary, the students could play a game of charades in which they act out the words and phrases.
- *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

Possible supporting strategies

- Some knowledge of the Kingdom of Tonga and its traditions and values, including the fact that it has a monarchy and that special occasions often include royal ceremonies
- Some understanding of the significance of ngatu (or tapa) for people in the Pacific
- Some understanding of how life in Tonga in the 1950s and 1960s would have been different and why changes over time mean that ngatu is no longer the everyday item that it was
- An understanding that certain items can carry special significance to a family, culture, community, or country
- Some experience of following a set of instructions to create a technological outcome
- Familiarity with the concept of certain technological practices being gender-specific in some cultures.
- You may wish to seek further information (for example, about similarities and differences between the culture and traditions of various Pacific nations) from your local communities. The Ministry of Pacific Peoples can also provide useful guidance and contacts. See Te Ara for information about Tongans in New Zealand. You could provide students with graphic organisers, such as Venn diagrams or Before and Now charts, for recording and organising their ideas. These will help English language learners understand the concepts.
- Review the students’ knowledge of the cultural traditions and values covered in the article. Ascertain their background knowledge, but ensure that students feel comfortable to share their knowledge with the class. It may be appropriate to allow students to discuss their ideas in small first-language groups before sharing their ideas with the whole class.
- If possible, show the students a piece of ngatu or tapa cloth and allow them to handle it. Alternatively, you can find images and videos online. Use these items to draw out the vocabulary and prior knowledge and to preview the text.
- Check that the students understand what we mean by a “technological outcome” and encourage them to guess what ngatu are used for, the materials they are made of, and how they are made.
- Discuss the concept that in many cultures, certain technological practices have traditionally been gender-specific. *Why do you think this is? What do you think of it?* This could be an opportunity to discuss the notion of how cultural practices can change over time. We can see a man in the photo on page 7. *What does this tell us about changes in Tongan culture?*

TEXT FEATURES AND STRUCTURE

- A mix of simple, compound, and complex sentences
- Terms and phrases that reflect the transmission of cultural knowledge and practices, including “passing on”, “our traditional Tongan ways”, “learning about Tongan culture and helping to keep alive the tradition”
- Direct quotations from Megan, Lita, and their grandmother
- The inclusion of explanatory text (pages 6–7) in an otherwise straightforward description of an event
- The inclusion in the explanatory text of many features of procedural text, including the purpose, a numbered list of steps, the action verbs, and the illustrations and photographs that show steps in the process
- A repetitive structure in some places, especially in the explanatory text
- Language for signalling purpose, for example, “to dry”, “to make it soft”, “so it can dry”
- Bolded words explained in brackets, in the running text, and in a list of Tongan vocabulary.

Possible supporting strategies

- Point out that the article includes the explanation of a process. If necessary, review the features of other procedural texts the students have read. Discuss why these features are used (to make it easier to follow). Prompt the students to compare the examples with the explanatory text on pages 6–7. Help them to notice that this is not a typical procedural text because it is not written in the imperative. (It describes what the women do, rather than directly telling the reader what to do.) Make the point that authors mix features of different text forms to suit their purpose.
- Draw attention to the direct quotations from Lita, Megan, and Uoleva and discuss their effect. *We hear the words of two young girls and their grandmother. How do these direct quotations help you understand why this group of women and girls love coming together in this way?*



Sounds and Words

Possible curriculum contexts

ENGLISH (Reading)

Level 2 – Ideas: Show some understanding of ideas within, across, and beyond texts.

ENGLISH (Writing)

Level 2 – Structure: Organise texts, using a range of structures.

SOCIAL SCIENCES

Level 2 – Understand how cultural practices reflect and express people's customs, traditions, and values.

TECHNOLOGY

Level 2 – Technological knowledge: Technological products: Understand that there is a relationship between a material used and its performance properties in a technological product.

– Nature of technology: Characteristics of technology: Understand that technology both reflects and changes society and the environment and increases people's capability.

– Characteristics of technological outcomes: Understand that technological outcomes are developed through technological practice and have related physical and functional natures.

THE ARTS: VISUAL ARTS

Level 2 – Understanding the visual arts in context: Share ideas about how and why their own and others' works are made and their purpose, value, and context.

Communicating and interpreting: Share the ideas, feelings, and stories communicated by their own and others' objects and images.

Possible first reading purpose

- To find out how ngatu is made.

Possible subsequent reading purposes

- To explore how a traditional practice is kept alive
- To find out the uses of ngatu
- To identify and explore the features of the text.

Possible writing purposes

- To describe how to make an artwork of your own
- To explain how a tradition is kept alive in your culture.



The New Zealand Curriculum

First reading

- Provide a short introduction and brief outline of the text.
- Share the purpose for reading with the students.
- It may be useful to prompt the students to pose questions before reading.
- Use a globe or Google Maps to show the students where Tonga is and its distance from New Zealand. Prompt discussion about what it must be like to come from a small island nation to live in an urban community in New Zealand.
- Point out the title and prompt discussion or think, pair, share why people might want to keep their traditions alive. *What are some important traditions in your family? Why are they so important? How does your family keep them alive? Why might this be especially important for people who have migrated to a new country?*
- Skim and scan the text with the students, pointing out the supportive features, including the headings, photographs, illustrations, and vocabulary list.
- Work through the text with the students, supporting them with the vocabulary and names where necessary.
- This is quite a long text. It may be appropriate to spread the first reading over two sessions, focusing first on the narrative and then on the explanatory text.

If the students require more scaffolding

- Before reading the explanatory text (pages 6–7), have the students look closely at the images and prompt them to infer what is involved in making ngatu. Encourage them to share the actions they think it involves and list these words.
 You could project an image of the page into a Google slide and use white text boxes to cover the text. After the students have listed their action words, remove the text boxes and reveal the text.
- Give the students photocopies of the two pages and have them highlight the action words and compare them with the words on their list. *How well did we predict the procedure for making ngatu?*
- Have the students cut out the action words for making ngatu, along with the photographs. Working in pairs, get them to place the photographs in order and match them with the correct words. Then give them the opportunity to use the target language as they explain the procedure for making ngatu to a partner. Encourage them to support each other with this task. Afterwards, they can use the pictures and matching words to write the instructions for making ngatu.
- Discuss the concept that works of art often incorporate symbols that have been selected and organised to “tell a story”. Look at the ngatu in the photographs or a real one if available. Encourage the students to share their ideas of the stories these ngatu may tell.
 The students could look online to find other cultures that use symbols in their art to tell stories. They then add examples to a Google slide presentation, which can be shared with the whole class for discussion.
- *Supporting English Language Learning in Primary Schools* has sections on instructing and explaining.

Subsequent readings How you approach subsequent readings will depend on your reading purpose.

Where possible, have the students work in pairs to discuss the questions and prompts in this section.

The teacher

Prompt the students to recall their earlier discussion about the title and the concept of keeping a tradition alive. Give them sticky notes to highlight words and phrases and images that reinforce this idea.

Make a two-column chart for the students to record what made ngatu important in the past and what makes it important now. Have them discuss the following questions with a partner.

- *What have you learnt about how ngatu was used in the past and how it's used now? Why have the uses changed?*
- *Why does Mele say that “ngatu is a treasure”? What does she mean when she says, “When we're born, we are wrapped in ngatu, and when we die, we are also wrapped in it.” Do Lita and Megan agree with their grandmother? How do you know?*

The teacher

Direct the students to reread page 9. Then lead a discussion about other ways in which cultures are kept alive today.

- *What are some other ways that we remember and share our culture?*
- *What's an example of something that is a “treasure” in your home? What makes it valuable? How was it created and by whom? What stories does it tell?*
- *What do you know about the way cultures other than your own are remembered and valued?*

The students:

- identify words and phrases that reinforce the idea in the title
- summarise what they have learnt about how ngatu was used in the past and how it is used today
- make connections and draw inferences to speculate on why ngatu is used differently now from how it was used in the past
- (with support) integrate information from the photos and text to draw conclusions about the importance of ngatu to Tongan people living in New Zealand today.

The students:

- share examples from their own experience (for example, of attending family gatherings or church or learning songs, games, or recipes) and suggest how these keep their culture alive
- make connections between the text, the shared examples, and their observations of other cultures, such as watching a game of kirikiti, visiting a marae, going to a cultural dance or music event, or attending a festival such as Diwali or 'Aho Fakamē (a day to celebrate children in Tongan culture).

Subsequent readings (cont.)

The teacher

Invite the students to share with a partner an important cultural tradition that they might want to pass on to their own children.

- *What is this tradition? What makes this important to you and your family? How did you learn it? Who taught it to you? When do you practise it?*
- *How has this practice changed over time? Why?*

See the [Family Treasures Unit](#) on ESOL Online for further ideas on this topic.

The students:

- use what they have learnt to reflect on the cultural practices that are important to them and the importance of maintaining a connection to the past.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- *You used the images to identify the actions needed to make ngatu. Then, when you were explaining the procedure to your partner, I heard you use the action verbs to give a step-by-step account of what to do. Remember to look for those action verbs next time you read instructions.*

METACOGNITION

- *What connections to your own experience did you make when you were reading this article? How did it help you think about cultural traditions that are important to your family?*



Reading standard: by the end of year 4



The Literacy Learning Progressions



Assessment Resource Banks

Text excerpts from “Ngatu: Keeping the Tradition Alive”

Examples of text characteristics

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Page 8

At home, they plan the design and then paint the ngatu. They might use designs of turtles, fish, birds, and animals. They might include the Tongan flag. Each piece of ngatu tells a story.

EXPLANATION

Artists often provide written notes to explain the abstract ideas that they are trying to convey in their artwork. They provide enough information for us to see the links they are trying to make, but then we have to think for ourselves.

Have the students create a journal that explains the story of an artwork that they create. For example, they could create their own piece of ngatu that incorporates symbols representing aspects of their own cultural traditions. If possible, work with Tongan artists to follow the procedure described in the article. If that's not possible, the students could transfer their symbols onto relief block prints and use those to create patterns that follow the principles of harmony, design, and contrast. *Pasifika Visual Arts: A Resource for Teachers of Years 7–10* incorporates a sequence of work that you could adapt to this purpose (Ministry of Education, 2005, item number 30915, available from Down the Back of the Chair). *Siapo – Printmaking* is another potential resource that is of particular value for English language learners. You might also adapt suggestions in the teacher support material for *Connected 3*, (2007).

The students' journals could explain what their artwork means and how they made it. When they finish, have them use their journal notes to write explanations that will help others understand what the piece represents about their culture.

 Students could present their ngatu design and explanations in a digital format that can be shared using [Google Slides](#).

Page 6

1. After the hiapo is cut down, women and girls peel the bark from the tree.

EXPLAINING A PROCESS

Writers explain a process by telling what is done or what happens in order. They use numbering or sequence words to show the order of the actions. They can also include the purpose of an action, and may include visual information, such as photographs or diagrams. The purpose is to make the process clear to readers.

Have the students use the text as a model for explaining how to create a simple technological outcome, such as a work of art, using materials that are available in the learning environment. (For example, they could use modelling clay, tooth picks, and other small items to make a small figure.) They need to set out the steps and, where necessary, explain them. They can include pictures and diagrams.

 The students could use a [Google Doc](#) table to organise pictures and diagrams alongside their written explanations. They could think about what elements their photos would need to best support their descriptions.

Have the students review their explanations by giving them to a partner to see how easy they are to follow. The students may find that it is better to write a more typical procedural text with a list of materials and the instructions written in the imperative. They could try rewriting their explanations and repeating the model construction with a different partner.

 Alternatively, the students could add a column to their table to write their new explanations using [Google Docs](#).

Support the students to integrate what has been learnt by co-constructing a set of criteria for writing effective procedural text.

Some English language learners will benefit from using a model text structure or text/sentence frames. [The English Language Intensive Programme](#) has examples of model procedural texts and ideas on how to support language learning at different stages of English acquisition, for example, Stage 2 writing: 21 a, b, c, and d.

Text excerpts from “Ngatu: Keeping the Tradition Alive”

Page 35

“Our mother started teaching us to make ngatu when we were five or six years old. Now we are passing on what we learnt to our daughters and granddaughters,” says Uoleva. “Megan and Lita were born in New Zealand, so it’s very important they learn our traditional Tongan ways.”

Examples of text characteristics

INCORPORATING DIRECT SPEECH

Writers often incorporate direct speech when reporting an event. This helps to bring the writing alive and give authenticity to the views expressed in the article. It can also be used to highlight important points.

Teacher (possible deliberate acts of teaching)

Have the students identify examples of direct speech in the text.

- *What do these examples tell us?*
- *Why do you think the writer has put these bits in direct speech?*
- *Can you find other places where the writer uses indirect speech (where she tells us what the women said but doesn’t put it in quote marks)?*

Ask the students to interview a partner about something they like doing (for example, a sport or hobby). Then have them write a paragraph about their partner’s interest. Have them include some direct and indirect speech in their paragraph.

GIVE FEEDBACK

- *Your explanation was very precise, and I can see that you’re pleased that your partner did such a good job of carrying out your instructions..*

METACOGNITION

- *How did keeping a journal help prepare you to write your explanation? Tell me about another task that keeping a journal might help with.*



Writing standard: by the end of year 4

The Literacy Learning Progressions