

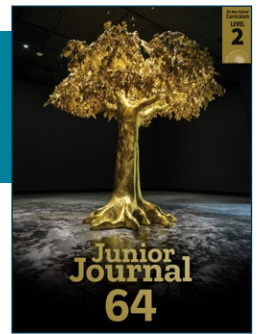
# Trees and Us

by Phillip Simpson

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Level 2

Purple 2



The Learning Progression Frameworks (LPFs) describe significant signposts in reading and writing as ākonga develop and apply their literacy knowledge and skills with increasing expertise from school entry to the end of year 10. This teacher support material describes the opportunities in “Trees and Us” for ākonga to develop this expertise.

## Overview

This report builds on the information about trees in “What Is a Tree?” and “Tree Facts” and goes on to explore how we use and think about trees. It provides many opportunities for ākonga to make connections to other texts in this journal, and to the intriguing photo of “The Golden Bearing” on page 22, and to their own knowledge and experiences. “Trees and Us” also connects with the theme of kaitiakitanga in “The Sticky, Sticky Pine”.

A PDF of this article and an audio version as an MP3 file are available at [www.juniorjournal.tki.org.nz](http://www.juniorjournal.tki.org.nz)

For information about related texts, see the TSM “All about Trees”.

LPFs	Curriculum links
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- Making sense of text: using knowledge of text structure and features
- Making sense of text: vocabulary knowledge
- Acquiring and using information and ideas in informational texts
- English
- Science: The Living World
- Social Sciences
- Technology

The New Zealand Curriculum

## Key text features

“Trees and Us” includes the following characteristics that help ākonga develop the reading behaviours expected at Purple and build their awareness of the features of non-fiction.

The structure of the text as a report with an introduction, a series of main points, and a conclusion

Design features typical of non-fiction: headings and subheadings, photographs, captions, a text box, bullet points, illustrations, and a diagram

Some possibly unfamiliar topic-specific vocabulary (for example, “atua”, “created”, “waka”, “slabs”, “whakairo”, “history”, “entrance”, “representing”, “tupuna”, “tangata whenua”, “Earth”, “provide”, “creatures”, “nectar”, “protect”, “enrich”, “prevent”, “fertile”, “furniture”, “musical instruments”, “ornaments”, “medicine”, “bacteria”, “calm”, “Rongoā Māori”, “Tīpuna Māori”, “reduce”, “heal”, “wounds”, “knowledge”, “traditional”, “ointments”, “health”, “purify”, “breathe”, “carbon dioxide”, “oxygen”, “global warming”, “survive”, “diseases”, “imagine”) and tree names, requiring ākonga to use their processing systems

The simile comparing trees to lungs and the inverted commas for “breathe out” to indicate personification – giving the leaves human qualities

**Trees can provide medicine**  
Some trees, such as kawakawa and mānuka, have leaves, flowers, or bark that can be used to make medicine.  
The oil from mānuka leaves can kill bacteria.  
Kawakawa oil can calm itchy skin.

**Trees purify the air we breathe**  
Trees use carbon dioxide from the air to make their food, and they “breathe out” oxygen through their leaves. This is where the oxygen that we breathe comes from. Trees are like the world’s lungs – breathing in and out and purifying the air.

**Trees help prevent global warming**  
When there is too much carbon dioxide in the air, the air gets warmer. This is called global warming. Global warming makes it harder for all living things to survive. But trees can help stop global warming because they take carbon dioxide out of the air.

**Rongoā Māori**  
Tīpuna Māori knew which trees they could use to help reduce pain, calm itchy skin, clear up colds, or heal wounds. This knowledge of rongoā Māori (traditional Māori medicine) has been passed on and is still used to make ointments, health drinks, and medicines.

Language features typical of non-fiction:

- definitions in parentheses
- the use of bullet points (linked to the heading “Why are trees special? and, on page 29, connected to a stem sentence)
- noun phrases (for example, “huge, straight trunk”, “living things”, “musical instruments”, “Tīpuna Māori”, “traditional Māori medicine”, “health drinks”, “global warming”)

## Possible reading purposes

What can ākongā expect to find out or think about as a result of reading this text?

- To find information about why trees are special
- To think about how we can help care for trees.

## Possible learning goals

What opportunities does this text provide for ākongā to learn more about how to “read, respond to, and think critically” about texts?

This text provides opportunities for ākongā, over several readings, to:

- **make connections** between the text and visual language features to track information (**summarise**)
- **ask questions** and look for or think about possible answers
- **identify and discuss main ideas**
- **make connections** between this article and other texts in this journal
- **monitor** their reading and, when something is unclear, take action to solve the problem.



Sounds and Words



The Literacy Learning Progressions

- It would be best for ākongā to have read and discussed “What Is a Tree?” and/or “Tree Facts” first so they have some prior knowledge of the topic and key vocabulary.
- Read the title and first paragraph and ask ākongā to recall some special things they know about trees. (You might want to use the photograph on the facing page of “The Golden Bearing”, either now or after reading, as a way of drawing out ideas about how people think about trees.)
- Read and discuss the rest of page 23 together, encouraging ākongā to make connections to their knowledge, for example, of Tāne, te ao Māori, whakairo, tōtara. They may also make a connection to the name Tāne Mahuta for the kauri tree in “What Is a Tree?”
- Browse through the article, using the headings and captions as a guide to what ākongā will find out. Provide support with vocabulary as needed. You could add to or create a new KWL vocabulary chart as described in the TSM for “What Is a Tree?”
- Discuss the use of bullet points for the subheadings on pages 24–27 and explain their link to the page 24 heading, Why are trees special? Clarify also the link to the stem sentence for the bullet points on page 29.
- Draw attention to the cartoon on page 27. Prompt ākongā to notice the labels for oxygen and carbon dioxide and to make connections to what they have learned from “What Is a Tree?” about how trees use carbon dioxide. Remind ākongā that “air is a mixture of gases” to clarify any misconceptions about humans breathing in only oxygen and trees “breathing out” only carbon dioxide.
- Introduce and explain the term “global warming”.
- Together, set a reading purpose.
- Give ākongā sticky notes to mark questions or ideas that arise as they read or to note aspects they might want to return to or discuss later.

## Reading the report

Encourage ākongā to read the report by themselves, intervening only if needed. The focus of the first reading is for ākongā to identify key information and ideas relevant to the initial reading purpose. (For examples of the sorts of reading behaviours to look for and support, see the TSM for “What Is a Tree?”) Allow for several sessions to read and discuss the text, to investigate other reading purposes, and explore ideas and language features more deeply.

## Deliberate acts of teaching

How you can support individual ākongā (if needed).

- Prompt ākongā to draw on their phonics knowledge and other word-solving strategies, for example:
  - when decoding:
    - » breaking words into chunks or syllables (“a-tu-a”, “wha-kai-ro”, “re-pre-sent-ing”, “pro-vid-e”, “nec-tar”, “pre-vent”, “fer-tile”, “fire-places”)
    - » drawing on their knowledge of variations in the sounds of letters and letter combinations (“entrance”, “Earth”, “medicine”, “reduce”, “wounds”, “knowledge”, “oxygen”, “imagine”)
  - when working out meanings of words and phrases:
    - » recognising the root word (en-rich, carv(e)-ing, music-al, glob(e)-al)
    - » using the context of the sentence and/or the surrounding sentences
    - » looking for supporting information, such as definitions in parentheses, photographs, captions
    - » rereading or reading on to look for further information.
- Remind them to note things they are not sure about or that are of particular interest and tell them that you will discuss their questions and ideas after the reading. Reassure them that when reading non-fiction, they may sometimes need to read more slowly, reread parts, and/or check aspects like photos or captions to build their understanding.

## Thinking, talking, rereading

The following suggestions provide a starting point for some of the many ideas ākongā could explore after reading this text (and others in this journal). Several of the suggestions can be explored further as independent reading activities.

- Encourage ākongā to share their responses to the article and connections to their own prior knowledge and experiences. For example:
  - their understandings about Tāne and/or rongoā Māori. You could also discuss the connection to Matariki and Tupuārangi – the star associated with food that grows above our heads in the ngahere (forest) – and with birds, berries, and other natural resources from the forest.
  - their knowledge of uses of trees in countries other than Aotearoa, for example, the use of banana, palm, and coconut trees in the Pacific.
- Ask ākongā to share any new questions they thought of as they were reading and answers they found. Provide an opportunity for them to find out more as an after-reading activity.
- Support ākongā to locate and summarise information. Focus on the bullet points in the section “Why are trees special?” on pages 24–27 and ask ākongā to find the supporting detail for each bullet point. They could use highlighters on a printout of the text.
- Return to the KWL vocabulary chart (if created before reading) and ask ākongā to share what they have found out. Find and read the sentences that include these words and discuss ways the meanings are supported. Add new topic words ākongā have discovered from their reading.
- Support ākongā to think critically, making connections to their own knowledge and experience and to other texts, for example:
  - Discuss the big ideas on page 27, making connections also to pages 8–9 of “What Is a Tree?” *Why does the author describe trees as “the world’s lungs”?*
  - Encourage ākongā to imagine a world without trees. *How would our lives be different?*
  - Explore the theme of kaitiakitanga, making connections also to “The Sticky, Sticky Pine”.
  - Prompt ākongā to notice the four main headings in the article. *What are the main ideas about trees that the author wants us to think about?*
  - Enjoy comparing the information about trees with the ideas of “Professor Clever” (JJ 57).

### Building language knowledge

As ākongā reread and discuss the text, note opportunities for explicit instruction and to explore language features in more detail. For example:

- how ākongā worked out new vocabulary (or tried to)
- how the meanings of unfamiliar words and phrases are supported (through definitions, the context of the sentence or paragraph, or the photographs). Draw attention also to some examples of noun phrases (“thick bark”, “living things”, “tree flowers”, “Tīpuna Māori”, “health drinks”, “special gifts”) to show how reading on to the end of the phrase helps to clarify meaning.
- the suffix “al” in “musical”. Support ākongā to identify further examples (“traditional”, “global”) and to use the words in oral sentences. Generate other examples together (accidental, occasional, universal, electrical, personal).
- Provide further practice in locating information and summarising by giving out question cards based on some of the headings. Have ākongā work in pairs, using key words to locate the headings or subheadings linked to the information they need to answer the questions. Question cards could include: How do trees provide food for people? How do trees protect and enrich the soil? How do people use the wood from trees? Why are some trees in danger? How can people care for trees?
- Have traditional stories available about Ranganui and Papatūānuku and their children and Tāne Mahuta and his children. Acknowledge that ākongā might bring knowledge of these stories and ask them to share their knowledge, if they are comfortable doing so.
- Support ākongā to find out more about whakairo, for example, by reading “Kākahu Pekepeke” in *Junior Journal* 61 or by viewing Rarangi Matihiko Kōrero Juniors (which both explore the idea of whakairo telling stories) or viewing a video clip showing the carving process. You could invite a local carver to talk to ākongā or they might investigate the features of the carving patterns at their local marae. They could refer to the Arts Online [Whakairo poster](#) to explore the meaning of some of the symbols.
- Encourage ākongā to talk with whānau about the article. You could invite someone from the local community to talk with ākongā about rongoā Māori and/or food gathered from the forest. Ākongā could also share what they know about food from trees in the Pacific and other countries.
- Explore examples of artwork about trees or leaves or artworks made of wood. Enjoy viewing and discussing “The Golden Bearing”, including what messages the artist might be wanting to communicate and how the artwork does this. Find out more at: <https://christchurchartgallery.org.nz/exhibitions/reuben-paterson-the-golden-bearing> and <https://govettbrewster.com/exhibitions/reuben-paterson-the-golden-bearing>
- Explore the theme of kaitiakitanga. Support ākongā to find examples of how people are caring for trees, including in the JJ 63 article “Volunteers”. Ākongā could make a plan for something they would like to do or find out how they might become involved in any local tree planting activities.

For further suggestions, see the TSM for “What is a Tree?”

For English language learners, [SELLIPS](#) and the [Teaching Strategies](#) section of [ESOL Online](#) also have ideas for purposeful and relevant tasks.