

# Post-visit information

**Ko Te Raranga, Ko Te Poi 2021**

**NCEA Year 11- Year 13**



Kaokao by Ngāhina Hohaia (2019), Collection of Puke Ariki.

Thank you for visiting us. Attached is some information that we hope is useful to you on your return to the classroom.

***"Unuhia te rito o te harakeke kei whea te ke kōmako e kō?  
Take away the heart of the flax bush and where will the bellbird sing?"***

## Key Questions

- **What are some of the uses of Harakeke?**

Harakeke has many uses as the whole leaf can be used for weaving baskets and other containers. The leaf's fibre is called muka. Muka can be woven into a fine thread or a thick twine for weaving and rope making. Harakeke can be used to make clothing, shelter/housing/sails for waka, traps/nets/fishing lines/mats and food storage.

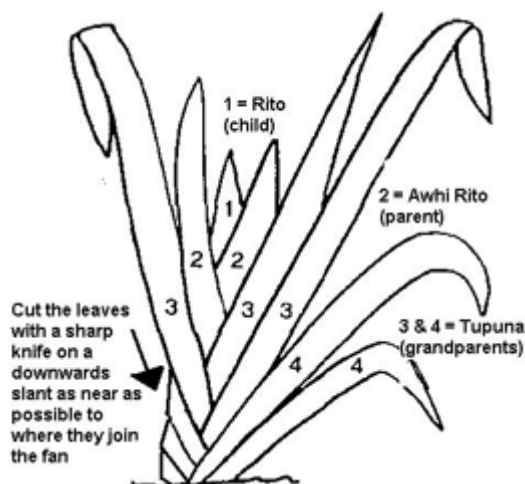
It can be dyed different colours. Māori weaving used traditional natural dyes. Modern weavers also use synthetic dyes to achieve bright colours.

Harakeke has several traditional medicinal purposes, many of which are used today.

# Post-visit information

- **What are the names for different parts of the harakeke plant?**

There are many different varieties of New Zealand Harakeke.



- **Can you locate, name and describe some of the harakeke pieces in Takapou Whāriki?**

From your visit you will have seen a variety of examples of raranga that Puke Ariki holds. Some belong to the gallery collection and some are on loan from families. You can explore them further in our [Te Takapou Whāriki](#) Gallery at Puke Ariki.

- **Explain and discuss the traditions and tikanga (protocols) around using harakeke?**

There are many protocols around harakeke, and within some of these, there are variations in different parts of the country. Some have a practical interpretation, which can be self-evident. Common ones include:

- Harakeke should not be harvested in wet weather, storms or at night.
- The 'rito' is the baby shoot in the very middle of the plant. It should never be cut, neither should the two on either side of it. They are viewed as the 'Awhi Rito' or the parents.
- Flax must not be burnt. Scraps not needed and off cuts of the leaves after weaving should be tied into bundles and returned to the area where they came from to rot and return to Papatūānuku.
- Children are not to jump over or play around harakeke weavers or play with the off cuts.
- Eating while using harakeke is frowned upon.
- Some weavers don't believe in selling their work. Others believe that this restriction will narrow the number of people who own them.
- The first kete you make should in theory be given away.

# Post-visit information

- **How have techniques and materials of Māori weaving changed over time?**

Early Māori brought weaving skills with them on the first waka. Finding harakeke, kiekie, pīngao, kākahu, tī kōuka and other plants meant they had many options to work with and assist with the changing needs they faced as a result of migrating so far south.

Areas developed their own patterns, and colours used could vary, based on natural dye resources available in different areas.

The next big change came as a result of the new materials brought by European settlers. Some early examples of combinations of harakeke/wool and cotton appear in *Te Takapou Whāriki* Gallery. Purists would argue over time that this was an inappropriate use of traditional weaving techniques, but others would argue that it is a snapshot of changing times.

Using modern dyes, materials and combining them with traditional methods has become acceptable since the development of the “Contemporary Māori Art” scene. Artists increasingly explore their heritage through an authentic art form.

- **What are some of the materials used for poi in Takapou Whāriki?**

Traditional poi materials include: Raupō, corn husks, houhere (Lacebark), harakeke, and other native plants.

Modern poi interpretations can include: Woolen blankets, satin, cotton, linen, embroidery cotton, silver, muka, synthetic fibres.

- **How are the artwork by Ngaahina Hohaia and Matthew McIntyre Wilson different to the traditional pieces on display?**

Answers will vary according to interpretations, but commonly expected observations may include:

- Multiple poi in arranged patterns.
- Different materials and reasons for this.
- Using the printed word/letters to convey a message.
- Size and scale.
- Comparison between functional use and art interpretation.

Senior students may also draw comparisons between these art works and other contemporary Māori art practitioners. Discussion around the artist’s statements, intention and audience interpretation can be a springboard for students own work as well as greater understanding and appreciation of contemporary New Zealand artists practice.

- **What are the purposes of Tukutuku paneling, where do you find them and how are they constructed?**

Tukutuku, (or arapaki/tuitui in other areas) is a traditional laced wall panel between carved ancestor figures, usually in wharehau. Vertical rods made from Kākaho (the stalks from toetoe), and horizontal wooden slats are woven together with strips of kiekie or harakeke, and/or pīngao and may be dyed

# Post-visit information

with natural dyes. The patterns have meanings and can be quite complex. Modern materials are sometimes used, for the framework and the patterns.

## Important Vocabulary

### Types of Garments

<b>Kākahu</b>	cloak or garment
<b>Korowai</b>	cloak with hukahuka thrums, also a common word for any kind of cloak
<b>Piupiu</b>	skirt of dyed flax
<b>Tāhei</b>	fibre necklace
<b>Pōtae</b>	hat

### Techniques

<b>Raranga</b>	weaving the flax leaf into baskets, mats, kete etc.
<b>Tāniko</b>	weaving on a warp and weft by hand, by twisting muka fibre that has been prepared into twine.
<b>Whatu</b>	a weaving twist /weaving technique.

### Fibres and Dyes

<b>Harakeke</b>	flax – (Phormium tenax).
<b>Muka</b>	the fibre within the flax leaf
<b>Kiekie</b>	a climbing plant (Freycinetia baueriana)
<b>Pīngao</b>	a coastal grass that is the source of a yellow dye.
<b>Tānekaha</b>	a tree that is a source of a tan coloured dye.
<b>Hīnau</b>	black dye source (Elaeocarpus dentatus)
<b>Paru</b>	thick swamp mud that is the black dye source.

## Web links

- [Story: Flax and flax working, Te Ara Encyclopedia.](#)
- [National New Zealand Flax Collection, Manaaki Whenua \(Landcare Research\).](#)
- [Katarina's kete, Manaaki Whenua \(Landcare Research\).](#)
- [Ali Brown Flax weaving instructions.](#)
- [Māori flax weaving, Teddy Tamaiti, YouTube](#)
- [Aku Mahi Whatu Māori / My art of Māori weaving, 1978, Ngā Taonga \(Sound & Vision\)](#)