

Taste of Te Kauri

Framework for Learning Resource

Forest Ecology

Pre-visit

1. Influences of the past

- Students will explore different perspectives of the history of Waikato natural landscape.
- Students will research and discuss the extent and diversity of local natural ecosystems in the past.
- Students will study how people use and value natural resources in different ways, how people have influenced change to the land cover and biodiversity and learn about historical events specific to their area.

2. Introducing the issue

- Students will explore the concept that there are native and exotic (introduced) species (plant and animal).
- Students will develop their knowledge and understanding of the interrelatedness of a natural ecosystem.

3. Introducing the site

- Students will share their existing knowledge of the site and build on this knowledge through discussion and research.

Visit

Current Situation

- Students will experience a local natural fragment. Through activities, observations and measurements they will gain an understanding of what is currently living in this environment, its inter-relatedness and gain some insight into how the health of the fragment is compromised.
 - *Students will learn to identify key plant species.*
 - *Students will learn to identify key bird species.*
 - *Students will observe insect life in the shrub layer.*
 - *Students will learn about forest structure.*
 - *Students will identify different rongoa plants.*

Post-visit

- Students will review their understanding of the health and values of a local natural fragment and investigate ways they could become actively involved in caring for a natural special place.

4. Exploring alternatives

- Student will learn about what the community and/ or other organisations are doing to help heal local natural fragments.
 - *Students may participate in or contribute in some way to a restoration programme.*
- Students will learn monitoring skills through hands-on activities and develop an understanding of the need for measuring change through interpretation, discussion and reflection on results (theirs and others).
 - *Students will observe and measure seedling growth and propose reasons for differences.*
 - *Students will observe and monitor and record bird numbers.*
 - *Students will observe and measure life and death in the leaf litter.*

5. Taking Action

- Students will work as a group to discuss, plan, design and take action for their local environment.

Possible options:

 1. *Develop a native forest at school.*
 2. *Adopt a local forest fragment and participate in some way towards restoration.*
 3. *Create a brochure to raise awareness of the values of a local fragment.*
 4. *Create a presentation to help others identify key local native plants and/ or birds.*
 5. *Plant a rongoa garden at school to teach future students about medicinal plants.*
 6. *Write a letter to the local council or paper about what you saw at your local fragment, with possible suggestions for management or monitoring.*

Reflect on Change

- Students will use a range of strategies to reflect on their learning and action.
- Students will celebrate their successes and plan for the future.