



Kaiako Support Notes

Arohanui supports the curriculum principle of empowerment by helping children to recognise and appreciate different perspectives. It is set in the familiar world of an early learning centre, so it will connect to children's own experiences of inclusion and exclusion. It may also motivate them to take action to create a culture of belonging.

The first time you share the story with children, focus on enjoyment and understanding. In subsequent readings, explore the perspectives of the characters and the themes of aroha, caring, diversity, and inclusion.

Your learning community will have its own ways of thinking and talking about values and its own ways of making them real. You could incorporate the following ideas in your talk and in what you plan around the story.

Te Whāriki

Te Whāriki is underpinned by the vision that “children are competent and confident learners and communicators, healthy in mind, body and spirit, secure in their sense of belonging and in the knowledge that they make a valued contribution to society”.

This book has possibilities for learning across your whāriki. However, it is most connected to the principle of **Empowerment | Whakamana** and the strands of **Belonging | Mana whenua** and **Contribution | Mana tangata**.

Read *Arohanui*

Be intentional. Before reading the story with the children, practise reading it aloud, checking your pronunciation and use of voice and gesture. Think about prompts you might use. Think about adjustments you may make according to the make-up of your group and their capabilities and interests.

- You can skip some pages or sentences, rather than keeping strictly to the text.
- Some children may enjoy reading the book over and over, joining in as they become familiar with parts of the story.

Briefly introduce the story to the children: *This story is about two girls who love to play together. Let's find out what happens ...*

As you read, use prompts to foster empathy and help the children make connections to their lives and your community's values:

- *What is happening now?*
- *Look at 'Ofa's face. How do you think he feels?*
- *What sort of person is 'Ofa? Would you like to play with him?*
- *I wonder why Mawadda and Aroha changed their minds about letting 'Ofa play.*
- *How do the children feel at the end of the story?*

Balance your questions with comments about the pictures and children's experiences related to the story to keep the interaction in a conversational style.

Encourage the children to go beyond the story by sharing thoughts, feelings, and personal stories:

- *This story makes me think about when ... What does it make you think about?*
- *You said something like this happened to you. Can you tell us how that felt?*

Talk about it

Discuss the story's message, drawing on the sense of connection and empathy the children have established. Encourage them to share their expectations about how people should treat one another.

- *What do you think about the way Mawadda and Aroha treated 'Ofa?*
- *Why do you think they treated 'Ofa like that?*
- *What did the girls learn?*
- *What would you say to Mawadda and Aroha if you could talk to them?*

Talk about it CONTINUED

Talk with the children about the concept of arohanui. Explain, if necessary, that aroha means love and nui means big, so arohanui means lots of love.

- *What are some ways we show aroha to each other?*
- *How can we make everybody in our centre whānau feel they belong and are loved?*

Foster connection through talk about the names of the children in the story and the names of the people in your community.

- *The names Mawadda, Aroha, and 'Ofa have special meanings. All of our names are special. My name was given to me by ... It comes from ... It means ... Can you tell us the story behind your name?*
- *What things are similar about our names? What things are different? What things are interesting?*

Take action for aroha, belonging, and inclusion

1. Invite people from across your community to read the book to the children. Encourage them to share whānau or cultural stories on similar themes.
2. Start an inquiry focus in your centre about social communication capabilities: How are children supported to have positive conversations with peers about their play preferences (for example, to join groups, to include others, or to communicate respectfully that they want to play alone)?

Use intentional teaching practices such as questions and prompts to lead discussions about social problem solving. Make the learning visible by recording the children's ideas and solutions.

These are some examples of questions, prompts, and provocations:

- *Sometimes other people say, "You can't play". What can you do when this happens? What could you say?*
 - *If you don't want someone to play, how can you tell them in a kind and caring way? What could you say? What could you do?*
3. Think of ways that children could represent themselves, such as painting on mirrors, photographing themselves, or using other art forms. Talk with the children to decide how you could build a display.
 4. Photograph or video everyday interactions where children are having fun while being kind, caring, and inclusive. Display and talk about these examples, using words from the children's languages. Displaying words from children's home languages for key concepts (such as kindness, love, caring, friendship) is a good way to build their positive sense of cultural identity. Capture the stories in print or digital books to share and return to.
 5. Your teaching team could build a curriculum focus for the service, such as Mana Atua/Wellbeing – talking about our feelings and understanding the feelings of others (A related resource is *He Māpuna te Tamaiti*).

Where to go to for more information

Te Whāriki Online draws together research, digital resources, and examples to support early learning kaiako in implementing a rich curriculum for all children. See especially the sections on "Identity, language, and culture", "Parents and whānau", and "Inclusive practice".

<https://tewhariki.tki.org.nz/en/weaving-te-whariki/identity-language-and-culture/>

<https://tewhariki.tki.org.nz/en/weaving-te-whariki/parents-and-whanau/>

<https://tewhariki.tki.org.nz/en/weaving-te-whariki/inclusive-practice/>

He Māpuna te Tamaiti is intended to support children's social and emotional competence, engagement, and learning.

<https://tewhariki.tki.org.nz/en/teaching-strategies-and-resources/self-management-and-regulation>

For Each and Every Child is a bilingual picture book explaining the United Nations Convention on the Rights of the Child, in child-friendly language.

<https://www.unicef.org/nz/teaching-resources>
