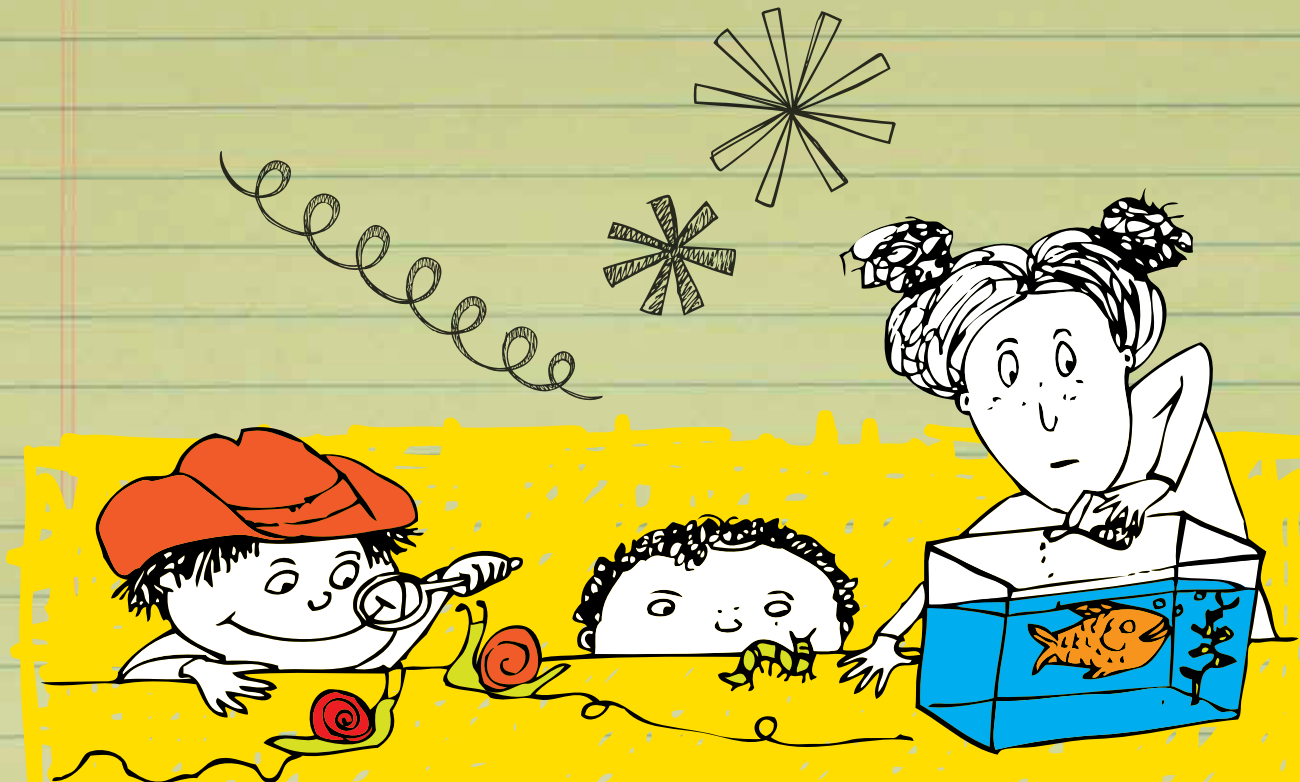


Natural resources

Ngā rawa ā-Māori



Natural resources are gifts from Papa-tū-ā-nuku (Mother Earth) and are fundamental learning experiences. Hands-on experiences with natural materials offer children opportunities to develop theories about how things work in the living, physical and material worlds.

Natural resources

Ngā rawa ā-Māori

Te Whāriki

All strands of Te Whāriki are supported when children explore with natural resources. In particular, children's developing knowledge of the natural resources available in our environment is supported in the **Exploration strand**, where children develop working theories for making sense of the natural and physical world. They learn about the features of their natural environment, and develop a sense of respect and responsibility for natural resources and the important qualities of their environment that are of significance to their family and wider community.



Natural Resources help children to

- develop an appreciation and understanding of the natural world (animals and plants)
- develop a sense of curiosity
- share in the collection of materials for play
- develop a desire to experiment.



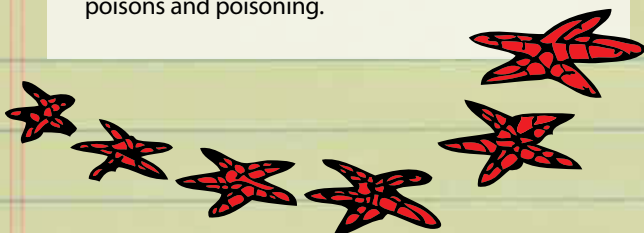
Adults can support children by

- encouraging discussion about natural resources
- sharing knowledge
- joining them in experimenting
- bringing in new items for display.

Setting up the area

Natural resources can be used in different areas of creative play, such as collage and clay, or used as items children can touch, smell or pick up. Display these on child-sized tables, or on a shelf low enough for children to reach. The most important thing is to make sure the items are safe to hold, non-poisonous and larger than 5cm.

The Poison Centre www.poison.co.nz/fact.php?f=8 or publications such as *Poisonous Plants and Fungi in New Zealand* written by Jack Crow (1995) and published by Northland Regional Council are useful resources for information about poisons and poisoning.



Ideas for natural resources

- a selection of natural materials, such as: shells, bark, sponges, stones, non-poisonous seeds, leaves, flowers, plants, branches, logs, driftwood, seaweed, moss, lichen, rocks, sticks, pine cones, seedlings, bones, fur, feathers and flax
- an aquarium, pot plants or worm farm
- a vegetable or herb garden
- posters, books and information about the natural world
- magnifying glasses or containers.

Ideas for using natural resources

- ordering – place shells or stones in a row from smallest to largest, largest to smallest, repeating patterns
- threading – thread shells, leaves and other material onto a thick string
- sorting and matching – sort stones, shells and flowers into groups of the same colour, size or shape
- pressings – use leaves, shells or nuts to make patterns in clay or dough
- painting – paint on stones, driftwood or large leaves
- weaving – use flax or palm leaves to weave between branches, feathers and wool
- leaf rubbings – place a thin piece of paper over a leaf and lightly rub a crayon over the paper to make a pattern
- collages – use natural resources for collages
- observation, discussion and appreciation – the five senses are a useful starting point for conversations: How do the items look, feel, taste, sound and smell? What are they used for and by whom or what? What can you do with them?