



Curriculum Insights and Progress Study

National Monitoring Study of Aotearoa | Te Aroturuki o Aotearoa

Kei te hirikapo o ngā tamariki, te kairangitanga o te anamata
The future lies within the minds of our children

Power up your practice:

Te Ao Tangata me Te Reo Pākeha
Insights from Social Sciences and English

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Nau mai, haere mai

- Karakia
- Mihimihi
- Ko mātou tēnei | Introducing the team



**Curriculum Insights
and Progress Study**

National Monitoring Study of Aotearoa | Te Aroturuki o Aotearoa



Ngā kaupapa o te rā | Our focus for today

- Introducing Curriculum Insights
- Te ao tangata | Social sciences 2023
- Te Reo Pākeha | English 2023
- Closing mihi and karakia



Curriculum Insights

...provides useful information about how students are progressing and achieving,

and helps us understand how the refreshed curriculum is being used in schools.

These insights can be used to support ongoing improvement across the education system.



**Curriculum Insights
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National Monitoring Study of Aotearoa | Te Aroturuki o Aotearoa

A strong foundation

1995 – 2010
NEMP

National Education
Monitoring Project



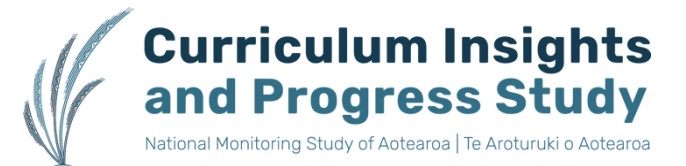
2011 – 2022
NMSSA

National Monitoring
Study of Student
Achievement



2023 – present
Curriculum Insights

Curriculum Insights
and Progress Study



Three key components



Learning area assessments

School visits: trained Kaiako Rangahau collect data from students in Years 3, 6, and 8.



Foundation assessments

Reading, writing, and maths assessments carried out online by the teachers and schools involved.



Research Panel of Schools

Nimble and responsive data collection from a representative panel of 40 schools.



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2023 learning area assessments

- Nationally representative samples
- Around 50 schools and about 1,000 students per year level
- Administered in Term 3, 2023
- Students undertook a range of rich tasks





Te Ao Tangata | **Social Sciences**





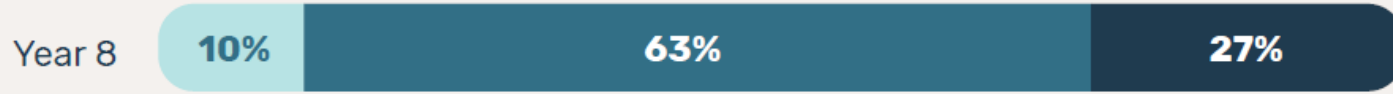
Key insight: Te Ao Tangata | Social Science

Teaching with a focus on concepts supports students to develop more complex understandings in the social sciences

Students with a strong grasp of democracy can explain it clearly, link it to ideas like equality, fairness, and representation, draw on knowledge of how government works, and connect these ideas to their own experiences



What does the government of Aotearoa New Zealand do?



Emerging understanding

Response reflects simple ideas about leading the country, making the rules and fixing problems.

Example responses:

"They take on all the laws and stuff and they choose how the lifestyle we live in and stuff and how and if we're having to use electric cars or diesel."

"Help people out. They work things out trying to make life better."

"Is it like, solving problems and making the decisions, something like that. So, like for dental problems there might not be that much nurses and dentists and surgeons so they hire more so people could get their diseases solved."

Deeper understanding

Response reflects more comprehensive understanding and greater detail, such as how the government makes decisions on how NZ should spend its money, bringing laws to parliament, deciding policies which get put into practice by government departments.

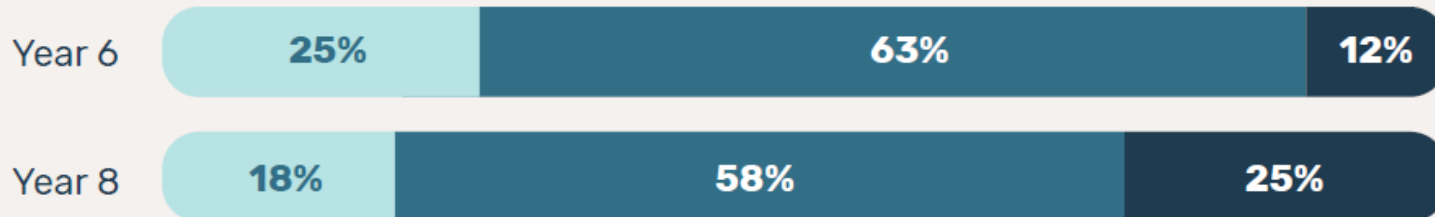
Example responses:

"Our government controls how the running of our country works and also pays for roading and controls how we do the taxes and can provide free healthcare and things like schooling in state schools..."

"Well in the COVID time they restricted the bubbles of where we could go and what we could do, the levels of vaccinations, the elections, roads, they have the higher power of like, police, so they kind of control that."

"They have different ministers like the minister of education and like they have a bigger chief that's above them - that's the Prime Minister. And they like help improve the country. And the minister of education they help with schools, they improve our learning by giving us more technology and like giving us better ways to learn."

How is it decided who gets to be in our government?



Emerging understanding

Response reflects emerging understanding of an election, and the idea that the most votes wins.

Example responses:

"Everyone over the years of 18 can vote who gets to be the Prime Minister. My mum just say, I'm going to vote, and I'm like, 'Ok!'"

"There will be, like a voting station where you can just go and write who you think should be government and whoever has the most votes becomes government."

"I'm pretty sure there's a poll where people will vote for who they want it to be. I think you can do it online nowadays, so you just like click which one you want, and if you do it in the mall I think you get a sticker saying 'I Voted!'"

Deeper understanding

Response reflects more comprehensive understandings and detail about concepts relating to democracy and representation, and examples such as voting age, each voter has two votes, parties need to join together and have a combined vote of at least 50%.

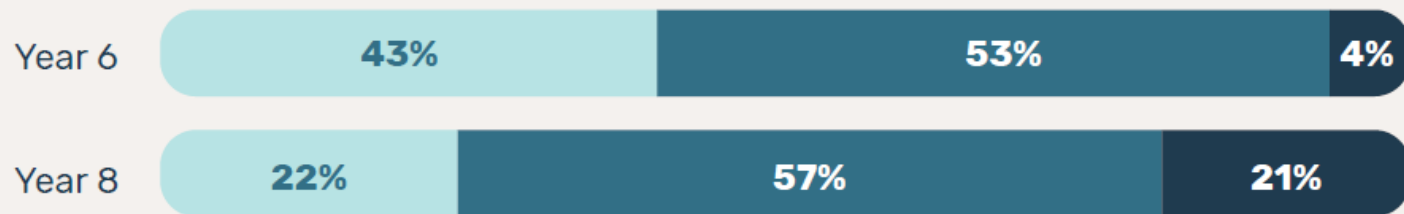
Example responses:

"It's the MMP vote so there's a party vote and the electorate vote, so say the party vote for say National is 51% they'll have that and then how many electorate votes for National they get that will make up the 51%..."

"There's a voting system, that happens every 3 years. There are two main parties: National and Labour. Usually those two parties are the only ones who end up getting a Prime Minister. There are seats for parliament, and you have like ministers for each city and areas in cities."

"It's normally a vote, and you got the Act party, and National, and a few others, and everyone from NZ. I think 18 up, gets to vote, and then obviously whoever gets the most votes gets to win."

Why is it important that people have a right to vote, to decide our government, in Aotearoa New Zealand?



Emerging understanding

Response reflects simple or undeveloped understanding of the democratic process including the concept of fairness and people having a say.

Example responses:

"Because I guess it's important to like choose who you feel comfortable ruling your country and making the right decisions for the future."

"So they can have a bit of a choice about what happens in NZ".

"Because everyone needs to like, they just need to have their opinion, so like it's fair, instead of like, how back in the day it wasn't fair because only men got to vote. And now everyone gets to vote, that's 18 and over."

Deeper understanding

Response reflects more comprehensive and greater detail about concepts relating to democratic processes and recognises that these can be complex and even contested with greater detail in examples.

Example responses:

"There are a lot of different opinions and people in New Zealand, with different ideas about how our country should be run. And the vote of everyone is the first way to do it because it gets everyone's opinion and comes up with something that will satisfy the most people."

"So then the people can choose what they want. So like, let's say one party wants to do this but another party wants to do that, so people can choose which one they think is better."

"I guess because the people would want the decision in how the country was ruled, they wouldn't want the government to do whatever they want and they would want to pick a party and like not have a dictatorship where there is one person who just chose to be there..."



What this might mean for you

- Start with simple definitions and concrete examples of concepts
- Give students opportunities to revisit concepts in different contexts
- Connect concepts to broader ideas and discussions
- Use real-world contexts and experiences that are meaningful to students
- Design opportunities for students to discuss, explain, and apply ideas
- Repeatedly revisiting and extending concepts can support deeper understanding



Highlights from the collection

Success in Te Ao Tangata | Social Sciences 2023

Results from the Curriculum Insights and Progress Study

Curriculum Insights and Progress Study

Kei te hirikapo o ngā tamarii, te kairangitanga o te anamata
The future lies within the minds of our children

This dashboard uses 2023 data from the Curriculum Insights and Progress Study to provide an overview of three success indicators for the te ao tangata (social sciences) learning area at Year 3, 6 and 8: achievement, enjoyment of learning, and self-efficacy. The 2023 study was based on the 2023 draft version of the New Zealand Curriculum. Please note that the draft was developed before the 2024 reset of the curriculum refresh and content related to te ao tangata (social sciences) is scheduled for review during 2025 and 2026.

He Mihi

Ko tōu te reo o māhū ki ngā kura, ngā tauira me ngā ākonga i whai wāhi ki a mātau te āra kohikohi rārangau. Mā tō koutou whānau nui, kua māhau te kite me pāheko mātau a e anga whakamau ngā ākonga pūa nei i a Aotearoa.

The research team would like to acknowledge the kura and kaiako involved in gathering the data. Their support enables us to provide insights into the āra, learning and achievements of ākonga across Aotearoa New Zealand.

About the study

The Curriculum Insights and Progress Study is a national sampling study designed to generate insights into the implementation and impact of the refreshed New Zealand curriculum. The study results on the National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA) is shared with the Ministry of Education. It is designed and led by the University of Otago and the New Zealand Council for Educational Research under contract to the Ministry of Education.

The study focuses on students in Years 3, 6 and 8 who are learning in English-medium state and state-integrated schools. All learning areas are studied over a four-year cycle. In 2023, the inaugural year, the study conducted a learning area programme focused on (1) te ao tangata (social sciences) and English. The study was the first in scope due to the progressive test writing.

What did the study involve?

Students completed a range of assessment tasks and responded to a questionnaire based on te ao tangata (social sciences). The assessment tasks were informed by the learning area statement of the 2023 draft version of the New Zealand Curriculum and evaluated students' understanding and application of knowledge (the 'HOW') as well as their practices, skills and strategies (the 'DO'). However, throughout the assessment tasks were the important concepts and big ideas which build towards the 'WHY/WHEN' aspect of the learning area.



The tasks were based around meaningful contexts, used provocative questions, and incorporated critical thinking. Some tasks were videoed to allow for later analysis. Many of the tasks were originally developed for the National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA) last conducted for social studies in 2018. These were reviewed and updated, as necessary. New tasks were developed related to Aotearoa New Zealand's histories and to include a focus on using literacy within a social sciences context.

The tasks were administered by trained Kaiako Rangahau (Teacher Researchers) in Years 3, 6 and 8 and involves:

- computer-based and paper-and-pencil tasks involving multi-media elements
- one-to-one interview tasks requiring oral and written responses.

What is the te ao tangata | social sciences learning area about?

The 2023 draft version of the New Zealand Curriculum explains that the purpose of the te ao tangata | social sciences learning area is to foster students' curiosity about people, places, and society while building their understanding of social, cultural, economic, and political processes.

By connecting students to both local and global contexts, the curriculum helps students understand diverse perspectives and interactions. It emphasizes the development of knowledge about how society and communities operate and equips students with research, evaluation, communication, and critical thinking skills, alongside financial literacy for economic participation. The draft learning area statement also encourages students to engage in social actions and decision-making processes to address contemporary social, economic, and environmental challenges.

It should be noted that at the time of the study, schools were not required to use the draft learning area statements. The only exception was the te ao tangata (social sciences) content on Aotearoa New Zealand histories (ANZH), which most schools were just beginning to include.

Who took part?

The study involved nationally representative samples of students in Years 3, 6 and 8 responding to the end of the first three phases of the 2023 draft curriculum. Around 50 schools were involved at each year level. This number was increased to 80 schools from 2024.



Schools and students participating, by year level

Year level	Schools	Students
3	48	1010
6	48	1050
8	46	960

Note: that the same sample of schools was involved at Years 6 and 8.



Where can I find out more?

A data window with detailed results by year level.

The study's website with information about this and previous studies.

University of Otago

NZCER

Success Indicator 1: Achievement

To report the assessment results, the study team developed a measurement scale, accompanied by descriptors that illustrate what students typically knew and could do at different score ranges.

The descriptors indicate that higher scores reflect a combination of strong conceptual knowledge and critical thinking skills. The lines on the graphic show where the described score ranges start and end. They are not intended to indicate minimum achievement requirements.

Boxplots alongside the scale depict the distribution of student achievement in Years 3, 6, and 8. Following the graphic, a table presents the proportion of students who achieved within each score range.

Te Ao Tangata | Social Sciences 2023



1000+ Students scoring in this range can typically:

- offer deep, abstract explanations of concepts and more complex perspectives
- show a comprehensive understanding of historical events and provide in-depth reasoning for opinions
- identify and evaluate multiple sources of information, justifying their reliability
- evaluate others' social actions and give well-reasoned justifications
- retrieve, classify and communicate ideas effectively using social sciences conventions for activities like mapping and graphs.

850-1000 Students scoring in this range can typically:

- explain concepts with relevant examples, connecting them to the context and providing more abstract explanations
- critically evaluate historical sources, with a growing sense of their reliability, relevance, and limitations while using deeper knowledge to explain events and patterns
- explain multiple viewpoints, and give some reasons for these
- understand and justify social actions, recognizing their purpose within a broader societal context.

700-850 Students scoring in this range can typically:

- demonstrate growing confidence in discussing and explaining concepts, with a developing understanding of historical events, causes, and their impact
- show a straight-forward understanding of Te Tiriti o Waitangi
- explain simple individual or collective viewpoints and provide some reasoning for them
- identify social issues and their impacts, and describe personal and communal responses
- retrieve information from various sources and explain the reliability of sources
- use information to identify and justify locations on a map.

550-700 Students scoring in this range can typically:

- define simple concepts, provide concrete examples, and show their significance and application
- show a basic understanding of historic events and people, and use historical sources in simple ways
- identify opinions and viewpoints
- locate key information, give simple explanations, complete simple mapping or classifying exercises
- describe personal responses to social issues and the impacts of social actions taken by others.

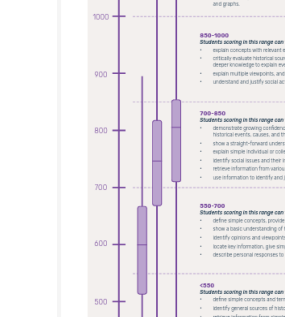
<550 Students scoring in this range can typically:

- define simple concepts and terms
- identify general sources of historical information
- retrieve information from simple texts or videos
- provide personal responses to a historical event or concept.

Percentage of students scoring in each score range

Score	<550	550-700	700-850	850-1000	1000+
Year 3	20-32%	55-61%	9-16%	0-4%	0-3%
Year 6	0-5%	31-38%	47-53%	11-17%	0-3%
Year 8	0-4%	10-23%	40-53%	20-32%	0-3%

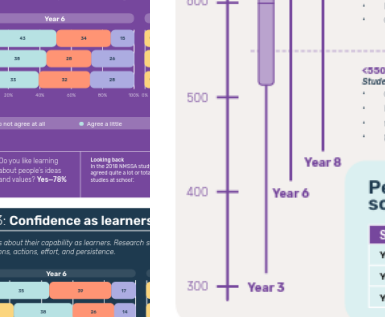
enjoyment of learning



enjoyment of learning



Success Indicator 3: Confidence as learners



Te Ao Tangata Social Sciences

Te whakaaro huatau a te ākonga ki te ao manapori?

How do students think conceptually about democracy?

Curriculum Insights and Progress Study

Published May 2026

University of Otago

NZCER

Te Tihanga o te Māhara


He tirohanga mā te kaiako | Insights for teachers

Highlights from the collection

Te Ao Tangata
Social Sciences
English

Summary of the 2023 Learning Area Assessments

Te Ao Tangata | Social Sciences and English



Published May 2026

Curriculum Insights and Progress Study

University of Otago

NZCER

To Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga Māori

Te Ao Tangata
Social Sciences
English

Pūrongo mōhio ā-horopaki

Contextual Insights Report 2023: Social Sciences and English

2023

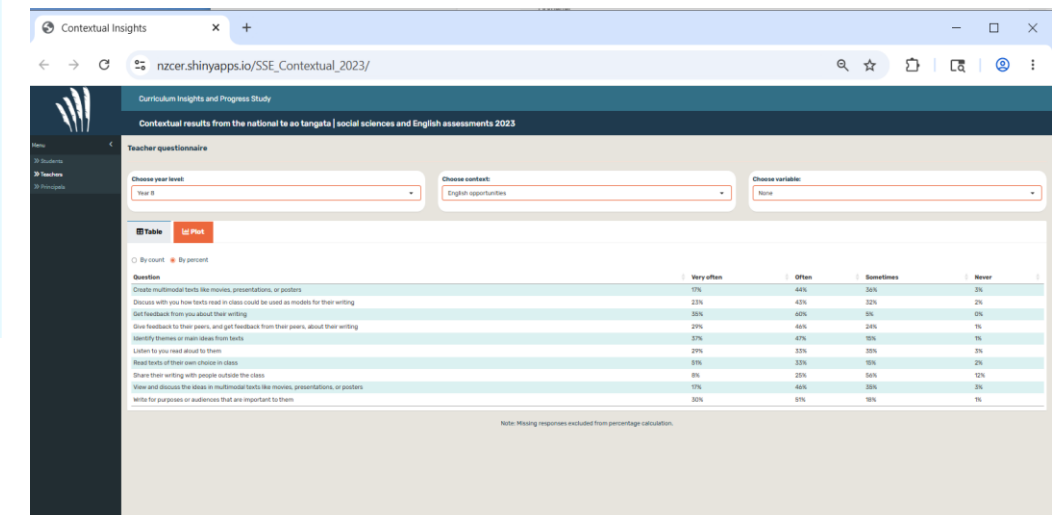
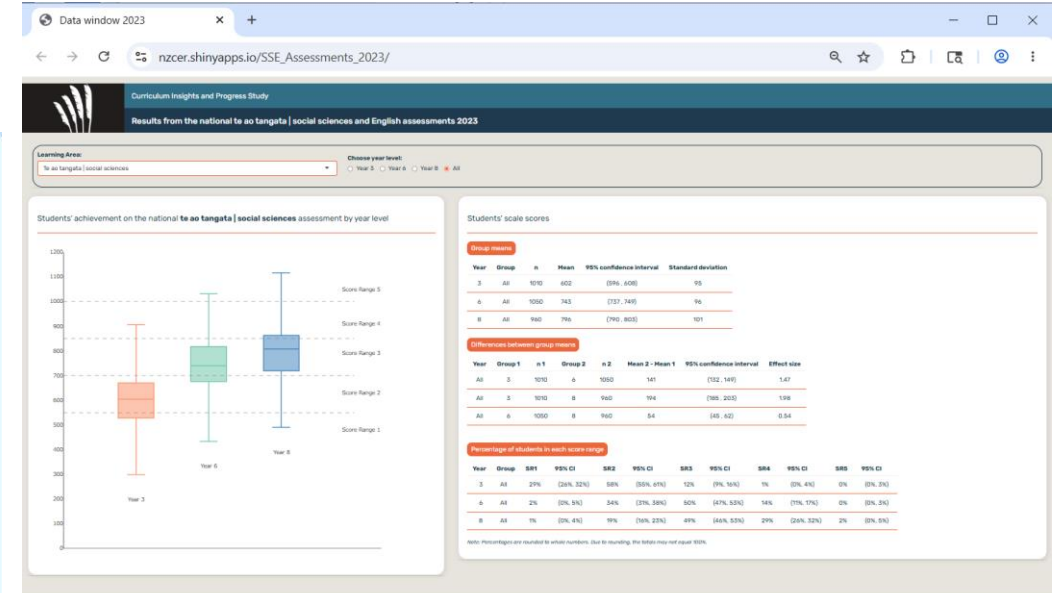
Curriculum Insights and Progress Study

Published May 2026

University of Otago

NZCER

To Tāhuhu o te Mātauranga Māori



Ngā Pātai | Q & A





Te Reo Pākeha | English





Key insight: English

Many students do not like reading, do not choose to read in their own time, and do not believe they can read well

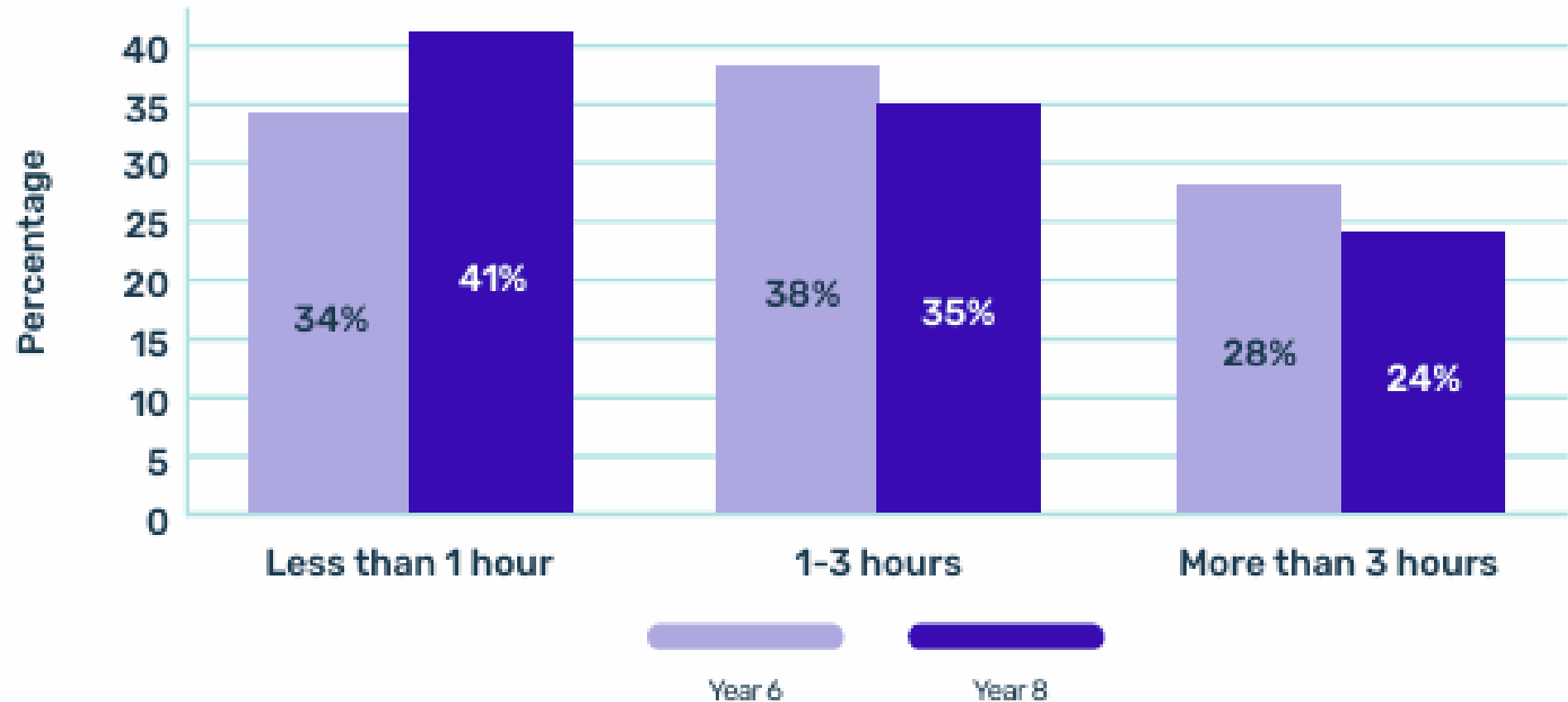
Motivation to read tends to decrease over time

There are ways we can engage our students in reading to better sustain their motivation



Recreational reading

Figure 3. Time spent reading when not at school (each week)





Why does this matter?

Reading and reading motivation is associated with:

- achievement
- wellbeing
- empathy, theory of mind, and perspective taking
- participation in public, economic, and social life





Support reading motivation

Students need:

- texts that interest them
- purposes for reading that matter to them
- challenging and successful reading experiences
- rich, open-ended tasks
- opportunities to collaborate with others
- choice
- a flexible, rather than fixed, view of reading ability





Opportunities to collaborate

Dialogic talk around text

<https://natlib.govt.nz/schools/teaching-and-learning-resources/teaching-tools-resource-guides/guides-for-exploring-childrens-and-ya-literature>

Build a class reading community

<https://natlib.govt.nz/schools/reading-engagement/creating-a-reading-community/a-school-reading-community>

Focus on reading identity

<https://natlib.govt.nz/schools/reading-engagement/strategies-to-engage-students-as-readers/reading-identity-cards-and-chatterbox>




National Library reading identity resources



I visualise
the characters
and setting as
I'm reading

Statements



When was the
last time you
had a book read
aloud to you?

Questions



Find your people

Listen to a few statements
that your teacher reads out.
Group together with others
who have similar identities and
chat. For example, those who
enjoy graphic novels; those
who enjoy non-fiction; those
who couldn't choose their
favourite author or book.

Activities





Opportunities to choose

Choice about:

- what to read: topic, genre, and mode
- where to read
- when to read
- how to read
- who to read with
- how to share reading response with others



Highlights from the collection

Success in English 2023 | Results from the Curriculum Insights and Progress Study

Curriculum Insights and Progress Study



Ko te reo te tuakiri.
Language is my identity.
Ko te reo tōku ahurei.
Language is my uniqueness.
Ko te reo te ora.
Language is life.

He Mihi

Ka tona te reo a mihi ki ngā kura, ngā tauira me ngā kaiako i whai wāhi ki a mātou te āto kōwhiri ranganga. Mā tā kōwhiri owhina nui, kua mahara te kite me pēhea tētahi a māu whakamau ngā ākonga puta noa i Aotearoa.

The research team would like to acknowledge the kura | schools and kaiako | teachers involved in gathering the data. Their support enables us to provide insights into the aro | learning and achievements of ākonga across Aotearoa New Zealand.

About us

The Curriculum Insights and Progress Study is a national sampling study designed to generate insights into the implementation and impact of the refreshed key learning curriculum. The study builds on the National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA), which was carried out by the University of Otago and the New Zealand Council for Educational Research under contract to the Ministry of Education.

The study focuses on students in Years 3, 6, and 8 and on learning in English, social science, and state and state-integrated schools. All learning areas are studied over a 10-week period. In 2023, to recognize year the study conducted a learning area programme, focused on te ao | tangata | social sciences and English. The 2023 study was limited in scope due to the preparation time available.

What did the study involve?

Students completed a range of assessment tasks and filled in a questionnaire as part of the English learning area study. The assessment tasks were informed by the 2023 draft version of the New Zealand Curriculum. In all the schools, the assessment focused on a selection of the 'KNOW' and 'DO' components. These involved comprehending and critically analysing different types of literary texts. Literary texts use language to describe, imagine and engage us to entertain, engender emotion, express cultural identity and invite reflection. The assessment included written texts, moving images (such as short video clips) and texts with static images. All of the reading (what the UNDERSTANDS) from the 2023 draft learning area statement were woven throughout the tasks, including the understanding that 'Narrative, language, and texts embody power relationships' and 'Language and literature give us insights into ourselves and others'.



The tasks assessed students' skills in locating and recalling information, interpreting meaning, and critically analysing content. Critical analysis included evaluating text construction, addressing inclusion and representation, and understanding how texts influence and position readers. Students were also required to consider how the nuanced meanings, themes, and messages within the texts were conveyed through various literary techniques and devices.

The tasks included both selected-response questions and questions requiring short written answers. Many of these tasks were adapted from the National Monitoring Study of Student Achievement (NMSSA), with updates made as necessary.

Trained Kaiko | Rangahau | Teacher Researchers administered the tasks during school visits in Term 3.

What is the English learning area about?

The 2023 draft version of the New Zealand Curriculum explains that the purpose of the English learning area is to 'foster students' literacy, and critical and creative communication skills. By engaging with language and literature in various forms—oral, visual, and written—students build their ability to read, write, and communicate effectively. The English learning area also empowers students to critically analyse texts and create their own powerful works. This supports personal development and active participation in literary communities. Through their engagement with diverse texts, students are prepared to navigate life opportunities as effective communicators and critical thinkers. The 2023 draft also explains how the English learning area emphasises understanding and appreciating the cultural and linguistic diversity of Aotearoa New Zealand and the world. It strengthens knowledge of te ao Māori and Māori perspectives, contributing to the principles of 'Te Tiriti o Waitangi' | The Treaty of Waitangi.

Who took part?

The study involved nationally representative samples of students in Years 3, 6, and 8. Around 50 schools were involved at each year level. This number was increased to 80 schools from 2024.

Schools and students participating, by year level

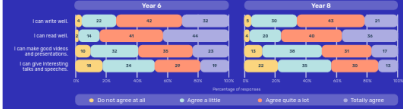
Year level	Schools	Students
3	48	969
6	48	1029
8	46	943

Note: that the same sample of schools was involved at Years 3 and 6.



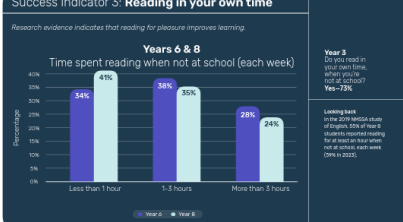
Success Indicator 2: Confidence

All school students develop beliefs about their capability as learners. Research shows that those beliefs are often associated with students' aspirations, actions, effort, and persistence.



Success Indicator 3: Reading in your own time

Research evidence indicates that reading for pleasure improves learning.



Percentage of students scoring in each score range

Score range	<500	500-650	650-800	800-950	950+
Year 3	19-20%	44-27%	28-27%	20%	0-3%
Year 6	0-2%	14-21%	48-24%	25-22%	0-3%
Year 8	0-4%	0-1%	31-43%	41-48%	2-9%

Where can I find out more?



What do we know about students' reading motivation?

Published May 2026



He tirohanga mā te kaiako | Insights for teachers

Ngā Pātai | Q & A





Nei rā te mihi ki a koutou | thank you all

- Mihi whakamutunga
- Karakia whakamutunga



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