

Include students' languages and cultures in classroom practice and lesson planning

A suggestion for implementing the strategy 'Value what each student brings ' from the Guide: [Inclusive classroom culture](#)

Includes:

- Engage student languages
- Utilise personal experiences
- Use first language texts
- Create authentic contexts
- Useful resources

Inclusive Education

From

Guide: [Developing an inclusive classroom culture](#)

Strategy: [Value what each student brings](#)

Suggestion: [Include students' languages and cultures in classroom practice and lesson planning](#)

Date

18 June 2026

Link

inclusive.tki.org.nz/guides/developing-an-inclusive-classroom-culture/include-students-languages-and-cultures-in-classroom-practice-and-lesson-planning

Engage student languages

Rae Si'ilata, urges educators to create opportunities for students to bring their language into the classroom.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/190931605>

[View transcript](#)

Source:

NZC Online (NZ)

<https://nzcurriculum.tki.org.nz/Curriculum-resources/Media-gallery/Cultural-diversity/Cultural-diversity-in-the-classroom>

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Utilise personal experiences

Connect learning materials to student experiences. Consider how you will plan to:

- ✓ ask students about interests and personal experiences
- ✓ learn about the cultural background of your students
- ✓ use students' interests to support the selection of materials and contexts for learning
- ✓ enable learners to see and connect to their culture e.g. signs, choice of texts, poetry, art and music
- ✓ enable learners to use their first language, for example providing texts in the different languages fiction and non-fiction books and magazines
- ✓ work with learners to give agency, voice and choice over content.

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Use first language texts



Source:

[Literacy Online](#)

<https://literacyonline.tki.org.nz/Literacy-Online/Planning-for-my-students-needs/Pasifika-dual-language-books>

[View full image \(2.9 MB\)](#)

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Create authentic contexts

Julie
McLaughlin
recounts
how she
adjusted
lesson
contexts to
make them
relevant.



Video hosted on Vimeo <http://vimeo.com/111161803>

[View transcript](#)

Source:

Te Mangōroa (NZ)

<http://temangoroa.tki.org.nz/Video-stories/TMK-Culture-counts-1>

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Useful resources



Thumbs Up! An introduction to New Zealand Sign Language

An introduction to New Zealand Sign Language that supports teaching and learning NZSL as an additional language in English-medium schools for students in years 7–8.

[Visit website](#)

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