

TIPS FOR WRITING A LEARNING STORY

A guide to writing with heart, depth, & clarity



1. BEGIN WITH DEEP CURIOSITY

- Approach your Learning Story with a mindset of wonder and curiosity, just as you would when observing a child.
- Ask yourself: *What moments truly stood out? What surprised or moved me? What new understandings are emerging about this child?*



2. CRAFT AN ENGAGING TITLE

- Choose a title that captures the essence of the experience, something meaningful, reflective, and perhaps even poetic. This will often emerge once you've written the story.

Examples:

- *Just like a Lightbulb*
- *No More Room*
- *"Let me tell you a story"*



3. TELL THE STORY WITH PRESENCE & EMOTION

- Write from the heart, immerse yourself in the memory and describe it vividly.
- Use first-person perspective to bring authenticity and warmth to your narrative.
- Consider writing as if you were telling the story directly to the child or their family, making it personal, accessible, and engaging.



4. USE PHOTOS TO DEEPEN THE STORY

- Select images that evoke emotion and meaning, not just ones that document events.
- Think about how the photos and words together tell the story.
- Remember: *The child will be "reading" the photographs too.*



5. RECOGNISE AND ANALYSE THE LEARNING

- Reflect on what was learned, not just what happened, but why it mattered.
- Consider carefully the strands and goals of Te Whāriki as well as the Learning Outcomes.
- Deepen your perspective on learning, what learning matters here? Working Theories and Learning Dispositions?
- Ask yourself: *What did I notice about this child as a learner? What learning was made visible through this experience?*



6.
MAKE
LEARNING
VISIBLE AND
MEANINGFUL

- Use rich, descriptive language to highlight the significance of the experience.
- Let your words reveal the child's strengths, dispositions, and evolving identities as learners.

Example:

- *"As I sat alongside you, I could see your determination growing with every careful placement of the blocks..."*



7.
PLAN FOR
FUTURE
LEARNING
(RESPONDING)

- The third part of the Learning Story supports formative assessment, on how this experience will influence your practice and future learning possibilities.

Questions to consider:

- *What learning could we build upon?*
- *How can I support this interest or disposition further?*
- *Who else might be part of this journey?*



8.
ENCOURAGE
REVISITING
AND
REFLECTION

- Keep your Learning Story alive, as a living document that can be revisited, reflected on, and extended over time.
- Invite the child and their whānau into the reflection. Learning Stories build memory, identity, and community.



9.
HONOUR THE
CULTURE

Honour the Culture of Aotearoa, Te Tiriti o Waitangi, and the cultural traditions of the child

- Acknowledge and celebrate the richness of each child's cultural background.
- Infuse te reo Māori where appropriate to reflect the bicultural foundations of our curriculum and respect for all languages and worldviews.



10.
CELEBRATE
THE JOURNEY

- Remember, this Learning Story is not just an assessment, it is a taonga (treasure).
- It is a trace of your professional life and your deep commitment to children and their learning.
- Share it with others who will appreciate and reflect on the experience alongside you: your colleagues, the child, and their whānau.



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