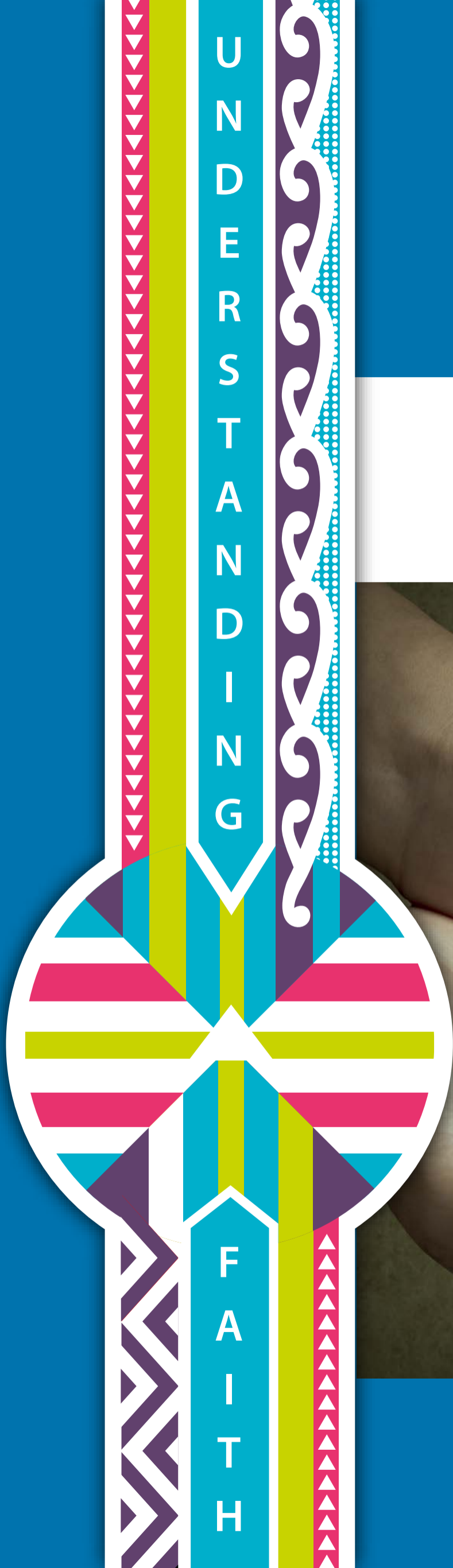


10A

LEARNING STRAND > HUMAN EXPERIENCE

Discovering Our Identity



RELIGIOUS
EDUCATION
PROGRAMME

FOR CATHOLIC SECONDARY SCHOOLS
IN AOTEAROA NEW ZEALAND



THE LOGO

The logo is an attempt to express Faith as an inward and outward journey.

This faith journey takes us into our own hearts, into the heart of the world and into the heart of Christ who is God's love revealed.

In Christ, God transforms our lives. We can respond to his love for us by reaching out and loving one another.

The circle represents our world. White, the colour of light, represents God. Red is for the suffering of Christ. Red also represents the Holy Spirit. Yellow represents the risen Christ.

The direction of the lines is inwards except for the cross, which stretches outwards.

Our lives are embedded in and dependent upon our environment (green and blue) and our cultures (patterns and textures).

Mary, the Mother of Jesus Christ, is represented by the blue and white pattern.

The blue also represents the Pacific...

Annette Hanrahan RSJC

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Māori words and advanced words are **highlighted in red** in the text. You can click on highlighted words in the text to view their meaning.

You can also view all the Māori words in a glossary on **PAGE 59**.

PART ONE

Seeking Identity

Focus:

- Our identity is who we are.
- We are born with an **identity** that develops through life.
- Over time we discover more about who we are.
- Parents, family, school, friends, country, **culture** and religion all shape our identity.

Discovering Our Identity

Identity: Who or what a person or thing is.
(Chambers Dictionary)

We are all born with a **unique** identity that develops as we grow. As we go through life one of our tasks is to discover more about this identity, to find out who we really are. This means looking for answers to important questions:

- Who am I?
- What makes me tick?
- Who is the real me?
- How am I different from others?
- What am I here for?
- Where am I going?

All of us face these questions of identity and are challenged to answer them.

As we go through life we learn about our identity in different ways:

- Through events we experience and situations we find ourselves in
- Through our decisions and actions
- Through our relationships with *Te Atua* (God) and other people

WORDS TO UNDERSTAND

identity
unique
mystery
culture
society
environment
heritage
genealogy

Because each of us is a deep **mystery** we will never discover and understand everything that there is to know about ourselves. But as long as we live we will continue to search for better ways of explaining and expressing our unique identity.



Something to Think About

Someone said:

“I am three persons: the person I think I am, the person you think I am, and the person I really am.”



Something to Discuss

Over the years, *he tangata* (people) have come up with different ways of explaining who we are and where our identity comes from. Here are some of them:

- | | |
|---------------------------------|---|
| • We are what we think | • We are what we buy |
| • We are what we feel | • We are what we look like |
| • We are what we do | • We are what we eat |
| • We are what we say | • We are what others think we are |
| • We are what we achieve | • We are the different roles we play |
| • We are what we believe | • We are everything that has ever happened to us |
| • We are what we value | |
| • We are what we own | |

Work in pairs or small groups.

- Discuss what each statement in the box means.
- Rank the statements, starting with those you most agree with and ending with those that you least prefer.
- Compare your rankings with other pairs or small groups.
- Make up a statement of your own about identity that begins: “We are ...”

Something to Do

Survey a mix of people – parents, teachers, friends, students in other year levels etc. – about what they think makes us who we are. Ask them their opinion of the above statements. Get them to rank them.

Compare and discuss the findings of your survey with those of other class members.

Some Points About Identity

- We are all born with a unique identity.
- Early childhood is an important time for establishing our identity.
- Over time our identity continues to develop.
- Parents, *whānau* (family) and friends play a major role in shaping our identity.
- Identity is influenced by **environment**, culture and religion.
- During our teenage years we test and challenge earlier understandings of who we are.

Activity: Learning About My Identity

During our lives we learn about our identity in a variety of ways – through the events and situations we find ourselves in, by our own decisions and actions, and through our relationships with others.

Complete the profile on the following pages by writing in the spaces provided. Base your answers on your own life experience.

Learning Experience

An important event or situation I have found myself in:

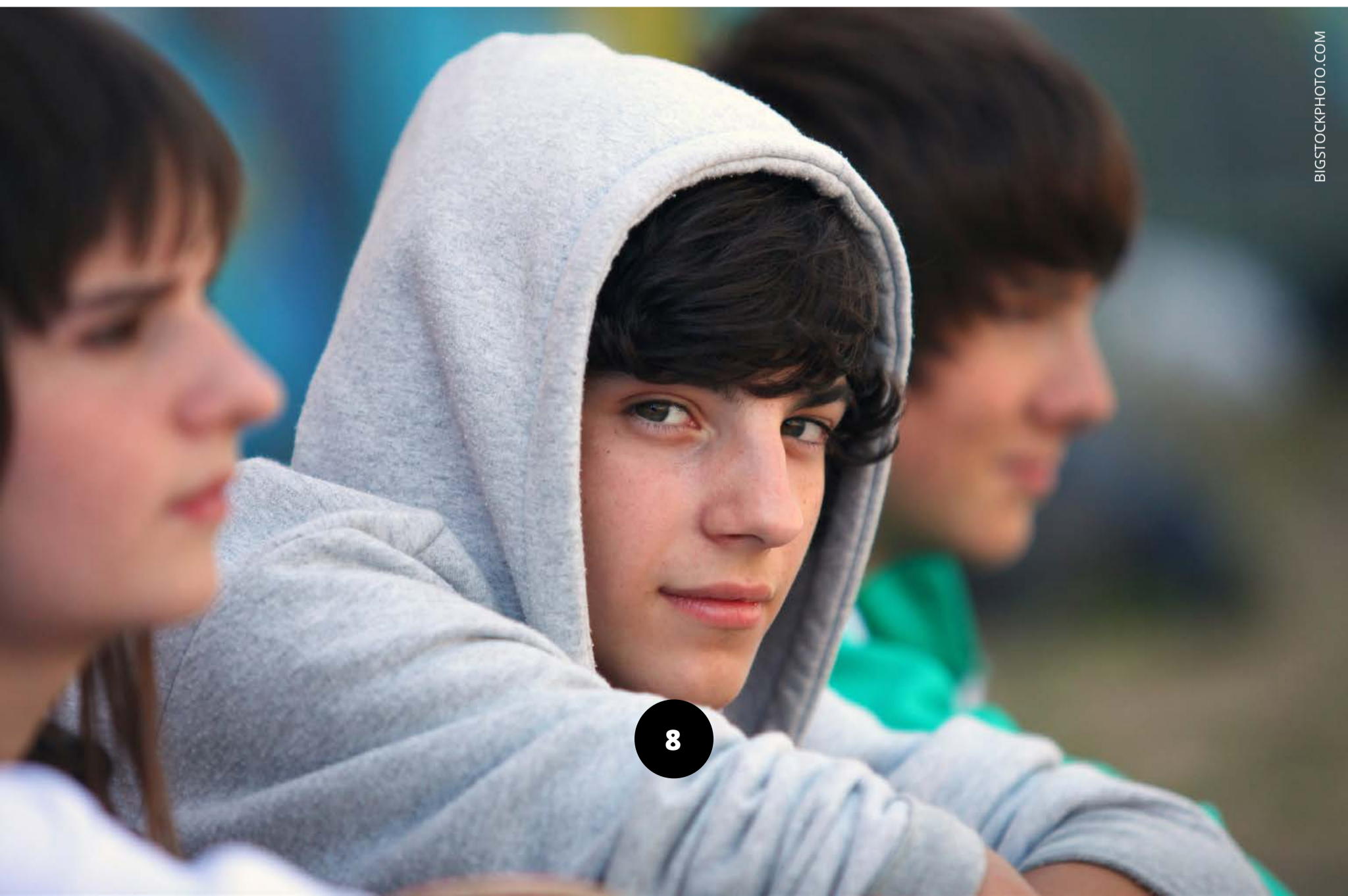
What it taught me about myself:

A significant decision I have made or action I have taken:

What it taught me about myself:

A significant relationship with another person / people:

What it taught me about myself:





Task One

Write a poem about **aspects** of your own IDENTITY. Choose between the two types of poem.

Either:

- a. Use words that share letters with the word IDENTITY.
Use the space provided below.
Here is an example:

i m a g i n a t i v e
d e t e r m i n e d
 b r a v e
 c a r i n g
 t o l e r a n t
 w i s e
 i n t e l l i g e n t
d r e a m y

i

d

e

n

t

i

t

y

Or:

- b. Write an eleven-line biopoem in the space provided below. Use this model poem to help you:

Lines	Instructions	Model Biopoem
1	Your first name	<i>Toní</i>
2	Four descriptive traits	<i>Honest, caring, curious, energetic</i>
3	Sister or brother of..	<i>Sister of Ríki</i>
4	Lover of (people, ideas)	<i>Laughter, learning, challenge</i>
5	Who feels...	<i>Happy when travelling</i>
6	Who needs...	<i>Sunshine every day</i>
7	Who gives...	<i>Friendship, encouragement, and smiles</i>
8	Who fears...	<i>Pain, hunger, and the end of summer</i>
9	Who would like to see...	<i>Peace among all living things</i>
10	Resident of (your city)	<i>Auckland</i>
11	Your last name	<i>Harrison</i>

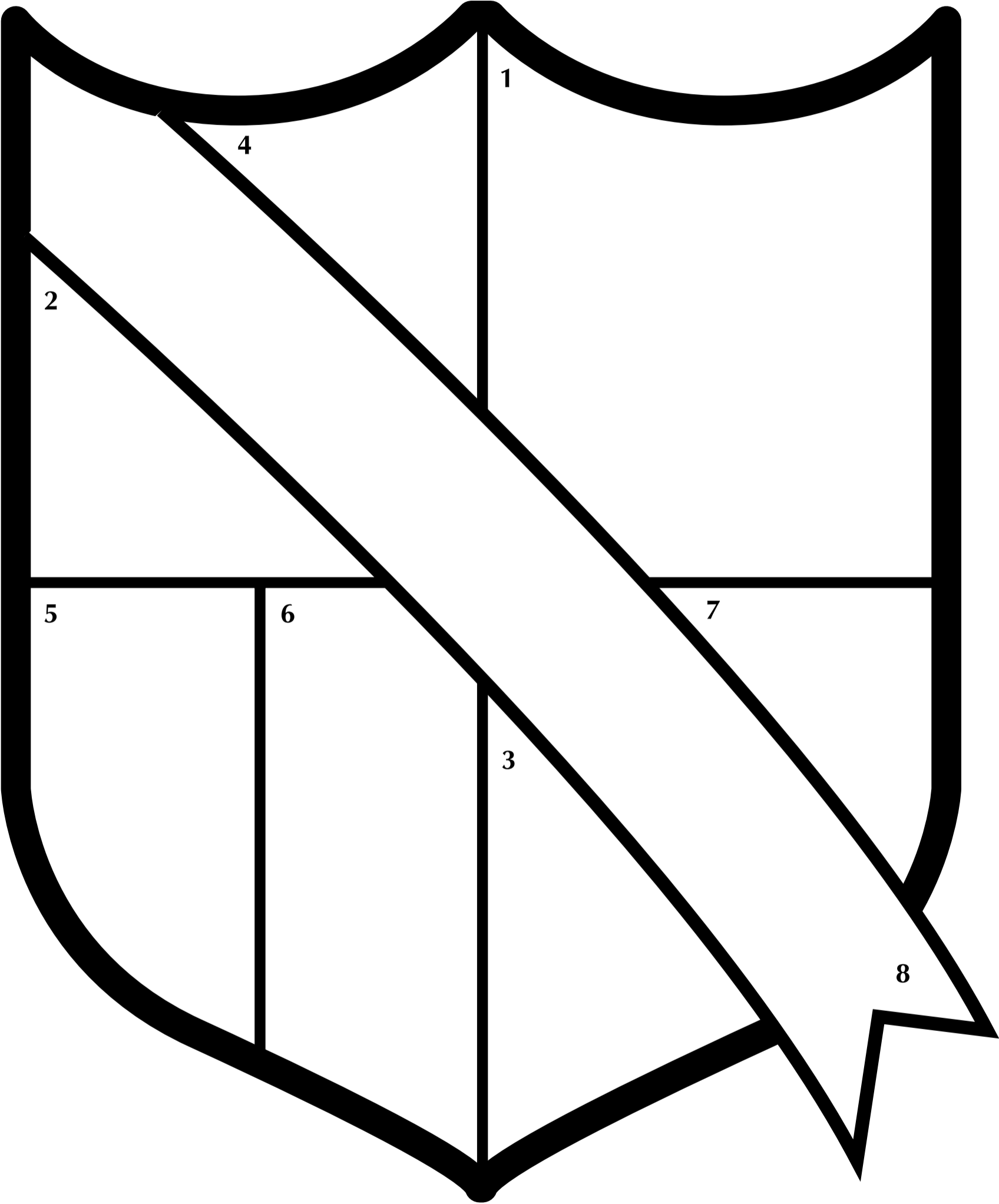
Lines	Instructions	Model Biopoem
1	Your first name	
2	Four descriptive traits	
3	Sister or brother of..	
4	Lover of (people, ideas)	
5	Who feels...	
6	Who needs...	
7	Who gives...	
8	Who fears...	
9	Who would like to see...	
10	Resident of (your city)	
11	Your last name	

Activity: Designing a Shield

Use the outline of the shield that appears on the next page. Fill in the spaces with the following:

1. A flag representing your country OR your family OR any group you identify with.
2. Something you are good at.
3. Something that you find difficult.
4. Your most important possession.
5. Your greatest achievement.
6. A quality you value.
7. What you would do with a year to live.
8. Three words you would like to be remembered by.





Activity: Completing a Questionnaire

A person's attitudes and values are important aspects of their identity.

- a. What attitudes and values are important to you? Complete the following questionnaire to find out.
 - Tick only the column that best expresses your opinion about each statement.
 - Add statements of your own in the spaces.
-

My main goals are:

- to have good relationships
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- to be loved
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- to experience freedom
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- to be successful
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- to have a comfortable life
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

My main sources of enjoyment are:

- friends
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- family
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- music
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- television
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- the internet
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- sports
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- pets
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

My main concerns are:

- my physical appearance
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- doing well at school
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- life after school
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- having enough time or money
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

.....
My hopes and dreams for the future are:

- further education

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- a satisfying job

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- family life

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- being successful

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- owning my own home

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- being involved in my community
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

.....
Values that are important to me are:

- honesty
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- concern for others
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- politeness
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- generosity
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- tolerance
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- loyalty
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- a sense of humour
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

.....
Aspects of my religion that are important to me:

- going to church on Sunday

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- praying

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- going to church camps and weekends with friends

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

- add your own statement here
-

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

Extension Activity

Use the information you have gathered about yourself from completing your questionnaire to make a poster or collage that expresses attitudes and values that are important to you.

Task Two

Choose a person from your family or school who has had an important influence on your attitudes and values.

Write them a letter which you do not need to send, or give a speech about how they affected your life. Change any names, if you need to.

Communicating Thoughts and Feelings

One way that we express our identity is by communicating our thoughts and feelings about issues that personally concern us.



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Comments from Young People

My advice for anyone thinking about making a change for the better is only three words: Go for it. (Jess)



I have always wanted to get good grades, so this year I started doing my homework, studying and paying attention in class. It worked! Hard work does pay off. (Jim)



In this country there are lots of issues for kids – drugs, smoking, alcohol, depression, sex and parent-related problems. Where do teens like me fit in? (Mike)



Nobody should change for anyone, no matter how much they get made fun of, laughed at or even talked about, because you're you, your own person. (Katie)



I used to be embarrassed by my parents. ... I know I hurt their feelings. Now I am older I make more of an effort to understand them. (Tracey)



Being honest helped me to gain respect and trust. Being friendly to others caused people to become friends with me. I have gained more friends with a positive attitude than I had with a negative one. (Manu)



When I go to my youth group at church, I feel I belong. I'm glad that there are other people like me, that there is actually someone who understands what I'm feeling. (Paul)



Religion gives me a firm foundation. It stops me from swaying in too many directions. It gives me something to hold on to. (Mele)



I heard that some kids are now wearing bracelets engraved with the letters "WWJD," reminding them to ask themselves in tough situations: "What would Jesus do?" (Ben)



Something to Discuss

In a pairs or small groups discuss the previous comments:

- a. In each case do you agree or disagree with what is said?
- b. Decide what you would reply to each of the comments.
- c. Write up a group comment on any issue that concerns you and those you are working with.

Culture and Identity

The **society** and culture to which a person belongs are important in shaping that person's sense of who they are.

Societies and cultures have their own identity. In Aotearoa, for example, sporting achievement, care for the environment, a sense of justice and fair play, and the right to good healthcare and education, are seen by many people as important aspects of this country's identity. Other things that New Zealand is known for are its independent spirit and willingness to compete with the bigger, more powerful countries of the world.

Something to Discuss

What other things are important to New Zealanders' sense of who we are?



 **Task Three**

The following newspaper headlines all introduce issues that are regarded by many New Zealanders as being important to this country's identity.

Which aspect(s) of New Zealand's identity does each headline deal with?

Free Access to Education Essential

New Zealand Movie Takes on Film Industry Giants

Happiness is a Winning Team

Aotearoa's Taste for Organics Grows

Zero Tolerance for Bullying

Extension

Collect other headlines / articles / photographs from newspapers or magazines that say something important or interesting about New Zealand's sense of identity.

Share these with your group.

A Sense of Home

When someone arrives home after a tough day at work or school there is a sigh of relief: "Thank goodness I'm home." Everything is familiar – the faces, the surroundings, the noises and the conversation. At last they can truly relax, they can put their feet up. This is their home and they belong.

A strong relationship with *whenua* (land) is an important aspect of Māori culture. To Māori, tribal land is home and they are *tangata whenua* (people of the land). Land offers security, warmth and nourishment. For many Māori, the piece of land where

they most feel at home is the *marae* (the traditional meeting place of the Māori people). *Marae* and *whenua* give Māori their sense of identity and are great **sources** of *mana* (spiritual power).

The *marae* is not just a place where people meet. The *marae* is a family home of generations that have gone before. It is the standing place of the present generation and will be the standing place for generations to come. A person's *marae* is the place where they have a right to stand before others and speak as they feel.

Often Māori will refer to their *marae* as their *tūrangawaewae* (place to stand). It is a place of security and comfort where they discover and strengthen their identity. On the *marae* the younger generation learn about their heritage from the old people who pass on to them their knowledge of *whakapapa* (genealogy) and tribal history.

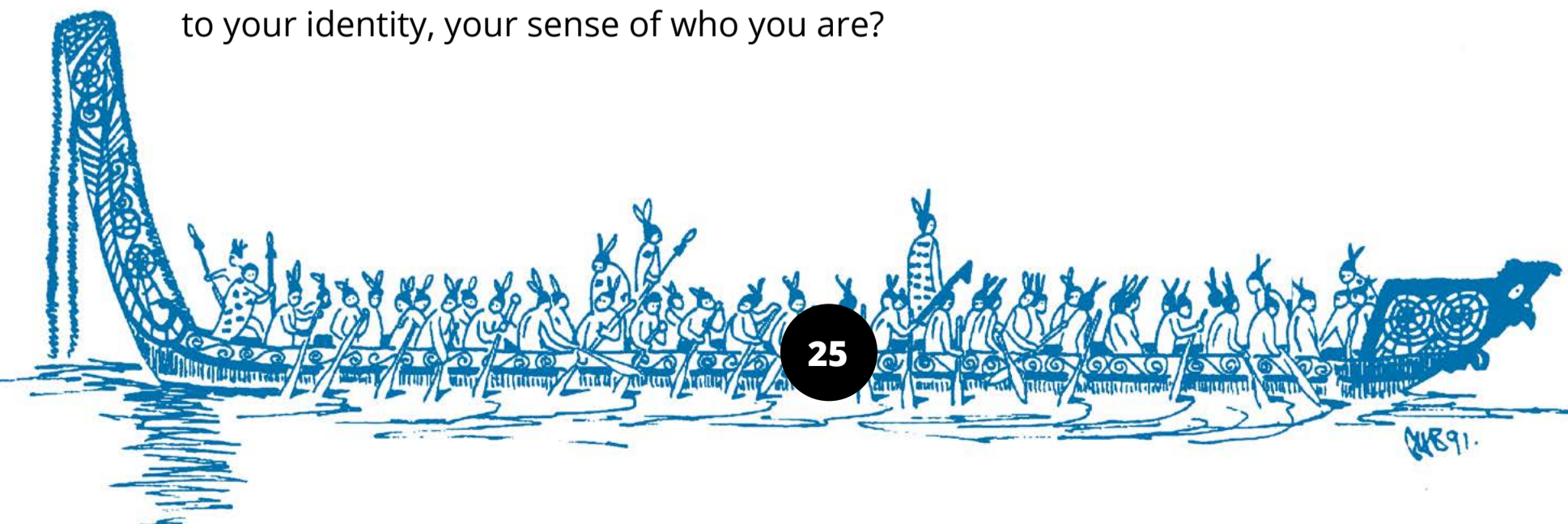
As well as **drawing** their identity from the land, Māori also get their sense of who they are from their relationship with other people, especially their *tūpuna* (ancestors) and members of their *iwi* (tribe) and *hapū* (sub-tribe). Strong links with *atua* (spiritual powers) also provide a strong sense of identity.

Task Four

1. How are *whenua* and *marae* like home?
2. *Tūrangawaewae* means “a place to stand”. What places (other than *marae*) can be regarded as *tūrangawaewae*?
3. Name two sources of Māori identity other than *whenua* and *marae*.

Something to Think About

Do you or your family have a *tūrangawaewae* – a special place that is important to your identity, your sense of who you are?



Religion and Identity

Valuing God is Cool

In a recent survey 34% of teenagers said religion plays a powerful role in their everyday lives.

In the survey of over 272,400 American teenagers, young people identified religion as the second-strongest influence in their lives after their parents. Its role was greater than that of teachers, girlfriends, boyfriends, **peers** and the media.

“It’s like a safe place,” said one reply. “It’s a hope that there’s a way to live that’s better. Religion has given me a positive outlook: I became drug-free and an A student. The key was my religion.”

University studies also show that religion is one of the most powerful influences on young people. There aren’t a lot of positive things that predict avoiding risk – not IQ, where you live, all that stuff. Religion is one of the few positive things you can add to a young person’s life.

“Teens are very spiritual. Adults may not see it, but they are. Society tries to cater for kids by giving them jeans with names on them and shoes that fly, but what they really want to know is that God has given them power.”

Task Five

- a. Write down three things that the article says about teens and religion.
- b. Is there anything in the article that you strongly agree or disagree with?
- c. Jot down a question that the article causes you to ask.

Something to Think About

How important is religion in your life?

PART TWO

Identity in God

Focus:

- Christians find their identity in God.
- God is our loving Creator and we are God's precious creation.
- Jesus affirms our identity and teaches us that God accepts and loves us as we are.
- When we pray God wants us to be honest about who we are.

WORDS TO UNDERSTAND

Yahweh
Sheol
embryo

Identity in God

Christians believe that the answer to the question “Who am I?” lies in the heart of God.

While a person's thoughts, behaviours, roles, appearance, intentions or possessions tell us something important about that person's identity they can never fully explain who that person is. Who we really are is found in our relationship with God, through Jesus Christ.

Scripture reminds us many times that:

- God is our loving Creator
- We are God's precious creation



Psalm 139 speaks from a human point of view about God’s great knowledge and care for each of us.

Psalm 139

Yahweh, you examine me and know me,
you know when I sit, when I rise,
you understand my thoughts from afar.
You watch when I walk or lie down,
you know every detail of my **conduct**.

A word is not yet on my tongue
before you, Yahweh, know all about it.
You fence me in, behind and in front,
you have laid your hand upon me.
Such amazing knowledge is beyond me,
a height to which I cannot **attain**.

Where shall I go to escape your spirit?
Where shall I flee from your presence?
If I scale the heavens you are there,
if I lie flat in **Sheol**, there you are.

If I speed away on the wings of the dawn,
if I dwell beyond the ocean,
even there your hand will be guiding me,
your right hand holding me **fast**.

I will say, ‘Let the darkness cover me,
and the night wrap itself around me,’
even darkness to you is not dark,
and night is as clear as the day.
You created my inmost self,
knit me together in my mother’s womb.
For so many marvels I thank you;
a wonder am I, and all your works are wonders.

You knew me through and through,
my being held no secrets from you,
when I was being formed in secret,
textured in the depth of the earth.

Your eyes could see my **embryo**.
In your books all my days were **inscribed**,
every one that was fixed is there.

How hard for me to grasp your thoughts,
how many, God, there are!
If I count them, they are more than the grains of sand;
if I come to an end, I am still with you.

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Task Six

Read Psalm 139 carefully. Find the lines that match each of the following ideas. Copy them out below.

- a. God knows everything about me.

- b. God's knowledge is much greater than mine.

- c. I can never get away from God.

- d. God always guides and protects me.

- e. I thank God for making me such a wonder.

- f. God knew me even before I was born.

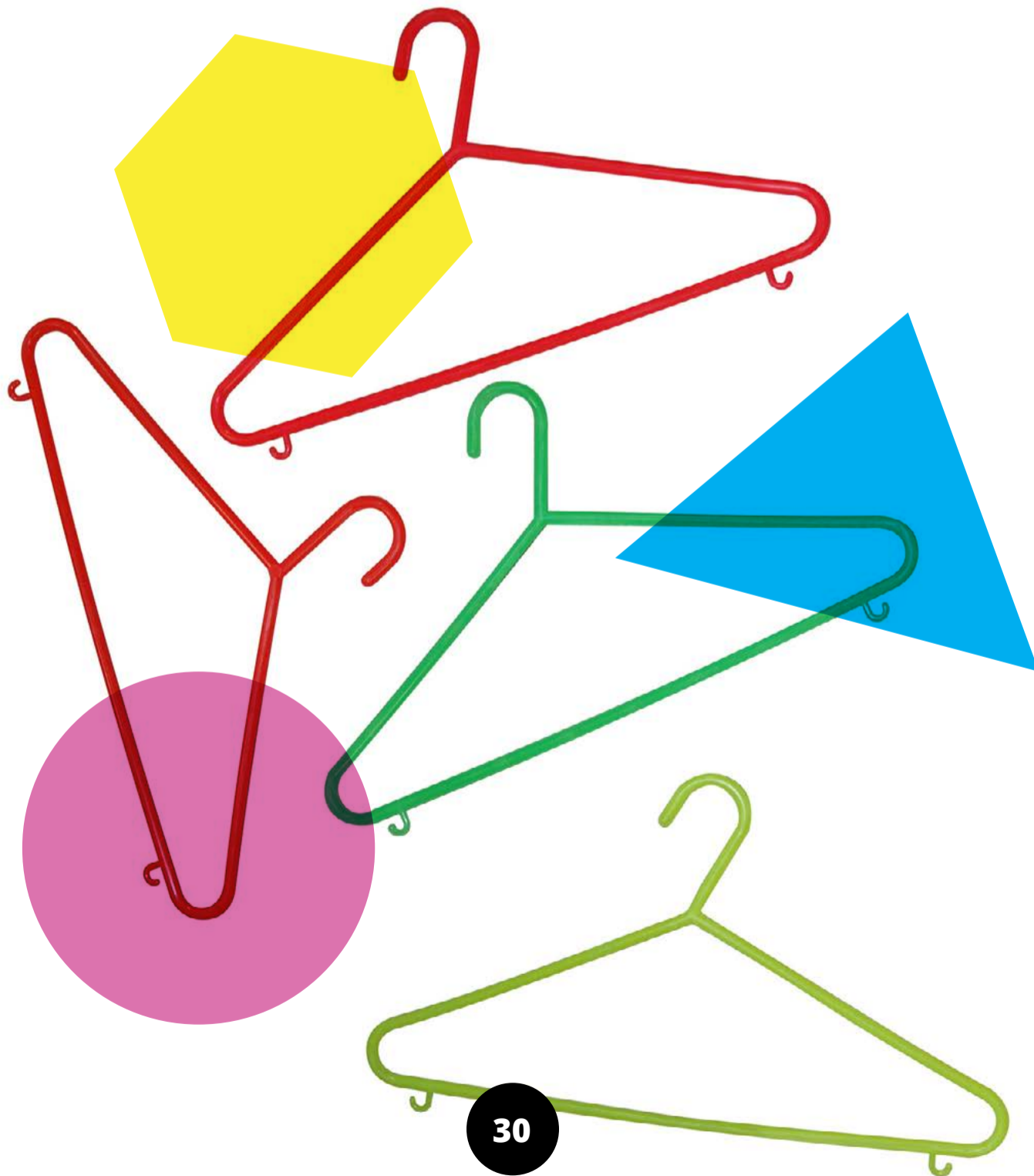
- g. I can never understand God's thoughts.

Task Seven

Work in a group to make a mobile of Psalm 139 to hang from the classroom ceiling.

- a. Choose a different picture, shape, symbol, object or words for each of the nine verses of the Psalm.
- b. Hang the nine pictures, shapes, words etc. from a coat hanger, hoop or old umbrella frame.

Otherwise, design a poster that picks up the key ideas from Psalm 139.



Jesus Affirms Our Identity

Sometimes we forget that our identity is a *koha* (gift) that has been given to us by God. We fear that we are not good enough and that *Te Atua* doesn't really love us as we are. Instead we start to believe that we need to earn God's *aroha* by thinking or doing all the right things.

When Jesus taught people about *Te Rangatiratanga* (the Reign of God) he reminded them that God accepts people as they are and welcomes them that way.

In the song *Come As You Are*, Jesus invites his followers to approach God just as they are.

Come As You Are

D.Brown, ©Spectrum Publications

Come as you are,
That's how I want you.
Come as you are,
Feel quite at home.
Close to my heart,
Loved and forgiven,
Come as you are,
Why stand alone?

No need to fear,
Love sets no limits.
No need to fear,
Love never ends.
Don't run away,
Shamed and disheartened.
Rest in my love,
Trust me again.

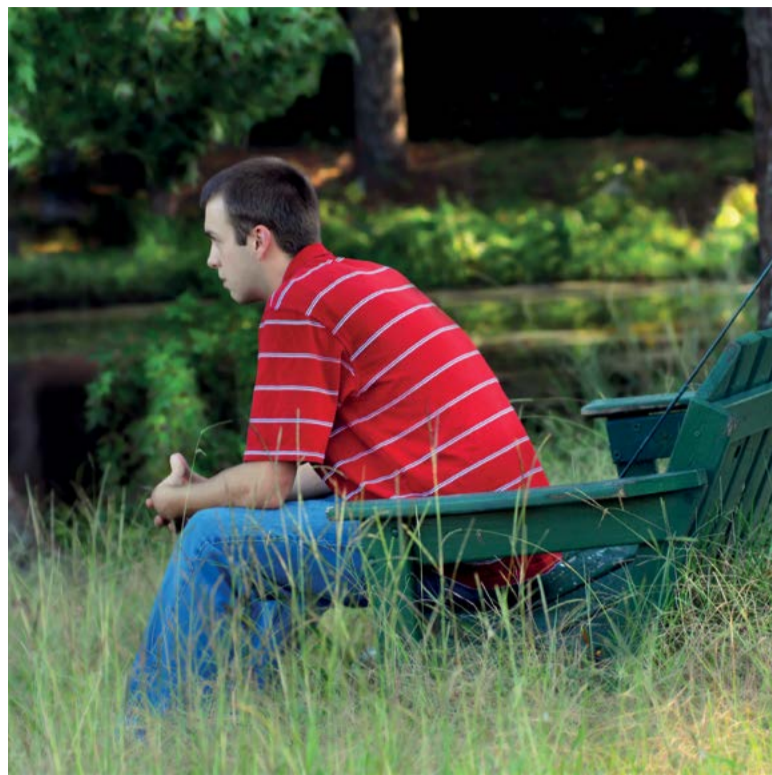
I came to call sinners,
Not just the virtuous.

I came to bring peace,
Not to condemn.
Each time you fail,
To live by my promise,
Why do you think,
I'd love you the less?
Don't run away,
Shamed or disheartened.
Come as you are,
Why stand alone?

Come as you are,
That's how I love you.
Come as you are,
Trust me again.
Nothing can change
The love that I bear you.
All will be well,
Just come as you are.

Task Eight

- a. Think carefully about the message of *Come As You Are*. Some ideas from the song are listed below:
- God accepts us as we are
 - God loves and forgives us
 - God doesn't want us to be alone
 - God's love sets no limits
 - God calls us to trust again
 - When we fail God continues to love us
 - Nothing can change the love that God has for us
- b. Jot down any other ideas that you want to add to the list.
- c. Choose two or three of the ideas that appeal to you. Explain what you think is special about them.



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Task Nine

Work in pairs or small groups to design an advertisement for God that uses ideas from the song *Come As You Are*. The advertisement could be in the form of:

- A thirty second TV commercial that is performed for the class
- A radio jingle that is sung for the class
- A newspaper advertisement
- Stickers, badges and bumper stickers
- Posters for the walls of the classroom or school

Be Yourself When You Pray

When we pray it's important to remember that God wants us to come to him as we are.



A Short Reflection

Read through the following *karakia* written by young New Zealanders and choose one that you identify with. Take time to think about it. Jot down any words or draw any ideas that especially appeal to you.

Dear God,

Help me to understand myself a little better.
Help me cope with the tough things in life. Give me strength to survive. With your help I know I can do it, if I take one step at a time.

(Mereana)

Dear God,

Choices are tough for me. Today it's so important to get things right.

I'm afraid that I'll make the wrong decision and muck up my life.

Keep guiding me along the right path.

(James)

Lord,

All I ask is to get through today without being hassled by teachers.

(Andrew)

God,

Thanks for all the great people that I know and the good times I have with them. Thanks also for Mum and Dad who keep me on track.

(Tama)

Jesus,

Thanks for forgiving me when I do wrong. Keep on caring for me even when I make mistakes.

(Gerry)

Te Atua,

Why is growing up so hard?

Everyone says school days are the best days of your life. If that's true, why do I feel so confused?

Sometimes I feel on top of the world without any fears, other times I'm so down.

Help me see more clearly who I really am.

(Emily)

Jesus,

Thanks for forgiving me when I do wrong. Keep on caring for me even when I make mistakes.

(Gerry)

Mother Mary,

Be with me when my parents are pushing me harder and harder.

Be with me when my friends are too busy to listen.

Be with me when school stresses me out.

Be with me when my team is an embarrassment.

Be with me when the whole world is my enemy.

Be with me all the time.

(Annie)

Task Ten

Write a short prayer or reflection of your own.

It could be about yourself, your family, your friends, the different groups you belong to or any topic you like.

The *karakia* is between yourself and God. Be honest with God and yourself.

Illustrate your prayer if you wish.



PART THREE

Accepting Self and Others

Focus:

- Acceptance is a basic human need.
- God accepts us without conditions and asks us to accept ourselves as we are.
- As we grow we are challenged to accept other people.
- Jesus is a model of how to treat people with dignity and respect.

WORDS TO UNDERSTAND

essence
reservoir
galaxy
colony
Word-made-Flesh
Emmanuel

Acceptance – A Basic Human Need

Food, shelter, and clothing are basic physical human needs. These are essential because people would not remain alive for long without them. People also have basic emotional needs. They must be loved and cared for, especially when they are young, if they are to develop into adults capable of loving and caring for others.

Another important human requirement is the need to be accepted and appreciated. Young people who lack acceptance will often grow up unhappy and sick. Some will turn to crime.

Acceptance means that the other person allows you to be really you. It allows you to develop self-respect, a sense that your existence means something and that you

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count for somebody. Acceptance does not force you to be a person you are not. It gives you the opportunity to develop at your own pace. Acceptance gives you the freedom to hold your own views. Acceptance does not reject a person on the basis of their successes or failures, their strengths and **defects**, their likes and dislikes. Acceptance allows people to be themselves and encourages them to be the best possible human beings that they can. We show that we accept a person by treating them with dignity and respect.

When a person is not accepted, that person will struggle to develop their **potential** and will find it hard to live a fulfilled life. In extreme cases, people have been known to die because they have been rejected by those around them.

Something to Discuss

Treasure in a Field

Accept yourself,
Don't have to prove anything,
Just be yourself.
You make the world a special place to be
And I hope you have the faith to see
That you've no need to travel far
For Treasure in a Field.

Accept your past,
The years have formed you
And life awaits the gift
The gift that you can give is yours alone
And in your way you've clearly shown
That you've no need to travel far
For Treasure in a Field.

Chorus:
And even though it's true your life's been hard
And few have understood the pain inside
It doesn't mean to say you have to run and hide.

The stage is set,
The light is cast upon you
And don't forget
Your friends are here to help you through the scene
And once begun you'll begin to dream
'Cause you've no need to travel far
For Treasure in a Field.

The time will come when someone else who in need
Will turn and run
Afraid to face what lies ahead for them
And you will turn and stand with them
For you'll have found the strength within
Your Treasure in a Field.

Chorus

Accept yourself, accept the things you can't change
Don't have to run. Don't have to run and hide
Accept yourself. You make the world so special
Accept yourself. Just be yourself.
Accept yourself. You've Treasure in a Field.

By Chris Skinner

Something to Discuss

- Suggest four ways in which acceptance helps people.
- Suggest four things that happen to people when there is a lack of acceptance

Something to Do

Either:

Find in a magazine or newspaper pictures of people or situations that:

- Show acceptance
- Show a lack of acceptance

How can you tell from the pictures? Focus on the facial expressions, gestures and body language of the people pictured for evidence to support your viewpoint.

Or:

Watch your favourite TV show at home and record how acceptance or lack of acceptance is shown.



More Survey Information

In an American survey:

- Only 4 in 10 teenagers consider themselves attractive.
- Half the girls want to lose weight and half the boys want to tone up.
- After losing weight and toning up, teenagers' top three concerns are their grades, doing better in sports, and having a better relationship with their parents.
- Only 15 percent like themselves “the way I am”.

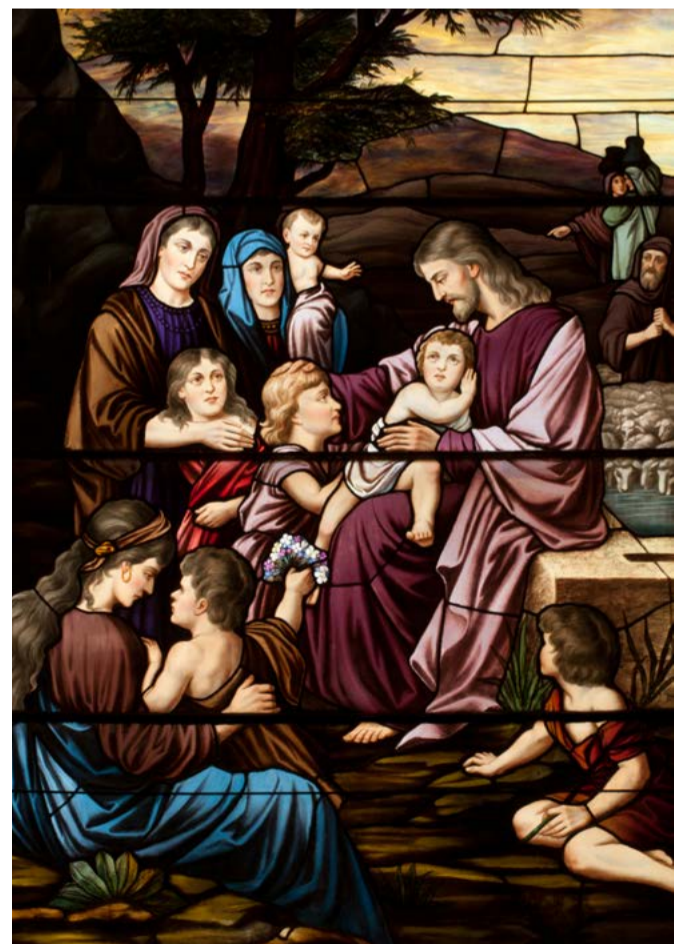
- If a survey was conducted in New Zealand do you think the results would be similar?
- Why do you think so many young people are more and more concerned about their physical appearance?
- The survey says that only 15 percent of teenagers like themselves “the way I am.” What other things beside physical appearance do young people find hard to accept about themselves?

Something to Think About

Be sure that Yahweh is God,
He made us, we belong to him.

Psalm 100:3

What do you think Jesus would say to those people who find it hard to accept themselves as they are?



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Prayer of Self-Acceptance

Loving God,

I accept my life fully and am open to the lessons it offers me today.

I accept myself completely –
my strengths and my weaknesses,
my gifts and my **shortcomings**,
my good points and my faults.

I accept my identity as a human being –
the personality I'm developing,
my learning and my growing,
my power to heal and change.

I accept that at the heart of me is goodness –
that my **essence** is love,
that at my **core** is an inner strength,
more powerful than all my fears.

I accept that there are times when I do wrong –
that I make mistakes as a part of growth,
that I must be ready to forgive myself,
knowing that You have already forgiven me.

I accept that my life is a blessing and I am deeply grateful.

I accept that I am placed on this earth to share my gifts with others, fully, freely, and with joy.

Amen.



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Something to Pray

Read the Prayer of Self-Acceptance quietly to yourself and reflect on what it is saying.

Answer the following questions only if you wish to:

- a. What words or lines from the *karakia* (prayer) do you find easy to pray or say?
- b. What words or lines from the prayer do you find difficult?
- c. What words or lines from the prayer mean the most to you?
- d. Respond to any idea in the *karakia* by writing your own short reflection or by illustrating it.

Respect for the Individual

As we mature, we gradually learn to relate to others by communicating with them more deeply:

- In our **communication** with others we usually begin by exchanging **information**.
- Later, we begin to share our **opinions** and **ideas** about different things.
- When we have grown to trust someone we will let that person know our **feelings** and **emotions**.

As time goes by we are able to look back on past events and begin to understand how we have become the kind of people that we are. As well as learning to accept ourselves, life also challenges us to learn to accept other people.



BIGSTOCKPHOTO.COM

Get To Know Me Game

Purpose

This game gives you an opportunity to share ideas, opinions, hopes, likes and dislikes, etc. with other class members.

- Have the confidence to share your views and experience
- Be prepared to listen to those of others

How to Play the Game

1. Get into groups of five or six people. The teacher will give your group a set of cards with unfinished statements on them. For example:
“I am glad that ...”
“My favourite activity is ...”
2. Place the cards face down in the centre of the group. Each player in turn picks one card up, looks at it, and completes the unfinished sentence by giving his / her answer. There are no right or wrong answers.
3. The player answers by completing the sentence. E.g. “I am glad that I am alive” or “My favourite activity is sleeping”. If someone prefers not to play a particular card, that person shows the card to the group and ‘passes’. Other players may take it in turn to answer. Even if the card is ‘answered’ by the player picking it up, other players may, in turn, add their answers. As you finish with each card place it on a separate pile.
4. At the end of each round – when one card has been picked up by each player – discuss similarities and differences in the group.

Rule of the Game

When somebody is giving an answer, others in the group must listen and show they are listening! It is up to the group to make sure this rule is followed.

After the Game

After the groups have been through all of the cards they come together for a discussion.

Something to Discuss

- How easy / difficult is it to give one's ideas, opinions etc?
- What makes it easy / difficult?
- How can each person benefit from hearing the contributions of others?
- How can each person become more confident sharing ideas?
- What can each member of the class do to help or hinder others become more confident about themselves, their ideas and opinions?

Something to Write

Write up a 'Reminder Sheet' that records the main points of the discussion, especially any ideas that are guidelines for good communication.



Task Eleven

This task is about relationships – getting along with other people.

Choose six of the following people and answer the questions about them on the paper your teacher gives you:

Mother

Father

A brother or sister

A friend

A teacher

People your own age

Older people

Other relatives

(e.g. grandparents)

People of the same sex

People of the other sex

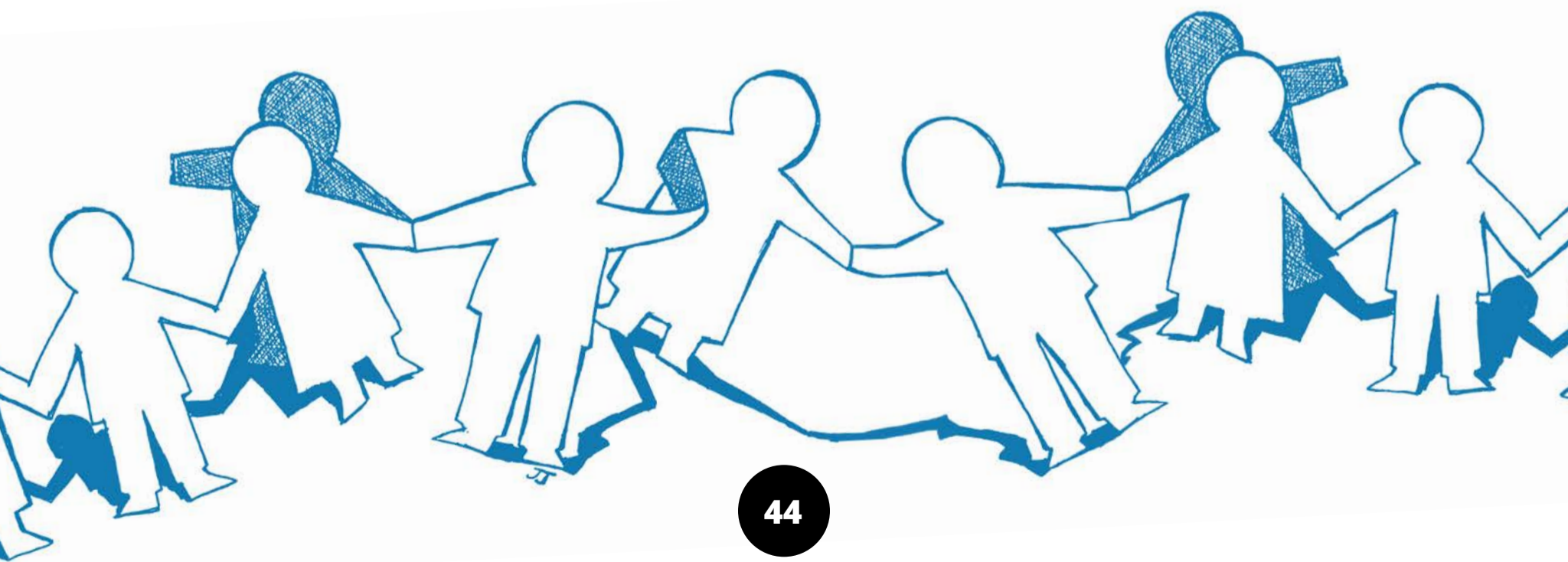
People in authority (e.g. police)

A person you met for the first time

Any other people

There are no right or wrong answers. The important thing is to write what you really think (and not what you think you should).

You can opt out of writing about any person you do not want to write about. You will not be required to share what you have written.



The Person Next To You

Look around you, and take time to look.

Who is the person sitting next to you?

The person next to you
is a miracle and a mystery
a **reservoir** of possibilities
a whole **galaxy** of hope.

The person next to you
is a unique universe of experiences,
seething with necessity
dread and desire
smiles and frowns
laughter and tears.

The person next to you
can be more than just alongside;
is able to live not only for self
but also for you;
can comfort, **encounter**, understand you,
if that is what you want –
and, in turn,
is to be understood also.

The person next to you
can never be fully understood:
is more than any description or explanation;
can never be fully controlled – nor should be.

The person next to you
believes in something – something precious:
stands for something
counts for something
lives for something
works for something
waits for something
runs for something – and from something too.

The person next to you
is a person to wonder at
and a person who often doesn't feel very wonderful
who sometimes hurts
hits out
and yet bruises – easily
comes close to **chaos**
and yet survives with extraordinary toughness.

The person next to you
is a whole **colony** of persons
persons met all during one's lifetime,
is really a community in which still live a father and
mother
a friend and enemy.
The person next to you
holds many lifelines
but only one life;
and the plan of that life
has a lot to do
with the things most cared about at this moment.
Could the joy of this care
have anything to do with your own?

For the mystery of **The Person Next to You**
is the sign they give of the continuing presence
– in our world – in our midst –
of God **Word-made-Flesh**.

So, look around you, brothers and sisters
And cry with joyful hearts:

EMMANUEL – GOD IS WITH US.

(from NCRS programme)



Task Twelve

Either:

Choose someone you know well and get on with easily.

Use the model of the biopoem that you used for **Task One**. Adapt it to write a biopoem about your chosen person.

Or:

Think of someone you have difficulty in accepting.

Make up a prayer asking Te Atua to help you accept this person. Do not name anyone. You need not share this karakia with anyone unless you wish to.



Something to Think About

What important qualities mentioned in the following scripture passages can help us to accept others?

This is my commandment: love one another, as I have loved you. No one can have greater love than to lay down his life for his friends.

John 15:12-13

Love is always patient and kind; love is never jealous; love is not **boastful** or **conceited**; it is never rude and never seeks its own advantage; it does not take offence, or store up **grievances**. Love does not rejoice at wrongdoings, but finds its joy in the truth. It is always ready to make allowances, to trust, to hope and to **endure** whatever comes.

1 Corinthians 13:4-7

Task Thirteen

Look up the following stories in your Bible. In them we see Hehu mixing with many different people and treating them with dignity and respect.

Luke 5:12-14

Luke 5:17-26

Luke 5: 27-28

Luke 5:29-32

Luke 6:6-11

Luke 7:36-50

Luke 9:37-43

Luke 18:35-43

For each story:

- Who is the person that Jesus meets?
- How did Jesus treat the person with dignity and respect?



Something to Do

Work in a group. Choose one of the incidents from scripture and act it out. Use words, mime or rap.

Task Fourteen

Use your Bibles to look up the following passages from scripture where Jesus teaches people how they should treat others.

Write the letter of the alphabet for each teaching next the matching scripture passage.

What Jesus Teaches

- a. Forgive a person even when you are wronged many times.
- b. Do not judge and you will not be judged, do not condemn and you will not be condemned, but forgive and you will be forgiven.
- c. Love your enemies and do good to those who hate you.
- d. Lend without any hope of getting back what you lend.

Scripture Passage

Luke 6:27

Luke 6:35

Luke 6:37

Luke 17:4

Accepting or Rejecting

In the course of a week each of us meets many different people, just as Jesus did. When this happens we can choose either to **affirm** their identity by treating them with dignity and respect or we can reject them and put them down.



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Activity: Do I Treat Others as Jesus Treats Them?

- a. Decide where each of the following statements about your treatment of other people fits on the lines below.
- b. Write one or two statements of your own in the spaces provided on the next page and indicate where they would go on the line.

1. I forgive others when they are in the wrong

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

2. I forgive others when they repeat the same mistakes

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

3. I show respect for others, even those I don't like

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

4. I make judgements about others

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

5. I blame others when things go wrong

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

6. I share my things with others

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

7. I am sensitive to the needs of others

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

8. I give my energy and time to others

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

9. add your own statement here

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

10. add your own statement here

Strongly disagree

Strongly agree

c. If you choose, share your response to this task with a trusted friend or adult.

Do they see you how you see yourself?

PART FOUR

Journeying Together

Focus:

- For Christians, life on earth is a *hīkoi tapu* (sacred journey or pilgrimage) – the final destination is the fullness of God’s life and love.
- The Holy Spirit makes Christ present and guides Christians as they journey.
- Christians travel as companions who support and encourage one another.
- During life’s journey we are called to develop those gifts and talents that lead to God and reject those qualities that weigh us down.

WORDS TO UNDERSTAND

pilgrimage

The Christian Journey

Christians have always regarded life on earth as a sacred journey or **pilgrimage**, with the final destination being fullness of life with God.

The Christian journey has never been easy and is sometimes dangerous. When times become difficult Christians stay hopeful by reminding themselves that God is with them. *Te Wairua Tapu* (the Holy Spirit) makes Christ present as they journey and guides them on the right path.

I am with you on the journey and I will never leave you.

I am with you on the journey, always with you. (mantra)

Christians also take comfort from the fact that they do not travel alone. They journey in the company of others who offer support and encouragement, especially when the going gets tough.

Companions on the Journey

C. Landry – ©Oregon Catholic Press

We are companions on the journey,
breaking bread and sharing life;
and in the love we bear
is the hope we share
for we believe in the love of our God,
we believe in the love of our God.

No longer strangers to each other,
no longer strangers in God's house;
we are fed and we are nourished
by the strength of those who care,
by the strength of those who care.

We have been gifted with each other,
and we are called by the Word of the Lord;
to act with justice, to love tenderly,
and to walk humbly with our God,
to walk humbly with our God.

We will seek and we shall find;
we will knock and the door shall be opened;
we will ask and it shall be given,
for we believe in the love of our God,
we believe in the love of our God.

We are made for the glory of our God,
for service in the name of Jesus;
to walk side by side with hope in our hearts,
for we believe in the love of our God,
we believe in the love of our God.

USED WITH PERMISSION WORD OF LIFE
INTERNATIONAL LICENCE NUMBER 6204



GETTY IMAGES

Abraham and Isaac, 1817. Artist: Olivier, Johann Heinrich Ferdinand (1785-1841). Collection of the National Gallery, London

Task Fourteen

Listen to Companions on the Journey and follow the words in your book.

- List three different things that Christian companions do for each other as they travel life's journey
- What does the song say about the Christian companions' relationship with God?

Packing for the Journey

Whenever we go on a trip, for a weekend or a longer period of time, we always pack the things we will need when we get there, such as a toothbrush or extra pair of socks.

The same is true of our journey through life. There are certain gifts, talents, and abilities that we need to take with us in order to get along with people and get the job done. These gifts and talents are not physical objects – they are things like skills, attitudes and values that we need to identify and make better use of.



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Something to Do

- a. As a group, take a few minutes to brainstorm ten to fifteen talents, gifts or abilities that you would like to take on your journey. Write these down on paper.
- b. In your group decide on the three most important talents, gifts or abilities.
- c. Report back on your group's findings to the class.

Unpacking for the Journey

Just as there are some things that we need to take on our journey, there are also others that we need to unpack and leave behind. There are some things that weigh us down, that cause us to hurt other people and ourselves and strain our relationship with *Te Atua*. It is important that we become aware of these things so that we can avoid or overcome them.



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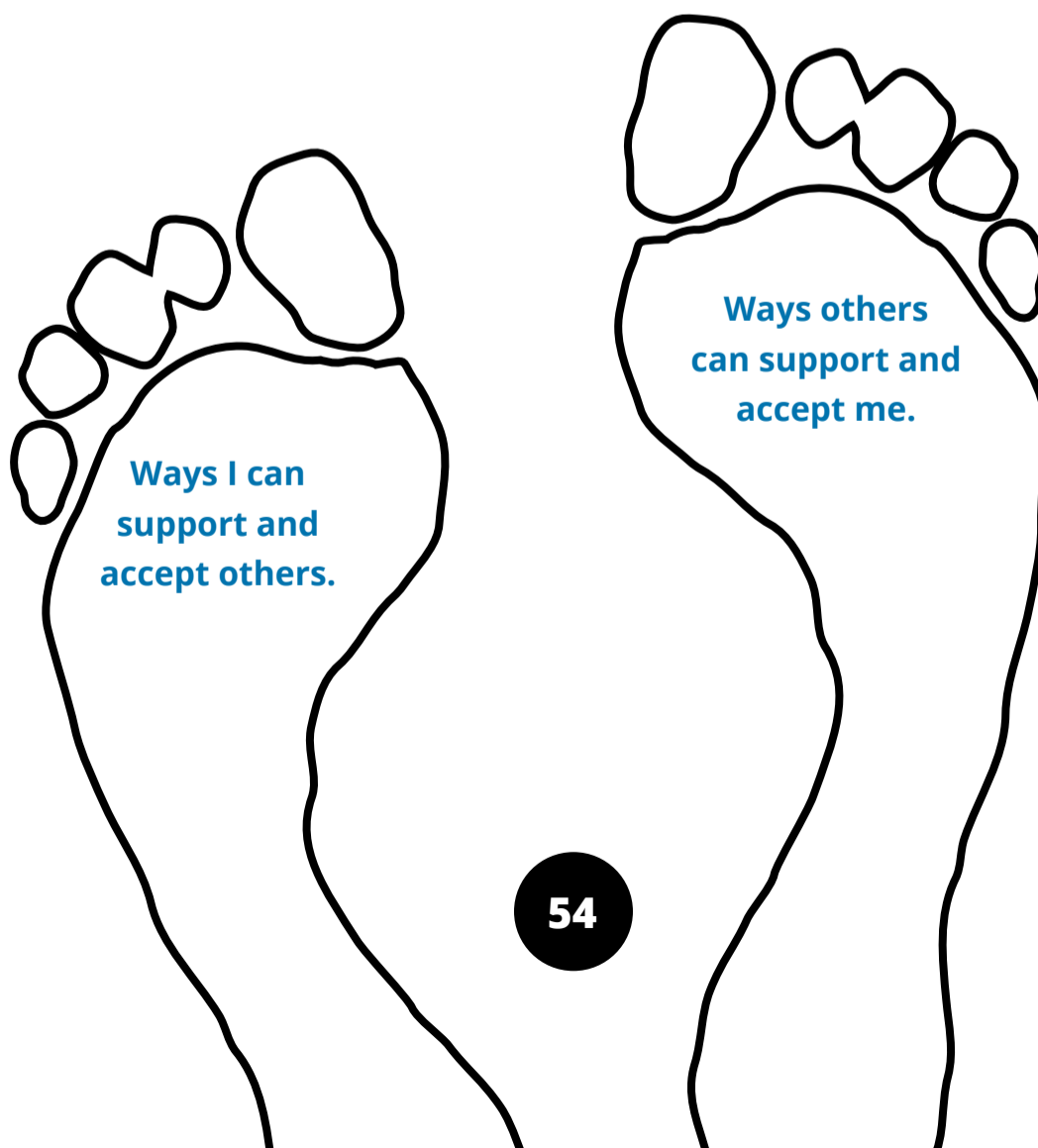
Something to Do

- a. Take a few minutes to brainstorm ten to fifteen of these negative things that we need to unpack and leave behind. Write these down on the paper.
- b. In your group decide on the three most damaging of these.
- c. Report back on your group's findings to the class.

Activity: Footprints

Footprints are signs of our journey through life.

- a. Trace around your feet with a pencil on paper
- b. Inside the left footprint, write words or draw symbols that show different ways you can give support and acceptance to others as they travel life's journey.
- c. Inside the right footprint, write words or draw symbols that show different ways that others can give you support and acceptance as you travel life's journey.



Activity: Identity and Commitment Pledge

A pledge is a formal promise about something very important.

- Read through the following identity and commitment pledge.
- Complete it and sign it only if you are able to commit yourself to what it says.

Identity and Commitment Pledge

I _____ have a unique identity as a person created in God's image. There is no one else quite like me. My identity is discovered through my relationships with God and with other people.

I inherit part of what I am from my parents and continue to grow as I journey with God and others through life.

On my journey I discover that I have a contribution to make to the growth of others, just as they contribute to my development.

As I am accepted for who I am by others, so I must learn to accept them for who they are.

I acknowledge this as part of the ...

Family,

College,

Church,

and being a citizen of Aotearoa New Zealand, I have received much and have a responsibility to give to others.

_____ (name)

Final Prayer

Lord Jesus,

We follow you as companions on a journey
Fellow travellers on the pilgrimage of life.

We thank you for the gift that each one of us is
And that each brings to our life together.

Help us to accept and appreciate one another
Whatever our differences of country or culture.

Give us a spirit of generosity
and the strength to help each other and those in need
whom we meet as we journey.

Give us the wisdom and courage to travel on in hope
until we reach our journey's end
and our final rest in You.



PART FIVE

Summary

- Our identity is who we are.
- We are born with an identity that develops through life.
- Over time we discover more about who we are.
- Parents, family, school, friends, country, culture and religion all shape our identity.
- Christians find their identity in God.
- God is our loving Creator and we are God's precious creation.
- Jesus affirms our identity and teaches us that Te Atua accepts and loves us as we are.
- When we pray Te Atua wants us to be honest about who we are.
- Acceptance is a basic human need.



- God accepts us without conditions and asks us to accept ourselves as we are.
- As we grow we are challenged to accept other people.
- Hehu is a model of how to treat people with dignity and respect.
- For Christians, life on earth is a *hīkoi tapu* (sacred journey or pilgrimage) – the final destination is the fullness of God’s life and love.
- *Te Wairua Tapu* makes Christ present and guides Christians as they journey.
- Christians travel as companions who support and encourage one another.
- During life’s journey we are challenged to develop those gifts and talents that lead to God and reject those qualities that weigh us down.

GLOSSARY of Māori terms

This glossary gives explanation of Māori terms which are italicised in the text. The first time a Māori term appears in the text, its English meaning appears in brackets after it.

Pronunciation – correct pronunciation of Māori comes only with practice in listening to and speaking the language. The English phonetic equivalents provided under each Māori word are intended to provide a reasonably accurate guide for students. If in doubt please seek assistance from someone practised in correct pronunciation of Te Reo Māori.

´ indicates stressed syllable

Aroha

úh-raw-huh

In general, means love and/or compassion. Note that the word is used in two senses:

1. a joyful relationship involving the expression of goodwill and the doing of good, empathy.
2. sympathy, compassion towards those who are unhappy or suffering.

Atua

úh-too-uh

The Māori word Atua has been used to describe God in the Christian sense since missionary times. Before the coming of Christianity, Māori used the word atua to describe many kinds of spiritual beings (in the way we now use the word “spirit”) and also unusual events.

Hapū

huh-póo

A sub-tribe. A collective of related families all with a common ancestor.

The hapū, rather than the iwi, is the operational unit of Māori society.

He Tangata

heh túng-uh-tuh

Human beings.

Hehu Karaiti

héh-hoo kuh-rúh-ee-tee

Jesus Christ.

Hīkoi Tapu

hée-kaw-ee túh-poo

Sacred journey or pilgrimage.

Iwi

short i as in tin – like Kiri

A tribe, a collective of hapu, all with a common ancestor. Can also mean a race of people, as in te iwi Māori (the Māori people), te iwi Pākehā (Pākehā people), etc. Negotiations with government are usually carried out at iwi level.

Karakia

kúh-ruh-kee-uh

Prayer, ritual.

Koha

káw-huh

Gift

Mana

múh-nuh

Spiritual power and authority. Its sources are both divine and human, namely, God, one's ancestors and one's achievements in life. Mana comes to people in three ways: Mana tangata, from people, mana whenua, from the land, and mana atua, from the spiritual powers.

Marae

(múh-ruh-eh)

The traditional meeting place of the Māori people.

Tangata Whenua

túng-uh-tuh féh-noo-uh

Indigenous people of the land, or their descendants. Local people, home people, túng-uh-tuh féh-noo-uh people of a marae are usually spoken of as hunga kāinga, iwi kāinga or tangata kāinga, not tangata whenua.

Tapu

túh-poo

This word is used in three senses:

1. restrictions or prohibitions which safeguard the dignity and survival of people and things
2. the value, dignity, or worth of someone or something, eg the holiness of God, human dignity, the value of the environment
3. the intrinsic being or essence of someone or something, eg Tapu i Te Atua is the intrinsic being of God, the divine nature.

Please note: when tapu refers to the Tapu of God it is written as Tapu.

Te Rangatiranga

teh rung-uh-tée-ruh-tung-uh

The Kingdom or Reign of God.

Te Wairua Tapu

teh wúh-ee-roo-uh túh-poo

The Holy Spirit.

Tūpuna

tóo-poo-nuh

Ancestors. Some areas use the term tī-puna.

Tūrangawaewae

tóo-ruh-nguh-wuh-eh-wuh-eh

The standing place from where one gains the authority to belong.

Whakapapa

fúh-kuh-puh-puh

Genealogy or family tree.

Whānau

fáh-nuh-oo

Extended Family.

Whenua

féh-noo-uh

Land.

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