**Taking care of our kupu**

**Ako: Learn about kaitiakitanga and what it means to you**

The kupu ‘kaitiaki’ and ‘kaitiakitanga’ are often used when talking about conservation issues and actions.

This activity encourages us to think about how and why these kupu are used.

[Taking care of our kupu](https://e-tangata.co.nz/reo/taking-care-of-our-kupu/?fbclid=IwAR2CxyICbvpCUQpzNerzQT1e98KusdVVdJmS-Qf98G1JlwYCoYpJqVrxf9Q) (published in [E-Tangata](https://e-tangata.co.nz)) was written by Tame Malcolm (Te waka o Te Arawa, Ngāti Tarāwhai, Ngāti Pikiao, Ngāti Ngararanui, Ngāti Whakaue). Tame is a conservationist and an expert in indigenous pest management.

**Mahi:**

Read [Taking care of our kupu](https://e-tangata.co.nz/reo/taking-care-of-our-kupu/?fbclid=IwAR2CxyICbvpCUQpzNerzQT1e98KusdVVdJmS-Qf98G1JlwYCoYpJqVrxf9Q).

1. While you read, consider some of these excerpts:

“It’s a word we say all the time, but do we really know and understand the deep concepts associated with it?”

“For Matua Kevin and his whānau, conservation of natural resources was just something they did. It was part of their everyday life. It was not something that had a title.”

“I don’t mind what people choose to call themselves. Ultimately, if the kupu kaitiaki encourages people to think about protecting the beauty and diversity of our environment, then that’s a good thing.”

“What I do hope though, is that by using it, we take care not to forget the beauty and diversity of our reo Māori — and we strive to understand and protect its complexity, too.”

1. Write down some of the words or phrases in the article that have given you cause to pause and think.

**Mahi:**

These are glossary definitions/explanations from three different websites.

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| [Te Aka Māori Dictionary](https://maoridictionary.co.nz/) | [Te Ara – The Encyclopedia of New Zealand](https://teara.govt.nz/en/kaitiakitanga-guardianship-and-conservation) | [Science Learning Hub](https://www.sciencelearn.org.nz/glossary) |
| **Kaitiaki** – trustee, minder, guard, custodian, guardian, caregiver, keeper, steward. | A **kaitiaki** is a guardian. This can be a person or group that cares for an area such as a lake or forest. They are given that role by the local iwi. | **Kaitiaki** – A person, group or being that acts as a carer, guardian, protector and conserver. |
| **Kaitiakitanga** – guardianship, stewardship, trusteeship, trustee | **Kaitiakitanga** means guardianship and protection. It is a way of managing the environment, based on the Māori world view. | **Kaitiakitanga** – A term that encompasses ideas about care and guardianship of the sea, sky and land – the environment. Kaitiaki refers to those who carry out kaitiakitanga such as tangata whenua (people of the land). |

1. After reading [Taking care of our kupu](https://e-tangata.co.nz/reo/taking-care-of-our-kupu/?fbclid=IwAR2CxyICbvpCUQpzNerzQT1e98KusdVVdJmS-Qf98G1JlwYCoYpJqVrxf9Q), which definition resonates with you?
2. Has reading the article affected your choice of definition? Explain why or why not.

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