

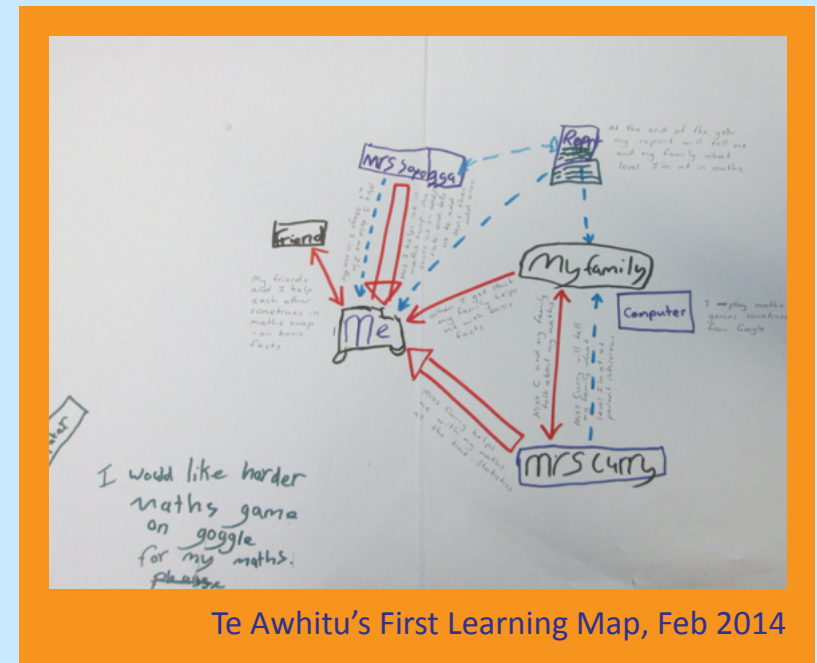
A CASE STUDY OF ONE STUDENT TE AWHITU

CHILD AND PURPOSE

Te Awhitu was a 9-year-old Māori (Indigenous New Zealand) boy at the time he engaged with the Learning Maps. He was labelled a priority learner as he was performing below National Standards in reading and writing and well below National Standards in mathematics. Yet this story scripts a young boy who is a talented learner and cognitively capable of talking about the way he goes about his learning. The main purpose of sharing this case study is to show how negative stories of children's learning capabilities can be re-scripted to positive stories so all children feel they are confident and capable learners. Furthermore, this case shows how the children themselves can become actively involved in the re-scripting process.

TE AWHITU'S ACTIONS

Te Awhitu drew his first Learning Map in mathematics – see below. He talked with his friends about his map and also looked at their maps. They noticed that all the arrows were going into them. They also noticed that they were going through the motions of lots of mathematics activities that were not challenging them to learn how to solve problems and strategise. Te Awhitu's change priority from his first map was to become more active in his mathematics learning and engage in harder mathematics activities to push his thinking skills.



Te Awhitu's First Learning Map, Feb 2014

IMPACT OF TE AWHITU'S ACTIONS

Te Awhitu's engagement with Learning Maps and new types of supports from his teachers and families impacted positively on his learning in at least three ways.

The first positive impact was a significant shift towards National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics – see the table below. The shifts from red (Well Below) to orange (Below) to green (At) show that by the end of Year 6, he is At National Standards in reading, writing and mathematics.

Te Awhitu	Year 4 End 2012	Year 5 End 2013	Year 6 End 2014
Writing	Data: 2B overall OTJ: Below NS	Data: 2A overall OTJ: Below NS	Data: 3P overall OTJ: At NS
Maths	Data: 1A overall OTJ: Well below NS	Data: 3B overall OTJ: At NS	Data: 3P overall OTJ: At NS
Reading	Data: 2B overall OTJ: Below NS	Data: 2A overall OTJ: Below NS	Data: 3A overall OTJ: At NS

The second positive impact was the confidence Te Awhitu gained in being able to articulate his learning situation. Te Awhitu was able to talk with ease about his learning situation and compare his two learning maps.

**VIEW TE AWHITU'S VIDEO AT
[BIT.LY/TEAWHITUBOTHMAPS](http://bit.ly/teawhitubothmaps)**



The third positive impact was the closer learning relationship that Te Awhitu created with his father. Te Awhitu bounced ideas around about his learning with this father and he responded with useful ideas and became more interested in his learning. This improved child-parent learning relationship was activated by Te Awhitu. Te Awhitu's teacher, Miss Curry, supported him in that and the other developments around learning choices and use of technology, but she never crossed the line to direct him in the way he went about making his changes.

CONCLUDING COMMENT

Te Awhitu was fortunate to have teachers and school leaders who had an eye for good ideas. Through an analysis of the Learning Maps, Miss Curry and her students identified a common theme: 'all the arrows are going into us,' that is the students and the teachers acknowledged the learning was passive. Miss Curry and the other teachers in the school went about changing their teaching practice to position their students as active learners. At that point, it was up to Te Awhitu to use his agency and take greater responsibility for his own learning. To his credit, he stepped up and created some significant changes in the way he was learning and living. His confidence and energy levels surpassed expectations. Te Awhitu's video became a landmark occasion in that it represented a re-scripting of a 'priority learner' into a 'cognitively capable learner'. Te Awhitu articulated for himself what that meant and thousands of people around the world have enjoyed hearing his story.