

DE-STREAMING

RESOURCE: 'MIND YOUR LANGUAGE' UNPACKING THE LANGUAGE USED AROUND STREAMING.

Ko tōu reo, Kō tōku reo, Te tuakiri tangata,
Tīhei uriuri, Tīhei nakonako
Your voice, my voice, it is an expression of identity
Behold, the message and the messenger.

Purpose *(Why you might use this resource)*

To

- Have a common understanding of the language used around streaming in order to understand and unpack what is happening in your setting.
- Ensure the messaging in schools is positive and promotes achievement for all students.

Audience *(Could be one intended, or several)*

Classroom teachers

PLD facilitators

SLT

Key Points

- **Ability grouping** refers to the range of different ways schools select and sort learners with similar perceived ability, achievement in testing, and/or engagement and motivation into fixed groups, classes or schools.
- **Ability grouping** differentiated instruction by narrowing the variation in ability within groups of learners, in order to tailor teaching to the needs of the group (Ansalone, 2010; Hornby and Witte, 2014). Prior achievement data or teacher perceptions of learners' potential ability are the most common basis for grouping. Each group is offered either different curricula, or the same curricula at different levels of difficulty.
- **Horizontal ability grouping** is where grouping occurs within year levels) within schools, which occurs between classrooms and within classrooms. Learners can also be grouped by ability across different grade levels (vertical grouping) or between different schools within the overall systems.
- **Between-class ability grouping** is when the measured lowest-performing and highest-performing learners are sorted into different classes. Learners can be grouped for some or all subjects. This is commonly known as 'streaming', but is also referred to as '**tracking,**' '**regrouping,**' '**banding,**' or '**setting**'.
- **Within-class grouping** is where a mixture of learners in the same class are grouped into smaller fixed groups based on a measurement of their ability for specific lessons or topics.

It doesn't matter what it is called - there is a *'large body of evidence that fixed ability grouping and streaming limit the opportunities, aspirations, expectations and subsequently learning outcomes of learners allocated to middle and lower ability groups.'* (Davy, 2021: *He Whakaaro: Does streaming work?*).

Link(s) to key documents

[He-Whakaaro-Does-streaming-work.pdf](#)

Suggestions for Use

Participants could read the above article for discussion points and to help reflect on the questions below,

Potential activity

Māori journalist Nadine Millar wrote that: *'Education has long been used as a way of normalising one set of ideas and values over another. It is colonisation by stealth. A battle for our hearts and minds, using words and ideas as weapons.'* (Millar, N. E-tangata, 2017).

Provocation: Think about what Nadine Millar means by "A battle for our hearts and minds, **using words and ideas as weapons**"

1. What is your understanding of this quote?
2. How can words and ideas be used as weapons?
3. How do words and ideas play a part in the call for action around de streaming in Aotearoa New Zealand?

Potential activity:

Encourage leaders and kaiako to take note and survey the language and messaging used when grouping students within schools and within classes.

Discussion questions:

1. What language is used at your school by leaders when discussing student ability and/or the way students are grouped?
2. What language is used at your school by kaiako when discussing student ability and/or the way students are grouped?
3. What language is used at your school by students when discussing student ability and/or the way students are grouped?
4. What language and messaging may need to be changed?
5. What are the next steps to ensuring positive language and messaging is used in your setting?