

92050R



Mana Tohu Mātauranga o Aotearoa
New Zealand Qualifications Authority

Level 1 Social Studies 2026

92050 Demonstrate understanding of decisions made in relation to a contemporary social issue

Credits: Five

SAMPLE ASSESSMENT

RESOURCE BOOKLET

This sample includes the same resources used in the 2025 assessment without the “Relevant ethical considerations” section, as this is no longer relevant to the current version of the standard.

INTRODUCTION: What is cultural appropriation?

Cultural appropriation is taking the ideas or designs of one group in society by a more dominant group, such as artists or companies using Indigenous ideas and designs in new products without permission. Because Indigenous ideas and designs can be thousands of years old, they often cannot be credited to a specific individual, but instead ownership is collective.



Cultural appropriation is common in the fashion industry, with models wearing traditional designs of cultures to which they do not belong.



Some people think that it is okay to use Indigenous ideas and designs without permission. In an article for *The Guardian*, Nigerian-based writer and lawyer Sede Alonge wrote about American influencer and businesswoman Kylie Jenner being called out for wearing her hair in cornrows, a braided hairstyle associated with people of African descent, with strong links to Black self-expression, especially amongst African Americans. Alonge states, “In an era in which mixing, matching, and borrowing are fundamental elements of fashion worldwide, an era in which we are trying to emphasise our common humanity, do we really have to insist on particular hairstyles being the exclusive ownership of a certain race? I had hoped such days were long gone.”

DECISIONS MADE IN RELATION TO CULTURAL APPROPRIATION

RESOURCE A: Deciding not to consult with Indigenous peoples

Global companies and haka classes

In February, New Zealander Eva Hayward who lives in Sweden, drew media attention to global companies running Māori haka classes for corporate clients without Māori consultation. The haka energiser classes are marketed as quick, fun activities to liven up a group. The classes are 10 to 30 minutes long and sometimes taught by non-Māori instructors. Hayward's brother had sent her a video of a haka workshop he had attended in Poland. "He said the class was being treated like a yoga class or a place for men looking for 'a masculine outlet,'" Hayward said. "I don't have Māori heritage, but I'm a New Zealander," and "seeing [the haka] being used in corporate settings in other countries as little games and things to almost laugh at is offensive".



HakaMan operates out of The Netherlands and allegedly does not have anyone of Māori descent teaching the haka classes.



Another company, Catalyst Global, which operates in 90 countries, told the media that it was reviewing its "Haka Action" workshop. A Catalyst Global spokeswoman said the review will "ensure that [the workshop] is culturally appropriate. With the key learning being about the value of performing together as one, using the haka as an example. We could explore using another performing art to bring across the same message".

Fiction and Lionel Shriver

In a keynote speech, 'Fiction and Identity Politics', delivered to the Brisbane Writers Festival in 2016, fiction writer Lionel Shriver said, "I am hopeful that the concept of 'cultural appropriation' is a passing fad [something that will only last for a short period of time and shouldn't be taken seriously]". She went on to state that "people with different backgrounds ... exchanging ideas and practices is ... one of the most productive, fascinating aspects of modern urban life."

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University students in Maine, USA, were criticised for ethnic stereotyping when they hosted a Mexican-themed party and wore sombreros.

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"I would argue that any story you can make yours is yours to tell, and trying to push the boundaries of the author's personal experience is part of a fiction writer's job."

RESOURCE B: Deciding to consult with Indigenous peoples

Māui Studios and “Mad Maggie”

After being approached by Sam Gill, a New Zealander and the primary writer of US company Respawn’s *Apex Legends – Season 12* (2022), to consult and provide visuals for a new wāhine Māori (Māori female) character, Christchurch-based Māui Studios created “Mad Maggie”.



Mad Maggie, and the voice actor behind her, Nicola Kāwana.



“... companies need to know that the best way to approach cultural development is to go to the tangata whenua [Indigenous peoples] of whoever they are hoping to create.”

Minnetonka® and Lucie Skjefte

Another business that decided to respect Indigenous cultural rights is Minnetonka®, a Minneapolis-based business in the US that sells “Thunderbird” moccasins (a Native American style of footwear).



Minnetonka® also donates a portion of the sale of each shoe to ‘Mni Sota Fund’, a non-profit that helps Native Americans in Minneapolis, Minnesota get training and capital for home ownership, and to start their own business.

Lucie Skjefte (Red Lake Nation), Indigenous designer and graphic designer holding the new Thunderbird moccasin.

Acknowledgements

Material from the following sources has been adapted for use in this examination (accessed 20 March 2025).

Introduction

- Page 3: <https://theconversation.com/what-is-cultural-appropriation-and-how-does-it-differ-from-cultural-appreciation-162331> (text)
<https://www.dw.com/en/ralph-lauren-apologizes-for-plagiarism-of-indigenous-mexican-designs/a-63514344> (text)
<https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2015/jul/24/white-woman-black-hairstyle-cultural-appropriation> (text)
<https://thegauntlet.ca/2021/10/29/cultural-appropriation-vs-cultural-appreciation-halloween-edition/> (image)

Resource A

- Page 4: <https://www.nzherald.co.nz/nz/haka-for-sale-inside-the-problematic-global-trend-of-maori-dance-workshops-for-corporate-clients/7OBWMIXWZREB7OD4V6ZBDZA3K4/> (text and image)
- Page 5: <https://www.theguardian.com/commentisfree/2016/sep/13/lionel-shrivers-full-speech-i-hope-the-concept-of-cultural-appropriation-is-a-passing-fad> (text)
<https://www.artshub.com.au/news/opinions-analysis/shrivers-hot-button-speech-on-cultural-appropriation-252221-2353748/> (image)

Resource B

- Page 6: <https://www.stuff.co.nz/entertainment/games/300515882/local-creatives-bring-maori-culture-to-gaming--without-the-appropriation> (text)
<https://thespinoff.co.nz/pop-culture/10-02-2022/kia-ora-aunty-mad-maggie-makes-history-in-apex-legends> (text and image)
<https://www.instagram.com/toihoukura/p/B40k1vLgwoT/> (text)
- Page 7: <https://www.fastcompany.com/91023961/this-company-built-its-brand-on-appropriating-native-culture-now-its-working-with-indigenous-designers-to-make-amends> (text)
<https://www.minnetonkamocasin.com/blog/lucie-skjefte-intro/> (image)