

# The Coping Posters Teaching Resource

## Using Static Images to Make a Difference in NZ Secondary Schools



The Coping Posters Teaching Resource was created by NZ secondary-school teacher Ilana Hill in collaboration with Engage Aotearoa. This teaching resource is designed for secondary school teachers who would like to introduce a mental-health and resilience message to their curriculum. The Coping Posters Teaching Resource enables any teacher to use the Static Image component of the Year 9 NZ English curriculum to safely explore coping tools with students as they create static images that promote their favourite coping messages and The Coping Kete web-resource. With the top two from each school being

shared on the Engage Aotearoa website, the posters have a real-world application that enables students to make a difference in their community.

### Materials in this Pack

- **The Coping Kete:** Available online at [www.engagenz.co.nz/copingkete](http://www.engagenz.co.nz/copingkete) - Use the website in class to explore how the resource works and browse through the different categories of coping to find strategies students want to promote.
- **Coping Poster Teaching Inquiry:** Background information and learning objectives by Ilana Hill.
- **Teacher Guidelines:** These guidelines will help you know how to talk about mental-health, mental-health problems and coping with your students in a way that reduces stigma, normalises distress and is safe and non-judgemental for the students in your class, some of whom will likely be currently experiencing mental-health challenges themselves. Teachers are welcome to approach Engage Aotearoa with questions that arise or to organise a Skype session with students so they can ask questions.
- **Poster Guidelines:** Everything your students need to know to make a poster that is on-message and can be used to make a difference.
- **Student Handouts:** In addition to the above guidelines, this teaching resource includes the following student handouts – Static Image Terms and Definitions, Visual Language Information, Static Image Analysis Worksheet and the Coping Kete Poster Planning Worksheet.
- **Engage Aotearoa Images**
  - Engage Aotearoa Logo: white background or blue-sky background.
  - Photograph of Personal Coping Kete
  - Photograph of flax kete
  - Butterfly Diaries Images: Butterfly and Chrysalis images.

Contact [admin@engagenz.co.nz](mailto:admin@engagenz.co.nz) for a copy of the electronic files for all images needed.





## Coping Posters Teaching Inquiry

By Ilana Hill

**Subject:** Year 9 English | **Topic:** Static Images

**Themes:** (1) Using images to share meaningful messages  
(2) Technology as a communication tool  
(3) Coping with stress and distress

### Background

- I have a year 9 class that is full of energy and disparate personalities. I was very worried about engagement in English and I was seeking ways to make learning relevant and meaningful.
- I hoped to build meaningful relationships with students by bringing material that has relevance to their daily lives and the difficulties they see around them. I wanted students to be engaged and enjoy learning, so I could enjoy teaching them rather than just trying to manage their behaviours.
- I was a part of Lifehack Northland, a weekend spent trying to make positive changes in the community. There, I was introduced to the volunteers at Engage Aotearoa and started helping them to create promotional materials for their web-tool, The Coping Kete using my skills in Illustrator. I was really excited about helping make useful information about how to cope with depression visually accessible. I got the idea that perhaps my students would feel the same way, and it could even be a subtle vehicle to teach them some of their own coping techniques for when times get tough.
- I was conscious I have some students in class who self-harm and I did not want to do the wrong thing, so I consulted with Engage Aotearoa about how to do this safely and liaised with my school for approval. It was all go. We could even run it as a competition and the winner would get published online, or even printed for schools.
- We would use adobe illustrator to create professional looking posters and encourage the use of technology as a communication tool.
- I proposed it to my students and they were very interested in the idea, especially the promise of published fame.

### Learning Objectives

1. Students will think deeply about how images can be created to influence an audience's thinking.
2. Students develop and master the graphic design skills to create images that convey meaning and plan every aspect of executing their vision.
3. Students will become adept at using computers to create professional posters they have pride in.
4. Students will gain an understanding of copyright and build good practises around ownership of ideas and images.
5. Students will develop compassion and tools to become resilient as they progress through their teenage years in an area where they have to face a lot of negativity in their lives.

## Coping Posters Teaching Guidelines

1. This resource is intended to be incorporated into the standard Static Image or Media topics of the Year 9 English curriculum and existing lesson plans, by qualified secondary school teachers. You should familiarise yourself with The Coping Kete resource before attempting to use the teaching resource with students.
2. Please discuss your use of this resource with your school principle/head of department as appropriate, and with your school guidance counsellor, so they can make themselves available to students who may come forward with their own difficulties during or after the class.
3. Please ensure all posters meet the guidelines set out in the Coping Posters Guidelines.
4. Please choose to use normalising, neutral language when talking about mental-health problems and steer away from language that implies abnormality, disease/illness or value judgements. Good words to use to describe mental-health problems include mental-health challenges/issues, distress, mental unwellness, extreme experiences, tough stuff, rough parts of life, feeling stuck.
5. If the topic of suicide or self-harm comes up – read through the Surviving a Crisis page on The Coping Kete with your students (this is safe and coping-focused). Avoid naming any suicide methods in the course of this discussion: Naming suicide methods can share ideas with people who are currently suicidal. Emphasise that suicidal thoughts are common (1 in 6 Kiwis have suicidal thoughts in their lives), refer to them as a sign we have been trying to cope alone for too long and need to reach out for some help (that would be considered an ‘expression and support’ strategy, something we all need to have). Let the whole class know they can tell you if they are feeling that way. Refocus the class on to coping. Ensure to follow up with any students after class who show distress so you can check-in and direct them to your school guidance counsellor as needed. If someone should become distressed during the class, take them to the school guidance counsellor.

### Setting the Scene

6. Safety Nets: Warm students up to the idea. Let students know that today you are going to be using your usual curriculum to do something a bit different. Explain you will be exploring ways to use posters to share social-change messages and ideas instead of the usual products or movies, and that, to get started, you will be looking at how to use posters to create a community that knows how to cope with stress and distress. Acknowledge that there will probably be some people in the room who have gone through these things themselves or are going through them now. Ask students to be considerate of the fact this topic will be close to home for some when they are sharing any comments in the class. Set students at ease by letting them know that they will not be asked to share any private information. Let the class know that even though you’ll be talking about the community and what helps people cope in general, it might get them thinking about how they cope themselves and if they’ve been struggling with things that might be distressing. If that happens they might like to take a break by going to the bathroom or let you know after class. Invite these students to talk to you for support after class or at a later time and
7. Introduce a continuum view of mental health and the role coping plays in moving us up or down that continuum: Mental health is our experience of feeling able to handle the world; that experience involves what is happening with our situations, bodies, thoughts, moods and our behaviour or actions, which all interact with each other in a great big mess called survival. It’s normal to feel like we aren’t handling things at different times. Sometimes our mental-health experience is a good one and we have a state of wellbeing. Sometimes that experience is a struggle and if it goes on for a long time we might call that a mental-health problem. It’s useful to think of it like a continuum or a scale that we move along throughout the day as different events unfold. The way we cope with those events can move us further up or down the continuum or keep us where we are. Sometimes we get stuck down the struggling end for a long time and we call that a mental-health problem, but we all go through different amounts of stress and distress every day, moving up and down the continuum as we cope the best we can. Struggling to cope can happen to anyone for a whole bunch of different reasons and there are a lot of things in life that are really hard to cope with.

8. Make mental health and coping relevant to the class. Ask students to raise their hand if they have ever known someone who has struggled with a mental-health problem or addiction (note this does not require any sensitive self disclosure). Explain that mental-health struggles are common and because we hardly ever talk about these things it can be hard for people to know how to cope and get through; today's task is about making it easier for people to find out about the strategies that might help.
9. Make sure everyone knows mental-health problems are common. Ask half of the room to stand up and explain that – nearly 50% of New Zealanders will experience a mental-health problem in their lifetime, if this room was NZ, that'd be all the people standing up. Ask half of the people standing to sit back down (leaving 25% of the room standing) and explain that – around 1 in 4 kiwis will experience a mental health problem each year. It is very common to go through these kinds of things. Most people will either be someone who struggles themselves or will know someone who does at some point in their lives. So it's really important that everyone is able to easily find their way to information about coping, either to share it or to use it when we are in need.

### Introducing the Activity

10. Introduce The Coping Kete: A group of volunteers who have all recovered from mental-health problems have created a website with an online tool that shares over 150 different ways of coping with stress called The Coping Kete. There's also information about what coping is, different kinds of coping, how to learn new coping strategies and how to cope during times of distress.
11. Introduce the Poster Activity: Hand out the Coping Poster Guidelines and explain the task will be to create a poster that sells a coping idea they think is important and promotes the online Coping Kete resource at the same time. Their job is to explore The Coping Kete online and find a strategy or idea to share.
12. Q & A: Give the class a chance to read the poster guidelines and ask questions.

### Poster Planning

13. Explore The Coping Kete and Note Key Messages: Look through the website as a class or individually, beginning with the home-page, moving through the Finding Your Way Around, Building Your Personal Coping Kete, Information About Coping and the Surviving a Crisis pages. Ask students to note down the key messages they take from each page. Bring the class back together and collate their key messages about coping on the board. Explain to students that these are the core messages they want to promote in their posters. Highlight the message that the key to effective coping is flexible coping and we all need to be free to experiment with what might work for us.
14. Choose a Strategy to Promote and Plan Posters: Draw student attention to Poster Planning Worksheet. Give students a chance to explore the strategies by themselves, choose one they want to share and complete the boxes in the left-hand column of their Poster Planning Worksheet.
15. Static Image Curriculum: Use the Static Image Curriculum to teach the knowledge needed to design a poster that promotes the ideas gathered in the right hand column of the Poster Planning Worksheet. Students can use the Static Image Analysis Worksheet to explore how the key elements taught in the Static Image Curriculum are used by others to share ideas.
16. Poster Design: Guide students back to their Poster Planning Worksheets and give them some time to use the boxes in the right-hand column to plan how they will use each of the elements of a static image to promote the key message behind their chosen strategy.
17. Set a deadline for completion and plan revision sessions to guide towards completion.

### Sending the Posters Out Into the World

18. Send completed posters for judging: When your posters are ready, email them as a series of jpegs with the students name and school in the file-name to [admin@engagenz.co.nz](mailto:admin@engagenz.co.nz).
19. Share the winning posters in your school newsletters, around the community, and in your school halls.



## Coping Poster Guidelines

**This is no ordinary school assignment.**  
We are going to work on something that makes a difference in our community.



1. Your mission is to create a digital poster to promote ways of coping with the tough stuff. Let's use graphic design to make a difference! Share a positive message about coping and asking for help while you raise awareness of a web-tool that makes it easier for Kiwis to find what they need to make it through the tough times.
2. The top posters from our class will actually be used by Engage Aotearoa in their work to make it easier for Kiwis to survive and thrive through the hardest parts of life. Your poster could be featured on the Engage Aotearoa website where anyone can download, print and share it with their school. It'll also be posted on the Engage Aotearoa Facebook page and Twitter feed so it can be shared through social media.
3. Choose a specific coping strategy to base your poster on from over 150 strategies in The Coping Kete on the Engage Aotearoa website at [www.engagenz.co.nz/copingkete](http://www.engagenz.co.nz/copingkete).
4. Use snappy phrases and engaging visual images that will grab attention and inspire people to share the message – can you make something that would go viral?
5. Use positive, empowering, normalising or neutral images. Your visual image can change the way people think about mental-health challenges and asking for help. Half the country struggles with their mental-health at some point – it's so common, there's no way it can be considered weird. But the media usually only shares the scary, weird images and stories about mental-health problems or uses scary words like 'brain disease' or 'tormented' or 'crazed' or 'psycho killer' to grab people's attention. This spreads shame, fear and misunderstandings about mental-health problems, adds to people's distress and stops them from asking for help when it's needed. You can help balance the picture by making a poster that shares the message that mental-health problems are normal responses to stressful things and focuses on the tools to survive them.
6. Use positive, empowering, normalising words and descriptions. Posters that share messages about mental-health problems like depression being sicknesses or show people with mental-health problems as weird, abnormal, different, crazy, dangerous or stupid cannot be used by Engage Aotearoa.
7. Any images used should be your original creation, be 'copyleft' material under the Creative Commons or be used with the permission of the copyright-holder. If in doubt, ask your teacher for help.
8. Posters to include a link to The Coping Kete: [engagenz.co.nz/copingkete](http://engagenz.co.nz/copingkete).
9. Posters to include the Engage Aotearoa logo at the bottom of the page.
10. The top posters from our class may also be printed in the school newsletter and placed around school to raise awareness across the student body and our whanau (unless you'd rather not share your work, that's entirely up to you).





## Coping Kete Poster Planning Worksheet

The strategy I want to promote is

Coping Kete No: \_\_\_\_

[www.engage.co.nz/copingkete](http://www.engage.co.nz/copingkete)

Strategy Title:

Description:

What I need in my poster

Colour

Frame

Hyperbole

Layout

Lettering/Font

Lighting

Lines

Proportion

Symbolism

Verbal Features

What is this Coping Kete post about?

Key concepts in a few words and pictures.

# Every Picture Tells a Story

## Static Images: Terms and Definitions

Colour	This can be used to attract attention to a certain point in a Static Image, or to create a mood. It can also be used to represent feelings or emotions.
Frame	Could be external (like a picture frame) or internal (used to separate elements within the image.) Sometimes white space is used to act as an internal frame.
Hyperbole	Deliberate exaggeration of particular parts of the images, or parts within the image. For example, deliberately making Superman's arms huge, to show that he is particularly strong.
Layout	The way components are put together on the page is called the layout of a static image. Usually there is a dominant subject that takes up the majority of the space on the page.
Lettering/Font	The style that the words have been written in. Look at the font, the colour, the size, the layout and any variety within these (not the actual words themselves).
Lighting	Related to colour. How has the subject been lit? Is the lighting bright, or dim? Is the subject lit from above or below? What is the effect?
Lines	Straight or curved edges in a static image. Our eyes often use these to travel around within an image. For instance, a car placed on a road will be imagined travelling down that road.
Proportion	The practice of using a variety of different sized objects within a static image. Proportion can be used to show relationships between objects, by showing one to be larger or more dominant than others.
Symbolism	The use of signs to carry a message in a simple picture form. These can be: people used to symbolise particular parts of society or objects that symbolise characteristics in a character.
Verbal Features	The way that words have been used on a static image. Look for metaphors, similes, alliteration, pun and pronouns (Pronouns can be used to include the audience (we, us) or to exclude others (they, them)).

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see [http://english.unitechnology.ac.nz/resources/resources/exp\\_lang/comparisons.html](http://english.unitechnology.ac.nz/resources/resources/exp_lang/comparisons.html)), puns and pronouns (see [http://english.unitechnology.ac.nz/resources/resources/exp\\_lang/pronouns.html](http://english.unitechnology.ac.nz/resources/resources/exp_lang/pronouns.html)).

## Visual Language

All the visual language features you will need to understand and apply for this internal assessment are outlined and explained in Chapter 13: Creating Visual Texts in your Level 1 English Learning Workbook (ISBN: 978-1-877530-62-3)

### Make sure you consider...

- **Images-** both dominant images and secondary/ supporting images
- **Placement-** Consider the rule of thirds, central placement or 'centring' and overlapping when arranging your images.
- **Proportion-** Proportion is important because relative size indicates which images are most important.
- **Depth-** Lighter shades make images (or part of an image) appear closer, while the darker the shade the further the image (or part of the image) seems. This is the rule artists use when shading to create depth. This rule makes 2D images seem more 3D and 'realistic'. ALSO: Images that appear bigger or closer catch your attention immediately and appear more dominant. You may also consider framing your image to contain it and highlight your image- this is especially effective if your frame is a contrasting colour.
- **Colour-** Think about what the colours you choose symbolise. What do you associate with that colour? Make sure you read Page 220 with regard colour, as it can be used to intentionally create a variety of effects.
- **Font-** Does the lettering you have chosen reinforce the tone of your image and your theme? It is important to choose the correct font, size and colour to help convey your intended message- don't simply choose a font you 'like'.
- **Brevity-** Keeping words to a minimum help to create a strong visual statement- If you use words sparingly, obviously the ones you have incorporated must be very important and the audience is more likely to take them in and consider your message.
- **Linking-** The words MUST go with the images. They should help support each other and contribute to the image's meaning.

### Don't forget about language techniques!

- **Alliteration-** Alliteration is when words begin with the same sounds (e.g. fresh fruit for the family). If your Coping Kete quote or phrase contains alliteration, it'll help the audience remember your message.
- **Puns-** This is language that works on two levels. You may incorporate both verbal and visual puns. Read the explanation for how and when to use puns on page 221 of your book.



# Static Image Analysis

<p><b>What do you see in these posters?</b> What works? What doesn't work? Write about....</p>
Colour
Frame
Hyperbole
Layout
Lettering/Font
Lighting
Lines
Proportion
Symbolism
Verbal Features

