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Hawke's Bay
Tai Ahuriri

GOING TO SCHOOL IN THE OLDEN DAYS.

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Napier District School, October 1879.

SCHOOL IN THE OLDEN DAYS

- Have you ever wondered what school was like in the olden days?
- How different the classrooms, teachers and lessons were?
- What the punishment was if you were naughty?

By the end of this lesson you'll be able to answer all these questions.

Learning areas

- English
- Health and physical education
- Social sciences
- Technology

Key competencies:

- Thinking
- Using language, symbols, and texts
- Relating to others
- Participating and contributing



A group portrait of pupils at Taradale School taken in 1901.



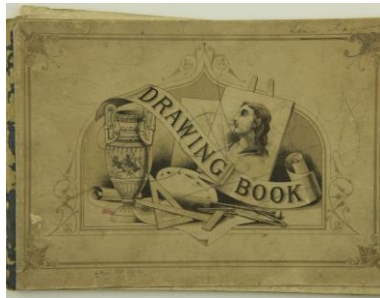
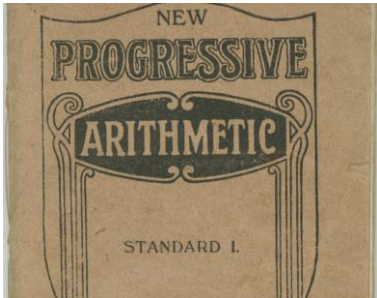
- Children of all ages were grouped together in one room schoolhouses.
- There was one teacher for the entire group and he/she was charged with tending to and teaching each student on their own level.
- Teachers had tremendous responsibilities and received very little pay.





Group portrait of students at Nelson Park School in Napier. Nelson Park P 1 1922.

- School students in the 1800s had very limited supplies at their disposal and often limited space in which to learn.
- Many families couldn't afford to purchase age-appropriate reading material for their children.
- When pencils weren't being used, pens fashioned out of quills from bird feathers were sharpened to a point and dipped in ink for writing. Slate boards and chalk were also common school supplies in early schoolrooms and erasers were made of sheepskin.
- Many schools didn't have desks so children sat on rough, wooden benches all day for their lessons.





Group portrait of students and staff at Pakowhai School thought to have been taken on 19 March 1913. The school room is behind them.

Lessons were quite different than they are today.

- Teachers taught subjects including reading, writing, arithmetic, history, grammar, rhetoric, and geography.
- Students would memorize their lessons, and the teacher would bring them to the front of the room as a class to recite what they'd learned—so the teacher could correct them on things like pronunciation on the spot—while the other students continued to work.

Discipline was very strict.

- Sure, stepping out of line in the 1800s and early 1900s could result in detention, suspension, or expulsion, but it could *also* result in a lashing.





A photograph of Petane School with pupils and staff

- There was no transportation to get to school. Most schoolhouses were built to serve students living within 4 or 5 miles, which was considered close enough for them to walk.



Group portrait of students at Pakowhai School.

- At some schools, boys and girls entered through separate doors; they were also kept separate for lessons.



EXTRA FOR EDUCATORS – AT SCHOOL OR HOME

- School days: Research what schools were like in the olden days and draw up a table comparing today's classroom with the past. For example, headings could include:
 - School rules
 - Punishments / consequences
 - Subjects studied
 - Games played in the playground
 - How students got to and from school
 - Old-fashioned names
 - Clothes children wore to school
 - Heating / cooling in the classroom
- Time travel: Using ideas from the above activity, role-play a day in an olden days school. Allocate old-fashioned names, and dress up for the day!
- Colonial cooking: Research what foods were available in the olden days and find some recipes from these times to try. Students could make their own butter and bake bread, damper, biscuits or cakes.
- Show and tell: Students could bring in historical items from a grandparent or great-grandparent, and present the class with a story about what the item is and what it was used for. These items could be made into a mini museum display with students creating their own interpretive signage.
- A picture tells a thousand words: Students could bring in an old family photograph and write a simple biography about that person.
- Family tree: As a take-home project, students could work with their parents on creating a family tree that shows how all the members of their family are connected, and how many generations they can trace back.
- Local history: The class could research the history of the school or other local historical landmark and present their findings to the rest of the school at an assembly. They could find old school photos or pictures of the grounds, and compare how things have changed or stayed the same (for example, the architecture, clothing worn).
- Personal histories: Invite one of the class members' grandparents or great-grandparents to come in and share stories with the class about what it was like to grow up long ago.

