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**150 Years of Public Education**

Teaching and Learning Resources

for Level 5 - 6

**Level 5 - 6**

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# Acknowledgment

We acknowledge the Traditional Owners of the land, and pay our respects to their Elders past, present and emerging.

These lessons are about the history of education, and we would like to acknowledge that education in Victoria began more than 60,000 years ago when Aboriginal communities and Elders taught the youngest people the life skills and values that they wished them to embody.

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this resource may contain images and content about deceased persons.  
  
Some material in this resource or the recommended further reading may reflect the period in which the item was written or created and may not be considered appropriate today. These do not reflect the views of the authors and are provided only for historical context.

# Introduction

To commemorate the 150th anniversary of public education in Victoria, the Department of Education and Training has published a collection of resources that link the history of education and schooling to the relevant parts of the curriculum at all levels F-6. Teachers should confer with colleagues to ensure that students encounter a variety of these topics and develop a breadth of historical skills during their progress through the school.

This unit introduces students to the changing face and role of education over time, with particular focus on education in Colonial and post-Federation Victoria, and the impact of the passing of The Education Act of 1872 which enacted free, compulsory and secular education. A range of activities are provided in this learning sequence, which addresses learning descriptors from the Level 5-6 History curriculum from the Victorian Curriculum. Choose the activities that you feel would most benefit your student’s learning and support the development of historical and critical thinking skills.

# Victorian Curriculum Connections

## Victorian Curriculum Achievement Standards

### History

By the end of Level 6, students identify and describe change and continuity and explain the causes and effects of change on society. They compare the different experiences and perspectives of people in the past. They explain the significance of an individual and group.

Students sequence events and people (their lifetime) in chronological order and represent time by creating timelines. They identify a range of sources and locate and compare information about the origin, content features and the purpose of historical sources. Students describe the historical context of these sources to describe perspectives of people from the past and recognise different points of view. Students develop texts, particularly narratives and descriptions of continuity and change. In developing these texts and organising and presenting their information, students create an explanation about a past event, person or group using sources of evidence and historical terms and concepts.

### Key Questions addressed:

* What do we know about the lives of people in Australia’s colonial past and how do we know?
* How did an Australian colony develop over time and why?
* How did colonial settlement change the environment?
* How did Australian society change throughout the twentieth century?
* What contribution have significant individuals and groups made to the development of Australian society?

## Relevant Victorian Curriculum Content Descriptions:

### History

Sequence significant events and lifetimes of people in chronological order to create a narrative to explain the developments in Australia’s colonial past and the causes and effects of Federation on its people [(VCHHC082)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHC082)

Describe perspectives and identify ideas, beliefs and values of people and groups in the past [(VCHHC084)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHC084)

Describe perspectives and identify ideas, beliefs and values of people and groups in the past [(VCHHC084)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHC084)

Identify and describe patterns of continuity and change in daily life for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, ‘native born’ and migrants in the Australian colonies [(VCHHC085)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHC085)

The nature of convict or colonial presence, including the factors that influenced changing patterns of development, how the environment changed, and aspects of the daily life of the inhabitants, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples [(VCHHK089)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHK089)

The effects of a significant development or event on a colony [(VCHHK090)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHK090)

The causes and the reasons why people migrated to Australia from Europe and Asia, and the perspectives, experiences and contributions of a particular migrant group within a colony [(VCHHK091)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHK091)

The different experiences and perspectives of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples, migrants, women, and children [(VCHHK094)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHK094)

The stories and perspectives of people who migrated to Australia, including from one Asian country, and the reasons they migrated [(VCHHK095)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHK095)

Significant contributions of individuals and groups, including Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples and migrants, to changing Australian society [(VCHHK096)](https://victoriancurriculum.vcaa.vic.edu.au/Curriculum/ContentDescription/VCHHK096)

## Learning Intentions

Learners will:

* understand that people hold different perceptions and understandings about education, and these have changed over time
* understand the perspectives of children who had different experiences of education, based on their gender, race, wealth and society’s expectations and norms
* recognise that Aboriginal learning is complex and intimately tied to the cultural practices of Aboriginal people that are strongly linked to caring for their ancestral lands, informed by seasonal change, and shaped by the features of the environment and landscape in which they lived
* understand that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander cultures are strong, resilient living cultures that continue today despite the traumas that have been faced in the last 200 years
* identify the catalysts for change in education, including colonisation, the gold rush, the Education Act of 1872, Federation, migration during the 20th century and the introduction of computer technologies.

## Success Criteria

Learners can:

* Describe how perspectives about education differ between different groups, and how the values and beliefs of a society will influence the way education is conceptualised and delivered
* Explain the importance of Country to Aboriginal people and how it continues to be tied to cultural practices and learning
* Identify the Traditional Owners of the land where their school is located
* Explain that since the establishment of formal schooling in Victoria following colonisation, different learners have different perspectives about their experiences of education
* Describe some of the factors that influenced the types of opportunities and experiences of different learners in Victorian schools
* Recognise some of the catalysts that changed education in Victoria and describe the impact they had.

# Learning Activities

## Materials and Texts

* Slide pack resource, indicated by 
  + includes student prompts and graphic organisers to support student learning activities
* Tablet or camera to take images around the school (optional)
* Graphic Organiser – Timeline
* Graphic Organiser – Time Capsule

## Get started

Introduce the unit of study to students, explaining that they are going to learn about changes to education throughout Victoria’s history. The teacher will provide explicit teaching of historical information to establish a common framework of understanding. Background reading for teachers is available in the [background reading](#_Background_reading_for) section of this document, with more extensive information available on FUSE.

Students will learn and practice their historical inquiry skills by investigating educational experiences of Aboriginal people prior to colonisation, the impact of Colonisation and passing of The Education Act of 1872, and the changes that have occurred in education and school throughout the twentieth century up to the present day.

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After introducing the unit of study to students, provide them with a KWL chart. Students complete the “What I Think” and “What I Wonder” sections, and then turn and talk with a partner to share their thinking and questions. Create a question wall as a visual classroom display or to share on your class digital platform, adding students’ questions from their “What I Wonder” section of their KWL. To accelerate the learning process and support the learning of students of diverse abilities, the teacher should answer some of these questions, and identify others as topics for potential inquiry. Encourage students to continue adding their questions, as well as recording any answers they find throughout the learning sequence.

Introduce and teach vocabulary to support student learning in the unit. Students may not be familiar with some of the words we use when we talk about history and the past.

If students are unfamiliar with primary and secondary sources, how they differ and their purpose and use, watch [Historical Inquiry: Types of Sources](https://online.clickview.com.au/libraries/videos/3712994/types-of-sources) on ClickView (sign into ClickView using your department credentials. Discuss the difference between primary and secondary sources, and list and identify different types of resources as primary or secondary sources. Discuss why you might use primary and secondary sources, and what should be considered when using these resources (e.g. bias, perspective etc). Create a ‘primary and secondary sources’ anchor chart for later referral.

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Watch the “Then and Now” video available on the [150years of public education in Victoria](https://www.vic.gov.au/150-years-public-education-victoria) website which includes images of past and current schools as an introduction to the topic. Lead a discussion on the things they noticed about the video compared to their own experiences of school. Examples might be the size of classrooms, uniforms, the leaving age or the different opportunities available for boys and girls. Discuss whether the information shown in the video is a primary or secondary source. Students explain their reasoning for their response.

### Learning on Country prior to colonisation

***Before teaching this section, review this*** [***teacher guide***](https://www.datocms-assets.com/19924/1656294948-beforeyouusethissequence.pdf) ***from the department’s*** [***Learning Sequences***](https://learningsequences.educationapps.vic.gov.au/) ***website which provides advice and protocols for teaching Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander histories, cultures and perspectives content respectfully and inclusively.***

***Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people should be aware that this resource may contain links to images and voices of deceased persons.​***

Share the [Timeline of Australia’s Defining Moments](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/) with your class. Discuss that evidence shows that First Nations people have lived in Australia for over 65,000 years. Explore the timeline entries prior to 1770 with students. Lead a discussion with your class about why there are fewer entries from this time. Examples include their oral rather than written cultural practices, permanent architectural structures were less common (for example compared to Egyptians and Romans who built large structures) as the cultural practices of Aboriginal people were strongly linked to caring for their ancestral lands, informed by seasonal change and shaped by the particular environment and landscape in which they lived. Encourage students to explore entries on the [Timeline of Australia’s Defining Moments](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/) or the [Deadly Story: History timeline](https://www.deadlystory.com/page/culture/history) more deeply.

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Use a scaled timeline to support students to develop a conceptual understanding of the length of time that Aboriginal people have lived in Australia. An example of a scaled timeline is included in the slide pack. Enable students to conceptualise the length of times by measuring out a length of 65m on the oval or hardcourt, and having students stand on the timeline to represent significant events from the [Timeline of Australia’s Defining Moments](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/). Each 1m represents 1000 years. Ask students what they notice about how the events are distributed on the timeline – prompt them to show that the greatest number of recorded events are clustered in the last 23 cm of the timeline.

This activity will support students to develop an understanding of the length of time that Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples have lived in this land, supporting an understanding of the resilience of ongoing cultural practices. The timeline will assist students to consider the very recent arrival of Europeans and other more recent migration, and the impact that colonisation and subsequent dispossession of lands has had on Aboriginal and Torres Strait peoples over a very short period of time.

### Country and learning

Introduce this activity to students by asking them what they know about the Traditional Owners of the Country where your school is sited. If students are not aware of who the Traditional Owners are, they can search using the Australian Institute of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Studies (AIATSIS) [Map of Indigenous Australia](https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/map-indigenous-australia) or the [interactive map](https://achris.vic.gov.au/weave/wca.html) on the Victorian Aboriginal Heritage Council website. Draw students’ attention to the number of Countries that existed prior to colonisation.

Explore the languages, place names and stories about some of the significant places on the Country where your school is sited using the [First Languages Australia interactive map](https://gambay.com.au/placenames/) or by searching the Deadly Story – [Aboriginal Country Map - Deadly Story](https://www.deadlystory.com/page/aboriginal-country-map) web page. Discuss with students the importance of hearing the voice of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people when listening to these stories.

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Share Uncle Colin Walker’s recollections of his traditional and cultural education from the slide pack, then watch [Places of Wadawurrung dreaming](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=APds2gM-Ud8) and [Kirrit Barrett](https://youtu.be/mz37H8hmd8Q) produced by ABC Indigenous. Prompt a discussion with students about how the stories and voices of Traditional Owners help us to understand how Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people educated young people both in the past and present, the importance of learning on Country and through sharing stories, and the importance of learning First languages.

*Go further:* Museums Victoria offers an online learning incursion [First Peoples of Victoria: Knowledge of Country](https://museumsvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka/learning/school-programs-and-resources/first-peoples-of-victoria-knowledge-of-country/) which explores the knowledge systems and scientific understandings of the First Peoples of Victoria. This virtual learning program explores the similarities between intergenerational knowledge of First Peoples complex understandings of all that exists on their Country, and Western science skills taught in schools today, and addresses History, Geography and Science curriculum outcomes. [Teacher resources](https://museumsvictoria.com.au/bunjilaka/learning/school-programs-and-resources/back-at-school-activities/) for First Peoples are also available from Museums Victoria.

### First scientists, technologists and engineers

This activity provides an opportunity for students to use their historical research skills and apply them to learn about Aboriginal science, technology and engineering practices. Introduce the activity by discussing the process of scientific discovery, and how knowledge changes over time and in response to environments. Discuss how, in order to survive and flourish in Australia, Aboriginal people established innovative scientific, technological and engineering practices.

Explain to students that they are going to conduct research into the scientific practices of Aboriginal peoples living in Victoria prior to colonisation. Guide students on how to develop an inquiry question. Watch [Developing an inquiry question](https://vimeo.com/517924555) from the History Teachers Association of Victoria to assist students if needed. You may wish to have students form groups to complete their research project.

Lead students in an exploration of the information on the [Deadly Story Science, Technology and Engineering](https://www.deadlystory.com/page/culture/Life_Lore/Science) website page to build their background knowledge and select one of the scientific, technological or engineering innovations listed to investigate further.

Model for all students how to gather information and organise their research and ideas, including citing their reference materials. Remind students to find resources created by or focusing on Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people and their perspectives.

Prompt students with questions that explore how the evidence of scientific understanding, mathematics and engineering they have researched provide us with insights into the importance of education for Aboriginal people in the past.

Encourage students to present the findings of their research in an interesting way, for example as a documentary, news report, newsletter article or an interactive quiz.

**Enable** students by selecting one innovation and undertaking a collaborative research project, supporting students through shared or guided reading and modelling the steps to gather, organise and publish their inquiry.

## Going deeper

**Claiming and colonisation**

Form students into groups of four to complete a [jigsaw cooperative reading](https://www.theteachertoolkit.com/index.php/tool/jigsaw) task. Share the following four topics from the Defining Moments 1700-1799 webpage: [Cook claims Australia](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/cook-claims-australia), [The First Fleet arrives at Sydney Cove](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/first-fleet-arrives-sydney-cove), [Smallpox epidemic](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/smallpox-epidemic) and [Pemulwuy resists the colonists](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/pemulwuy-resists-colonists).

Provide one person in each group with one reading topic. Students read and summarise the information and respond to the questions on each page. Students then form into ‘expert groups’ for each of the readings. Students share their thoughts and ideas about the text, collaboratively developing a summary of the key information.

Students return to their original groups and share their expertise with the members of their group. Groups create a collaborative summary page or anchor chart that can be displayed in the room or on your collaborative classroom digital platform that compares the perspectives of Europeans and Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander people on the four topics that were explored.

Share the [Invasion of Victoria](https://www.deadlystory.com/page/culture/history/Invasion) page from Deadly Story with students. While some of the language used in this resource may feel confronting, it provides an opportunity to discuss with students how language is used by different groups to represent different perspectives about an historical event. Additional resources can also be found on the [State Library of Victoria Early History – Aboriginal First Nations](https://guides.slv.vic.gov.au/Victoriasearlyhistory/AboriginalFirstNations).

### The early colonial days

Watch [The Colonial Years (1788-1900)](https://online.clickview.com.au/libraries/videos/3713004/the-colonial-years-1788-1900-) on ClickView (sign into ClickView using your department credentials) which provides some information about the early days following colonisation, and introduces the perspectives of Chinese and English migrants and their experiences.

Watch [Colonies and the Impact on Land](https://online.clickview.com.au/libraries/videos/3713059/colonies-and-the-impact-on-land) ClickView (sign into ClickView using your department credentials) which explores the impact of colonisation on the land and First Nations people.

Return to the [Invasion of Victoria](https://www.deadlystory.com/page/culture/history/Invasion) page from Deadly Story with students and explore how language is used by different groups to represent different perspectives about an historical event.

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Guide a class discussion to compare and contrast the perspectives of the different people and their experiences, using prompting questions such as:

* Why do Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples view the arrival of the English and colonisation as an invasion rather than a settlement?
* Why were the First Fleet sent to Australia?
* Why do you think Aboriginal people might have thought that the English arriving on the First Fleet could have been relatives returning from the spirit world?
* How do the views of Aboriginal people about colonisation differ to those of migrants from Europe and China? Why might these views be different?
* How might the perspectives of convict migrants compare to free settlers? Why?

Ask students what they think happened to Aboriginal people as they were dispossessed from their lands. Explian that while many Aboriginal people were killed through massacres and introduction of new illnesses, others were forced off Country onto [missions, reserves and stations](https://aiatsis.gov.au/explore/missions-stations-and-reserves#:~:text=Missions%20were%20often%20created%20by,the%20government%20for%20this%20purpose.). Missions were places where Aboriginal people had little to no agency and strict rules were imposed by managers who banned traditional languages and cultural practices. In many cases, basic human rights were ignored. Coranderrk Aboriginal reserve is one example.

Share the information on [Protests against paternalism](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/coranderrk-aboriginal-reserve-established) on the Australia’s Defining Moments digital classroom and discuss with students. Listen to [interviews of descendants of Coranderrk residents](https://www.abc.net.au/radionational/programs/awaye/27leave-us-here273a-150-years-of-coranderrk/5144226) on the page. Lead a discussion with students about how the perspectives of Aboriginal people may have been affected by their experiences, and the experiences of their ancestors, at Coranderrk, drawing on the evidence they found.

### Education in Victoria following colonisation

Explain to students that they are going to learn about how schools and education have changed since colonisation.

#### Bush schools

Share the [Brown Hill Primary School](https://www.vic.gov.au/150-years-brown-hill-primary-school) timeline on the 150th anniversary of public education in Victoria. Explain that, like many early schools in Victoria, this school opened originally in 1853 as a bush school made of timber with a bark roof. This photograph of a [bark hut school in Charlton](https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/5ab5ad3f21ea670eb42e51cd) from the Victorian Collections website shows an example of the rough nature of these buildings.

Explain that most bush schools at the time were wooden, single rooms that were heated by a stove or open fireplace and used overhead kerosene lamps to light them. This meant that students spent most of the year being either too hot or too cold, and they often struggled due to the low light in their classrooms. In the early days of the Victorian colony, children did not have to attend school, and many children worked on farms and to support their families instead of going to school, while wealthy families often employed a tutor to teach their children at home.

Many early schools were staffed by single teachers, including young women. Share [Teaching in the bush](https://www.flickr.com/photos/public-record-office-victoria/25629419846/in/album-72157653881598175/), a letter written by the father of a young woman teaching in a bush school. He is requesting that his daughter is transferred from Rubicon State School to another school. Ask students to read the letter and find the reasons why the father was asking for the transfer. Prompt a discussion about while teaching provided opportunities for educated women including adventure and independence, there were also risks in teaching in bush schools.

Explain that as the population of the Victorian colony grew, some more permanent and robust school buildings were built. For example, at the [Brown Hill Primary School](https://www.vic.gov.au/150-years-brown-hill-primary-school), additional school buildings were constructed providing more classrooms and learning spaces in the 1860s and in 1877.

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Explain that from 1851 onwards, after Victoria separated from the colony of New South Wales, formal education evolved through several stages.

### The three stages of state education in Victoria

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1851–1862 | National and denominational schools |
| 1862–1872 | Common schools |
| 1873–present | State schools |

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Lead students through an introduction to the different types of schools, using the slide pack and the information in the [teacher background reading](#_Background_reading_for) as a starting point. Using this information to launch their investigation, students research the different types of schools that were in operation during this time and summarise the information using the *Schools in Victoria 1851 – 1872 chart* in the slide pack to record their learning. Provide students with a copy of the comparison chart from the slide pack and ask students to compare the different types of schools and identify what was different and what was the same about each school type.

### The Education Act of 1872

Share the [150th Anniversary of public education in Victoria](https://www.vic.gov.au/150-years-public-education-victoria) page with students and discuss the dot points outlining why the anniversary important. Students can view a copy of the original document at the [Education Act 1872 (Vic)](https://www.foundingdocs.gov.au/item-sdid-25.html) page on the Museum of Australian Democracy website.

Students read [Fostering ‘an educated community’](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/free-education-introduced) on the Australia’s defining moments digital classroom. A longer resource is also available from the website at [Free education introduced](https://www.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/resources/free-education-introduced). If using this longer text, consider using it in a guided reading process to support students to understand the vocabulary and information contained in the article, as additional support may be needed.

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Explain that the Education Act 1872 also introduced a standardised education, outlining the subjects that would be taught in Victorian schools. Core subjects were Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Grammar and Geography. ‘Extras’ were some form of physical activity (drill or gymnastics), and sewing or needlework for female students. Education prepared students for future work. The Victorian Collections [School Exercise books collection](https://victoriancollections.net.au/items/5f18f086d9d6851c74cc468a) provide examples of school workbooks around 1900, including examples of copperplate handwriting.

Explain to students that following the passing of the Act, school inspectors visited schools to collect data, such as the general condition and maintenance of school buildings and gardens, the behaviour of students, duration of lessons and the quality of teaching.

As a class, create a collaborative ‘Before’ and ‘After’ chart to compare and record the effect of the passing of the Education Act of 1872. Lead a class discussion on the wider societal impact of the law, for example on farms and other workplaces where children were commonly employed.

*Go further:* Share the [Women in Education](https://victoriancollections.net.au/stories/school-days-education-in-victoria/women-in-education) page from the Victorian Collections website with students. Lead a class discussion about the role of women in education, and the discrimination they faced, particularly after the 1870s.

Students undertake an investigation into the Suffrage movement in Australia and around the world and consider how actions such as the discrimination of female teachers in the late 1800s may have contributed to and influenced women’s perspectives about suffrage and women’s rights.

### Education in the twentieth century

Watch [Work and Leisure in the Early 1900s](https://online.clickview.com.au/libraries/videos/3712988/work-and-leisure-in-the-early-1900s) on ClickView. Sign into ClickView using your department credentials.

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After watching the video, share the images of schools in the in the slide pack with students. Ask students to point out the features of the classrooms pictured and how they have changed over time.

Students compare their experiences of education, school and entertainment with the experiences of children depicted in one of the photographs provided and complete a ‘Then and Now’ chart (an example entry is provided below).

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| **Then** | **Now** | **Reflection** |
| Teachers used blackboards, chalk and dusters. | Teachers used whiteboards with markers or interactive whiteboards. | Both technologies were designed to enable teachers to write and erase information repeatedly. Chalk dust was messy and considered unhealthy. |

### Significant events of the 20th Century

Many significant events occurred in the 20th century that directly or indirectly affected society and education in Victoria. Provide an introduction to some of the key changes, with a timeline to help students understand the sequence of developments. Then, building upon the historical thinking and inquiry skills that students have developed through the earlier activities, students undertake an independent research task.

Students will prepare a presentation that outlines the significant 20th century event and explore the impact it had on Australian society and education. Students will share their completed presentations with peers.

Allocate or students select from the following topics of investigation. Links for each topic idea from the Australia’s defining moments digital classroom are included to support students to begin their investigation:

* [Federation of the Australian colonies](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/federation-australian-colonies)
* [White Australia policy](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/white-australia-policy-established)
* [Women granted the vote in federal elections](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/women-granted-vote-federal-elections)
* [World War I](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/australian-troops-land-gallipoli)
* [Aborigines Protection Act](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/aborigines-protection-act)
* [The Great Depression](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/height-great-depression)
* [World War II – Curtin brings home troops](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/curtin-brings-home-troops)
* [Postwar immigration](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/postwar-immigration-drive)
* [Australian citizenship introduced](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/australian-citizenship-established)
* [Indigenous Australian granted the right to vote](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/indigenous-australians-granted-right-vote)
* [Government aid to non-government schools introduced](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/government-aid-non-government-schools-introduced)
* [Indigenous referendum](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/indigenous-referendum)
* [First Nations peoples counted in Census](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/first-nations-peoples-counted-census)
* [Equal pay for women](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/equal-pay-women)
* [Whitlam dismissal](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/whitlam-dismissal)
* [Arrival of Vietnamese refugees](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/first-arrival-vietnamese-refugees-boat)
* [Mabo decision](https://digital-classroom.nma.gov.au/defining-moments/mabo-decision)

Support students to plan and undertake their research project. You may wish to form students into groups. Encourage student to consider how they will share their learning with their peers. Consider developing an assessment rubric with students that will support them to understand expectations for their research project.

## Reflect and consolidate

### Resilience and strength

Watch the video [21st Biennale of Sydney: Marlene Gilson](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d6CC7rid-Ws). Discuss with students that in this video, the artist Marlene reflects on how she has drawn from her culture and traditions and shown strength and resilience to overcome difficulties in her life. Through her art, Marlene shares cultural stories of the Wathaurung people from Southwestern Victoria. She recounts how her grandmother shared cultural learning with her through stories. Her painting ‘What If’ challenges us to consider the impact of colonisation on Aboriginal people through imagining the colonisation of England by Aboriginal people.

Students reflect on their own family experiences and cultural traditions. How does their family or community share their cultural knowledge and traditions? How might these have changed over time, particularly if their family has migrated to Australia. How have attitudes and behaviours from others affected them?

Discuss with students that every person has a different perspective on education, based on their culture, family and personal experiences. Encourage students to reflect on the influences on their own perspectives. What has had the greatest influence on their own views and thoughts about learning and education? How important are cultural and family expectations on their learning? Students complete a reflection piece that captures their thinking about learning and education. This might take the form of a video diary, blog or journal entry. Given the personal nature of this reflection, ensure students are aware that they do not need to share it publicly with their peers.

# Teacher Materials and References

## How to research and present the history of your school

### Where should I look for information on my school?

Many Victorian primary schools have a long and rich history.Even if your school is in a new suburb, or was recently built, there is probably historical information that students can research as, there probably are or were older schools that existed in your area.

The Education Act 1872 stipulated that students were only excused from attending school if they lived further than two miles (3.2 km) away from any school. Consequently, the Department of Education worked to establish schoolhouses in both metropolitan and regional Victoria. The suburb where you live might once have been an agricultural area or a mining region that would certainly have had schools for the children of farmers or miners. Your current school may have replaced several schools or amalgamated (been joined with another one). If your school is new, you might have students research one of the schools that used to exist in your area instead.

*150 Years of Public Education school profiles*

Students can begin their research by checking the [150 Years of public education](https://www.vic.gov.au/150-years-search-school-profiles) website. If your school is not listed, students have some great sleuthing ahead!

*School archives*

Does your school have an archive? The best person to ask is your school librarian and the administration staff. Sometimes, historical documents, photos and artefacts can be found tucked away in storerooms.

The sort of things that might be found in your school archive could include:

* photographs of past students, teachers or buildings
* documents from the 100th anniversary of public education in Victoria in 1972
* a time capsule made by past students from your school
* audio or audiovisual recordings
* past school uniforms or bags
* student workbooks
* defunct learning technologies such as a typewriter or an inkwell.

You might ask to borrow some items to display in a school exhibition, discuss in class or photograph for a research project.

*Interview past students*

Using the historical records you find, your class can contact past students or teachers and organise to interview them about their experiences at your school.

Watch [this video](https://vimeo.com/user18540706) to get some inside information about how to conduct a great historical interview.

A helpful way to get your interview candidates reminiscing about their school experiences is to show them pictures.

*Social media*

You can use your school’s social media accounts to let your school community know that you are seeking historical information and memories about local schools. You can send a request to your students’ families to do a call-out through their social media networks.

There are several Facebook accounts with the title ‘I Grew Up In …’ (e.g., I grew up in Collingwood). People regularly post photographs and memories from their school days.

*Local historical society*

Most suburbs or shires have a historical society staffed by volunteers. They collect both records and memories from local residents so that the history of the area can be documented and preserved. Most would be very pleased to help you research the history of your school or past schools in your region.

The volunteers at the historical society might also be long-term residents of the area and potential interviewees.

*Local library*

Your local library is one of the best places to find books on your suburb or shire. The librarian might also be able to point you towards any files relating to local schools held in the collection. Library noticeboards can also be a good place to let the community know that you are looking for information about the history of your school. Make sure that all correspondence is sent directly to the school rather than your personal contact details.

*Trove*

Do a search of historical newspapers using [Trove](https://trove.nla.gov.au/). Make sure that you try both your school’s current name and any other iterations of the name from the past. For example, the local primary school in Bacchus Marsh went through several name changes.

The school opened in May 1850 and amalgamated with three other small schools in April 1863 to become Bacchus Marsh Central Common School. It later became Bacchus Marsh State School and was renamed Bacchus Marsh Primary School in 1970.

If you are searching online records, you will need to try ‘Bacchus Marsh school’ and all of these different school names as key search terms. Also, be aware that there may be schools with similar names in other states.

*Museums Victoria online collection*

[Museums Victoria](https://collections.museumsvictoria.com.au/) has a large archive dedicated to childhood. It doesn’t just contain objects, but also stories, poems, jokes, songs and games.

## How can students share what they have learnt?

### Historical timelines

One of the most effective ways to show how education in Victoria and your school has evolved is through a timeline. There are many innovative ways that your class can share your findings with visitors to a school. Some ideas include:

* create a giant timeline going down the hall of your school, in the gym or playground
* decorate a series of classrooms to each represent a decade of education in Victoria or at your school
* make a digital timeline to go on your school website (You can use the [150 Years of Public Education](https://www.vic.gov.au/150-years-public-education-victoria) website to see what kind of information you might include.)
* videorecord a mini documentary about an aspect of life at school in 1872, 1917, 1972 and today? It could be about an example of the curriculum, how students spoke to their teachers, or the kind of equipment used for their school lessons.

Remember to acknowledge on your timeline that education was occurring in your area before European settlement through the types of education experienced by children in local Aboriginal communities.

### Engaging your audience

Brainstorm ideas with your students of different ways they could share what they have learnt with the wider school community. Some ideas include:

* use mannequins to show changes in uniform or clothing worn by children over time
* hold a historical fashion parade
* write and perform some short scenes at your school assembly on how students learnt in the past
* work with your school art teacher to recreate historical lessons such as making an embroidery sampler
* create a session on how students used to exercise at school or play games at recess. Your class could lead a session for other year levels to try them out
* Invite a guest into your classroom to act as a ‘school inspector’ and to give a report on you and your students. Read some of the inspector reports available on the [150 Years of Public Education website](https://www.vic.gov.au/150-years-public-education-victoria). [Here](https://prov.vic.gov.au/archive/18524863-F6C0-11E9-AE98-9FEC939EC28A?image=1) are some examples from Brown Hill Primary School near Ballarat. They contain reports by inspectors from between 1914 and 1922.
* The ‘then and now’ method of display is an effective way to show change over time. It can be achieved with images, report cards, video clips, everyday school items, 3D displays, samples of student work, or demonstrations. Some examples of topics for research and discussion are listed below.

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Then | Now | Reflection |
| Teachers used blackboards, chalk and dusters. | Teachers used whiteboards with markers or interactive whiteboards. | Both technologies were designed to enable teachers to write and erase information repeatedly. Chalk dust was messy and considered unhealthy. |

### Suggested Excursions and Incursions

*National Trust of Victoria*

The National Trust of Victoria offers a [Mrs Sargood goes to school incursion](https://www.nationaltrust.org.au/educationprograms/mrs-sargood-goes-to-school/) where students in Years F-6 can experience the nineteenth-century Victorian approaches to education, manners and punishment. Incursions such as these can be an excellent way to inspire your historical research.

Heritage centres and Museums

Local heritage centres, parks and experiential centres provide opportunities for students to experience life in the past. Examples include:

* [Budj Bim Cultural Landscape](https://www.budjbim.com.au/visit/cultural-tours/student-tours/)
* [Brambuk National Park and Cultural Centre](https://www.parks.vic.gov.au/places-to-see/parks/grampians-national-park/attractions/central-grampians/things-to-do/brambuk-the-national-park-and-cultural-centre)
* [State Library of Victoria](https://www.slv.vic.gov.au/learn/listing-schools-programs)
* [Museums Victoria](https://museumsvictoria.com.au/learning/)
* [Walhalla Historic Township](https://www.visitvictoria.com/regions/gippsland/destinations/walhalla)
* [Eureka Centre, Ballarat](https://www.eurekacentreballarat.com.au/)

Commercial operators such as Sovereign Hill in Ballarat, Coal Creek in Korumburra, Old Gippstown in Moe, Pioneer Settlement in Swan Hill, Flagstaff Hill Maritime Museum and Village in Warrnambool and the Port of Echuca Discovery Centre also offer opportunities for students to explore the past.

# Background reading for teachers

This background reading material is adapted from material prepared by the History Teachers Association of Victoria to support the 150years of public education in Victoria program. Copies of the full teacher resources are available on [FUSE](https://fuse.education.vic.gov.au/Teacher)/the 150th website.

### *Introduction*

Education in Victoria occurred prior to the *Education Act 1872*, with children having received schooling in both formal and informal environments. For over 60,000 years, children from Aboriginal families learnt traditional knowledge such as creation stories and oral histories, hunting and gathering food, cultural protocols, and making tools, weapons, and shelters.

### Aboriginal education history

The [Education Act 1872](https://www.foundingdocs.gov.au/resources/transcripts/vic8_doc_1872.pdf) (Parliament of Victoria) was founded on Western principles of what children needed to learn. When researching the history of your school, it is important to consider how children were educated in your area before European colonisation. What do you know about the Aboriginal history of your area? How did parents, Elders and communities educate young people? What was considered an important life skill?

Objects and artefacts can tell us a great deal about the types of knowledge and skills that Aboriginal children would have been taught growing up in their Community. These included learning to build bark shelters, weaving nets and baskets to be used for fishing traps, collecting and storing food, and objects used in religious ceremonies. Aboriginal children also learnt the values, beliefs and cultural practices of their communities from their Elders and other family members.

The Western style of education offered by the national, denominational, common and state schools from 1851 in Victoria was very different to traditional Aboriginal knowledge and teachings. Prior to colonisation, Aboriginal children learnt about the history of their communities, wayfinding, spiritual stories, art, sewing garments such as possum skin cloaks, weaving containers, woodworking of tools and weapons, bush medicine, cultural protocols, and how to hunt and gather food.

*“I always tell them the story about our people making cordial out of the banksias. We used to put the banksia tops in a bowl of water and leave it sit there overnight and all the sugar came out of the banksia. They used to feed it to the babies in the heat and it kept water and liquid in them. It’s things like that that make children in awe because like I tell them, we lived with the land. The land was our friend and we were land’s friend. If we look after the land, it’s going to look after us.”* - Gloria Whalan, Aboriginal Life in Gippsland – A Senior’s Perspective(Koorie Heritage Trust & Network Aboriginal Disability and Aged Care Agencies 2016)

Western learning styles also contrasted with Aboriginal learning processes, which were holistic, relied heavily on context, engaged visual-spatial skills, and were often delivered in an informal manner.

*“Learning was largely a matter of observation and imitation of the actions of older people and to a much lesser extent by verbal instruction from those who were older. Much learning was unstructured and took place within concrete contexts. The early education of Aboriginal children was undertaken by those with whom they were intimate and kin. It was only later in life, particularly in the context of initiation or in the learning of religious knowledge and ritual, that verbal instruction was given in a more formal and structured way, and that information was imparted by people who were strangers or relative strangers.”* (Blanchard 1985 as cited in Hughes & More 1997)

Aboriginal education was delivered in language that encompassed their world view, shared and inherited knowledge, and identity. In Victoria there were roughly 38 distinct, separate languages, though there would have been some overlap between them, and most people would have spoken multiple languages.

*“Aboriginal languages are very unique and have very specific linguistic traits that reflect culture. For example, in many Aboriginal languages, the words you use differ significantly depending on who you’re speaking with and how you are connected to that person through kinship systems. This shows how important relationships to kin and Community are in our culture.*

*Language also represents a connection to our ancestors, who have spoken these words and told stories for thousands and thousands of years.”*  - *[Languages](https://www.deadlystory.com/page/culture/Life_Lore/Language)* (Deadly Story 2022)

Compulsory education was used by the Australian and Victorian governments to assimilate Aboriginal communities and individuals into Anglo-European culture. They were taught Western laws, morals, values, numeracy, literacy and religious doctrine. They were not allowed to speak in their own languages.

Aboriginal learning opportunities were typically segregated, in that it was rare for Aboriginal and European children to attend the same school or, if they did, at the same time. Merri Creek Aboriginal School was established in 1846 by the Collins Street Baptist Church. The school was attended by both girls and boys, including the children of Wurundjeri tribal leader Billibellary. The teachers were European, and the students learnt a mix of academic, agricultural and domestic skills and even built a public bridge across the Merri Creek. This was typical of the education provided to Aboriginal children, who were only being prepared for a life of unskilled - and sometimes unpaid - labour. One of the complaints against one teacher, Edward Peacock, was that he spent much of the time preaching to students. The school closed in 1851 due to low enrolments.

### Education following Colonisation

Following colonisation, when Europeans arrived in Australia, female convicts were often tasked with overseeing the education of young charges. Children from wealthy families were often more formally educated by a tutor or governess in their own home.

From 1851 onwards, after Victoria separated from the colony of New South Wales, formal education in the colony evolved through several stages.

### The three stages of state education in Victoria

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1851–1862 | National and denominational schools |
| 1862–1872 | Common schools |
| 1873–present | State schools |

### Denominational schools

Denominational schools gained strength during mass immigration to the state of Victoria in the 1850s due to the Gold Rush. These schools were founded by and affiliated with a church body and governed by the Denominational School Board, founded in 1848. The Board was structured into four units, each representing a key denomination: Roman Catholic, Anglican, Presbyterian, and Wesleyan. Religious education was integrated into the curriculum, ethos, and the general activities of the school community. Many of the early Victorian schools were denominational, as church bodies had the social infrastructure and funds to establish and run them.

A house with a fence around it

Description automatically generated with low confidence

Caption: [Old Catholic Church and denominational school in Portland](https://viewer.slv.vic.gov.au/?entity=IE1140282&mode=browse). The school is the small room attached to the back of the church. The school was founded by Reverend Michael Stevens in 1849 and was the second Catholic denominational school to be opened in Victoria.

Source: Laurie Burchell collection of photographs of Victoria schools, State Library Victoria.

### National schools

National schools were run by the National School Board and operated between 1851 and 1863. They were non-sectarian, meaning that religious education was separate to the general teaching. It ran parallel to the denominational school system and was used primarily by families who were not as wealthy as those attending denominational schools.

A black and white photo of a house

Description automatically generated with low confidence

Caption: [A national school, Dana Street, Ballarat](https://viewer.slv.vic.gov.au/?entity=IE16257589&mode=browse) 1861.

Source: Solomon & Bardwell, Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria.

### Common schools

In 1862, the *Common Schools Act* led to the cessation of national schools and the formation of the Board of Education. Denominational schools continued to be funded along with common schools, but there was a strong movement towards the idea of secular education. Common schools were now the mainstream source of schooling in Victoria and were committed to providing at least four hours of secular education between the hours of 9.00 am and 4.00 pm. Schooling still incurred a fee but orphans or children from destitute families had their fees paid by the Board of Education.

### Private school ventures

Many private and government schools were founded by individuals who had been well educated and were passionate about education. Many of these founders were women who initially ran the schools from their own homes before moving to bigger premises. Their schools often began as a way of offering education to girls and young women. Many schools began as private ventures before being purchased by the state government. [Baringhup School](https://www.vic.gov.au/150-years-baringhup-west-primary-school) is an example of a school that opened as a private school in 1869. It became a common school in 1870 and later a state school in 1970.

Text

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Caption: [Miss Clarke’s seminary, Portland](https://viewer.slv.vic.gov.au/?entity=IE7217935&mode=browse) ca. 1859. A private school for girls.

Source: Thomas Hannay, Pictures Collection, State Library Victoria.

### Ragged schools

Ragged schools were founded for children who came from families severely impacted by poverty and who could not afford the fees charged by national, common or denominational schools. It was understood by the teachers that the children attending may be dressed in ragged clothing, have no shoes, be unwashed, suffer from malnutrition and have intermittent attendance.

The first ragged school was founded in 1859 by Hester Hornbrook on Cambridge Street, Collingwood.Soon, more opened, each catering for between thirty-five and fifty students. Although not governed by the Denominational School Board, the teachings of the school were underpinned by religious, evangelical and moral philosophies. The ragged schools system provided opportunities to many children born into poor families, but in the spirit of religious salvation. Poor families were considered responsible for their own destitution through poor decision-making and moral depravity.

A group of people in a room

Description automatically generated with low confidence

Caption: Illustration of [Hornbrook Ragged School](https://viewer.slv.vic.gov.au/?entity=IE601213&mode=browse) off Little Lonsdale Street, 1884. Note that several of the children sitting on the right bench are not wearing shoes.

Source: David Syme and Co. Illustrated Australian news collection, State Library Victoria.

Classrooms were furnished with wooden desks and benches. Equipment usually included a blackboard, writing slates for students, a world globe, a small supply of books, and the requisite portrait of the reigning British king or queen.

**Curriculum and pedagogy**

Prior to the Education Act 1872, National, denominational and common schools taught a range of core subjects including spelling, reading, writing, dictation, composition, grammar, geography, arithmetic, geometry, mensuration (a type of geometry dedicated to the measurement of length, area and volume), algebra, bookkeeping, vocal music (singing) and drawing, plus needlework for the girls.

The Education Act 1872 introduced standardised education, stipulating which subjects would be taught in Victorian schools. Core subjects were Reading, Writing, Arithmetic, Grammar and Geography. ‘Extras’ were some form of physical activity, and sewing or needlework for female students. An accurate command of the English language was at the forefront of education during this period. It was tied to ideas of model citizenship, class and social etiquette. Handwriting was also considered an important quality of well-educated children and adults.

The emphasis on different aspects of education changed over time as approaches to pedagogy and learning technologies changed. Many schools shaped their extracurricular activities according to the advice of school inspectors. Organising a school branch of the Gould League of Bird Lovers was generally approved.

With the advent of the twentieth century, new subjects such as social studies were integrated into the state school curriculum.

**Women and education**

Women have been stalwart contributors to the history of education in Victoria, both as members of the teaching workforce and as volunteers through mothers’ clubs, school boards and other voluntary activities.

**Dame schools**

Many of the earliest private schools in the colony of Victoria were founded by women and run out of a private home. Students were taught academic skills alongside social etiquette and female arts such as needlework. These institutions incurred a small fee and were referred to as ‘dame schools’. The earliest dame school in Australia was founded in 1789 by a female convict named Isabella Rosson. In several cases, dame schools became large and significant educational institutions, such as Carlton State School, founded by Grace Pullar in 1858. The school was later renamed as the Faraday Street Common School, then the Faraday Street State School (No. 112). It closed in 1972 and is now the Kathleen Syme Education Centre.

**Female students**

Some of the challenges female students faced in the colony of Victoria related to the expectation that they would only need a basic education, as very few professional careers were offered to women at the time. They were less likely to undertake the more academic subjects. Only girls who attended private schools, were from wealthy families, or had a home tutor or governess were likely to study languages.

*After the* Education Act 1872

Teaching, along with nursing or becoming a governess, was one of the few professional careers available to women in the nineteenth century. Female teachers made up 48 per cent of the teaching profession in Victoria by 1866 and were highly valued for their ability to impart moral values in education. Under the National and Common School Boards, married women were allowed to teach or superintend schools—although, generally, they were paid less than male teachers. This was also evident in the denominational and ragged schools systems.

The Education Act 1872 signalled a new regime in educational administration that initially had a negative impact on female educators. This, in partnership with an unstable economy, meant that female teachers began to lose both rights and responsibilities as educators in the Victorian state school system. The Public Service Act 1889 stripped women of the right to work as teachers when they married, stating that they had to leave the public service. There was a small concession in that the amended 1890 Public Service Act (Article 14) allowed women (on the recommendation of the Governor in Council) to be employed as a sewing mistress.

**Victorian Lady Teachers’ Association**

The Victorian Lady Teachers’ Association (VLTA) was founded in 1885 in response to the marginalisation and unfair treatment of female teachers by the Victorian Education Department. They campaigned against the higher salaries awarded to their male counterparts, the exploitation of female workers, and the lack of superannuation schemes for female teachers in Victoria. They lobbied political figures and were outraged by the exclusion of women from the 1913 Teachers Act.

In addition to campaigning for the rights of women, the VLTA also tried to safeguard the educational opportunities for girls, especially when it was proposed that female students should be removed from academic lessons to train in domestic science two days a week.

**Migrant student experiences**

Some of the first education services for non-British migrant students were made on the goldfields of Victoria as Chinese miners arrived to seek their fortune. Initially, immigrants were single men, but over time men brought their wives and children with them. For those who wished to stay permanently in Australia, education would be a necessary step in planting their roots.

Many of the schools on the goldfields were denominational, although people of any religion could attend. The chief issues for teachers were language barriers, different religious beliefs among their pupils, and the nomadic nature of goldfield families who often moved around. Many church educators were not new to teaching non-English-speaking students due to a culture of overseas missionary work. In Ballarat, Reverend William Young began learning Chinese with locals and offering night classes to migrants and their children.

*Impact of* *the* Education Act 1872

Each decade of Australia’s colonial history has brought new migrants to Victoria—initially British and Chinese, later including Italians, Greeks, Vietnamese, Afghanis, Sudanese, and most recently Ukrainians.

Migrants were one of the key groups to benefit from and appreciate the stipulation that education was ‘free, compulsory and secular’. Many groups arrived in Australia due to economic issues in their homeland or to improve their socio-economic status. Although sometimes they had been professionals in their countries of origin, the language barrier meant that they had to take unskilled jobs and subsequently earn less income. In many cases, they came from countries where education was not free, and some had limited formal education.

The compulsory aspect of the Education Act 1872 was viewed positively by most migrants, as they saw education as an opportunity for their children to gain security and prosperity in their new homeland. Many migrant children were the first in their family to complete secondary schooling or attend university. This ethos often meant that educators were highly appreciated by migrant families.

The large wave of post-war immigration from Europe in the 1950s and 1960s changed the dynamic of public education in Victoria. Teachers were not equipped to teach students from non-English-speaking backgrounds and as a result many children struggled to engage with or understand their lessons. The ideology associated with the assimilation policy meant that students were simply expected to adapt. Many accounts show a clear division between students from English-speaking and non-English-speaking countries during this period. Students often suffered due to racist ideologies or stereotyping.

Because of the secular nature of Victorian public education, children from Jewish, Greek Orthodox, Hindu, Muslim or other faiths were not required to receive Christian religious instruction. However, being removed from the class during the religious education sessions that were delivered in schools by external providers sometimes made these students feel conspicuous and different from their peers.

Many children who immigrated between the 1970s and 2000s had come from countries such as Vietnam, Somalia, Ethiopia and Sudan and had suffered trauma due to wars in their own countries. Many had arrived without their parents, had grown up in refugee camps, and had never experienced formal education. It wasn’t until Victoria adopted a multiculturalism policy in the late 1970s and 1980s that education underwent a large shift to improve access and experiences for children from migrant families.

**Students with disabilities**

After the passing of the Education Act 1872 (Article 13, Clause 2), one of the key exemptions to the requirement to attend school related to health and disability. The Act was formed with the understanding that universal education would be beneficial to all Victorians, so several institutions were founded to ensure that students who had been born with, or acquired, disabilities could still attend school.

*Victorian Asylum and School for the Blind*

In the nineteenth century, blindness affected many children due to eye disease. To provide a suitable formal education, the Victorian Asylum and School for the Blind was opened in 1866. Children and young adults who attended lived onsite. The use of the term ‘asylum’ is confronting because it linked blindness with a lack of capability and a need to be protected from the world. It was also used in relation to mental health facilities. Students who attended the school learnt academic skills similar those in the mainstream schooling system. Additionally, they learnt a trade that could help them to become more financially independent. These included brush making, basket making, mat making, wool work, commercial or domestic laundry skills, knitting and needlework.

*1970s to the present*

Educational opportunities for students with long-term illnesses and disabilities improved during the second half of the twentieth century. More facilities for students with disabilities were included in mainstream education. These included ramps, modified toilets and hearing loops, although it was well into the twentieth century before all schools complied with accessibility regulations. Programs such as distance learning and the advent of online learning also increased the capacity for students who could not attend mainstream schools.

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