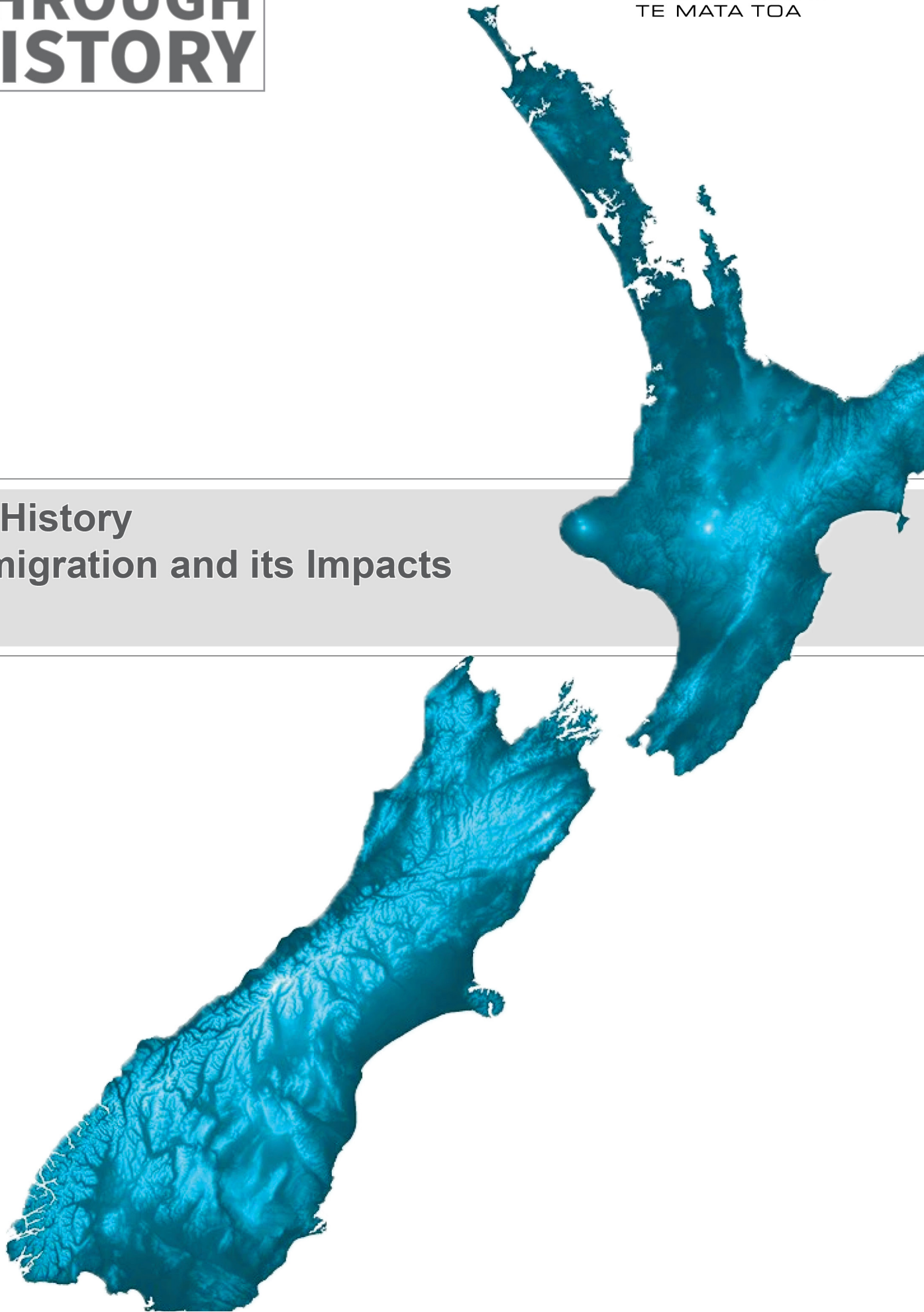


LIVING THROUGH HISTORY

**NATIONAL
ARMY
MUSEUM**
TE MATA TOA

NZ History Immigration and its Impacts



NEW ZEALAND

He waka eke noa

We are all in this together

History isn't something that happens to someone else. Right now, you are living through an extraordinary event that is changing the New Zealand way of life: the COVID-19 pandemic. Future students might look back on this moment in their classrooms and ask: how did they feel? How did they make it through?

Lockdowns, travel restrictions and self-isolation are all extreme responses, but they have been made necessary by the extraordinary times we've lived through. As disruptive as they are, these measures provide us with the opportunity to look back at one of the key issues at the heart of our nation's history: **Immigration to New Zealand**. Then, like now, access to these islands had a lasting impact on all involved: from the original Māori inhabitants to the thousands of settlers who came here seeking a new and better life, some of whom were discriminated against due to their ethnicity.

For each of the activities below:

- **Read** about the impact of people travelling to New Zealand.
- **Reflect** on how this is similar to what you are seeing now, and then.
- **Respond** to the questions or instructions at the end of each activity.

Share your answers with your classmates and teacher! We'll all have our own unique experiences, and we can all learn just as much from each other as we can from our nation's history.



Activity 1: Deadly Impact

People get used to their way of life, and sometimes this makes them vulnerable to the impact of forces outside their control. Before the signing of the Treaty of Waitangi in 1840, Māori had lived in New Zealand for at least five centuries and had established their own culture and *tikanga* (customs) distinct from other Polynesian peoples. The arrival of Europeans saw the introduction of new foods, animals, and diseases which collectively devastated the Māori people and their traditional way of life.

Māori had relied on staple crops such as kumara that were of limited nutritional value and required men to tend to them. This restricted inter-iwi conflict because men were always needed to collect the harvest, so *taua* (war parties) could rarely be away from home for long. When the first potatoes arrived with the Europeans, Māori suddenly had access to easily grown, easily stored food that women and children could harvest, freeing up men for longer campaigns against rival iwi. This, combined with the introduction of muskets, contributed to the devastating Musket Wars (1807-1837), which are estimated to have wiped out one fifth of all Māori at the time.

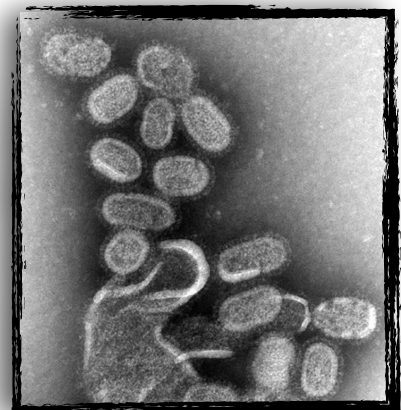
Pests and livestock both impacted traditional Māori land and food. Once let loose in New Zealand, ferrets, feral cats, stoats and other small mammals devastated native bird such as the Kererū, affecting any Māori who relied on Kererū for food. Meanwhile, European methods of livestock farming led to the destruction of native forest and wetlands, and motivated the confiscation of Māori land before and during the New Zealand Wars.



New arrivals also brought new diseases to which the Māori had never been exposed. Early European arrivals described the Māori as a 'fit and healthy' people, but an expanding European population combined with Māori displacement to new, often unhygienic settlements meant that diseases such as influenza and measles quickly spread across the country. Between 1840 and 1891 the Māori population declined rapidly, almost by half, and some Europeans believed that they would die out entirely. Some Māori named these epidemics *tokotoko rangi* (the spear from heaven).

1a Why do you think populations are vulnerable to new diseases like COVID-19? What effect does this have when diseases reach them?

1b What are some long-term effects of diseases on populations? How might these have affected health and life outcomes for Māori?



Activity 2: For a better life

As we have seen, the arrival of European settlers was catastrophic for many Māori in New Zealand. But why did settlers come to New Zealand in the first place? What makes a person leave their home to make a new life elsewhere?

1800's Britain was a land undergoing significant social change. Traditionally farmland had been a common resource shared by all and worked by all, but wealthy businessmen and landowners had been buying up smaller farms and privatising them. This process was known as 'enclosure', and was enforced both through the law or sometimes through the use of force against smaller landowners. Many of the working-class farmers who had lost their land to enclosure left for Britain's industrial cities, where factory workers were always needed. Others still dreamed of owning and working their own land.

New Zealand provided these settlers with an opportunity to realise this dream. There, ordinary Europeans could make a living 'taming' the native bush into viable European-style farmland, escaping the crowded and impoverished conditions of their homelands to create a new, idealised society on the other side of the world.

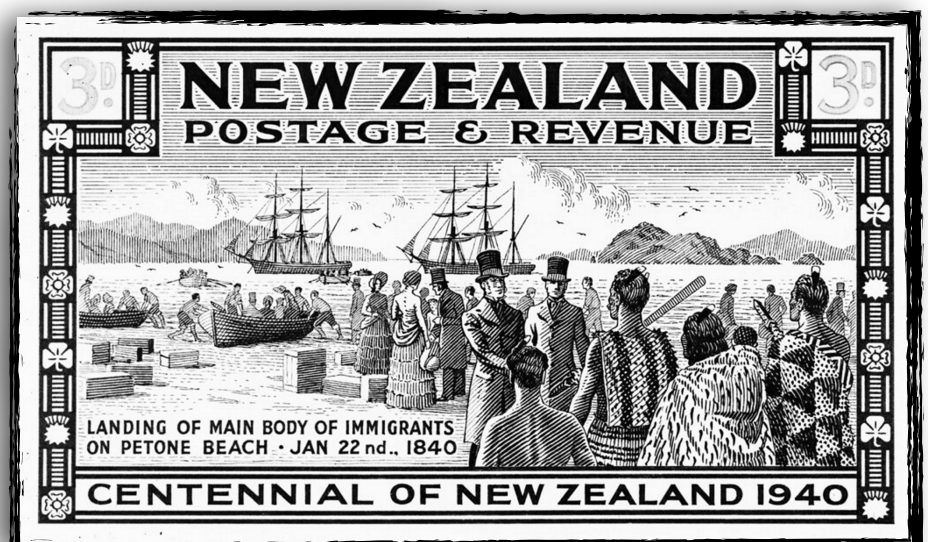
Many settlers couldn't understand why Māori seemed to be 'wasting' what appeared (to European eyes) to be prime farming land. They pressured the Government to buy land off Māori or, if that failed, to militarily confiscate the land so that they could put it to 'better' use. Fatal conflicts such as the Wairau Affray (1843) and the First Taranaki War (1860-61) began when settlers attempted to mark out disputed Māori land for farming.

The Industrial Revolution transformed the British Isles. Steam power meant that many jobs could be replaced by machines, production could be increased and more money made. Working and living conditions in industrial cities could be harsh and until 1842, children as young as four could be expected to work in mines and mills.

2a Why do you think settlers wanted to avoid living in industrial cities? What alternative did the New Zealand colony provide?

2b How were European ideas about land use different from Māori ideas about land use?

2c How did these differing views about land use bring Māori and Pākehā into conflict?



Activity 3: Who goes there?

Later, war and poverty in China inspired thousands of Chinese to seek a similar dream in New Zealand. Unfortunately, racist attitudes and discriminatory laws prevented them from thriving to the same degree.

From the late 1800s all the way through to the 1940s, New Zealand's border controls discriminated against Chinese immigrants in an attempt to prevent permanent Chinese settlement in what had become a primarily white European country. Specifically, the New Zealand government of the time intended to create a 'fairer Britain of the South Seas' – and that meant excluding minorities wherever possible.

The Chinese Immigrants Act of 1881 created the following restrictions:

- Ships were limited to one Chinese passenger per 10 tonnes of cargo, and in 1896 they were further limited to only one Chinese passenger per 200 tonnes of cargo
- Chinese migrants had to pay a 'poll tax' of £10 each (equivalent to roughly \$1700 today), and in 1896 this was increased to £100 (~\$19,000 in modern money)

Alongside the Act, public figures led the creation of "Anti-Chinese" societies that argued for further action against Chinese immigrants. The following extract is from *The New Zealand Herald* in April 1895:

THE ANTI-CHINESE DEMONSTRATION

The Anti-Chinese Demonstration at the Theatre Royal to-night was crowded. The Mayor presided, and among the speakers were the Hon[ourable] W.P. Reeves, and Messrs. G.J. Smith, W.W. Collins, and G.W. Russell, M.H.R.'s [Members of the House of Representatives]. Resolutions were carried, "That Legislation was imperatively necessary to prevent an influx of Chinese into the colony, and that the poll tax should be raised to £100." Mr. J. O'B. Hoare, who met with a very unfavourable reception, proposed "That the present time was inopportune," for which only two or three hands were held up. Each speaker referred to the fact that the fruit trade in Wellington was almost entirely in the hands of Chinese. At the close of the meeting an Anti-Chinese League was formed.

3a Reading the extract above, what do you notice about the people who led the Anti-Chinese Demonstration?

3b To what extent did anybody at the Demonstration speak out against what they heard? Were their words well received?

3c What, in your opinion, is the difference between necessary border controls and discriminatory border controls? Discuss this with your class. Which category would you place New Zealand's COVID-19 response into?

Activity 4: Stopping the Spread

Border control is a method used by all modern nations to control the flow of people and goods in and out of their country. Often these measures are intended to protect people, the economy, and the environment by catching illegal materials before they can enter. There are times in the past and today that the New Zealand government has enacted stricter border controls to limit the flow of diseases into our country. How a government chooses to police its border can have a significant impact on the people these restrictions affect.

In the 1600s, **influenza** was a mystery disease believed to have been caused by the influence (*influenza* in Italian) of cold weather, or the planets in the sky. Viruses were discovered in 1898, but the Influenza virus wasn't uncovered until 1931. Influenza mutates regularly, meaning that new strains (types) can be more or less harmful than before, and old vaccines will be less effective against them. Coronaviruses weren't discovered until 1968. When viewed with powerful microscopes they appear to have a crown (*corona* in Latin) of spikes all around them.

In the 1800s, new arrivals were quarantined on entry if they showed any signs of illness. Despite this, diseases such as measles, typhoid and tuberculosis reached epidemic levels across the country. By the end of the century, improved public sanitation and the first vaccines contributed to reducing the impact of these diseases.

Influenza was one disease that had yet to be covered by a vaccine, and from 1918 the Spanish Flu ravaged New Zealand. Doctors boarded ships on arrival and quarantines were put in place for suspected cases, but the disease still reached the general public. As it spread throughout New Zealand the government sent a response plan across the country. Shops, cinemas, theatres and hotels were closed to slow the spread of the disease, and makeshift hospitals across the country were set up to treat more than half a million victims. Lessons learned from the pandemic were used to create the Health Act of 1920, which simplified earlier laws and supported New Zealand's health services to make them better able to respond to future crises.



4a Over the last few decades, measles, swine flu and gastroenteritis have all had outbreaks in New Zealand. What happened, and how did the country contain these illnesses?

4b In 1967 a radio documentary called *The Great Plague* interviewed people who lived through the Spanish Flu pandemic. What questions do you think future historians would want answered by the people who lived through COVID-19? If you get the opportunity, ask your parents, grandparents or elders some of these questions and record their answers.

Beyond the Worksheet

These activities have shown you just a few examples of how the movement of people, animals and disease has impacted New Zealand in the past. But history doesn't stop happening, and there's more you can do to make sure that the times you live in aren't forgotten. Here are a couple of activities that could tell future historians what you lived through, how you felt and how we as a nation made it through COVID-19 together:

- **Keep a diary.** Diaries are important because they tell us how individuals saw the world changing around them. A thousand records telling you *what* happened *where* and *when* will never be able to show you *how* someone felt about it. Other reflective pieces of writing such as poetry can help you to express your unique feelings and perspectives.
- **Take photos.** If the COVID-19 pandemic has changed things about your house or your local neighbourhood (for example, a busy street being empty, signs up in shop windows etc.), take photos! Just as a diary tells you how you felt on a certain day, photos will help you and others to remember what was different about your life during the COVID-19 pandemic, and what the country was doing to contain it. **Note:** if the government has currently instructed you to stay at home or restrict unnecessary travel, do not go out to take these photos. It is more important that you keep yourself and others safe by taking these instructions seriously.
- **Write letters.** Write a letter to your grandparents/whanau. Draw or design a picture on your device.
- **Have a go at baking.** Try a recipe from one of the many cultures that reside in New Zealand.



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