**Activity 13: The Night Soil Man and Sewage**

**Collection Areas:** Mechanics Lane.

**Curriculum Links:**

* ***Social Sciences.***
* ***Technology:*** Technological Knowledge, Nature of Technology.

**Topics/Themes:** History, technology

**Resources Pack:** Bedpans, buckets, photos of night soil man, Questions for Viewing, Guide for Teacher / Helpers

**Time estimation:** 20mins

**Goals:**

Students will be able to:

* Gain a historical perspective and understanding into the events that lead to the development of wastewater systems and sewage treatment plants.

**Guide for teachers/helpers. What to do at this activity:**

1. Read information sheet about the history of the sewerage system in Nelson. Highlight the information regarding the open ditch running down Trafalgar St and the open sewage pond which is now Anzac Park. Prompt students to imagine the smell and impact this would have had.
2. Guide a conversation using the *questions for viewing* provided.
3. Look at the old drainpipe which is made from bricks and notice the black marks on it. This is where the sewage would be running through.
4. Talk about the bucket, one bucket per family *(Sarah, can we get an example of this, a wooden toilet seat on a bucket?)* only emptied once a week.
5. Night soil man - direct kids to look at the red cart opposite the sign. Talk about what the night soil collector did. Why he was called this (night time, soil a nice name for poo, and they put the poo in the fields.)
6. Play relay game (see activity instructions), kids become ‘the night soil man’ which team can be the fastest team of night soil men, without getting ‘night soil’ on them!

**Questions for viewing:**

* What would Nelson and daily life have been like without the indoor flushing toilet?
* What do you think would people have done with their waste including their rubbish, recycling and sewage in the olden days when they did not have flushing toilets and rubbish trucks?
* What would our life be like if we did not have a sewerage system? (What would it look like, feel like, smell like…) and what would be some consequences? (eg health and disease, rats, pollution in the waterways.)
* What do you think would have been the worst part of the job as a night soil collector?

**Relay Game Instructions**

**Activity Location:** Near the greenhouse, on the grass.

**Activity:** Split the group into two teams and do a relay game with bedpans and ‘night soil collector’ buckets using water. Try to not spill any of the sewage (water), just like in the olden days! Whose team can do the relay without spilling anything? The teacher is to determine the start and finish line.

**Post Visit Classroom Activity:** Creating a mini wastewater treatment.

**Curriculum Links:**

* ***Social Sciences.***
* ***Technology:*** Technological Practice, Technological Knowledge, Nature of Technology.

**Activity:** Students will work in pairs or groups to create their own mini wastewater treatment system. This will encourage them to think about how wastewater is processed now, compared to what they learnt at Founders about how waste used to be disposed of in the past. Below are a couple of websites which will give you some examples of how to create a small-size wastewater system with your class.

**Some links for examples:**

* <https://www.teachengineering.org/activities/view/uok-2216-wastewater-treatment-plant-model-water-quality>
* <http://www.waterwise.co.za/export/sites/water-wise/education/activities/wastewater-cleaned/downloads/Making_a_Model_of_a_Wastewater_Treatment_Works.pdf>

Students can be prompted to explore what happens to the sewage and cycle of wastewater in Nelson.

Here is a timeline on wastewater in Nelson: <http://www.nelson.govt.nz/services/facilities/infrastructure/nwwtp/>