



NEW ZEALAND EDGE

A NEW WAY OF THINKING
ABOUT OUR IDENTITY, STORIES,
ACHIEVEMENTS AND PLACE
IN THE WORLD



LEARNING ABOUT AND CELEBRATING THE ACHIEVEMENTS OF NEW ZEALANDERS - BOTH PAST AND PRESENT

www.nzedge.com CURRICULUM FOCUS: Levels 4-6

- New Zealand Edge is an inspirational website aimed at helping New Zealanders, both here and globally, celebrate our culture. It takes us on a radically optimistic journey and celebrates our people, our stories and our achievements.
- For teachers, New Zealand Edge is a treasure trove of resources, especially for social studies, particularly in the Culture and Heritage and Time Continuity and Change strands. Relevant achievement objectives are:
 - the impact of the spread of new technology and ideas
 - how and why cultures adapt and change
 - individuals passing on and sustaining and developing their culture
 - ways in which cultural and national identity develop and are maintained
 - how ideas and actions of people in the past have changed the lives of others
 - how beliefs, ideas and actions of the present & past change society.

CELEBRATING RICHARD PEARSE: FIRST FLYER

- Biographies of 35 NZ heroes are provided on the site. In this unit we celebrate the achievements of Richard Pearse - trail blazing aviator and eccentric visionary.
- Have students go to www.nzedge.com > click on heroes > scroll down to Richard Pearse.
- Individuals or groups now conduct online research and find the answers to the following questions and discussion topics.

INTRODUCTORY ACTIVITIES

- Discuss why the first 'controlled powered flight by the Wright Brothers on 17 December 1903 is regarded as a defining moment in world history, eg
 - it was a breakthrough that would change the world for ever.
- In what ways do the students think this changed the world?
- Challenge students to identify and list moments in history and significant inventions that would change the world, eg
 - the phonograph - telephone - splitting of the atom
 - launch of sputnik - moon landing



Richard Pearse's Plane

QUESTIONS & ACTIVITIES FOR RESEARCH AND DISCUSSION

- Have students identify the crucial element missing for history to credit Pearse with the first flight.
- Identify the considerable advantages that the Wright Brothers had over Pearse in pioneering flight. In the light of this, how do the students rate the achievements of Pearse?
- Identify any personality traits and interests of Pearse at school which would give a clue as to his future directions?
- Discuss why Pearse, along with many people throughout history, was obsessed with the idea of flying. List some of these early attempts. How did Pearse's attitudes towards flight contrast with most people of that time?
- Why was Pearse's adaptation of a petrol engine so crucial to his dream of flying? What made Pearse's adapted engine so remarkable?
- Why is it so exasperating that no details of the flight were recorded? Contrast this with the detailed recording of the Wright Brothers flight.
- Would it be fair to say that Richard Pearse was too wrapped up in his inventions and obsession with flight to have a sense of history?
- What clues to the character of Richard Pearse do his letters to Dunedin's Evening Star give us? Was Richard Pearse right not to have claimed for himself, the first successful flight? Give reasons for and against.
- In retrospect, just how advanced were Pearse's ideas in relation to the design of the Wright Brothers? How do these relate to the history of aviation?
- Was Pearse a victim of New Zealand's 'tall poppy syndrome' or just a modest and eccentric inventor ahead of his time?
- As New Zealanders, why do the students think we should be proud to celebrate the incredible achievements of Richard Pearse?
- Have students design 'Promoting Pearse' posters or flyers.

