

18. Education

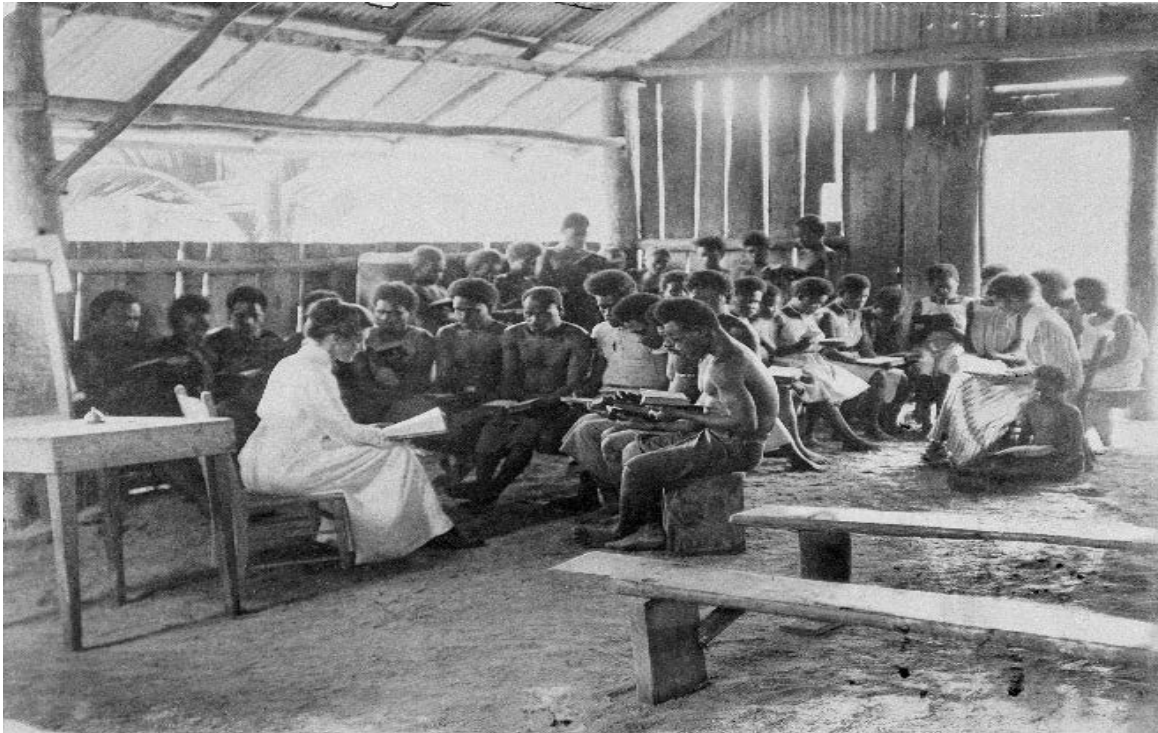
For thousands of years, Solomon Islanders taught their children by example, whether in agriculture, fishing, fighting, or the intricacies of behaviour, custom, ancestor worship or gender categories. Early literacy began with labourers attending night or Sunday classes when working in Queensland or Fiji in the late nineteenth century, or at the Anglican mission school on Norfolk Island. The first local school was Anglican, erected at Siotia, Gela, in 1896. All of the Christian missions began schools and, until after the Second World War the limited schooling available in the Protectorate was totally under their control. The best was the Anglicans' All Hallows Senior School at Pawa on Uki Island, which began in 1922. In that year there were 3,271 students attending Protectorate schools: 353 at Seventh-day Adventist schools, 630 at Catholic schools, 120 at South Seas Evangelical Mission (SSEM) schools, 2,178 at Melanesian Mission (Anglican) schools, and a smaller number at Methodist schools.

A Protectorate Education Department was established in 1946. The first government school was Auki Experimental School began in 1948: this later became King George VI School and was shifted to Honiara. Chung Wah, the Chinese school, began in Honiara in 1949. Woodford School, once mainly for European children, began in the early 1950s; it is now the leading international school in Honiara. Secondary education began at King George VI School in 1958. By mid-1969, there were 749 students enrolled in secondary schools. During the 1960s, the missions and the government began to send students overseas to study in Fiji, Papua New Guinea, New Zealand and Australia. Tertiary education began in the British Solomon Islands Training College in 1959. When universities were established in the Pacific in 1960s, Solomon Islands students began to attend. Other tertiary institutions were opened, almost all in Honiara, for training in technology, agriculture, public service administration, and marine services. There was a boat-building school at Auki, Malaita. These institutions also served students from neighbouring British and French colonies and territories. Several institutions were drawn together into the Solomon Islands College of Higher Education in 1984, and then as divisions of the Solomon Islands National University in the 2010s.

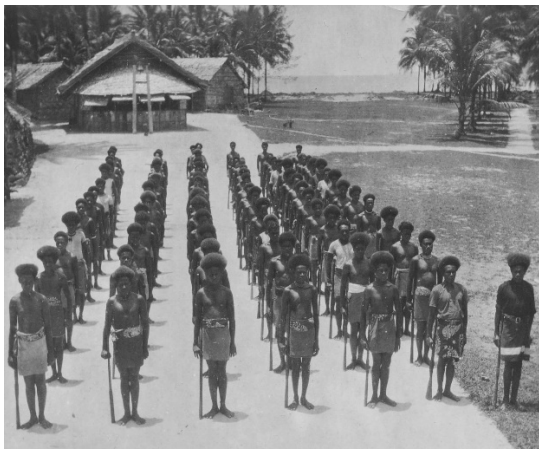
Today, 19 percent of children still do not attend primary school and a large number of adults are illiterate or innumerate, or have very low levels of ability in these areas. The percentage of males and females attending primary school is approximately equal.



18.1. Isabel Island school boy, 1906. (Anglican Church of Melanesia, J. W. Beattie Collection)



18.2. South Seas Evangelical Mission (SSEM) school classroom, Malaita, 1920s. (J. N. and N. C. Deck Collection, in Patricia Braga Collection)



18.3. School boys drilling at the SSEM Onepusu School, Malaita, 1922. (J. N. and N. C. Deck Collection, in Patricia Braga Collection)



18.4. The Anglican church and school at Fagani Village, Makira, 1906. (Anglican Church of Melanesia, J. W. Beattie Collection)



18.5. British Solomon Island Training College, 1950s. (Solomon Islands Government)



18.6. King George VI High School, Honiara, 1960s. (Solomon Islands Government)



18.7. Mbokonavera Community High School, Honiara, 2005. (Clive Moore Collection)



18.8. Mbita`ama Community School, north Malaita, 2005. (Mike McCoy Collection)



18.9. Children at Vura Community Primary School, Honiara, 2007. (Clive Moore Collection)



18.10. Students at Vura Community High School, Honiara, 2007. (Clive Moore Collection)



18.12. Young Women's Christian Association Kindergarten, 2008. (YWCA Collection)



18.11. Kindergarten student, 2005. (Clive Moore Collection)



18.13. Pawa Provincial Secondary School students on Uki Island, 2005. (Mike McCoy Collection)



18.14. Students holding Solomon Islands flags, Noro, 2010s. (Joe Hamby, Tri Marine Collection)



18.15. School children, Noro, 2010s. (Joe Hamby, Tri Marine Collection)



18.16. Graduation Day, Solomon Islands College of Higher Education, 2009. (Clive Moore Collection)