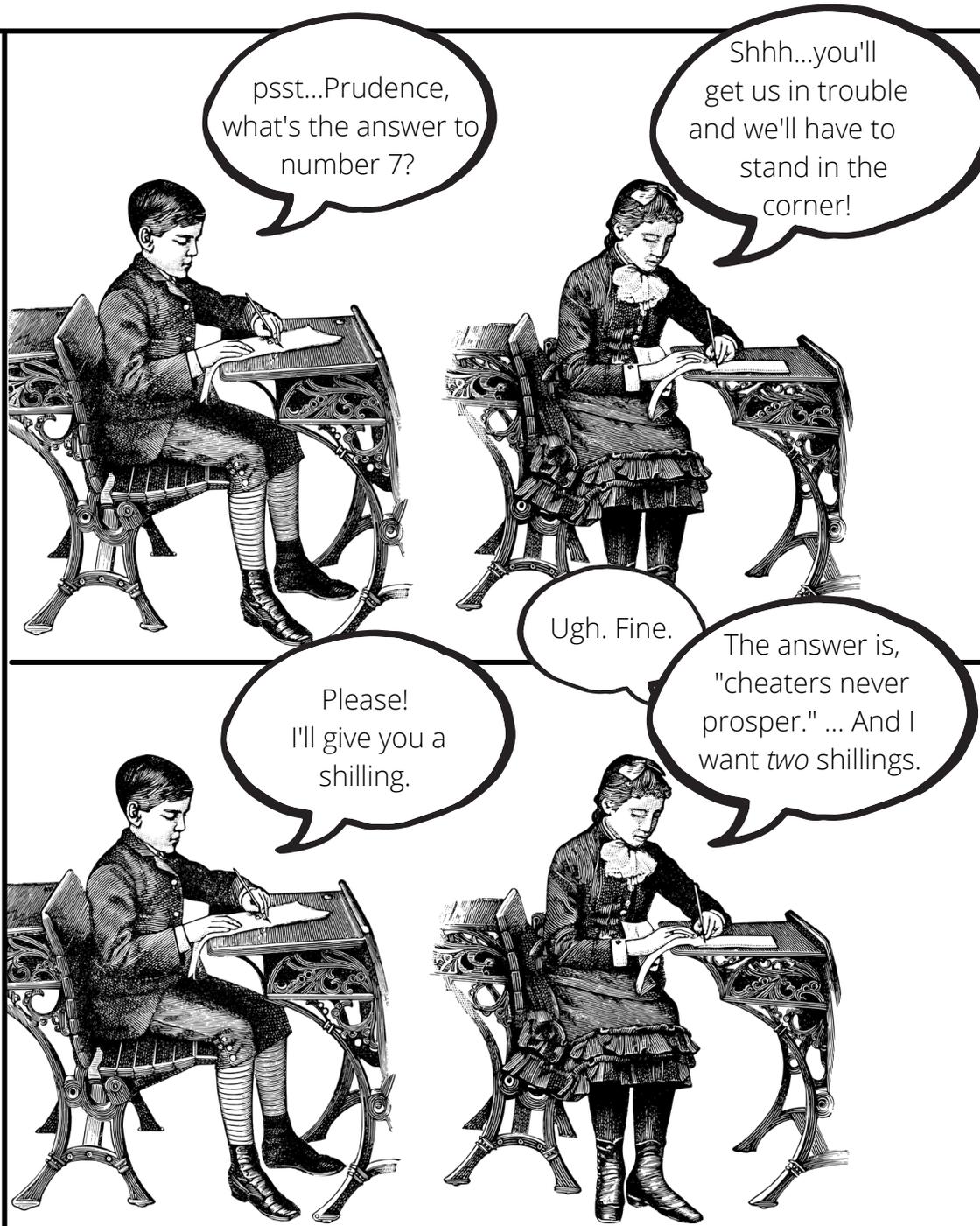
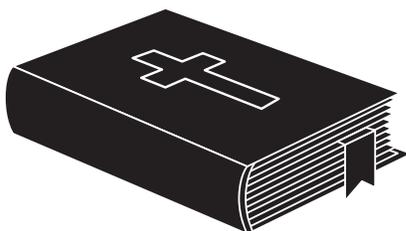




It's been more than 300 years since kids around New Hampshire started going to school. Ever wonder why and how we as a society decided that we'd all pitch in to prepare young people for life? Let's find out.

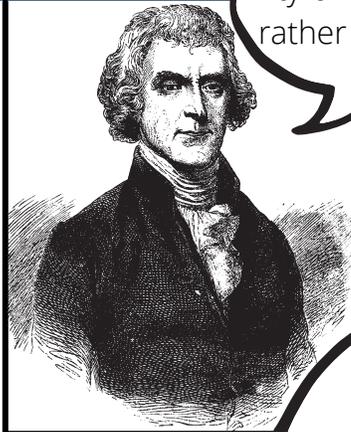
1647: The first community schools crop up in New Hampshire (which is currently combined with Massachusetts) after the legislature authorizes towns with 50 or more families to establish schools. These schools are originally designed to teach morals.



1779: As America wins its independence from Britain and establishes its own government, the Founding Fathers promote education as a way to protect their fragile new nation.

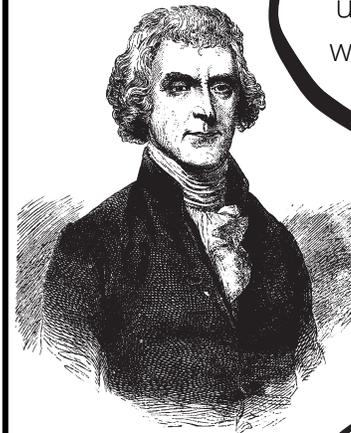
1784: New Hampshire adopts its constitution. Article 83 provides the basis for public education.

1789: A New Hampshire state law creates a formula to support schools through local taxes, essentially creating a statewide property tax.



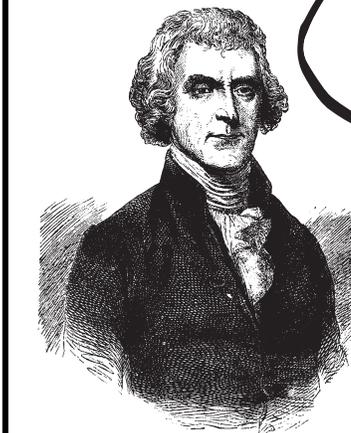
Overthrowing tyrannical rule is rather exhausting.

True, but what can be done about it?



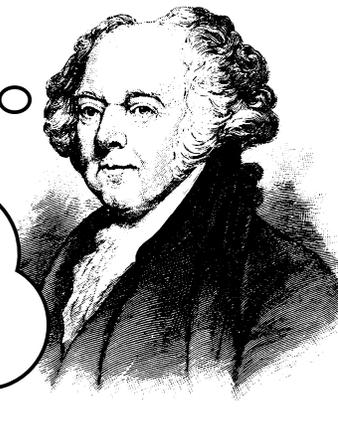
I suggest we educate **all people** so they understand democracy and won't let groups rise up and grab power?

Aye, but that sounds mighty expensive.



More expensive than another war?!

Is he making a joke? Should I crack a smile? But how?

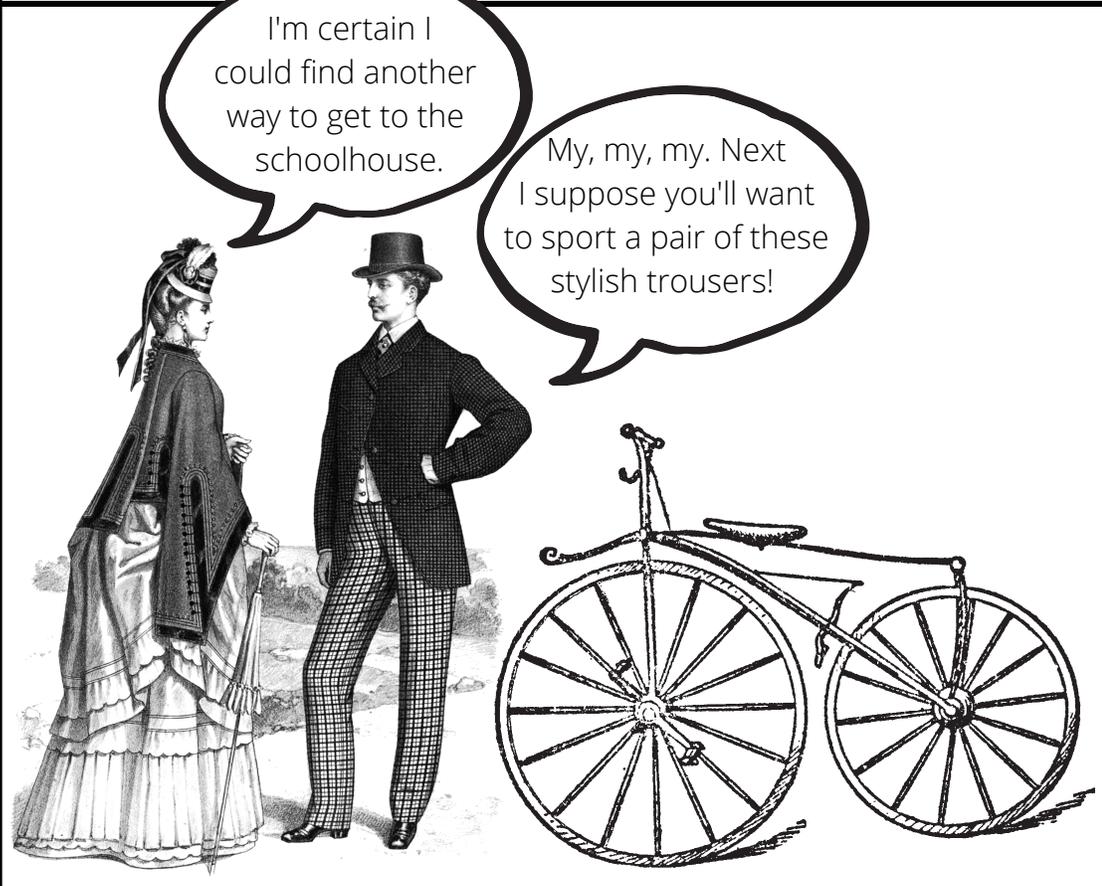
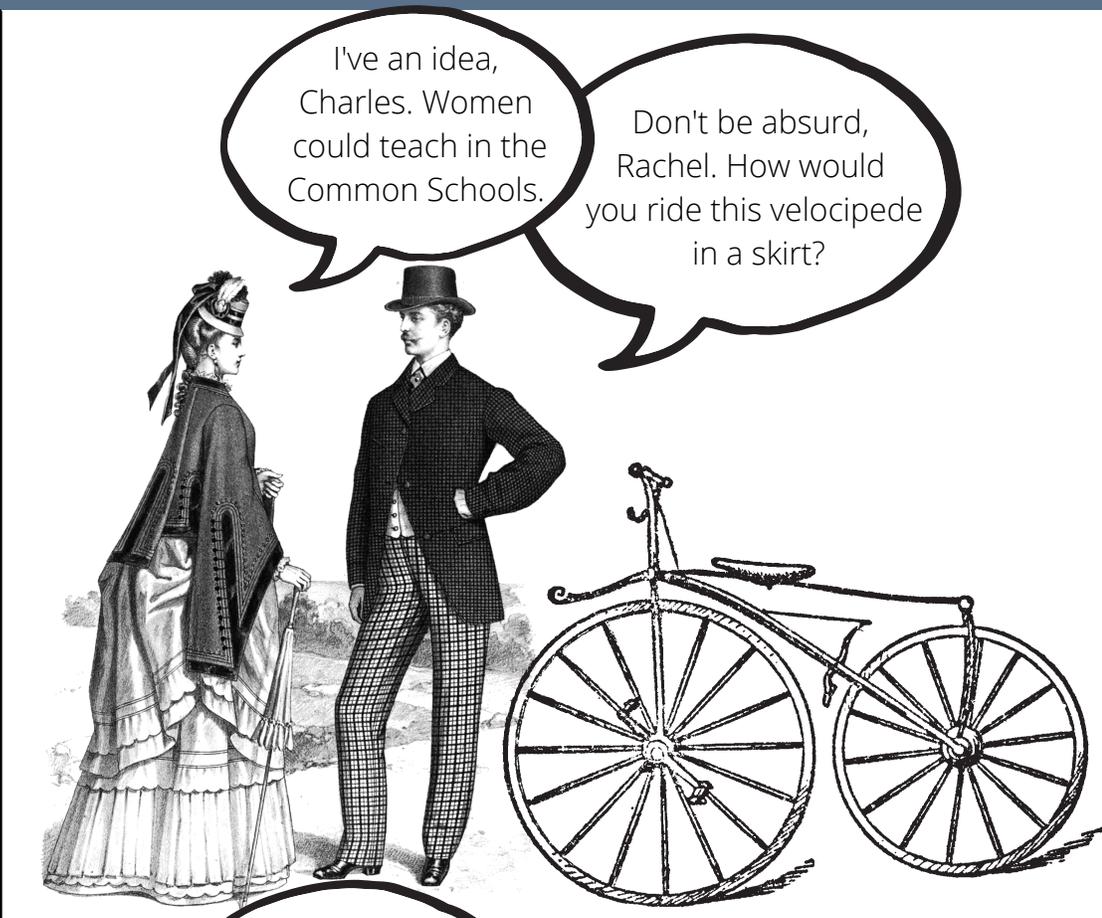


"It is believed that the most effectual means of preventing (tyranny) would be, to illuminate, as far as practicable, the minds of the people at large."

Thomas Jefferson

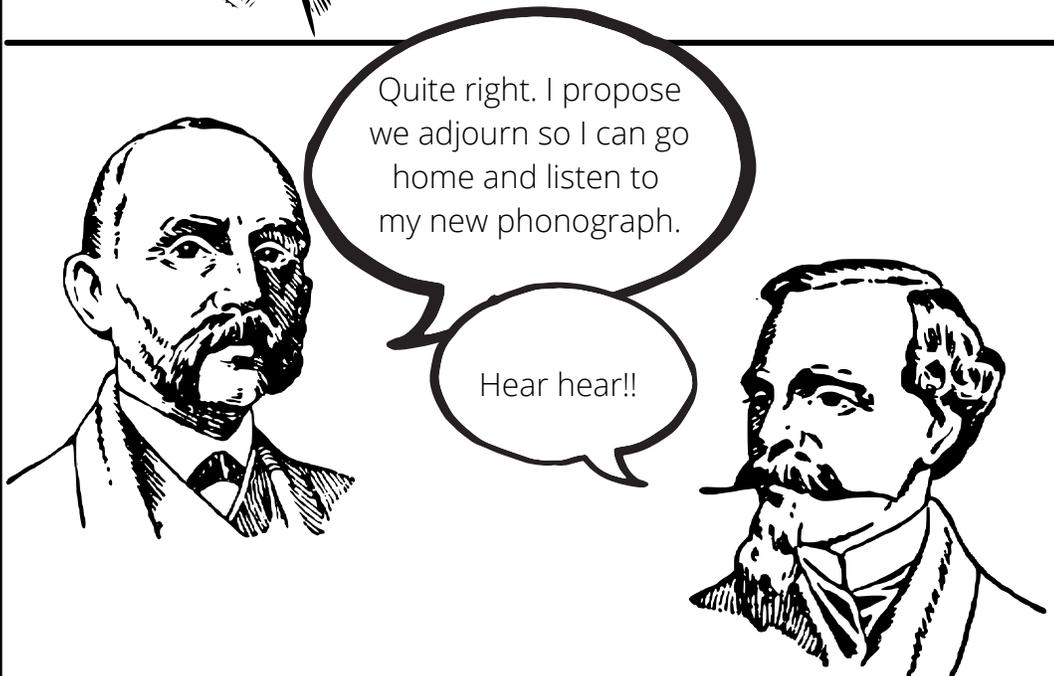
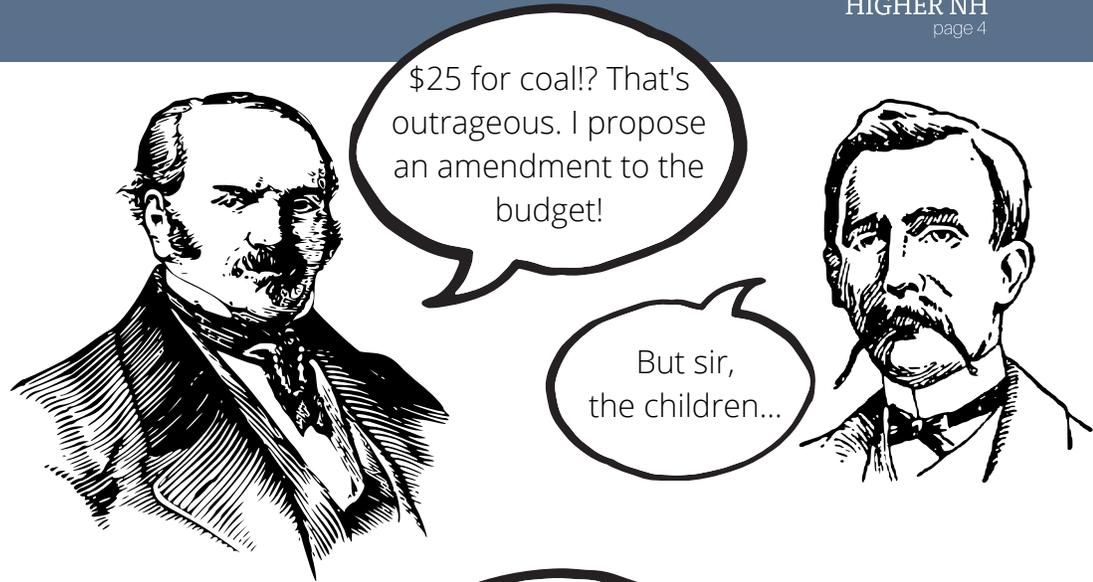
1805-1885: School districts begin to take shape in New Hampshire. In the New England town meeting tradition, school districts begin holding annual meetings, where citizens can vote on the school budget and conduct other business.

1830s-1880s: Reformer Horace Mann of Massachusetts proposes a system of schooling that is free and open to all and that instills democratic principles. He and other reformers also push for higher quality teachers and start teacher training programs. Women begin entering the teaching field. Schools increasingly become a means of Americanizing immigrants.



1885-1919: Through a series of laws in New Hampshire, the state begins to play a more prominent role in overseeing and financing schools. However, local districts continue to make most decisions.

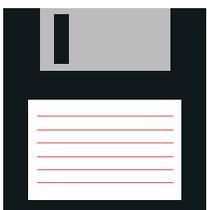
1900: After a period of patchwork school systems, the United States begins to embrace a universal public education system. Nine out of 10 students are now enrolled in public schools.



1954: In "Brown v. Board of Education," the U.S. Supreme Court rules that separate schools are not equal and orders the integration of schools. The ruling marks a victory in the struggle for educational equality, but the battle is far from over.

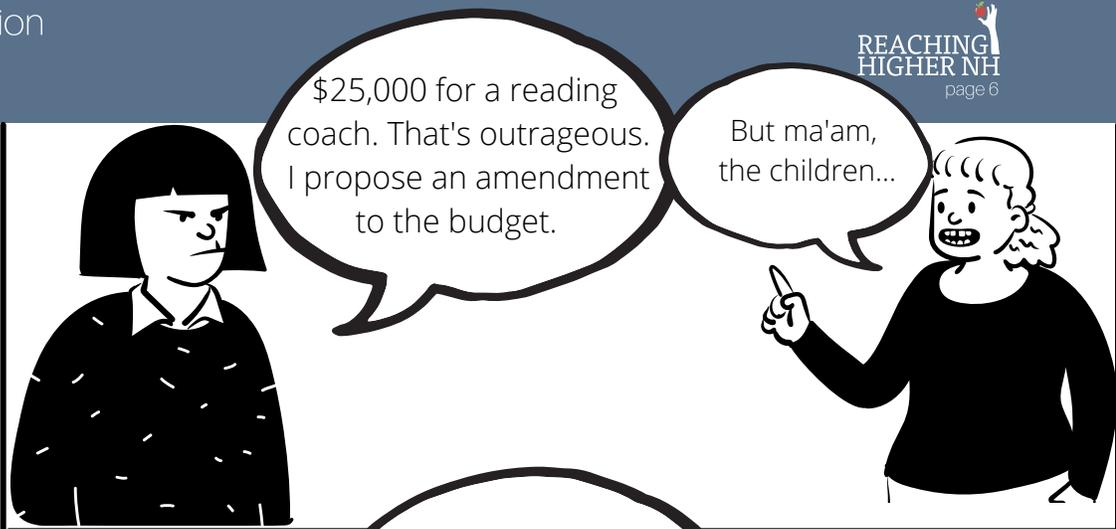


1980: Preparing Americans for working in the global marketplace becomes the key goal of public education. A privatization movement that seeks to operate schools more like businesses also begins to take hold.



1993-1997: Five school districts sue the state over the way it pays for education in a series of lawsuits known as Claremont I and Claremont II. The New Hampshire Supreme Court rules in the schools' favor, saying that the state is responsible for providing an "adequate education" and that the way it funds schools is "unconstitutional."

1997-present: State lawmakers continue to wrestle with the school funding formula, which still relies heavily on local property taxes. Another school funding lawsuit makes it to the Supreme Court.



"A constitutionally adequate public education is not a static concept removed from the demands of an evolving world. It is not the needs of the few but the critical requirements of the many that it must address."

New Hampshire Supreme Court *Claremont II* ruling



2003-present: New Hampshire adopts competency-based performance standards, designed to promote more meaningful learning, and pilots a competency-based assessment system.

Hey Henry, do you ever wonder why we still sit at desks and take tests when research shows that personalized, authentic learning produces vastly superior results and helps mitigate the inherent inequities of our schooling system?

My cat ate a spider.



Looking back through time, we can see that society has placed a high value on educating all of our children. We can also see that there are challenges to providing a good education to every child, and that people disagree about how to do it best. Understanding the role public schools play and how they've evolved over the years can better prepare us to discuss the future of education.

Learn more about the history of public education

Only a Teacher, PBS

Part I: A Very Brief History of American and New Hampshire Education, League of Women Voters

Our Kids: The American Dream in Crisis, Robert Putnam

'Life Stages: School' Civics 101: A Podcast

