

For keeps

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Question 13 was designed to elicit phrases which would establish whether something was a permanent gift or a loan:

13 Jostie has given you some interesting shells. You want to check whether he is just lending them to you, or whether he is giving them to you permanently. How would you ask him?

We offered the teacher a number of check-box responses:

Are you just lending them to me?

Do you want them back?

Can I keep them?/Are they for me to keep?

There was a very noticeable lack of formulaic responses to this question. 126 of the 150 schools chose one of the check-box items. It is unclear to what extent this was influenced by the inclusion of the check-box items. A different font was used for the check-box items, and the instructions to the teachers included the following:

If a response uses the same vocabulary as the question, it is not what I am looking for. I have often provided a check-box for this option, so that the students will not think that you are ignoring some of their responses.

Where other responses which are not of interest were common in the pilot test, I have provided check-boxes to save you time.

Please do not read out the check-box answers – they are not part of the question. I have put things which are only for the teacher in a **different font** as a reminder.

However, there was quite a lot of evidence that some teachers did read out the check-box items. Many other questions also contained check-box items, but still succeeded in eliciting the items we were seeking, even if there were frequent check-box responses as well. Thus while it is possible that in Q13 the check-box items pre-empted the supply of the formulaic responses we were looking for, it is just as probable that they were not supplied because they are not in use.

Only one formulaic response occurred more than three times: *for keeps*, with 14 reports. This phrase was in widespread use in the 1950's in New Zealand, at least in the Northern Region. It was particularly common in the context of marble-playing, but was not exclusive to that domain. It seems likely that with the general demise of marbles, and with greater regulation of the playground, the phrase has also fallen from use. (Playing "for keeps" was a common cause of playground tears and fights: few children could lose their marbles (literally!) without reacting in some negative way.) The 14 reports of *for keeps* were dotted round the country, in Northland, Auckland, Coromandel, Waikato, Hawkes Bay, Manawatu, Wellington, Canterbury, Otago.

There was thus no information of interest to be gleaned from Q13. It was one of the very few questions in the questionnaire to be a complete flop.

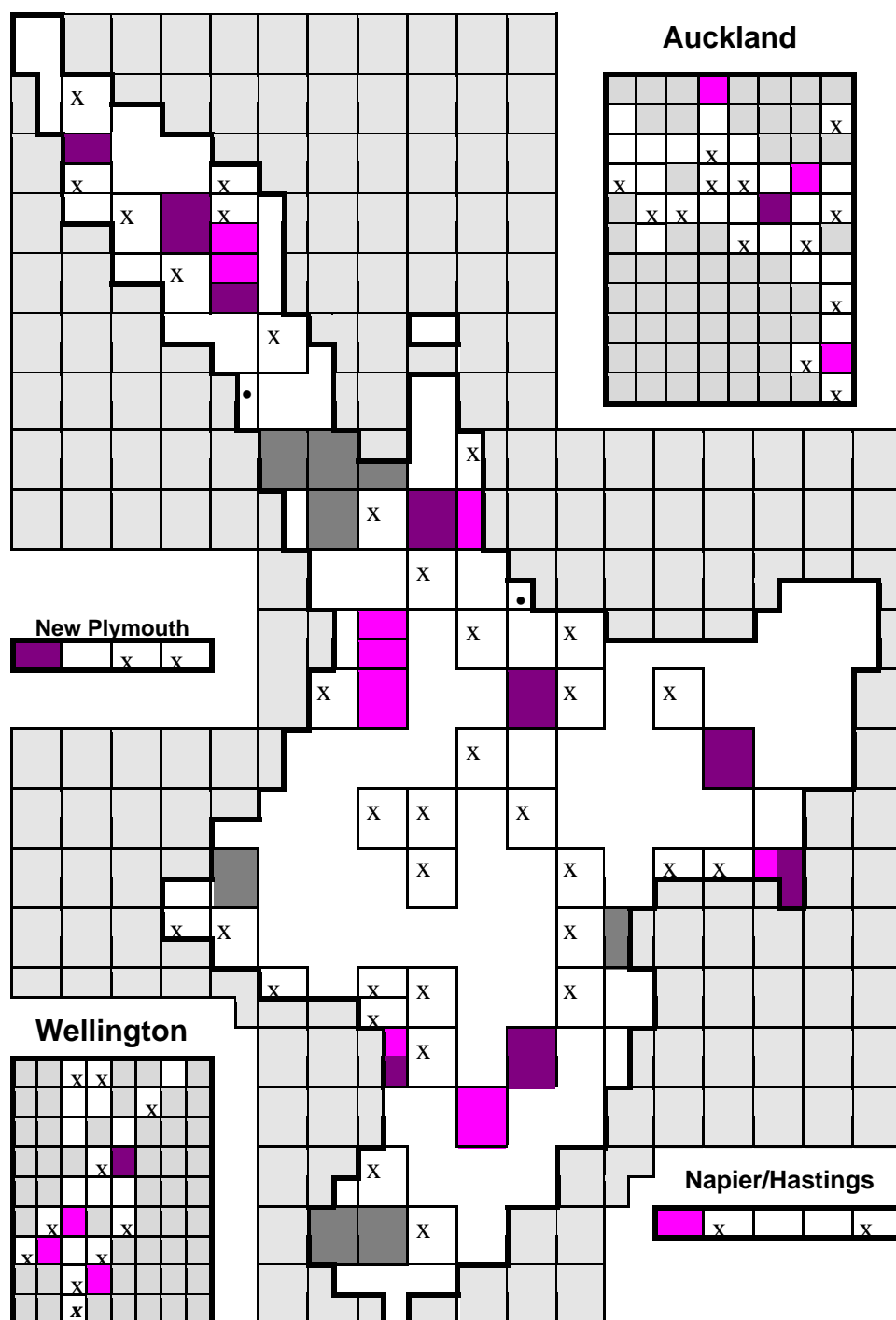
During the school visits, we returned to this question in the context of playing marbles. This revealed that there are two terms which predominate: *for keeps* and *keepsies*. *For keeps* was reported from 13 schools, including all but three of the schools in the Central Region portion of the South Island, and occasionally north of that. *Keepsies* was reported from 16 schools and was used fairly consistently through the North Island. *Keepers* was reported from two of the three schools visited in Southland – Otago. Thus it appears that these terms also show regionalisation, and it was purely the failure of the scenario in the questionnaire that prevented us from eliciting the requisite data.

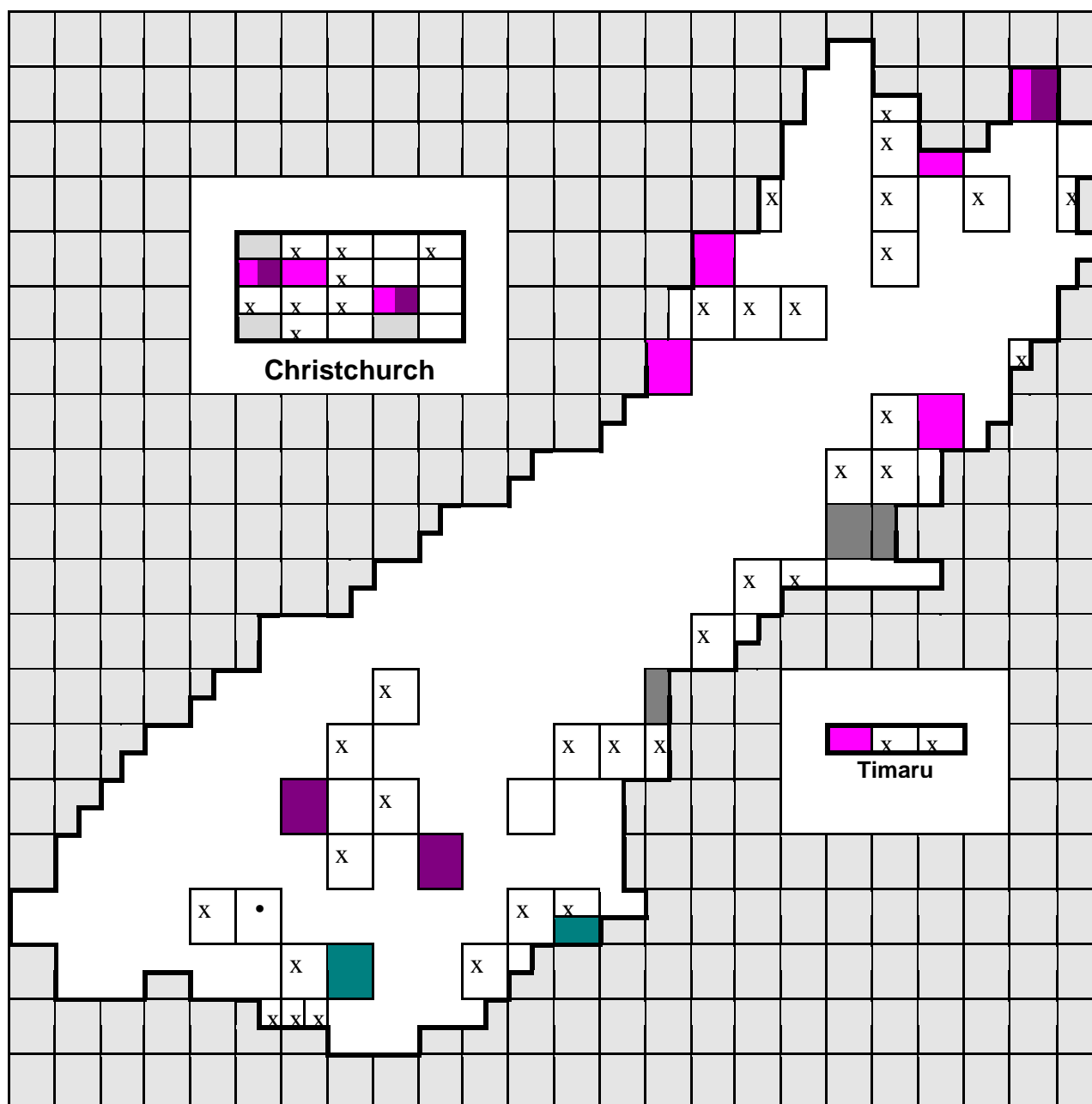
When the reports of *for keeps* from the original data are added to the visit data, the combined results suggest that *for keeps* is widespread, but *keepsies* is chiefly a North Island form, although it was also reported from a few South Island schools, two of them in Christchurch, and another from the touristy Central Otago lakes district, where there are many outsiders. There were no further reports of *keepers*.

During the visits, we also asked what the children called a game of marbles when it was not “for keeps”. There were two main answers: *friendlies* was the commonest, reported by 13 of the schools visited. Next most frequent was *friendsies* from 7 schools, all but one in the North Island. *Funsies* was reported from 3 schools in the North Island. All the schools which reported *friendsies* also reported *keepsies* in the first question. There is thus a strong likelihood that *friendsies* is also predominantly a North Island form.

Because the original data provided so little, no statistical analysis was undertaken for these forms. Nevertheless, the maps showing the combined data from the questionnaire and the school visits has been included to indicate the regionalisation which we suspect to be present.


Map 1: *For keeps, Keepsies, Keepers* (from school visits and original data)



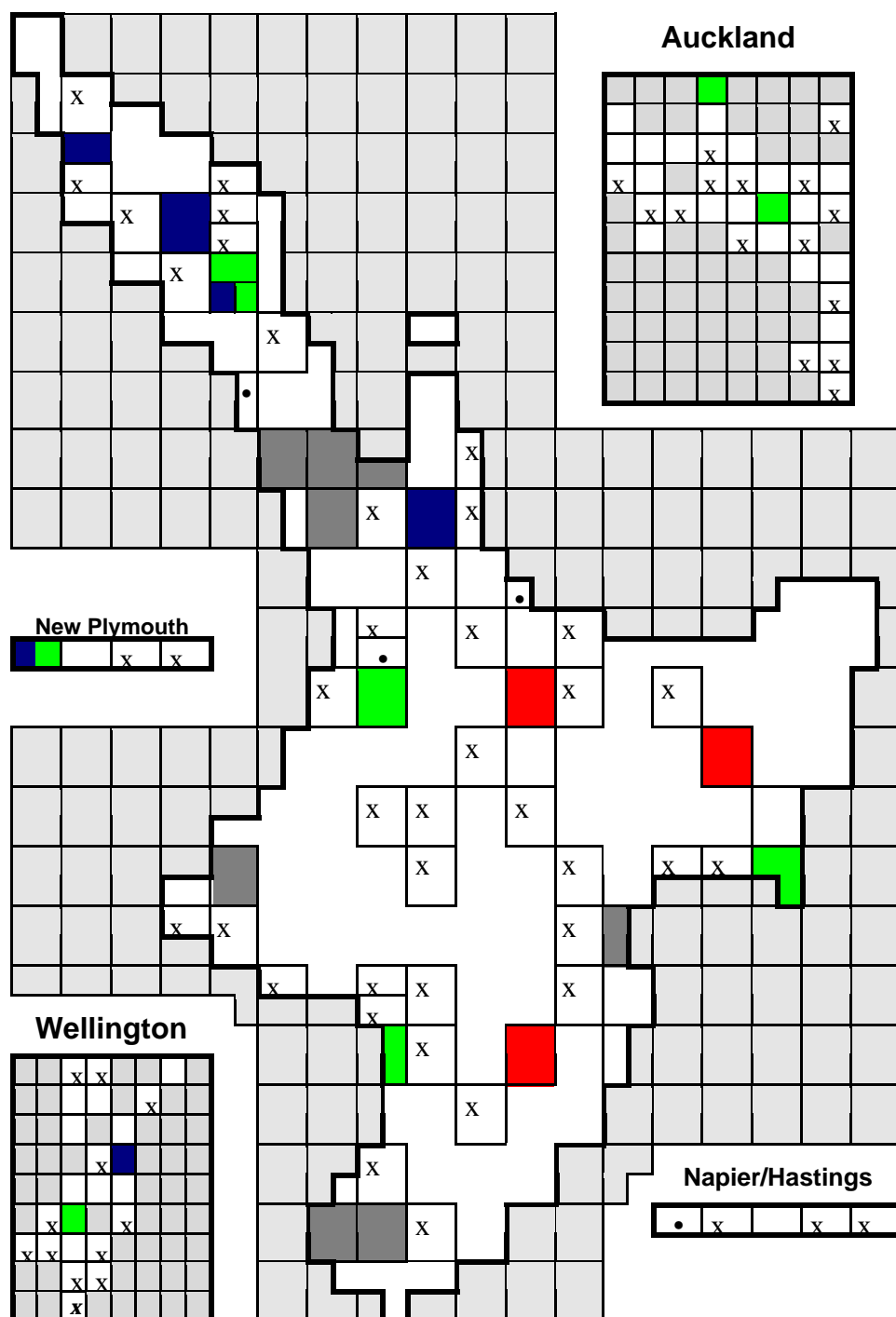


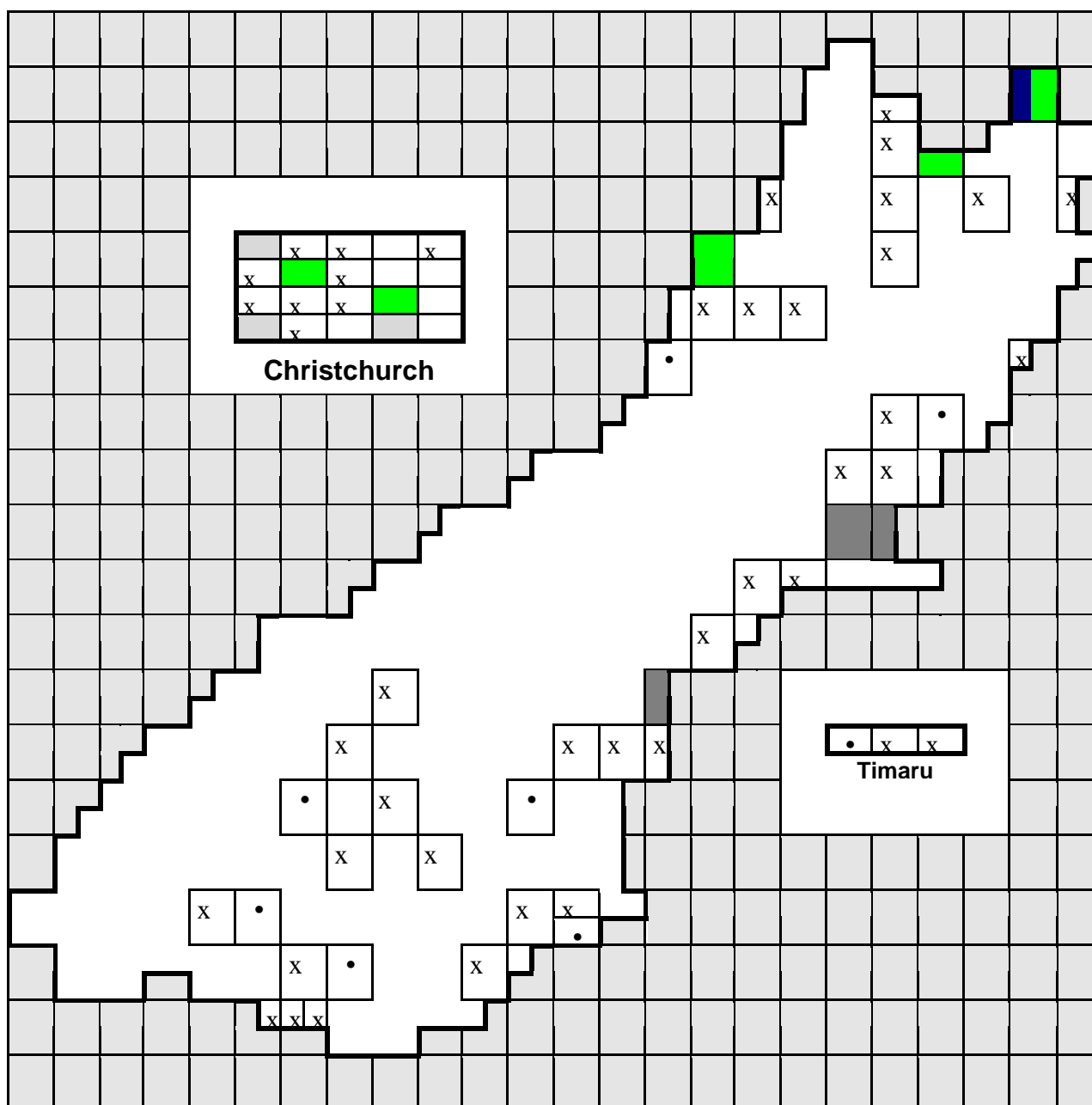
Key

Note that the insets are not to scale, nor all on the same scale for practical reasons. Each box represents one school in both urban and rural areas.

	for keeps		See urban map insert
	keepsies		school not visited
	keepers		no relevant data


Map 2: Friendlies, Friendsies, Funsies (school visits)





Key

Note that the insets are not to scale, nor all on the same scale for practical reasons. Each box represents one school in both urban and rural areas.

	friendsies		See urban map insert
	friendlies		school not visited
	funsies		no relevant data