

## Playing Truant

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Question 20 asked for the term used for playing truant:

- 20 You know that Brackie has gone to town without permission instead of coming to school. How would you tell your friends what Brackie is doing?

There were 61 different responses recorded for this item. In a number of cases, it was possible to group related items, to reduce the number of categories. Thus *wagging*, *wagging school*, *wagger* and *wag* were all grouped, and a similar process was used to combine other forms with the same roots. A number of different terms were provided for being "sick", including "pulling a sickie" and having "Monday-Tuesday fever". These were clearly linked thematically, and were grouped for analysis purposes. There were large numbers of low frequency items, occurring just once or twice in unrelated areas. These were ignored. They included items such as *jig*, *cruise*, *piss off down town*, *split*, *slap school*, *be a cheapskate*, *scarp it to town*, *go fishing*.

After grouping and deleting very low frequency items, there were 13 terms left. These terms with the number of occurrences were: *wagging* (130), *bunking* (55), *skipping school* (27), "sick" (15), *playing hookey* (10), *skiving* (4), *doing a runner* (5), *flunking* (3), *taking off* (3), *ditching* (5), *having a Maori holiday* (4), *flagging school* (4), *faking* (4). It will be seen that there is a large decline in frequency after the first five items. With the possible exception of *skiving* and *having a Maori holiday/day off*, none of the remaining terms appeared to have a patterned distribution: the handful of occurrences were dotted round the country. For this reason, it was decided to plot the five most frequent, together with *skiving* and *having a Maori holiday/day off*.

*Wagging* was almost universally reported, but the schools where it was not reported occurred in small clusters. The distribution of the remaining terms is rather strange. There are a series of pockets where *bunking* is a strong rival to *wagging*, notably in mid-Northland, in Hawkes Bay and in Canterbury. *Skipping school*, rather than *bunking* is the alternative to *wagging* (if there is one) in the area south of Auckland. *Being "sick"* is found sporadically throughout the country.

*Playing hookey* is interesting: it occurs in several rather isolated rural areas in the South Island and the Wairarapa, but also occurs in some central Auckland schools. This may be accounted for by it having entered NZ English twice: it was common in earlier times in New Zealand (it is recorded in the *Heinemann NZ Dictionary*, and also in the *Macquarie Dictionary*, 3<sup>rd</sup>. edn, and not marked as US), and we hypothesise that this usage is preserved in the isolated rural areas. It is also common American usage, and we hypothesise that it is this usage which is appearing in Auckland. *Skiving* does not show any clear evidence of regional distribution. *Having a Maori holiday/day off* (with the abbreviation MDO supplied by one school) is reported only in western areas of the central North Island. This is the kind of item which is likely to be under-reported because it is not PC, and children in some schools probably felt inhibited about telling the teacher about the use of such expressions.

**Statistical analysis**

There was little reason to expect much by way of results from the statistical analysis of the responses to this question. However, four terms were analysed: *Maori Day Off*, *bunking*, *playing hookey*, and *skipping school*.

In terms of decile, *Maori DO* was shown to be significantly low decile (p-value 0.0002). The Sub-region analysis confirmed that the four reports of *Maori Day Off* all came from the Central North Island.

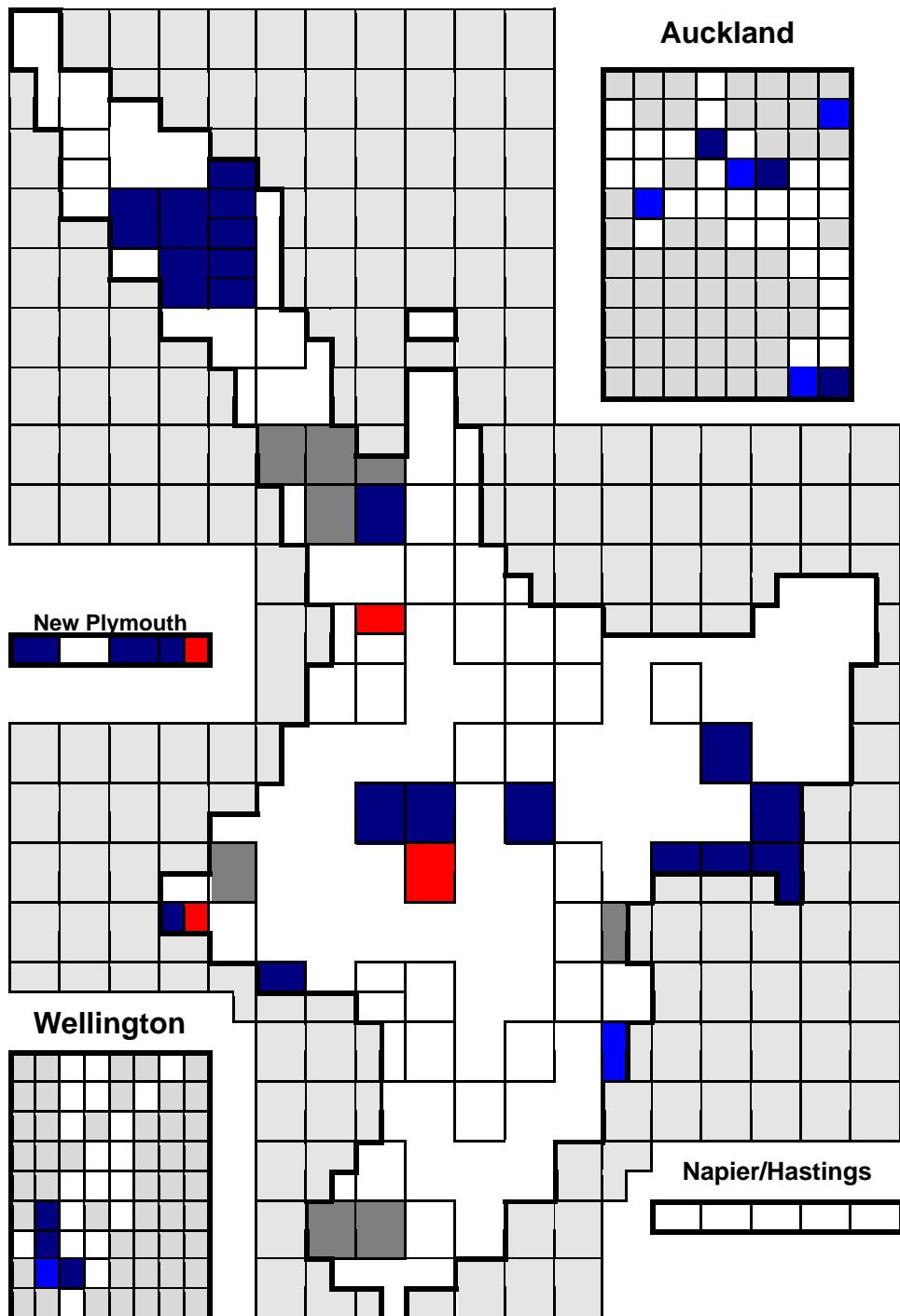
*Playing hookey* was not reported from the Southern Region.

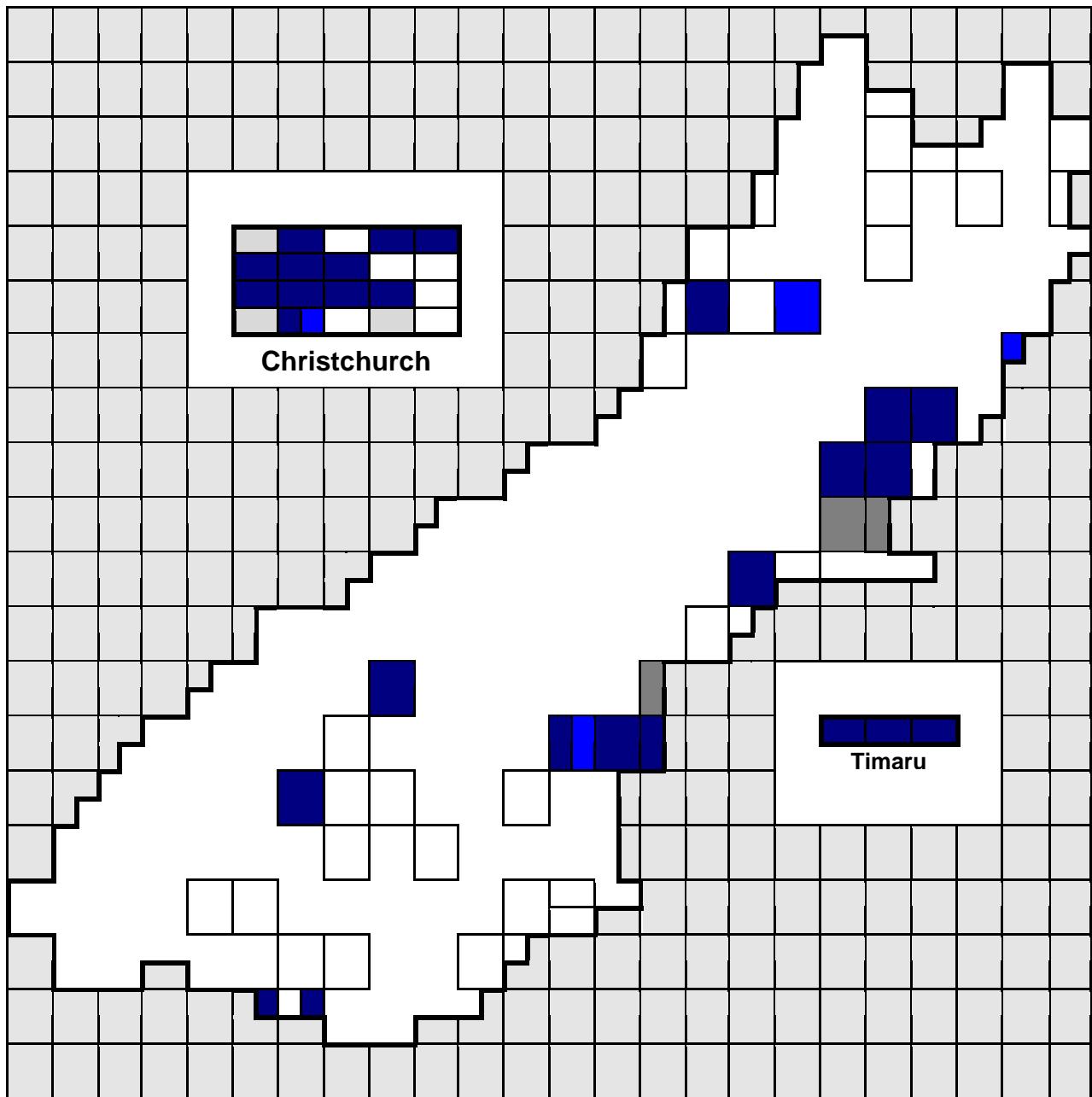
*Bunking* was shown to be significantly less common in the North Island than the South Island (p-value 0.0345).

*Skipping school* did not correlate significantly with any of the factors considered. This question was thus relatively unrevealing.

The relevant map follows; because *wagging* was so widespread, it is not shown on the map.

**Map: *bunking, playing hookey and having a Maori day off***



**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.

bunking

See urban map insert

playing hookey

Maori Day Off

**Q20 Statistics: Alternatives to Wagging****Alternatives to Wagging by Decile**

Analysis Of GEE Parameter Estimates – Empirical Standard Error Estimates

Empirical 95% Confidence Limits

parameter		Estimate	StdErr	Lower	Upper	Z	Pr> Z
intercept	0.0000	.	.	.	.	.	
item	MaoriDO	-2.3784	0.6001	-3.5546	-1.2022	-3.963	0.0001
item	bunking	-0.5458	0.3913	-1.3128	0.2212	-1.395	0.1631
item	playhky	-3.8263	0.8282	-5.4496	-2.2030	-4.620	0.0000
item	skipping	-2.3525	0.5774	-3.4842	-1.2208	-4.074	0.0000
decile*item	MaoriDO	-0.2497	0.0662	-0.3794	-0.1200	-3.774	<b>0.0002</b>
decile*item	bunking	-0.0000	0.0612	-0.1200	0.1199	-.0005	0.9996
decile*item	playhky	0.1868	0.1100	-0.0288	0.4024	1.6984	0.0894
decile*item	skipping	0.1372	0.0833	-0.0261	0.3005	1.6469	0.0996
scale	0.9730	.	.	.	.	.	

**Alternatives to Wagging by Main Region**

Analysis Of Initial Parameter Estimates

parameter		DF	Estimate	Std Err	ChiSquare	Pr>Chi
intercept	0	0.00	0.0000	.	.	
item	MaoriDO	1	-26.3651	0.5185	2585.3586	0.0001
item	bunking	1	-1.7918	0.7638	5.5035	0.0190
item	playhky	1	-26.3656	0.4249	3850.0302	0.0001
item	skipping	1	-0.9163	0.5916	2.3988	0.1214
item*region1	MaoriDO, 1	0	23.7811	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	MaoriDO, 2	1	-0.0002	60132.5783	0.0000	1.0000
item*region1	MaoriDO, 3	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	bunking, 1	1	1.1766	0.8126	2.0963	0.1477
item*region1	bunking, 2	1	1.4289	0.7977	3.2085	0.0733
item*region1	bunking, 3	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	playhky, 1	1	23.7816	0.6704	1258.4214	<b>0.0001</b>
item*region1	playhky, 2	0	23.8807	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	playhky, 3	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	skipping, 1	1	-0.6313	0.6865	0.8456	0.3578
item*region1	skipping, 2	1	-0.6931	0.6651	1.0862	0.2973
item*region1	skipping, 3	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
scale	0	1.00	0.0000	.	.	

## CONTRAST Statement Results

Contrast	DF	ChiSquare	Pr>Chi	Type
1 -2 for bunking	1	0.4922	0.4829	LR
1 -2 for skipping	1	0.0179	0.8936	LR

### Alternatives to Wagging by Sub-Region

#### Analysis Of Initial Parameter Estimates

parameter		DF	Estimate	Std Err	ChiSquare	Pr>Chi
intercept	0	0.00	0.0000	.	.	
item	MaoriDO	1	-26.3651	0.5436	2352.7136	0.0001
item	bunking	1	-1.7918	0.7638	5.5035	0.0190
item	playhky	1	-26.3652	1.0541	625.6117	0.0001
item	skipping	1	-0.9163	0.5916	2.3988	0.1214
item*region2	MaoriDO, 1	1	-0.0002	216811.094	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	MaoriDO, 2	1	-0.0002	216811.094	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	MaoriDO, 3	1	-0.0002	121837.317	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	MaoriDO, 4	0	24.6604	0.0000	.	.
item*region2	MaoriDO, 5	1	-0.0002	153308.595	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	MaoriDO, 6	1	-0.0002	113225.901	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	MaoriDO, 7	1	-0.0002	177025.517	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	MaoriDO, 8	1	-0.0002	216811.094	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	MaoriDO, 9	1	-0.0002	125175.944	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	MaoriDO, 10	1	-0.0002	167941.152	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	MaoriDO, 11	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region2	bunking, 1	1	1.7918	1.1180	2.5683	0.1090
item*region2	bunking, 2	1	3.4012	1.3354	6.4868	<b>0.0109</b>
item*region2	bunking, 3	1	0.1178	0.9895	0.0142	0.9053
item*region2	bunking, 4	1	1.1558	0.8679	1.7733	0.1830
item*region2	bunking, 5	1	1.0986	0.9789	1.2594	0.2618
item*region2	bunking, 6	1	-0.0541	0.9845	0.0030	0.9562
item*region2	bunking, 7	1	-24.5736	177025.517	0.0000	0.9999
item*region2	bunking, 8	1	0.1823	1.3354	0.0186	0.8914
item*region2	bunking, 9	1	3.8712	1.0704	13.0789	<b>0.0003</b>
item*region2	bunking, 10	1	3.1781	1.0992	8.3586	<b>0.0038</b>
item*region2	bunking, 11	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region2	playhky, 1	1	-0.0001	216811.094	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	playhky, 2	1	-0.0001	216811.094	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	playhky, 3	1	25.0435	1.1949	439.2661	<b>0.0001</b>
item*region2	playhky, 4	1	-0.0001	104152.681	0.0000	1.0000
item*region2	playhky, 5	1	23.9673	1.4839	260.8659	<b>0.0001</b>
item*region2	playhky, 6	1	23.3207	1.4693	251.9325	<b>0.0001</b>
item*region2	playhky, 7	1	24.2858	1.4954	263.7608	<b>0.0001</b>
item*region2	playhky, 8	1	24.7558	1.5202	265.1746	<b>0.0001</b>
item*region2	playhky, 9	1	23.5320	1.4731	255.1942	<b>0.0001</b>
item*region2	playhky, 10	0	24.1680	0.0000	.	.
item*region2	playhky 11	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region2	skipping, 1	1	-0.6931	1.2450	0.3100	0.5777
item*region2	skipping, 2	1	-25.4490	216811.094	0.0000	0.9999
item*region2	skipping, 3	1	-0.4055	0.8165	0.2466	0.6195
item*region2	skipping, 4	1	-0.5188	0.7731	0.4504	0.5022

item*region2	skipping, 5	1	-0.6931	0.9747	0.5057	0.4770
item*region2	skipping, 6	1	-0.9295	0.8579	1.1740	0.2786
item*region2	skipping, 7	1	-0.3365	0.9964	0.1140	0.7356
item*region2	skipping, 8	1	-25.4490	216811.094	0.0000	0.9999
item*region2	skipping, 9	1	-0.3365	0.8194	0.1686	0.6813
item*region2	skipping, 10	1	-0.4700	0.9874	0.2266	0.6341
item*region2	skipping, 11	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
scale	0	1.00	0.0000	.	.	.

**Alternatives to Wagging by Island**

## Analysis Of Initial Parameter Estimates

parameter		DF	Estimate	Std Err	ChiSquare	Pr>Chi
intercept	0	0.00	0.0000	.	.	.
item	MaoriDO	1	-26.3653	0.5111	2660.9238	0.0001
item	bunking	1	-0.1054	0.2653	0.1577	0.6912
item	playhky	1	-2.5840	0.5185	24.8339	0.0001
item	skipping	1	-1.3218	0.3249	16.5509	0.0001
item*island	MaoriDO, 1	0	23.2630	0.0000	.	.
item*island	MaoriDO, 2	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*island	bunking, 1	1	-0.7368	0.3485	4.4695	<b>0.0345</b>
item*island	bunking, 2	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*island	playhky, 1	1	-0.0902	0.6686	0.0182	0.8927
item*island	playhky, 2	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*island	skipping, 1	1	-0.3269	0.4302	0.5775	0.4473
item*island	skipping, 2	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
scale	0	1.00	0.0000	.	.	.

**Alternatives to Wagging by Catholic**

Analysis Of GEE Parameter Estimates – Empirical Standard Error Estimates

Empirical 95% Confidence Limits

parameter		Est.	Std Err	Lower	Upper	Z	Pr> Z
intercept	0.0000	.	.	.	.	.	
item	MaoriDO	-2.7081	1.0328	-4.7323	-0.6838	-2.622	0.0087
item	bunking	-0.5108	0.5164	-1.5229	0.5013	-.9892	0.3226
item	playhky	-2.7081	1.0328	-4.7323	-0.6838	-2.622	0.0087
item	skipping	-0.7885	0.5394	-1.8456	0.2687	-1.462	0.1438
item*catholic	MaoriDO, 1	-1.0454	1.1865	-3.3709	1.2802	-.8810	0.3783
item*catholic	MaoriDO, 2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
item*catholic	bunking, 1	-0.0041	0.5471	-1.0763	1.0681	-.0074	0.9941
item*catholic	bunking, 2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
item*catholic	playhky, 1	0.1013	1.0890	-2.0332	2.2357	0.0930	0.9259
item*catholic	playhky, 2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
item*catholic	skipping, 1	-0.8118	0.5878	-1.9640	0.3403	-1.381	0.1672
item*catholic	skipping, 2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
scale	1.0000	.	.	.	.	.	

**Alternatives to Wagging by Urban/Rural**

Analysis Of GEE Parameter Estimates – Empirical Standard Error Estimates

Empirical 95% Confidence Limits

parameter		Est.	Std Err	Lower	Upper	Z	Pr> Z
intercept	0.0000	.	.	.	.	.	
item	MaoriDO	-4.0604	1.0086	-6.0372	-2.0837	-4.026	0.0001
item	bunking	-0.4480	0.2669	-0.9712	0.0752	-1.678	0.0933
item	playhky	-2.3795	0.4675	-3.2958	-1.4633	-5.090	0.0000
item	skipping	-1.1676	0.3060	-1.7674	-0.5678	-3.815	0.0001
item*urb_rur	MaoriDO, 1	0.7402	1.1673	-1.5477	3.0281	0.6341	0.5260
item*urb_rur	MaoriDO, 2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
item*urb_rur	bunking, 1	-0.2277	0.3511	-0.9159	0.4604	-.6486	0.5166
item*urb_rur	bunking, 2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
item*urb_rur	playhky, 1	-0.4055	0.6564	-1.6920	0.8811	-.6177	0.5368
item*urb_rur	playhky, 2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
item*urb_rur	skipping, 1	-0.7520	0.4449	-1.6239	0.1199	-1.690	0.0909
item*urb_rur	skipping, 2	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000	0.0000
scale	1.0000	.	.	.	.	.	

**Alternatives to Wagging Northern and Central Regions only**

Analysis Of Initial Parameter Estimates

parameter		DF	Estimate	Std Err	ChiSquare	Pr>Chi
intercept	0	0.00	0.0000	.	.	
item	MaoriDO	1	-26.3653	0.5185	2585.3925	0.0001
item	bunking	1	-0.3629	0.2302	2.4854	0.1149
item	playhky	1	-2.4849	0.4249	34.1987	0.0001
item	skipping	1	-1.6094	0.3038	28.0615	0.0001
item*region1	MaoriDO, 1	0	23.7813	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	MaoriDO, 2	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	bunking, 1	1	-0.2523	0.3606	0.4895	0.4841
item*region1	bunking, 2	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	playhky, 1	1	-0.0991	0.6704	0.0218	0.8825
item*region1	playhky, 2	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	skipping, 1	1	0.0619	0.4622	0.0179	0.8935
item*region1	skipping, 2	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
scale	0	1.00	0.0000	.	.	

**Alternatives to Wagging by Decile and Main Region**

Analysis Of Initial Parameter Estimates

parameter		DF	Estimate	Std Err	ChiSquare	Pr>Chi
intercept	0	0.00	0.0000	.	.	
item	MaoriDO	1	-25.6010	0.9883	671.0230	0.0001
item	bunking	1	-1.7732	0.8504	4.3478	0.0371
item	playhk	1	-27.5765	1.0934	636.1236	0.0001
item	skipping	1	-1.7967	0.7994	5.0512	0.0246
decile*item	MaoriDO	1	-0.1431	0.2067	0.4788	0.4890
decile*item	bunking	1	-0.0032	0.0648	0.0025	0.9604
decile*item	playhky	1	0.1920	0.1350	2.0240	0.1548
decile*item	skipping	1	0.1459	0.0839	3.0237	0.0821
item*region1	MaoriDO, 1	0	23.6576	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	MaoriDO, 2	1	0.1003	59637.1837	0.0000	1.0000
item*region1	MaoriDO, 3	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	bunking, 1	1	1.1738	0.8146	2.0765	0.1496
item*region1	bunking, 2	1	1.4310	0.7989	3.2086	0.0733
item*region1	bunking, 3	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	playhky, 1	1	23.9340	0.7004	1167.6881	<b>0.0001</b>
item*region1	playhky, 2	0	23.7543	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	playhky, 3	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
item*region1	skipping, 1	1	-0.5176	0.6991	0.5481	0.4591
item*region1	skipping, 2	1	-0.7996	0.6781	1.3904	0.2383
item*region1	skipping, 3	0	0.0000	0.0000	.	.
scale	0	1.00	0.0000	.	.	