

Year 8: Power and the People. How did ordinary people achieve their right to vote?

<p>Key words:</p> <p>Suffrage: the right to vote in political elections. Democracy: a system of government where people vote to elect representatives. Representation: the action of speaking or acting on behalf of someone. Politically, adults eligible to vote elect MPs in elections to represent us in Parliament. MPs: stands for “Members of Parliament” and these are now elected by adults over 18 in each area of the country [constituencies] to represent their wishes and concerns in Parliament. Secret Ballot: the right where adults have the right to vote in secret for their preferred candidate. This ensures that voting is fair and independent of anybody trying to influence a person’s vote. Rotten Boroughs: an area that was able to elect an MP despite having very few voters, the choice of MP typically being in the hands of one person or family. Rotten Boroughs were a serious issue in 19th century in Britain. For example, Dunwich in Suffolk could send 2 MPs to Parliament in 1831 despite only having 32 residents whereas Manchester had no MPs! Radical: supporting far-reaching or thorough political or social change. Protest: a statement or action expressing disapproval of or objection to something Chartists: a political movement of working-class people in Britain from 1836 – 1848. The Chartists campaigned for universal male suffrage and reform of the political system in Britain. Massacre: a brutal killing of many people.</p> <p>Research: Find out who your local MP is and what they do in your local area. Many have their own websites.</p>	<p>Key people in the Women’s Suffrage movement:</p> <p>Mary Wollstonecraft: author of the book “A Vindication of the Rights of Women” in 1792. It became a best seller and argued for equal rights for women both politically and socially. Emmeline Pankhurst: founded the Women’s Social, Political Union (WSPU). It focussed on ‘deeds not words’ and its members became known as “Suffragettes”. Its campaigns were militant. Millicent Fawcett: leader of the Suffragist movement, National Union of Women’s Suffrage Societies (NUWSS). It focussed on peaceful and legal strategies to get the vote. Emily Davison: her actions included arson, assault and obstruction and while in prison she went on hunger strike and suffered force feeding. Davison is best remembered for her final protest, which caused her death. At the Epsom Derby in June 1913, she threw herself in front of the King’s horse which knocked her down. Sophia Duleep Singh: her contribution to the campaign was wide-ranging. Duleep Singh not only sold WSPU publications outside of her home at Hampton Court Palace, but also led a 400-strong demonstration to parliament on a day that later became known as ‘Black Friday’.</p> <p>Questions: What actions do you think were most effective in getting women the vote – militant or peaceful and why? Why should we remember the Suffragettes today?</p>
<p>Key events in the history of British suffrage:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • American Declaration of Independence, 1776. It said that all men were created equal and they had God-given rights to “Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”. These ideas helped to spark a political movement in Britain that sought change. • The French Revolution, 1789-1799. The French working and middle classes revolted against its monarchy and took power after executing its royal family and many of its nobility. It created a republic governed by the ideas of “liberty, equality and fraternity”, which is the foundation of France today. • The Peterloo Massacre, 1819. Eighteen people died in Manchester when cavalry charged into a crowd of around 60,000 people who had gathered to demand the reform of parliamentary representation. • The Cat and Mouse Act, 1913. This law allowed for the early release of WSPU (Suffragette) prisoners who were so weakened by hunger striking that they were at risk of death. They were to be recalled to prison once their health was recovered, where the process would begin again. • The Representation of the People Act, 1918. A law after WWI where all men over the age of 21 gained the right to vote together with women over the age of 30 who met a property or educational requirement. Around 8.4 million women gained the right to vote with this law. In 1928, all women gained the right to vote equal to men. 	<p>Keywords to help with evaluating sources</p> <p>Accuracy: a criteria to evaluate sources by looking at how accurate (correct) the content measured against historical fact. Comprehensiveness: a criteria to evaluate sources by looking at how much a source covers – in terms of years or topics discussed. Typicality: a criteria to evaluate sources by looking at whether a source reflects the typical experience or attitudes of people of the period. Content: information that a source contains. Provenance: where a source comes from, who made and why it was made [to persuade/inform]. Knowledge of context: your own knowledge of the topic that you can use to explain the meaning of a source.</p> <p>Activity: Choose a source from: https://www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/education/resources/suffragettes-on-file/ Explain how useful your chosen source is in telling us about the actions of the Suffragettes using content, provenance and drawing on what you know about the Suffragettes. Can you also use accuracy/comprehensiveness and typicality to make your judgement?</p>