

## Enquiry 2: Teachers' notes

# What were the suffrage campaigners fighting for?

## Enquiry overview

### About the lessons

This series of lessons has been designed to help you mark the 100th anniversary of women's suffrage. It explores the history of the suffrage movement from the mid-nineteenth century onwards and focuses particularly on the differing motivations of the women who took part in the campaign. This enquiry also serves to paint a broader picture of the movement, integrating working-class campaigners and their context, as well as the women who acted as the rank and file of the various campaigning groups and their leaders.

### Key learning points

- What the different groups campaigning for women's suffrage were actually fighting for.
- The difference between 'adult suffrage' and 'women's suffrage'.
- How women made their voices heard: the co-operative movement, TUC and ILP.
- The suffragist-suffragette split and increasing suffragette militancy.
- Engaging with the Warwick database and applying learning to 'big data' case studies.
- The terms of the 1918 and 1928 Acts and responses from campaigners.

### Outline

This enquiry explores the varying reasons why suffrage campaigners wanted to achieve votes for women from the mid-nineteenth century onwards.

Key areas of focus are:

- The ideas of the middle-class suffragists working in the mid-nineteenth-century context.
- The ideas of the working-class radical suffragists and their work within the context of Labour politics.
- The ideas of the suffragettes and the question over whether the suffragist/suffragette division hinged upon motivations or tactics.

### Lessons

The content is appropriate for addressing the relevant requirements of the National Curriculum for teaching about suffrage in history.

The lessons are designed for use with Key Stage 3 students and may be adapted for use with Key Stage 4. At the start of each lesson there is a recap to help teachers check that students have grasped the knowledge from previous sections.

### Rationale for the enquiry:

#### i) Scholarly rationale

This enquiry draws on recent scholarship by exploring the role played by many of the suffragists in radical politics, as well as the suffragettes. It includes insights from recent literature

that has built on previous studies of the middle-class leaders of the militant and non-militant campaigns, to include figures whose views and actions have not been explored in as much detail, especially working-class women. It also draws upon work that has situated the suffrage movement in a context of wider campaigns to improve the position of women in the nineteenth century and in late nineteenth- and early twentieth-century Labour politics.

#### ii) Curricular rationale

This enquiry explores similarities and differences between and within the various groups campaigning for women's suffrage. Its aim is to introduce the diversity of the movement and build substantive knowledge of key individuals, events and ideas associated with it, and also

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to give students a sense of the wider ideological and political context from the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. This enquiry should also

address misconceptions such as the idea that the suffragettes were intrinsically more radical than the suffragists and that all the participants

in the campaign for votes for women were of a similar social class.

### Breakdown of the scheme of work

Lesson	Key content
<b>L1:</b> What were the nineteenth-century campaigners fighting for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Lacking the vote means no influence over public policy.</li> <li>• The Second and Third Reform Bills and petitioning process.</li> <li>• The Langham Place and Kensington groups and Lydia Becker's involvement in Manchester.</li> <li>• Key legislation.</li> <li>• Plenary: Was it only middle-class women?</li> </ul>
<b>L2:</b> What were the radical suffragists fighting for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Nineteenth-century campaigners represented middle-class women: working women were not necessarily persuaded by their views.</li> <li>• The difference between 'adult suffrage' and 'women's suffrage'.</li> <li>• The co-operative movement, Trades Union and ILP.</li> <li>• Selina Cooper, Hannah Mitchell and Helen Silcock.</li> </ul>
<b>L3:</b> Were the suffragettes and suffragists fighting for the same things?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The formation of the WSPU in 1903 and the adoption of the policy of militancy in 1905.</li> <li>• The key aims of the WSPU.</li> <li>• The move to London in 1906 and the escalation of suffragette tactics.</li> <li>• The split in the WSPU in 1907 and the formation of the WFL.</li> <li>• Criticism of suffragette militancy and the violence and dictatorial style of the Pankhursts.</li> <li>• Was the dispute mainly about tactics or representative of a deeper conflict?</li> </ul>
<b>L4:</b> What were different people within the suffrage movement fighting for?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Why would different people fight for suffrage?</li> <li>• Activity: Using the database to research different individuals within the suffrage movement.</li> <li>• Patterns of membership of the different campaigning groups.</li> <li>• Diversity in background, beliefs and actions among those campaigning within the suffrage movement.</li> </ul>
<b>L5:</b> What had been won by 1918?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The terms of the 1918 Representation of the People Act.</li> <li>• The terms of the 1928 Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act.</li> <li>• Responses to the 1918 Act by the WSPU and by Millicent Fawcett and the NUWSS.</li> </ul>

## Lesson 1:

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# What were the nineteenth-century suffrage campaigners fighting for?

### Starter: (Slides 5–6)

Use the PowerPoint to put up images of nineteenth-century life. Pose the question: 'How might the vote affect these different areas of life?' Click again to reveal the statistic of who could vote and follow up with a second question: 'What difference might it make that only some men could vote on these things?'

**Slide 6** contains information on the Reform Bills and petitioning that can be used to explain the process to students.

### Activity 1: (Slides 7–8, Resources pp. 1–3)

Divide the class into groups, focusing variously on the **Langham Place Group, the Manchester National Society for Women's Suffrage and Harriet Taylor Mill and John Stuart Mill**. Each group should be given the relevant resource sheet, which they should read through before moving on to the activity below.

**Activity:** Use the resource sheet to construct a concept map of all of the reasons why your group and the individuals within it might want the vote.

**Feed back and pool ideas:** Students feed back on what they have learned, leading to the creation of a central map, or organise through smaller discussion and exchange of maps between groups.

### Activity 2: (Slide 9)

Use the PowerPoint to introduce some of the legal changes that had happened by the end of the nineteenth century: The Municipal Franchise Act, The Married Women's Property Act, The Repeal of the Contagious Diseases Act, The Local Government Act.

**Whole-class discussion:** Would the groups discussed today be satisfied by these changes? Why not? Why would different women be satisfied in different ways?

### Plenary: (Slide 10, Resources p. 4)

Students summarise why nineteenth-century campaigners wanted the vote on their **Plenary** resource sheet. They should fill in the first section only, leaving the rest blank, and should return to the sheet at the end of each subsequent lesson to gradually fill it in over the course of the enquiry.

**Final question:** Which women would be left out of these campaigns by the dawn of the twentieth century?

### Resources needed:

- Enquiry 2 PowerPoint Lesson 1
- Enquiry 2 Lesson 1 Resource Sheets pp. 1–4

## Lesson 2:

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### What were the radical suffragists fighting for?

**Recap and answers: (Slide 5)** Use the PowerPoint to recap learning from last lesson, if required.

#### Starter: (Slide 6)

Use the PowerPoint to introduce the radical suffragists, using the definition on the slide (click to reveal). Then introduce the difference between adult suffrage and women's suffrage (click to reveal).

**Key questions:** Would the campaigners introduced last lesson agree with the radical suffragists' point of view? Why? Which women might not agree with this?

#### Activity 1: (Slides 7–10, Resources p. 5)

Using the PowerPoint (text available on the resource sheets), introduce the co-operative movement, the Trades Union Congress and the ILP, and the changes to the law that allowed working-class women to stand for election as members of Boards of Guardians.

#### Activity 2: (Slide 11, Resources p. 6)

Focus on the **Selina Cooper and Harriette Beanland manifesto** (on the resource sheet). In pairs, get the students to read the manifesto in detail and answer the following questions:

- Why do Cooper and Beanland argue that it is necessary for working-class people to be on the Board?
- Why do Cooper and Beanland argue that it is necessary for women to be on the Board?
- What do Cooper and Beanland say they want to achieve if they are elected?

**Whole-class discussion:** What is the difference between the kinds of arguments that Cooper and Beanland are putting forward here and the ones you looked at last lesson? Why might these people go on to campaign for the vote in national elections?

#### Activity 3: (Slides 12–13, Resources p. 7)

Use the PowerPoint to introduce Helen Silcock and the TUC debate: the **Arguments** resource sheet explains that the motion she was putting forward in the 1901 Trades Union Congress was for the TUC to get behind women's suffrage, but she was countered with a bill for adult suffrage.

Click to reveal the verdict of the TUC in 1901.

**Activity:** Students should then look at the arguments collected on the resource sheet and arrange them in a table of arguments for campaigning for women's suffrage now or waiting to campaign for adult suffrage.

**Whole-class discussion:** Why do students think the TUC came to their decision?

#### Plenary: (Slide 14, Resources p. 4)

Returning to their **Plenary** resource sheet from Lesson 1, students should summarise why the radical suffragists wanted the vote.

**Final question:** Are there any women who would still be left out of this campaign?

#### Resources needed:

- Enquiry 2 PowerPoint Lesson 2
- Enquiry 2 Lesson 2 Resource Sheets pp. 4-7
- Lesson 1 Plenary Sheet p. 4

## Lesson 3:

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# Were the suffragettes and suffragists fighting for the same things?

**Recap and answers: (Slide 5)** Use the PowerPoint to recap learning from last lesson, if required.

### Starter: (Slide 6)

Set the scene using the PowerPoint. In this lesson we are going to look at whether the suffragettes and the suffragists disagreed primarily about why they wanted the vote or

the tactics they used to campaign for it. Click to reveal definitions of the WSPU and the term 'militancy'.

### Activity 1: (Slides 7–8, Resources pp. 8-9)

On the **WSPU** resource sheet are some selected quotes from members of the WSPU. The students should read through them and, using what they remember from the previous lessons, discuss the following two questions in pairs:

- Which of these ideas would the nineteenth-century suffragists have agreed with?
- Which of these ideas would the radical suffragists have agreed with?

**Activity:** The students should highlight or annotate their resource sheets when they think they have identified areas of agreement or disagreement. (The students could be reminded that areas of disagreement might be represented not only by direct conflict in ideas but in either the suffragists or suffragettes engaging with ideas that the other group appears to have ignored.)

**Whole-class discussion:** Each pair gives an example of one area of agreement between the ideas of the suffragists and suffragettes and one area of disagreement. The discussion could be summed up by posing the question: 'Did the suffragists and suffragettes agree on what the vote was for?'

### Activity 2: (Slides 9–11, Resources pp. 10-16)

Use the PowerPoint to introduce the splits in the suffrage movement.

Click to reveal the Millicent Fawcett quote from 1906. Considering the evolution of suffragette tactics, we are now going to consider whether she and the rest of the suffragists continued to hold this view as time went on.

Assign each student one of the **Character cards** from the resource sheet, containing information about members of the WSPU, the NUWSS or the WFL. Also give out the information on the **NUWSS and WFL**, and the **Timeline of suffragette activities**.

**Activity:** Go through the timeline as a class, with the students forming a continuum line according to whether they think their character would have approved of each action. Pause as you go through to question students about why they think their character approves or disapproves of particular events.

**Whole-class discussion:** Would Millicent Fawcett have changed her mind by 1914?

### Plenary: (Slide 12, Resources p. 4)

Summarise why the suffragettes wanted the vote on the Lesson 1 **Plenary** resource sheet.

**Final question:** Are there any women who are still being left out of this campaign?

### Resources needed:

- Enquiry 2 PowerPoint Lesson 3
- Enquiry 2 Lesson 3 Resource Sheets pp. 8-16
- Lesson 1 Plenary Sheet p. 4

## Lesson 4:

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# What were different people within the suffrage movement fighting for?

### Recap and answers: (Slide 5)

Recap on the groups they have covered so far: What were the Kensington and Langham Place groups, Millicent Fawcett and the NUWSS, the radical suffragists, the WSPU and the WFL fighting for?

Using prompts on the board, come up with a class summary of what each group was fighting for. This can be written up on the board.

**Pose the question:** Could you fight for more than one of these things at once?

### Starter: (Slide 6)

Introduce the question of why individuals might fight for suffrage. Get student responses using the prompts on the PowerPoint.

### Activity 1: (Slides 7–8, Resources pp. 17-19)

**Activity:** Split the class into pairs and assign them one of the Name grids to research from the resource sheets. They need to pick one person from each column and find them on the database spreadsheet. Once they've found them, both students need to fill in their two Research cards, detailing each individual's reasons for fighting and which groups they agreed with most. NB – at times, students will need to draw inferences from the information given about each woman on the database in order to think about what her reasons for supporting the suffrage campaign may have been.

Return to the different suffrage organisations and ask students to hold up their cards if they think they agreed with any of the things each group were fighting for (they might have agreed with more than one). Question selected students on why they think this is the case.

### Activity 2: (Slide 9)

The pairs of students should now join with another pair to form groups of four. The students should then discuss each of their individuals with each other, using the questions on the PowerPoint as a guide.

### Plenary: (Slides 10–11)

Using what they have learned from this lesson, students should fill in the last speech bubble on the Lesson 1 Plenary resource sheet.

Final question: Among all the different things that people in the suffrage movement were fighting for, did they have anything in common?

### Resources needed:

- Enquiry 2 PowerPoint Lesson 4
- Enquiry 2 Lesson 4 Resource Sheets pp. 17-19
- Suffrage database ([www.suffrageresources.org.uk/database](http://www.suffrageresources.org.uk/database))
- Lesson 1 Plenary Sheet p. 4

## Lesson 5:

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### What had been won by 1918?

#### Recap and answers: (Slide 5)

Ask selected students to feed back individual reasons for fighting for suffrage that they learned about while completing their research in the previous lesson.

#### Starter: (Slide 6)

**Whole-class discussion:** Use the PowerPoint to put up the terms of the Representation of the People Act of 1918.

Which of the groups we have looked at would be satisfied and who would be left out? Discuss this as a class.

#### Activity 1: (Slide 7, Resources p. 20)

Using the **Responses** resource sheet, look at two sources from 1918: the letter from Millicent Fawcett and the letter from the 'Women's Party', alongside the **Plenary** sheet that the students have been working on throughout the enquiry.

**Activity:** Identify which of the reasons for wanting the vote are being referred to in 1918, and which ones are still being left out. Students can highlight or underline on their sheets.

#### Activity 2: (Slide 8)

**Whole-class discussion:** Using the PowerPoint, bring up the terms of the 1928 Act. Did this solve the problem?

Discuss and record what is being left out and why.

#### Outcome activity and plenary: (Slides 9-10)

Ask students to write an extended paragraph to answer the enquiry question. Get the students to read each other's paragraphs in pairs, checking to see whether all of the different voices have been mentioned.

**Final question:** Using their **Plenary** sheets as a prompt, return to the original enquiry question and ask for quick responses.

#### Resources needed:

- Enquiry 2 PowerPoint Lesson 5
- Enquiry 2 Lesson 5 Resource Sheet p. 20
- Lesson 1 Plenary Sheet p. 4