

Enquiry 6a: Teachers' notes

What's the story of 'Votes for Women' in my local area?

Enquiry overview

About the lessons

This series of lessons has been designed to help you mark the one hundredth anniversary of women's suffrage. It explores the history of the suffrage movement from the mid-nineteenth century onwards and focuses particularly on the suffrage campaign at local level. Students will learn about the lives of key individuals related to the suffrage campaign in their local area and how significant they were at local level.

Key learning points

- Changes in the suffrage campaign over time.
- The kinds of activities carried out as part of the suffrage campaign and the chronology of activity in the local area.
- The lives of key campaigners in the local area.
- How effective the suffrage campaign was in the local area.
- How the local campaign compared to the national campaign.

Outline

Often, it is local history that inspires students. This enquiry seeks to fix a study of Votes for Women in their own locality. Unfortunately, that means quite a bit of work for the teacher. There may well be no consolidated story of suffrage in your particular area, so research is needed. These teacher notes suggest places to find out about suffrage and then some suggestions on using these resources in the classroom. Until you begin, you will have no idea of what will emerge. Examples from Lincolnshire will be used to illustrate this enquiry. Using a range of evidence, students will look in detail at events in their local area and then compare it to the 'textbook' version of events, looking for similarities and differences.

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

Increasingly, research into the suffrage campaign is focusing on the local area. Much evidence has emerged recently, some of it changing our perceptions of the campaign. This enquiry gives us an opportunity to dig deep into specifics and thus, hopefully, to add to our understanding of 'big picture' history of the topic.

ii) Curricular rationale

Both suffrage and local history are part of the Key Stage 3 history curriculum. This enquiry gives us an opportunity to explore a significant case study of suffrage in action. By examining events in one city in detail, students are allowed to ask questions about similarity and difference, as well as impact.

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Breakdown of the scheme of work

Once the research is complete, the enquiry comprises four lessons. It is envisioned that it would be taught in Year 9, allowing teachers to draw on and reinforce students' knowledge of the different periods, political developments and events studied earlier in the key stage.

Lesson	Key content
L1: What can we discover about 'Votes for Women' in my area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What can we tell from those who signed the 1866 petition in the local area? • Case study: Lincolnshire women who signed the 1866 petition. • Local suffrage activities 1866–1914. • Using local newspapers, photographs and postcards as sources.
L2: Who was important in my area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Local suffrage campaigners. • Case study: Jessie Boucherett. • Case study: Mary Ann Rawle.
L3: Which was more influential in my area – NUWSS or WSPU?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Comparing tactics of the NUWSS and WSPU in the local area <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • tactics • petitions • other actions • born out of desperation. • What part did men play?
L4: What was the impact of the campaign in my area?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of criteria for measuring impact. • Analysis of the impact of the suffrage campaign in the local area. • Exploring similarities and differences between the local area and the national picture.
Outcome activity	(a) How similar and how different was the campaign in your local area to that in the rest of the country? (b) What was the impact of the campaign on your local area?

Lesson 1:

Enquiry 6a: Teachers' notes

What can we discover about 'Votes for Women' in my area?

Key ideas

- Investigating 'Votes for Women' in the local area.
- Comparing 1866 in the local area with other areas.
- Considering the utility of newspapers and photographs as evidence.
- Constructing the local suffrage story (from many).

Starter: (Slide 5, Resources p. 1)

Introduce the Suffrage Database using the PowerPoint. Search the online database to find out about those in your own local area that signed the 1866 petition.

Whole-class discussion: Discuss with students what their link is to your area. What might their motives for signing be? What does all this tell us about the local suffrage movement in 1866? Which type of people signed? What does that tell us about the campaign at the time?

Activity: (Slide 10) Students explore how typical your local area was – by investigating those from other areas that signed the 1866 petition and comparing these with your

area. The resource sheet may help with this.

In order to investigate this fully and make comparisons, students will need to use the advanced search filters of the suffrage database. Explore with students the information on how to use the database and the kinds of information that the database might hold about individuals. What kinds of things might they compare in order to see how typical their own area was compared to others? For example, they might look at the numbers of people active, which suffrage societies they belonged to or the kinds of activity carried out (e.g. democratic or militant), among other things.

Activity 1: (Slides 11–12, Resources p. 2)

Using both historical and contemporary local newspapers, and the results from your research, let your students explore any news stories to find out what they can about suffrage activity in your area. The resource sheet provides examples for Lincolnshire.

You might use this also as an opportunity to explore the utility of primary – and secondary – sources, and the use we can make of newspapers in history. Many local newspapers were very definitely anti-suffrage and, especially after 1907, anti-WSPU. You might also ask students to look for inconsistencies and variations in factual detail between stories and modern reports.

Activity 2: (Slides 13–14)

Repeat the previous activity using photographs and postcards. The actual detail of this activity will, of course, depend on what you have discovered in your research. Again, ask students to discuss the utility of evidence as well as collecting 'the story'.

Plenary: (Slide 15)

The concluding activity is to try to write the story of suffrage activity in your local area. What have you discovered? Can you 'tell' the story of 'Votes for Women' from the evidence? Are there any omissions? Or are there any contradictions? Is there enough detail to tell a convincing story? Of course, many stories will make up the full story, so also explore with students how historians select which stories to tell.

Final question: Was your area typical?

Resources needed:

- Suffrage Database
www.suffrageresources.org.uk/database
- Enquiry 6a PowerPoint Lesson 1
- Enquiry 6a Lesson 1 Resource Sheets pp. 1–2
- Research results from the local area – newspapers, images

Lesson 2:

Enquiry 6a: Teachers' notes

Who was important in my area?

Key ideas

- Exploring the lives of important local individuals in the suffrage story.
- Comparing the activities of individuals.
- Adding to the story of 'Votes for Women' agreed in Lesson 1 through exploring the actions of individuals.

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

Activity 1: (Slides 6–8)

Research the lives of any notable suffrage campaigners you have discovered. The examples in Lincolnshire focus on individuals from 1866 and the WSPU, in order to provide a contrast. Of course, whom you are able to investigate will depend on the results of your initial research. The Lincolnshire examples can be removed by teachers in other areas and either be replaced with contrasting examples of teacher choice or students can be allowed free rein.

The point of researching the lives of significant individuals is to explore any light that they might shine on the story of 'Votes for Women' in the local area. It is also a good opportunity to discuss similarity and difference between individuals.

Plenary: (Slide 9)

Once the class have studied the two individuals for your area that you have supplied (or allowed them to define for themselves), allow them to interrogate the Suffrage Database to find names of other individuals involved in the movement from your locality. Build up a class list of local people. Students should be encouraged to give at least one reason for any suggestions that they make.

Final question: How effective was suffrage activity in your area in this period?

Resources needed:

- Suffrage Database
www.suffrageresources.org.uk/database
- Enquiry 6a PowerPoint Lesson 2
- Results of your research into individuals in the local area

Lesson 3:

Enquiry 6a: Teachers' notes

Which was more influential in my area – NUWSS or WSPU?

Key ideas

Explore all the tactics used by suffrage campaigners. Compare the national list of tactics with those used locally to try to draw conclusions about the relative importance of

the NUWSS and WSPU in the local area. What part did men play in the campaign – either pro-suffrage or anti-suffrage? The suffrage campaign was nuanced in most areas.

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

Starter: (Slide 6-10)

Introduce the tactics of the suffrage movement using the PowerPoint.

Activity: Discuss all the tactics used from 1832 onwards. How would you describe them? Ask the students to sort all the tactics listed in Slides 6–9. Can they sort them into categories? Which categories would they use?

Then ask students to refer back to previous research and find out which tactics they have evidence of in the local area. Does that mean that those you don't have evidence for were not used in your area

Finally, ask students to decide which ones they would describe as 'suffragist' tactics. And which ones would they describe as 'suffragette' tactics?

Activity 1: (Slide 11)

What part did men play in the suffrage campaign in the local area? Were they mainly 'antis' or were many men in favour of suffrage? What can you discover about the part played by men? And is that typical of elsewhere in the country?

Use the Suffrage Database and additional research if needed.

Plenary: (Slide 12)

Students should now be able to decide whether suffragists or suffragettes were more active and therefore perhaps more influential in the local area. It may not be quite so clear cut, of course, because 'active' and 'influential' are not necessarily the same thing.

Final question: Which organisation was most influential in your area?

Resources needed:

- Enquiry 6a PowerPoint Lesson 3
- Results of research into the local area
- Suffrage Database
www.suffrageresources.org.uk/database

Lesson 4:

Enquiry 6a: Teachers' notes

What was the impact of the campaign in my area?

Key ideas

Writing, as best they can from the evidence they have, the story of 'Votes for Women' in the local area. Weighing up the evidence then trying to reach a conclusion about the impact

of local suffrage activities. Finally, making meaningful comparisons between events in the local area and those we know of nationally.

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

Starter: (Slide 6)

Students should attempt to measure impact of local suffrage activities, based on what they already know. Of course, they will firstly need to decide what they mean by impact and then how to measure it.

Carry out a whole-class discussion about the suffrage campaign and the different kinds of activities that campaigners engaged in. Which of these had an effect?

What kind of effect was it? Was it helpful or unhelpful to the campaign? Did it lead to anything else? Use these discussions to develop a whole-class set of criteria for measuring the impact of activities.

There will almost certainly be no definitive answer here, emphasising the provisional nature of many historical enquiries.

Activity 1: (Slide 7, Resources p. 3)

Now that students have discussed and developed criteria for measuring impact, they should apply this to any suffrage activity/campaigners that they have encountered in their research and score each for impact. There is a resource sheet available to record their notes on. Note that 1 is lowest for impact and 5 is highest.

Activity 2: (Resources p. 4)

Whole-class activity: This is a bit more straightforward. This activity offers the opportunity to think about similarities and differences. The debate and discussion will, of course, depend on the nature of local activity and the results of the research that students have carried out in earlier lessons in this unit, but there should be enough scope for students to draw upon their research and learning to talk meaningfully about suffrage tactics and achievements. There is a resource sheet available to record their notes on.

Plenary: (Slide 8)

The main activity here centres on helping the students to reach a meaningful conclusion – based on the evidence they have before them. Again, the exact nature of that conclusion will depend on just how much local activity students have evidence for. Students should draw on both their research and ratings for the local area and their knowledge of the national campaign to answer the final question.

Final question: How similar, and how different, was your local area to the rest of the country?

Resources needed:

- Enquiry 6a PowerPoint Lesson 4
- Enquiry 6a Lesson 4 Resource Sheets p. 3-4
- Research on suffrage in the local area
- All previous work on the 'Votes for Women' campaign in the local area