

The Fight for the Vote: The Suffragette Movement

Learning objective: To understand the history of the Suffragette movement and the campaign for women's right to vote in the UK.

Read the text carefully and answer the questions below using evidence from the passage.

In the early 20th century, women in the United Kingdom did not have the same political rights as men. They were not allowed to vote in general elections, meaning they had no say in how the country was governed. In 1903, Emmeline Pankhurst founded the Women's Social and Political Union (WSPU). Its members became known as Suffragettes. Unlike the Suffragists, who preferred peaceful lobbying, the Suffragettes believed that more direct action was needed to grab the attention of the government. They organised large marches, held public meetings, and chained themselves to railings near Parliament to demand the vote. Their motto was 'Deeds, not words'. Despite facing imprisonment and harsh treatment, they remained determined to achieve equality. Because of their tireless campaigning, and the changing roles of women during the First World War, the law eventually began to change. In 1918, some women over the age of 30 were granted the right to vote. It was not until 1928 that women finally gained the same voting rights as men. Their bravery changed British democracy forever.

Word bank: Suffragette · campaign · parliament · equality · protest · democracy

1. Who founded the Women's Social and Political Union in 1903? (1 mark)

2. Identify two methods the Suffragettes used to protest for their right to vote. (2 marks)

3. Why do you think the Suffragettes chose the motto 'Deeds, not words'? (2 marks)

4. Based on the text, why might the First World War have influenced the government's decision to grant women the vote? (2 marks)

5. Do you think the Suffragettes were successful? Explain your answer using evidence from the text. (3 marks)

Draw: Draw a banner that a Suffragette might have carried during a march, including a powerful slogan and symbols of equality.



Extension challenge: Research how the Suffragists differed from the Suffragettes. Create a table comparing their methods and beliefs.