

The Fight for Equality: The Suffragette Movement

Learning objective: To understand the campaign for women's suffrage in the early 20th century and evaluate the methods used to achieve political change.

Read each question carefully. Use your historical knowledge to provide detailed explanations. Refer to the key events and figures discussed in class to support your arguments.

In the early 1900s, women in Britain were not permitted to vote in parliamentary elections. While the NUWSS (the Suffragists) used peaceful methods like petitions and lobbying to persuade politicians, the WSPU, led by Emmeline Pankhurst, adopted the motto 'Deeds, not words'. These women, known as Suffragettes, used more militant tactics to ensure their cause could no longer be ignored by the government. The struggle for the vote was a long and difficult journey, eventually leading to the Representation of the People Act in 1918 and finally the Equal Franchise Act in 1928.

Word bank: Suffragette · Suffragist · Parliament · Campaign · Democracy · Equality · Representation · Protest · Vote

1. Explain the difference between the methods used by the Suffragists and those used by the Suffragettes. (2 marks)

2. Why did the Suffragettes choose the motto 'Deeds, not words'? What does this tell you about their frustration with the government? (2 marks)

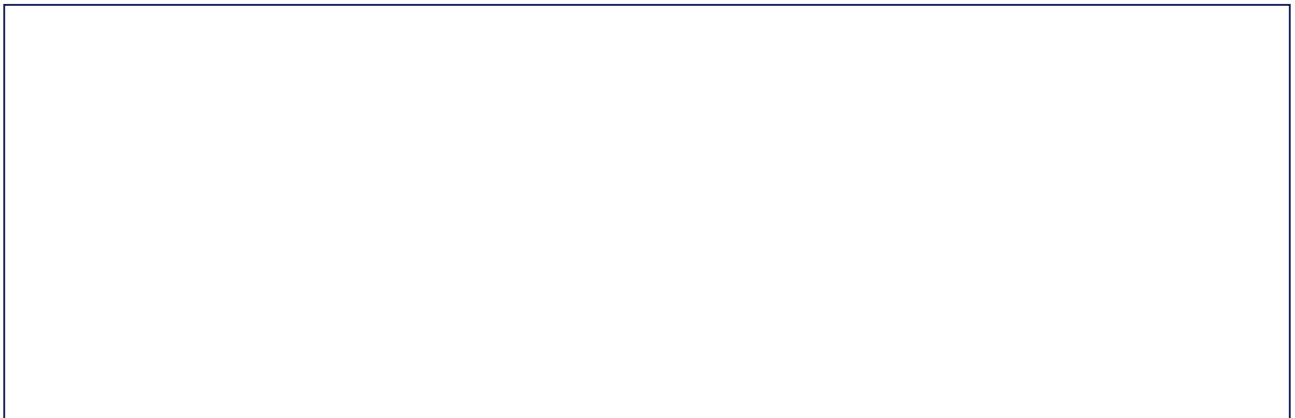
3. Compare and contrast the impact of peaceful protesting versus militant action in the campaign for women's suffrage. (3 marks)

4. Justify your answer: Was the campaign for the vote a success? Refer to the dates 1918 and 1928 in your response. (3 marks)

5. What might happen if women had never campaigned for the right to vote? Describe the impact on modern British society. (3 marks)

6. Imagine you are Ellie the elephant, who loves history. Write a short diary entry from the perspective of a woman living in 1910 who supports the Suffragette cause. (4 marks)

Draw: Design a colourful protest banner that a Suffragette might have carried during a march, including a powerful slogan advocating for equality.



Extension challenge: Research the role of women during the First World War (1914–1918). How did their contribution to the war effort change the government's opinion on whether women should be allowed to vote? Write a persuasive speech arguing why the government was finally forced to change the law.