

Australian women's suffrage: the right to vote

Website resources

www.culture.gov.au/articles/politics/suffragettes/

(Culture and Recreation Portal: Women's Suffrage)

Activities

Poster design

Invite the students to imagine they are living sometime in the 1880s and 1890s, in a place where women do not have the right to vote. Ask the students to design a poster on the topic 'Women have the right to vote'. Encourage them to use the topic words on the poster, and to make up a simple slogan on why women should have this right. Remind the students to create their design with the 1880s and 1890s in mind.

Research project

Invite the students to use books and the internet to research some of Australia's leading suffragettes, including:

- Louisa Lawson, Dora Montefiore and Rose Scott (New South Wales)
- Henrietta Dugdale, Vida Goldstein and Annette Bear-Crawford (Victoria)
- Mary Lee (South Australia)
- Edith Cowan, Margaret Forrest, Roberta Jull, Bessie Rischbieth and Frances Ruffly Hill (Western Australia)
- Elizabeth Brentnall, Léontine Cooper, Emma Miller and Margaret Ogg (Queensland).

For each suffragette researched, encourage the students to find and include the following information:

- dates of birth and death
- early years
- suffrage work
- leagues and organisations they worked with as part of the women's suffrage campaign.

Ask the students to use a computer program, a poster on cardboard or a scrapbook to present their information.

'A woman's place is in the home' vs 'Deeds not words'

How have things have changed in relation to women since the time of the suffragettes? Provide the students with a worksheet with four columns: 'Family', 'Law', 'Occupations' and 'Politics'. In each column, ask them to write down how things were for women in each area in 1883, and in 1983. Have students note when changes occurred during these 100 years. Invite the students to share their ideas with the class.

Women in Australian politics

Encourage the students to use books and the internet to find out more about women in politics. See links from www.culture.gov.au/articles/politics/women

Ask the students to work in groups, allocating one of the following topics to each group.

- Name the women elected to federal and state parliaments from 1903 to 1950. List their names, roles and achievements.
- Find out how many women were elected to federal parliament from 1951 to 2000. List their names and roles.
- Find out the names of women members, ministers, chief ministers and premiers in your state's parliament since 1921. List their names, roles and achievements.
- Find out how many women are in the Senate and the House of Representatives in the federal parliament at present.



Courtesy of National Library of Australia.

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Cotton, H. (Herbert Walter E.), 1872-1931.

Enfranchised! [picture]

1902. 1 drawing : ink ; 33.5 x 51.5.