

ART ACROSS THE CURRICULUM | HISTORY

ANALYSING HISTORICAL SOURCES FROM THE WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENTS

LEVEL 7

OVERVIEW

This resource introduces students to the women's suffrage movement in the United Kingdom using primary and secondary sources from The Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family Suffrage Research Collection at the National Gallery of Victoria (NGV). Through scaffolded activities, students analyse historical evidence and interpret the perspectives of women who were involved in the movement at the time. Students then complete a written activity using historical sources to support their analysis.

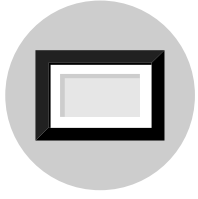
LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Ask questions of sources that identify origin, content, function and explain context
- Differentiate between primary sources (those from the time of the event/person/site being investigated) and secondary sources (those that represent later interpretation)
- Organise historical sources into types including artefacts, visual, written and audio
- Examine the history of women's suffrage with a focus on the United Kingdom suffrage movement
- Formulate a letter which examines the perspectives of women in the suffragette movement using historical sources

VICTORIAN CURRICULUM LINKS

- Asking questions of sources that identify origin, content, explaining context, and analysing reliability the usefulness about the historical context (VCHHC099)
- Differentiating between primary sources (those from the time of the event/person/site being investigated) and secondary sources (those that represent later interpretation) (VCHHC099).
- Organising historical sources into artefacts, visual, written, audio (VCHHC099).

ABOUT THE WORKS



IN THE GALLERY



IN SCHOOL

1. THE KRYSZYNA CAMPBELL-PRETTY AM AND FAMILY SUFFRAGE RESEARCH COLLECTION

You might think that women have always had the right to stand in elections and vote, but that isn't the case. It wasn't until the late 19th and early 20th century that women were given equal democratic freedoms to men, and only in certain countries, such as New Zealand and Australia. To create this change, women campaigned using both peaceful and confrontational tactics in organised societies known collectively as the women's suffrage movement.

In the United Kingdom, numerous women's suffrage societies were established during the mid-19th century and women were eventually granted the same voting rights as men in England in 1928. This momentous event in social history was also a significant time in the history of popular design and fashion with the birth of modernism.

Designers and artists created jewellery, accessories, ceramics, banners, printed items and other artistic objects, which featured distinctive colour schemes and logos to promote the suffrage message and build their political advantage. A wide selection of these objects are kept in the Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family Suffrage Research Collection at the NGV, offering an abundant supply of primary and secondary sources that can be used as evidence to learn more about this period in history.

Visual images defined the suffrage movement, from the purple, green and white sashes worn by the Women's Social and Political Union, to the 'Votes for Women' posters designed by Hilda Dallas and distributed in their thousands around London and beyond. New technologies were also used in printing and distributing daily newspapers.

EXAMPLE SOURCES

The following examples of objects, clothing and documents in The Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family Suffrage Research Collection are recommended for use in conjunction with the activities in this resource. To explore the Collection and find more sources to incorporate, visit NGV International or the NGV website <https://www.ngv.vic.gov.au/exhibition/womens-suffrage-research-collection>

DRESS AND ADORNMENT



Sashes were an essential part of the 'suffrage uniform' and were worn at demonstrations, processions and other public events to visually identify suffrage campaigners. This sash design was first seen at the Women's Sunday march held on 21 June 1908. In the lead up to that event, the Women's Social and Political Union treasurer, Emmeline Pethick-Lawrence selected the colours white (for purity), purple (for royalty, freedom and dignity), and green (for hope) to represent the WSPU. She impressed on women the importance of sporting the colours, rightly believing that the white, purple and green would become synonymous with the suffrage cause.

Women's Social and Political Union, London (distributor)
England 1903–17
Toye and Co., London (manufacturer)
England est. 1685
Votes for Women, sash c. 1909
cotton, metal
National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne, Shaw Research Library
Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM
and Family Suffrage Research
Collection

MEDALS AND HONOURS



Medals for Valour, such as this one and another in the Collection awarded to Grace Chappelow, were presented by the Women's Social and Political Union to women who had endured a hunger strike while serving a prison sentence for an act of suffrage militancy. Few of these medals were awarded, making receiving one the crowning achievement for a suffragette. The significance of these medals is emphasised by their comparable design to military medals of bravery.

POSTERS AND POSTCARDS

Women's Social and Political Union, London (distributor)

England 1903–17

Toye & Co., London (manufacturer)

England est. 1685

Medal for Valour, awarded to

Selina Martin 1909

silver, enamel, silk

Proposed gift of Krystyna

Campbell-Pretty AM and

Family through the Australian

Government's Cultural Gifts

Program, 2019

Ethel Smyth (composer)

England 1858–1944

Breitkopf & Hartel., Leipzig (publisher)

Germany est. 1719

March of the Women, music

score 1910

music score: ink over pencil on card

National Gallery of Victoria,

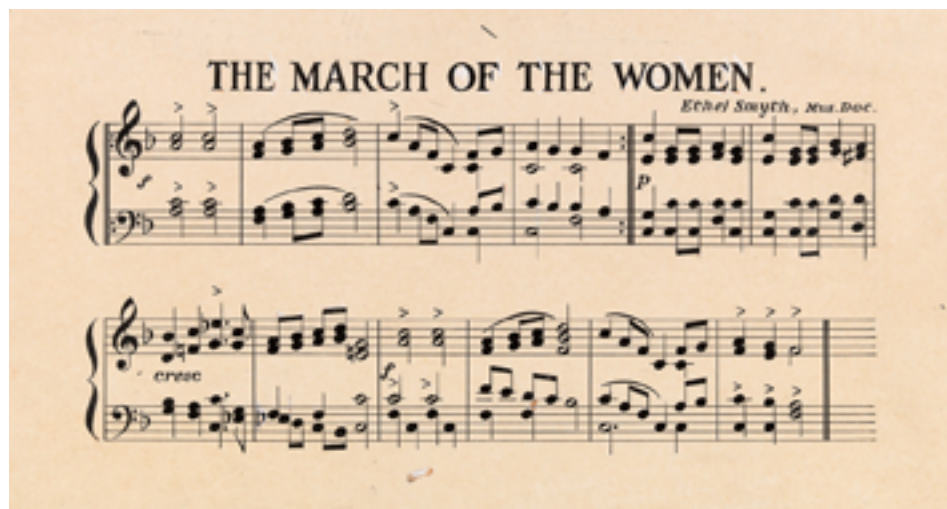
Melbourne, Shaw Research

Library

Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM

and Family Suffrage Research

Collection



In 1910, composer and suffrage campaigner Ethel Smyth composed *March of the Women* as the official anthem of the Women's Social and Political Union, based on the rousing melody of a traditional Italian folk song. The lyrics were written by journalist and suffragist Cicely Hamilton. *March of the Women* was widely adopted around the world as a rallying cry for suffragists, and was sung at rallies, meetings and in prison. When composer Thomas Beecham visited Smyth in Holloway Prison in 1912, he reportedly found her conducting a group of women singing the anthem, keeping time with a toothbrush.

LETTERS AND DOCUMENTS

Tuesday, Dec. 21st.
I was arrested with Miss Isabella Hall in this street. Immediately we were taken before Mr. Shephard Little the Liverpool magistrate, and an opportunity was given to make my communication with friends. The decision was to detain us for six days, upon hearing which we made application for bail to be allowed. This was refused - the magistrate turning to a number of qualified/indicate prisoners placed in in the most odious cages. "We, if I allow you bail, I shall be compelled to allow these prisoners bail also!" The magistrate refused to relent, despite the fact that we promised to keep the peace until after our trial. We were then taken in Black Maria to Walton Gaol. After being received, I was separated from Miss Hall, not seeing her again until the day of my trial. As a protest against the inhuman and unjust sentence of six days imprisonment upon a person who before the eyes of the British law is innocent (not having been tried) I at once adopted the hunger strike.

Wednesday, December 22nd.
My first action was to continue my protest by breaking the cell window. Then to prevent entrance I barricaded my cell. Shortly following this proceeding an entrance was forced by two women warders. The chief warder seemingly being all self-controlled asked me whilst I was on the floor, shaking and panting as alternately. The next break was a visit from the deputy medical officer. I refused to allow him to examine me, making request for a woman doctor. Of this no notice was taken but I was threatened

with "forcible feeding", if I refused food on this day. Her very intention had elapsed when several women entered and commenced to dress in my garments which were very wet from the previous day's snow. Upon refusal I was dragged up and forced into my chamber, taken to a punishment cell and handcuffed with hands fastened tight behind. In this condition I was left on a board and in an exhausted state I fell into a restless sleep. Whilst I found I had vacated on to the floor but was unable to rise as my hands were still fastened. Some hours later a warder visited me and lifted me on to the board. The cell was extremely cold and badly ventilated - fresh air which have entered was choked by the ventilator being blocked with frozen snow. In the evening the doctor ordered me to a different cell which he suggested would be warmer but which I found to be no improvement. Before leaving me for the night my hands were unfastened and the hands brought to the front and again handcuffed, and so remained during the night.

Thursday.
A further attempt without success was made to forcibly examine me and the doctor renewed his threats to forcibly feed me. In the morning I was taken before the visiting magistrate to answer the charge of breaking my window. Judgment was withheld until 4th. I made complaint of the threats of forcible feeding whilst I was a prisoner in prison, and also the unmerciful actions of the chief warder. I was informed the warder was quite justified so long as I refused to conform to prison rules. I then made application for a private doctor to examine me to safeguard against

Friday.
Despite the vigilance of the warder, during the night, I successfully wrote on the wall of the cell "Victory shall be won - No Surrender! To Freedom's cause this death", later the door of the cell was forced back to the wall leaving it flung wide open. The address was then stationed at the iron gate, constant relays occupying this position until my release.

Saturday, Dec. 23rd.
I made application to the Home Office to grant permission for a woman doctor to examine me as a slighter slight affliction of the throat had become greatly intensified by the forcible feeding operations.

Thursday, Dec. 27th.
I was unexpectedly and without any stated reason released. I asked for an explanation but the Governor stated he had none to offer.

SUMMONS TO DEFENDANT
WILFUL DAMAGE AND OBSTRUCTION OF HIGHWAYS
Waltham Drainage Act, 1901 (24 and 25 Vict., c. 10), sec. 45
In the City of Liverpool.
To MARY RICHARDS,
of [unclear] Street,
in the County of Liverpool.
Information has been laid this day by JOHN HILLMAN for that you on the 27th day of August 1909, wilfully and unlawfully did damage to a paving of glass, the property of His Majesty's Commissioners of Prisons, the said damage amounting to the sum of £ 1 1 0 a penalty in the Statute in that case made and provided.
YOU ARE THEREFORE HEREBY SUMMONED to appear before the Court of Sessions, sitting at the City Police Court, Dale Street, within the said City, on the 27th day of the month of September, in the Forenoon, to answer to the said Information.
Given the 27th day of September 1909.
J. S. Little
Justice of the Peace for the City of Liverpool.

(clockwise from top left)
Selina Martin (author)
England 1882–1972
page one from *No title* c. 1909
coloured ink on paper
National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne, Shaw Research
Library
Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM
and Family Suffrage Research
Collection

Selina Martin (author)
England 1882–1972
page two from *No title* c. 1909
coloured ink on paper
National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne, Shaw Research
Library
Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM
and Family Suffrage Research
Collection

Selina Martin (author)
England 1882–1972
page six from *No title* c. 1909
coloured ink on paper
National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne, Shaw Research
Library
Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM
and Family Suffrage Research
Collection

Court summons 1909
paper, ink
National Gallery of Victoria,
Melbourne, Shaw Research
Library
Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM
and Family Suffrage Research
Collection

Suffragette Selina Martin wrote this six-page typewritten account detailing the period from her arrest on 21 December 1909 to her release from Walton Gaol on 3 February 1910. In this first-person description, the reality and brutality of the suffrage hunger strikes and the subsequent force feeding of women who undertook them is graphically presented. Hunger strikes in gaol were seen by the leaders of the militant Women's Social and Political Union as an important tool in publicising and arousing support for the suffrage movement, with accounts featured in *Votes for Women*.

This court summons was issued to suffragette Selina Martin (under her alias Mary Richards) in September 1909 when she was charged with wilful damage for smashing fourteen panes of glass. Martin was imprisoned many times and was effectively a 'professional' suffrage militant. She took part in five demonstrations that included militant incidents between May and September 1909 and spent much of the next year either in prison or recovering from hunger strikes. Only a relatively small group of women were willing to engage in militant activity, so activists like Martin were highly valued by the Pankhurst-led Women's Social and Political Union.

PROPAGANDA, GAMES AND MERCHANDISE

Women's Social and Political Union, London (distributor)

England 1903–17

Pank-a-Squith c. 1909

board game: chromolithograph on paper on buckram covered board

figurines: lead

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Shaw Research Library

Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family Suffrage Research Collection



Named for suffragette leader Emmeline Pankhurst and her political adversary, Prime Minister Herbert Asquith, 'Pank-a-Squith' was one of many toys and games sold by the Women's Social and Political Union to raise funds for their campaign. Games were a vehicle for the suffrage message to reach a broad audience and inoffensively enter middle-class homes. Pank-a-Squith is similar to Snakes and Ladders: each player moves their suffragette game figure along a spiral of squares from their 'home' to the Houses of Parliament, navigating obstacles, prejudices and obstructions along the way. The first player to reach the final square of 'universal suffrage' is the winner.

W.K Harper (designer)

England active 1978–90

Royal Doulton, Burslem, Staffordshire (manufacturer)

England est. 1815

Votes for Women, figurine

c. 1978–81

earthenware

National Gallery of Victoria, Melbourne, Shaw Research Library

Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM and Family Suffrage Research Collection



This figurine was first made in 1978 to mark fifty years of universal female suffrage in England. The figure holds a pamphlet in one hand and a 'votes for women' poster in the other, and wears a sash and rosette in the purple, white and green colours of the Women's Social and Political Union. Royal Doulton was the first established ceramic firm to create products inspired by the suffrage movement. In 1909, it produced two ceramic inkwell figurines that alluded to the 1909 suffrage march on parliament. Both figures were squat and featured dour facial expressions. Although not explicitly anti-suffragist, the inkwells did not depict suffrage activists in a positive light.

PRE-VISIT WARMUP



IN SCHOOL

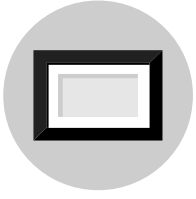
2. OBJECT ANALYSIS GUIDE – HOUSEHOLD OBJECT INVESTIGATION

Imagine you are an archaeologist or time detective.

1. Select an item from your classroom or your house (e.g. kitchen, bathroom), or even better, ask someone else to select one for you.
2. Imagine it's an artefact from a lost civilisation and you have never seen it before. Answer the following questions:
 - What do you notice about this artefact? Describe its shape, size, weight, smell and sound.
 - What material/s is it made from?
 - When might it have been made, and why?
 - What do you think its function might be, and why do you think that?
3. Formulate three questions you have about the artefact after studying it.
4. Create a sketch of the artefact and annotate/label it.

ACTIVITY

3. ORGANISING HISTORICAL SOURCES



IN THE GALLERY



IN SCHOOL

A **perspective** is a person's point of view, the way in which they see and understand events going on around them. When studying history, primary and secondary sources are important resources for us to explore different perspectives of a past event and understand the lives of the people who were involved.

A **primary source** is evidence that was made at the time of the historical event, for example an eye-witness account, a letter or an object that was made at that time. A **secondary source** is the evidence of someone who was not present at the time of the event, for example a textbook or something written by an historian afterwards.

Organise each of the example sources about the women's suffrage movement into:

5. Type: Such as artefact, audio, visual or written.
6. Source: Is it a primary source or a secondary source?
7. Perspective: Whose perspective is being shown by this piece of evidence?

Example

Votes for Women, sash c. 1909. Toye and Co., London (distributor)

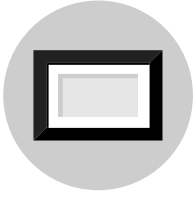


1. Type: Artefact
2. Source: Primary source
3. Perspective: This object is showing the perspective of women suffragettes in the United Kingdom, who were fighting for the right to vote. These sashes were worn as a uniform by those marching in the demonstrations. The sash shows the colours that were chosen to symbolise the women's cause – white (purity), purple (royalty, freedom and dignity) and green (hope).

Women's Social and Political Union, London (distributor)
England 1903–17
Toye and Co., London (manufacturer)
England est. 1685
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cotton, metal
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ACTIVITY

4. OBJECT ANALYSIS GUIDE – SUFFRAGETTE MATERIAL



IN THE GALLERY



IN SCHOOL

Now that you have had some practise analysing sources from the suffragette movement, visit The Krystyna Campbell-Pretty AM And Family Suffrage Research Collection at NGV International or research the [NGV website](#) and choose your own historical artefact to examine in more detail.

1. Use the information about the artefact to fill in the object-analysis guide, examining the piece of evidence from every angle, using all your senses
2. Record your observations in column one, using the questions as prompts to guide you
3. Include any further questions or areas of research you'd like to conduct in column two

ARTEFACT ANALYSIS:

Name of artefact: _____

	MY OBSERVATIONS	MY QUESTIONS FOR FURTHER RESEARCH
<p>Artefact Features: What is it made of? Describe its shape and size Can you see any writing or pictures on it? Is it complete or broken?</p>		
<p>Artefact History: When was it made? Who made it? Who might have owned it?</p>		
<p>Artefact Function: What was it made to do? Does it have a practical use, or a decorative one, or both?</p>		
<p>Artefact Perspectives: Would this artefact have been important to someone? If so, who? Is this artefact still important today? Why/Why not? Whose perspective is shown through this artefact?</p>		

POST-VISIT PROJECT



IN SCHOOL

5. PERSPECTIVES OF A SUFFRAGETTE: LETTER WRITING ACTIVITY

Imagine you are a suffragette in the United Kingdom during the early 20th century, fighting for your right to vote. Write a letter to someone detailing your experiences. You could imagine you're writing to a fellow suffragette in prison, or that you yourself are being held there for campaigning for equal rights.

Use the 'Letters and Documents' section from page 4 for some ideas and include references to these primary sources to support your historical experience.

FURTHER RESOURCES

Zoë Thomas, *Selling Suffrage: Visual culture and merchandise*, NGV Online Essay, 2020
www.ngv.vic.gov.au/essay/selling-suffrage-visual-culture-and-merchandise/

Women's Suffrage | A Curator's Perspective, NGV Melbourne, Youtube, 2020
www.youtube.com/watch?v=4Z4FV2Dp3tE

NGV SCHOOLS PROGRAM PARTNERS



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and Training



OFFICIAL SUPPLIER



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