

Year 8 Pack 4

The Campaign for Women's Suffrage



Name:

History teacher:

Suffragettes: government attempts to deal with the protest



Describe what you can see in this poster?

What can it tell us about how the police and government treated suffragettes?

Why do you think they might be doing this?

This poster is made by the suffragettes – Why do you think they made this poster?

Do you think this poster is reliable for an enquiry into actions taken by the government against the suffragettes? Why?

WSPU militants started a new tactics of breaking windows and refusing to pay fines so they could be sent to prison. The government refused to treat them as political prisoners and instead, they were treated as ordinary criminals. This included not being allowed to speak and having to empty their chamber pots (where they went to the toilet during the night) each morning. The government wanted to frighten and humiliate suffragettes, so they would not use this tactic. They did not want to encourage other groups looking for reforms



to try the same tactics or to recognise the suffragette tactics as political protest. When the government refused to treat them as political prisoners, some suffragettes went on hunger strike – this meant they refused to eat. This put a lot of pressure on the government, if a woman starved herself to death in prison for a political cause it would have created a lot of publicity and made the government look bad.

It would also have made the woman into a martyr – Someone who dies for what they believe in – this would have made them a hero and meant the suffragette cause would get even more support.

In order to prevent deaths, the government ordered the women on hunger strike to be force fed. This meant putting tubes down their throat and pouring down a watery liquid into the stomach. This was very painful, and women resisted so they often had to be held down by several nurses and prison officers. Often the women would vomit as the tube was removed, or the liquid would go into the lungs instead of the stomach causing serious health problems.

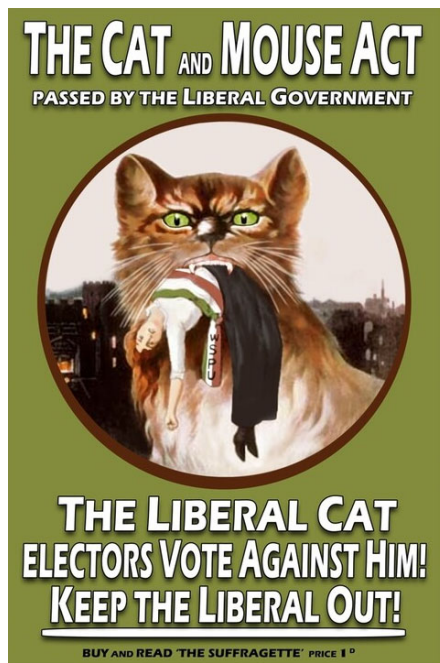
Why did the government force feed suffragettes in prison?

How did they do this?

What were the negative impacts of force-feeding?

In 1913, the government passed the so-called 'cat and mouse' act, which allowed the government to release a hunger-striker before they became seriously ill, and then re-arrest them once they had regained their strength, in order to complete their sentence. This showed the government using its power to make laws to stop the suffragettes getting more publicity.

How do you think the Suffragettes would feel about the 'cat and mouse' act? Explain why:



This poster is made by the suffragettes to ...

This poster is useful for an enquiry into methods used by the suffragettes to get support as

This poster is not so useful for an investigation into government actions against the suffragettes as

An account of Epsom Derby on 4th June 1913

The weather on Wednesday 4 June 1913 was forecast to be sultry with thunderstorms. That morning Emily left Alice Green's home at 133 Clapham Road, Lambeth, and walked to Oval to catch a tram to Victoria station, where she bought a return ticket for Epsom Downs. Emily pinned a purple, white and green flag inside her jacket and took her latch key, a small leather purse containing three shillings and eight pence and three farthings, eight halfpenny stamps and a notebook. Another suffragette flag was tucked up her sleeve. Emily squeezed close to the rails. The King's horse, Anmer, made a good start. At seven furlongs the field took the left turn downhill for five furlongs and this is where Anmer fell away to the group at the back. The leading horses pounded towards the spot where Emily was waiting. Everyone was screaming the names of *their* horses for that brief moment and jumping up and urging them on. The trailing bunch, including Anmer, approached. Emily fiddled with the sleeve of her jacket, bobbed under the white railings, and made history. Clutching her folded scarf of purple, white and green, Emily dashed out to make her protest at the lack of progress on women's suffrage in general, and the treatment of Mrs



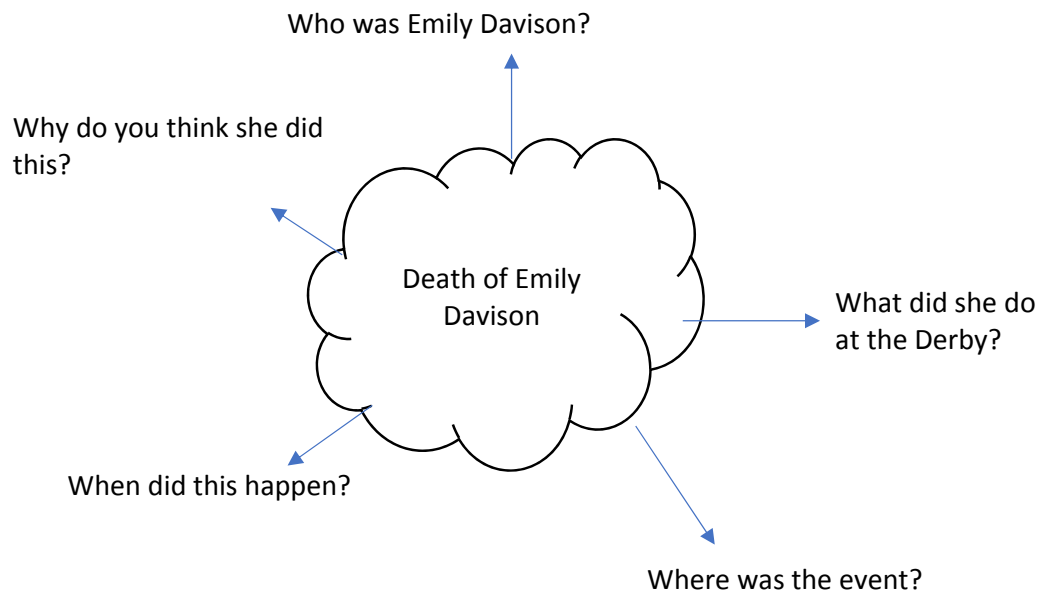
Pankhurst in particular. By targeting Anmer, she was reminding King George V of his government's injustice to women. Emily stood with her arms above her head, and then stepped in front of the jockey, Bertie Jones and tried to grab the horse's bridle. She was knocked over screaming.

'The horse struck the woman with its chest, knocking her down among the flying hoofs ... and she was desperately injured ... Blood rushed from her mouth and nose. Anmer turned a complete somersault and fell upon his jockey who was seriously injured,' the *Daily Mirror* reported.

Oblivious to what was happening the spectators who stood to the left of Emily turned to follow the race, but those to the right of her were puzzled by what was happening in front of their eyes. There was chaos: the jockeys behind Jones cursed and struggled to pull away from the woman who had invaded the track. Anmer cantered off with a few cuts to his face and body, apparently none the worse for his fall.

On 8 June, Emily died from her injuries, surrounded by an honour guard of Suffragettes in a room hung with green, white and purple bunting.

Task: After reading the account of Epsom Derby complete the spider diagram below



Task: What do you think Emily Davison's motivation was? Do you think she meant to kill herself in order to draw more attention to the cause or was it an accident? Explain your thinking using the evidence above

Consequences and significance of women getting the vote

- The **Suffragettes'** campaign might have won women the vote. Some historians believe that the real reason that the men in Parliament gave women the vote was because they were scared that the Suffragettes would restart their campaign of violent protest. MPs just used what women had done in the war as an excuse to do so. Saying that they were rewarding women for their effort in the war made politicians look good and fair, rewarding women for their work and gave women what they wanted.
- Women became 'seen'. One of the problems with women in history is that so much of what they did is 'unseen'. This was not true of the Suffragettes, who brought women's rights to the public attention. For the first time, women had become prominent and noticeable in society. Whilst the Suffragettes sometimes got them noticed for the wrong reasons - such as violence and hunger strikes – they at least got them noticed.
- The seeds of feminism. The Pankhurst's provided a strong example of women fighting for women's rights. This has inspired feminists and women politicians ever since.
- However, it can be argued that the suffrage movement still has a little way to go. There were only 17 women candidates at the 1918 General Election. Things had improved by 2010, but still only 143 of the 650 MPs were women and there were only four women among the 23 ministers in the Cabinet. The question now is about whether efforts should be made to help women become more represented in Parliament so that there is an equal share of male and female MPs. Accordingly, there is a progressing discussion about equal representation among female and male MPs. Parliament has set an aim to increase female MPs to 45% by 2030.
- In popular culture, women are still fighting for their rights in certain areas. It was not until 2007 that female Wimbledon tennis champions were awarded the same prize money as male Wimbledon champions. Women still only play their matches out of three sets rather than the five that men play. Many feel that, since women get equal pay, they should play the same number of sets as men. Many women players feel that they should be given the chance to play as many sets too.

Task: Which of the consequences above do you think is the most important consequence of the suffragette's campaign for the right to vote? Explain why

