

Knowledge organiser: How far did Britain achieve 'true democracy' by the 1930s?

Topic Summary:

Industrialisation, the increase in the population, and popular uprisings throughout Europe led to new ideas about who should be involved in the government of Britain. This set the country on the path to becoming a democracy. By 1928, all adult men and women had the right to vote. This unit will look at **CHANGES** to the British electorate and democracy.

Key Dates:

1721 – Robert Walpole becomes prime minister, the link between the Cabinet and the king.

1831 – The Bristol Riots began as only 6000 people out of 104,000 had the right to vote.

1839-48 – The Chartists presented a petition to Parliament. It was rejected and the Chartists movement lost support.

1918 – Representation of the People Act gave the vote to all men over the age of 21 and to all women over the ages of 30 who owned property.

1819 – 'The Peterloo Massacre' (a public meeting in Manchester to demand reform of Parliament).

1832 – The Great Reform Act redistributed seats to ensure that all new towns were represented.











1914 – Emily Davison became a martyr for the Suffragettes after she threw herself under the King's horse at the Epsom Derby.

1928 – Equal Franchise Act gave the vote on equal terms to men and women over the age of 21.

Key People:

<p>Millicent Fawcett</p> 	<p>Founder of the National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (1897). Campaigned peacefully for the vote for women.</p>
<p>Emmeline Pankhurst</p> 	<p>Founder of the Women's Social and Political Union (1903). Favoured the use of violent and extreme methods to achieve their aims quickly.</p>
<p>Thomas Paine</p> 	<p>In 1791 he published his book <i>Rights of Man</i>. Paine praised the French Revolution and made suggestions for political change in Britain.</p>
<p>Thomas Attwood</p> 	<p>A 'moral force' Chartist who opposed violence. He presented the first Chartist petition to Parliament.</p>

Vocabulary:

<p>Democracy</p> 	<p>A system of government by the whole population through elected representatives.</p>
<p>Government</p> 	<p>The group of people with the power to run a country.</p>
<p>Representation</p> 	<p>The act of speaking or acting on behalf of someone else.</p>
<p>Parliament</p> 	<p>The section of the government that makes laws.</p>
<p>Patriarchal</p> 	<p>A system of government controlled by men.</p>
<p>Suffrage</p> 	<p>The right to vote in elections.</p>
<p>Enfranchise</p> 	<p>To give a person or group of people the right to vote in elections.</p>
<p>Electorate</p> 	<p>The people in a country who have the right to vote.</p>
<p>Petition</p> 	<p>A collection of signatures used to show public support.</p>
<p>Protest</p> 	<p>A public expression of objection, disapproval or dissent towards an idea or action, typically a political one.</p>

Core Knowledge:

<p>Lesson 1: Why did the people of Britain begin to protest for a more representative government at the start of the 19th Century?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Today, the UK is a democracy where citizens elect representatives to speak for them at the UK Parliament in a General Election, but in 1800 only 2% of the population (wealthy upper class men) had the right to vote.• Pressure for greater democracy increased during the 19th century, and many British politicians favoured granting limited political reforms rather than risk a revolution.• The American Revolution, the French Revolution and the Irish Rebellion fuelled change for greater democracy and sparked a rise of protests in Britain.
<p>Lesson 2: What do the events of Peterloo reveal to historians about British democracy at the start of the 19th Century?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• On the 16th of August 1819, over 60,000 peaceful pro-democracy and anti-poverty protesters were involved in The Peterloo Massacre.• The yeomanry was ordered to arrest the speakers at the rally, but the chaos led to violence. 15 people were killed.• The growing public outrage over Peterloo and the subsequent heavy-handed treatment of further uprisings and protests led to the 1832 Great Reform Act.
<p>Lesson 3: How far did protests in Britain between 1815 and 1832 threaten the government and lead to democratic change?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Riots and disturbances took place across Britain, with some of the worst taking place in Bristol. Only 6000 people out of a population of 104,000 had the right to vote. The rioters burnt down over 100 houses, released prisoners from jail and looted the house of unpopular wealthy people.• The Great Reform Act of 1832 gave 200,000 more people in Britain the vote, abolished 56 'Rotten Boroughs', gave 22 new boroughs an MP, and gave men who owned a small area of land the vote.
<p>Lesson 4: What did democracy mean to the people of the Chartist movement in the early 19th Century?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Many working-class men felt betrayed when they were not given the vote as part of the 1832 Reform Act.• The Chartists petitioned for all men aged 21 to be given the vote and for each borough to be fairly represented.• Some Chartists, led by William Lovett believed in 'Moral Force' and others, led by Fergus O'Connor believed in 'Physical Force'. This divide led to the failure of their petition.• In 1867, the vote was given to all men who had a house and in 1872, a secret ballot was introduced.

The Suffragists

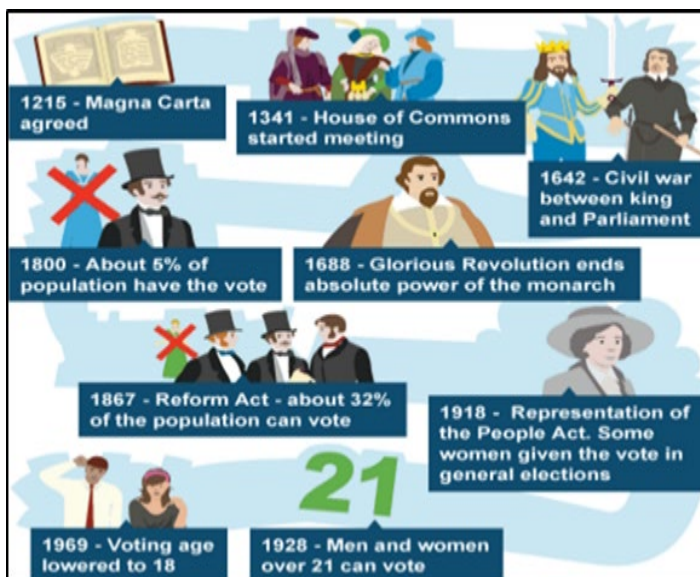
Campaigned peacefully for the vote by:

- Holding meetings.
- Going on peaceful marches.
- Wrote letters and prepared petitions.
- Made posters.
- Tried to get Members of Parliament on their side.

The Suffragettes

Campaigned for the vote with militant action

- Interrupted debates in Parliament.
- Chained themselves to railings.
- Smashed windows.
- Burned down churches.
- Began a campaign of arson and bombing targeting important politicians.



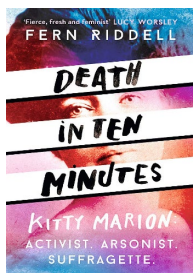
Core Knowledge:

<p>Lesson 5: How far was the campaign for women’s suffrage united in aims but divided in methods?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • By the end of the 1800s there was growing support for the campaign for women’s right to vote. • The Suffragists wanted the vote for property-owning women and used peaceful tactics. Over time they own some publicity, however some women became frustrated at the lack of progress. • The Suffragettes favoured more militant, direct methods of protest. 																											
<p>Lesson 6: Was Emily Davison’s death a tragic accident or suicide?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • In 1913, Emily Davison walked onto the racetrack at the Epsom Derby and walked on the racetrack in front of King George’s horse. She later died and became a martyr for the Suffragettes. • Some historians claim that Davison had intended to attach the sash to the horse’s bridle to promote the movement for women’s suffrage to a large crowd. 																											
<p>Lesson 7: How far did the Representation of the People Act of 1918 make Parliament a ‘mirror of the nation’?</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Although the 1832 Reform Act gave more British men the vote, Britain did not have a representative government. Pressure from the campaign groups led to the passing of the Representation of the People Act. • In 1918 the Representation of the people Act gave all men over the age of 21 and property-owning women over the age of 30 the right to vote. • Women comprised 52.7% of potential voters, but they were restricted until the Equal Franchise Act was passed in 1928 when all men and women aged 21 or over were given the vote. 																											
<p>Enquiry Outcome: How do I complete the enquiry outcome well?</p> <table border="1" data-bbox="21 942 449 1170"> <thead> <tr> <th>Pace</th> <th>Extent</th> <th>Nature</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Rapidity</td> <td>Length</td> <td>Category</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Speed</td> <td>Range</td> <td>Complexity</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Rate</td> <td>Scope</td> <td>Type</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Swiftness</td> <td>Proportion</td> <td>Diversity</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Quickness</td> <td>Degree</td> <td>Character</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Velocity</td> <td>Magnitude</td> <td>Essence</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Tempo</td> <td>Scale</td> <td>Variety</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Momentum</td> <td>Level</td> <td>Quality</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Pace	Extent	Nature	Rapidity	Length	Category	Speed	Range	Complexity	Rate	Scope	Type	Swiftness	Proportion	Diversity	Quickness	Degree	Character	Velocity	Magnitude	Essence	Tempo	Scale	Variety	Momentum	Level	Quality	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • You will need to assess the importance of parliament and explain how power was given to the people to elect their representatives in order to reach a judgement on how far Britain achieved ‘true democracy’ by 1928. • You will need to use the following criteria to assess the extent of change: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Changed events at the time they lived. • Improved lots of people’s lives or made them worse. • Changed people’s ideas. • Had a long lasting impact on their country or the world. • Had been a really good or a very bad example to other people.
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What do historians say?

How can I find out more?

Fern Riddell ‘Death in Ten Minutes’ (2018)



“No matter where women are found in feminist history, they have been portrayed as demanding our pity. But by changing the narrative, by looking at these women not as victims, but as survivors and fighters, I want to show you a world where women pushed our world’s politics and culture into the modern age.

Women were not victims, but soldiers and leaders.”

“Taking one look at the reality of suffrage violence, it’s clear that many of the actions of the militants can be viewed as acts of terror...

They were specifically designed to influence the government and public to change their opinions on women’s suffrage, not by choice but by threats of violence.

The sole purpose of the attacks was to cause terror.”

BBC Bitesize – Reform



BBC Bitesize Women’s Suffrage

