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About Power, Politics and Protest

How and why did political rights change in 19th century Britain? It's a big question, so we've broken it down into smaller topics, each in its own gallery. These topics span British political history in the period 1800-1914 and focus on political changes, the role of individuals as well as the broad patterns and causes of change.

Each gallery begins with a short introduction to the topic. Each contains original historical documents, with questions, activities and worksheets to help students explore the topic and interrogate the sources. Other supporting materials include transcripts and glossaries for the documents, plus a timeline of events in the development of political rights in Britain.

★ Introduction:

As a way of introducing the topic of political change, pupils are invited to compare politics in 1800 and politics today to see how things have changed.

★ Radicals:

Who were the radicals and what were their grievances? This topic for more advanced pupils touches on the ideas of Thomas Paine and the activities of Thomas Hardy.

★ Luddites:

Who were the Luddites and what did they want? Accounts of the machine-breaking disturbances of 1811-12 are here in posters and letters from both the government and the protesters.

★ Peterloo:

What happened at St. Peter's Fields? Whose fault was it? Pupils are presented with conflicting accounts from people of the time and encouraged to come to their own conclusions.

★ Captain Swing:

How did the agricultural labourers of the 1830s try to protect their jobs? See accounts of the destruction of threshing machines and posters debating the issues.

★ The Great Reform Act:

Why did the government change the political system in 1832? A reform petition, reports of riots, revolution in France - original sources give pupils a taste of why the government had to respond to critics of the electoral system.

★ Chartism:

What was Chartism? Sources that pupils can use to answer this question include newspaper accounts of riots and Chartist meetings, as well as the stated aims of the People's Charter Union.

★ White Slavery:

What risks did unskilled women face at work in 1888 and what did they do about it? This gallery focuses on the match workers at the Bryant and May factory.

★ Suffragettes:

How did British women make progress towards full political rights? Posters, news articles and police reports detail women's protest actions, and particularly the events leading to the death of Emily Davison.

Each gallery stands alone and can be used in a lesson or series of lessons on a particular topic. All the galleries together build up a fuller picture of political change in the 19th century and can be used both in the classroom or by pupils for further study in pairs, groups or independently.

The National Curriculum

Britain 1750-1900

Power, Politics and Protest fits into the breath study: Britain 1750-1900:

10) A study of how expansion of trade and colonisation, industrialisation and political changes affected the United Kingdom, including the local area.

Power, Politics and Protest can also be used alongside specific content from the QCA schemes of work:

Year 8

Unit 11: Industrial changes: action and reaction

Section 3: Did everyone agree with the industrial changes?

- ★ Luddites
- ★ Captain Swing

Year 8/9

Unit 16: The franchise: why did it take so much longer for British women to get the vote?

Section 3: Who was struggling for political change between 1815 and 1848?

- ★ Radicals
- ★ Peterloo
- ★ The Great Reform Act
- ★ Chartism

Section 6: Who was campaigning for votes for women?

- ★ Suffragettes

Year 7-9

Unit 22: The role of the individual for good or ill?

Sections 3-6: What motivated the individual? What was the impact of the individual's life at the time? How has the individual's impact been portrayed through time? Was the individual's impact for good or ill?

- ★ Radicals: Thomas Paine, Thomas Hardy
- ★ White Slavery: Annie Besant
- ★ Suffragettes: Emily Davison

GSCE courses (Year 10-11)

- ★ **AQA** Syllabus A, Option B, Enquiry in Depth, Britain 1815-1851
- ★ **AQA** Syllabus C, British Social and Economic History, Study in Depth: Social Protest, Social Reform and Social Improvements in the 18th and 19th centuries
- ★ **Edexcel** Syllabus B, Aspects of Modern Social and Economic History, Depth Studies on Chartism and Women's suffrage
- ★ **OCR** Syllabus C, British Social And Economic History, Paper 1, The Changing Roles and Status of Women