

SUFFRAGETTE

Dear Educator,

Bring the fight for equality to life in your classroom with *Suffragette* – the stirring new film from Focus Features about the women who were willing to lose their jobs, their homes, their children, and even their lives for the right to vote.

Opening in theaters this fall, *Suffragette* – the rare film to be written, produced, and directed by women – will empower all who are striving for social justice in our own day as they witness how British women helped launch a movement for change that defined political life worldwide in the 20th century.

This educational program, developed by curriculum specialists Young Minds Inspired (YMI) in cooperation with Focus Features, invites students to explore the connections between past and present as they discover how the Suffragettes set a precedent for taking on issues that still challenge us today.

Suffragette stars Academy Award nominee Carey Mulligan as a young working-class wife and mother who realizes that she must fight for her dignity both at home and at work through “deeds not words,” Academy Award nominee Helena Bonham Carter, Golden Globe Award nominee Brendan Gleeson, British Independent Film Award winner Anne-Marie Duff, BAFTA Award winner Ben Whishaw, and three-time Academy Award winner Meryl Streep as Emmeline Pankhurst, the historic leader of the Women’s Social and Political Union.

We encourage you to share this resource with other teachers at your school. Although the materials are copyrighted, you may make as many copies as you need for educational purposes. Please let us know your opinion of this program by returning the enclosed reply card or by responding at ymiclassroom.com/feedback-suffragette. Your comments help us provide free educational programs that make a real difference in students’ lives.

Sincerely,



Dr. Dominic Kinsley
Editor in Chief
Young Minds Inspired



FOCUS
FEATURES



Question? Contact YMI toll-free at 1-800-859-8005, or by email at feedback@ymiclassroom.com.

TARGET AUDIENCE

- College women's studies, history, and social studies classes/programs
- High school history and social studies classes/programs

PROGRAM OBJECTIVES

- To examine the history of women's rights and the right to vote
- To examine the message of empowerment embraced by all those who value equality
- To explore the film's connections to modern history and current events and present-day mechanisms for change

PROGRAM COMPONENTS

- This teacher's guide
- Three reproducible student activity sheets
- A colorful wall poster for display in your classroom

- Common Core standards alignment for grades 8-12 available at ymiclassroom.com/suffragette
- A reply card for your feedback, or reply online at ymiclassroom.com/feedback-suffragette

HOW TO USE THIS PROGRAM

Photocopy this teacher's guide and the three student activity sheets before displaying the poster in your classroom. Use the poster to introduce *Suffragette*. Tell students that these activities will enhance their viewing of *Suffragette*.

Enter the Essay Contest: Encourage your students to go to <http://suffragette-myvoice.com> to enter the *Suffragette* "My Vision, My Voice" Essay Contest for high school students. Students submit a 750-1000 word essay about their vision for the future of women, with one student winning a \$1,000 scholarship.



ACTIVITY ONE CREATED EQUAL

This activity sets the stage for viewing *Suffragette* by taking students back to a time, less than 100 years ago, when few women anywhere in the world had equality with men. First, have students investigate the Suffragette movement in the United Kingdom and compare/contrast with current equality movements in the United States and around the world. Next, have students complete a short true/false quiz on women's rights in the Suffragette era and in the United States today. (Answers for the Suffragette era: 1. True, 2. True, 3. False, 4. False, 5. False, 6. True, 7. True, 8. True, 9. False, 10. True)

Use the quiz to prompt discussion about where and why women still have not achieved equal status in society. Broaden this discussion to explore women's equality around the world in places like Nigeria, India, Saudi Arabia, and Brazil, and how the issue of women's equality may play a part in the coming U.S. Presidential election.

ACTIVITY TWO DEEDS NOT WORDS

This activity provides students with background on the Suffragettes in the U.K., whose tactics differed sharply from those of suffragists in the United States. Students are introduced to Emmeline Pankhurst and her "deeds not words" campaign that included civil disobedience, vandalism, and hunger strikes — but not threats to human life. Use the statements denouncing and endorsing the Suffragettes, taken from primary sources, to prompt student debate on how we would react to the Suffragettes' tactics today. Ask students to compare those tactics with the tactics employed by various civil rights and social justice activists today — for example, the gay rights movement, Occupy Wall Street, Black Lives Matter and others protesting police brutality. To conclude, ask students to create a position statement outlining the tactics they would use in a struggle for equality.

ACTIVITY THREE I AM A SUFFRAGETTE

This activity focuses on Maud Watts, the fictional character whose story is at the center of *Suffragette*. It uses examples from the film to preview how Maud's commitment to the movement becomes more passionate as she realizes she should have the right to equal pay but that her

disenfranchisement makes it impossible for her to enact positive change. She is a woman on a journey of self-discovery, self-empowerment, and self-actualization as a mother, a wife, and as an employee. Students witness how Maud comes to stand up for what's right, speak out against what's wrong, and take action to create change. Explore what motivates this character at each stage in her development, what obstacles — external and internal — she must overcome, what sacrifices she makes, and what she gains in the process. Ask students to create a case study of a current human rights movement — either in the United States or abroad — that has been effective, how it originated, and what events helped propel it. Have students discuss how a similar process of personal growth may be possible today through social media. As a step toward such growth, invite students to make a commitment to a cause of their choice through the social media campaign for *Suffragette*.

RESOURCES

Movie Website: SuffragetteTheMovie.com
Social Action Website: FightsNotOver.com
Social Action Essay Contest Website: <http://suffragette-myvoice.com>

