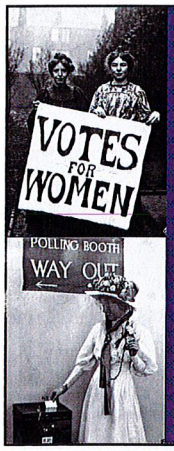
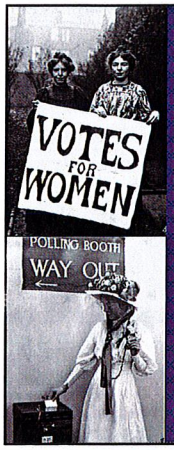


The Suffragette Movement

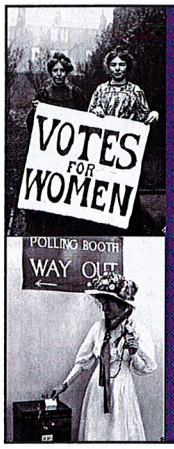


What is a Suffragette?

suf·fra·gette | ˌsəfrəˈjet |
noun historical
a woman seeking the right to vote through organized protest.

A suffragette is a woman who fought for the right to vote in political elections.

The Suffragette movement happened in the late 19th Century to the early 20th Century.



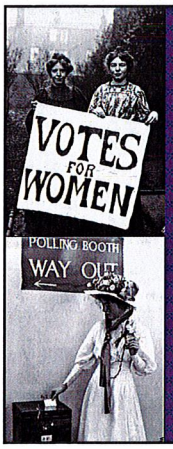
What started the Suffragette Movement?

In the 19th Century, woman had very little rights.

They had to look after their home and care for their children whilst their husbands were at work.

Women could not:

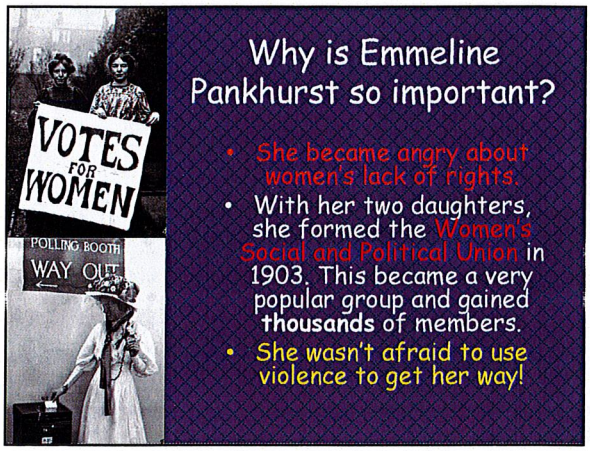
Vote
Fight in the war
Keep the money she earned
Go to university
Wear trousers!

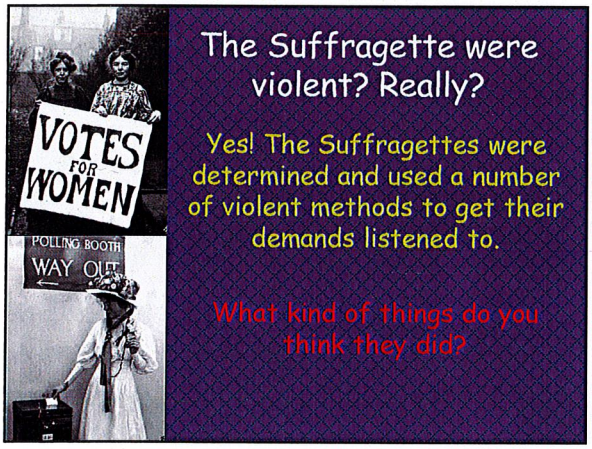


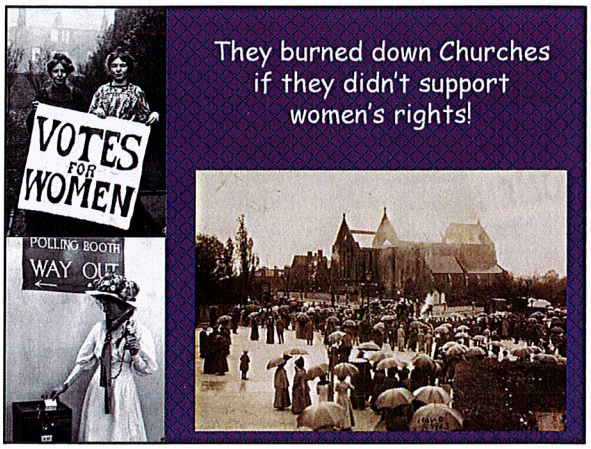
Women had fought for the right to vote before. However, these attempts had failed ☹.

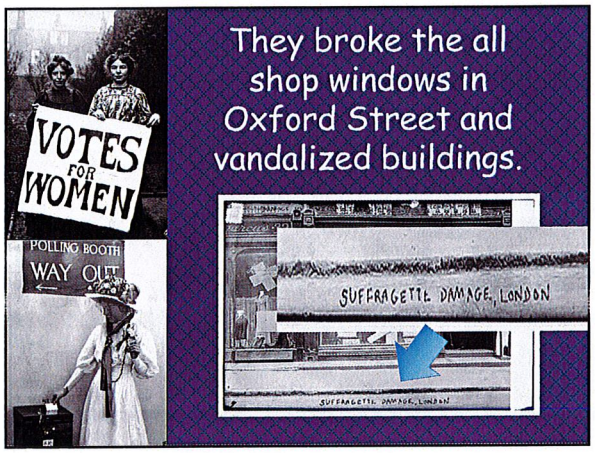
But this time, it was different.

VOTES FOR WOMEN
POLLING BOOTH
WAY OUT
Emmeline Pankhurst


VOTES FOR WOMEN
POLLING BOOTH
WAY OUT
Why is Emmeline Pankhurst so important?
• She became angry about women's lack of rights.
• With her two daughters, she formed the Women's Social and Political Union in 1903. This became a very popular group and gained thousands of members.
• She wasn't afraid to use violence to get her way!

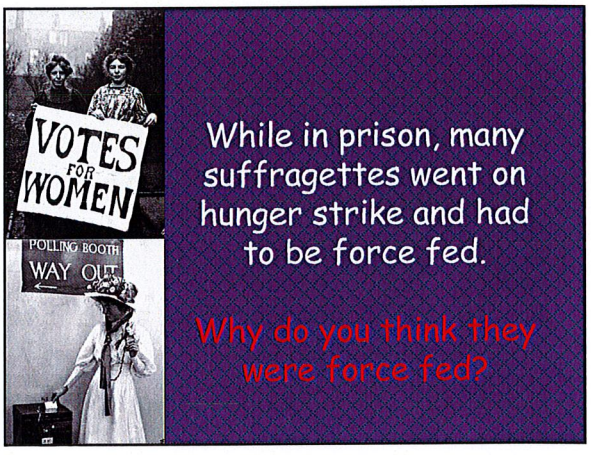

VOTES FOR WOMEN
POLLING BOOTH
WAY OUT
The Suffragette were violent? Really?
Yes! The Suffragettes were determined and used a number of violent methods to get their demands listened to.
What kind of things do you think they did?

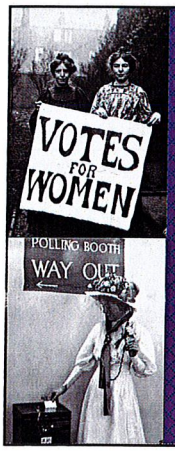

VOTES FOR WOMEN
POLLING BOOTH
WAY OUT
They burned down Churches if they didn't support women's rights!


VOTES FOR WOMEN
POLLING BOOTH
WAY OUT
They broke the all shop windows in Oxford Street and vandalized buildings.
SUFFRAGETTE DAMAGE, LONDON

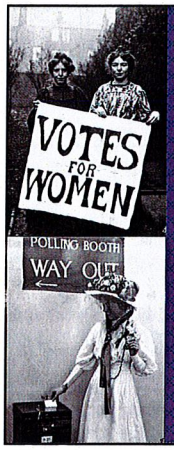
VOTES FOR WOMEN
POLLING BOOTH
WAY OUT
They chained themselves to the railings of Buckingham Palace!

VOTES FOR WOMEN
POLLING BOOTH
WAY OUT
Many Suffragettes were arrested (including Emmeline Pankhurst).

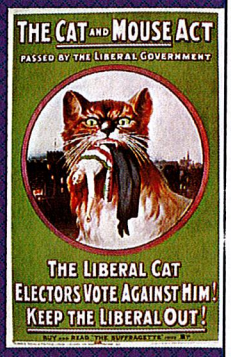

VOTES FOR WOMEN
POLLING BOOTH
WAY OUT
While in prison, many suffragettes went on hunger strike and had to be force fed.
Why do you think they were force fed?

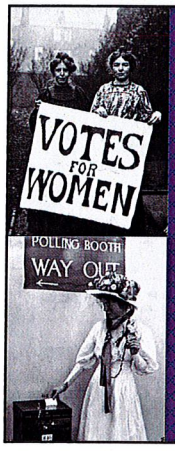


The prison officers force fed them so they didn't die and become a martyr (someone who is worshipped because of what they did in their life).



The government were highly embarrassed that the Suffragettes had to be force fed so the 'Cat and Mouse Act' was introduced.



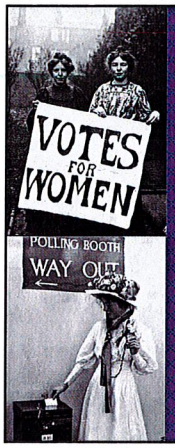


If a suffragette went on hunger strike, the officers would wait until she was too weak to cause any harm to the public.

She would then be released from prison. It was assumed she would eat and regain her strength.

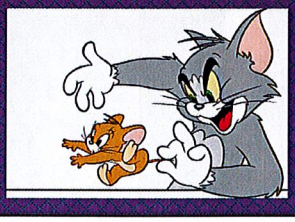
If she then caused trouble, she would be re-arrested. It was assumed that she would then go back on hunger strike.

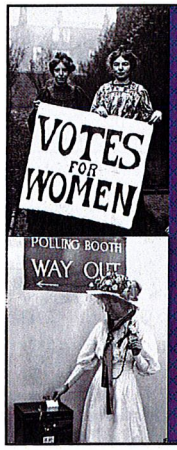
Then the cycle would start again.



Why do you think it was called the Cat and Mouse Act?

It was similar to the way cats play with its prey before eating it!

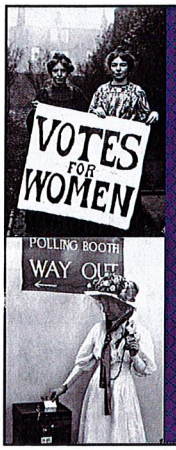




Do you think the Suffragettes gave up after so many were arrested?

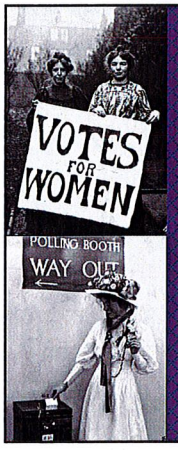
No! They refused to give up, and those not in prison kept on protesting!

The Cat and Mouse Act made them more determined!

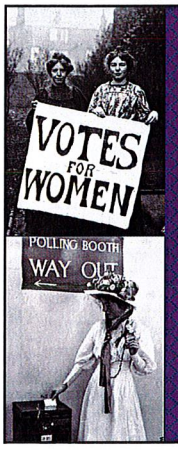


The Suffragettes were willing to die for their cause.

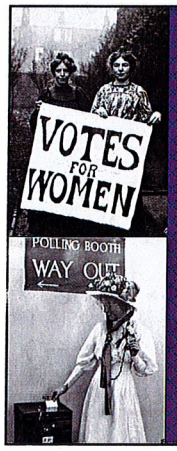
Emily Davison



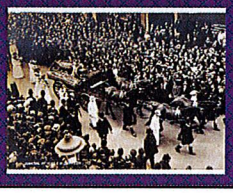
Emily Davison was horrified about the lack of independence and opportunities women had.

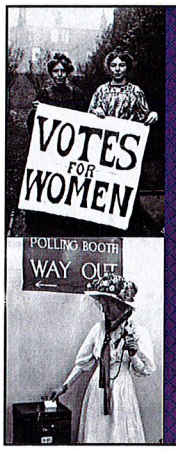


In 1913, Davison threw herself in front of the King's horse and died from her injuries.



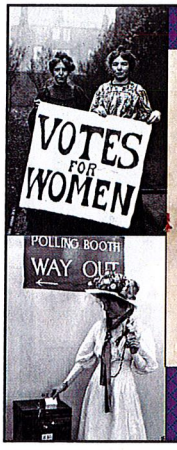
Hundreds of people attended her funeral, and she became one of the leading names in the Suffragette movement.



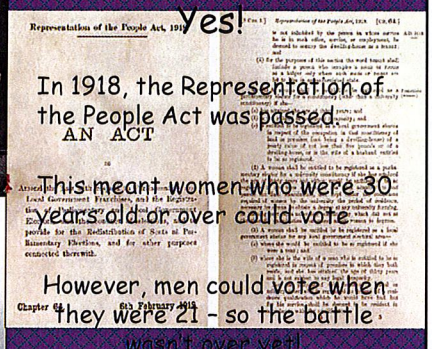


Now for the most important question:

Did the Suffragettes achieve anything?



Yes!

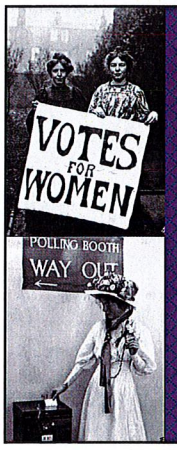

Representation of the People Act, 1918

AN ACT

In 1918, the Representation of the People Act was passed.

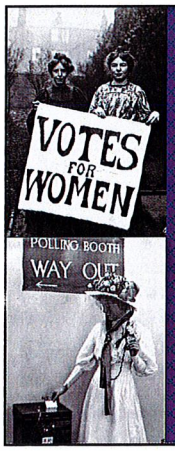
This meant women who were 30 years old or over could vote.

However, men could vote when they were 21 – so the battle wasn't over yet!



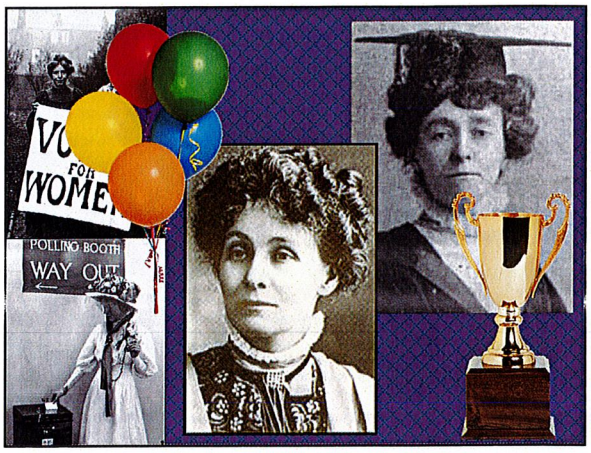
But…

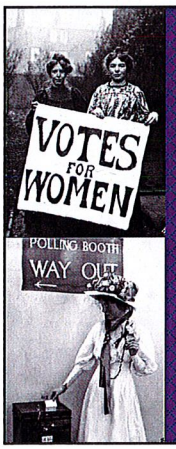
In 1928, the Representation of the People (Equal Franchise) Act was passed meaning that women could now vote when they were 21 years old – the same age as men could!



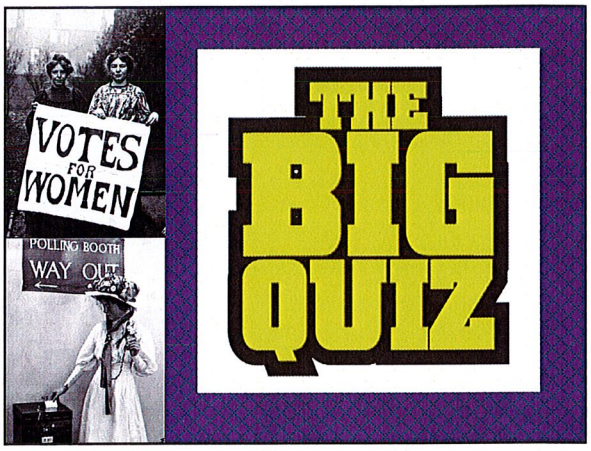
Although there was still inequality between men and women...

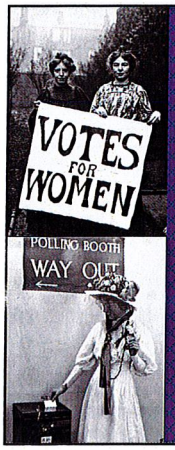
...in 1919, legal professions opened to women and the first woman barrister was appointed in 1922, meaning that women were slowly being seen as more equal.





The Suffragettes showed that with enough protest and determination, demands could be met - even if they sound outrageous at the time.





Quiz:

What is a Suffragette?

What kind of things could women not do before the Suffragettes?

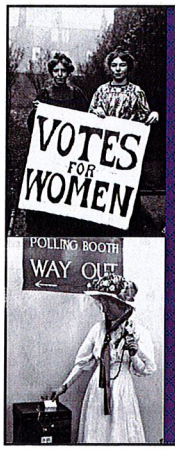
Which group did Emmeline Pankhurst form?

What violent things did the Suffragettes do?

Which act was introduced to stop force feeding?

Who stepped in front of the King's horse?

What did they achieve?



Answers:

A woman fighting for the right to vote.

Go to university, fight in the war, vote and wear trousers.

Women's Social and Political Union

Burn Churches, chain themselves to railings and vandalize shops.

The Cat and Mouse Act

Emily Davison.

The right to vote, age 30 in 1918 and age 21 in 1928. Women could be legal professionals.