

Use this worksheet to support Activity 15, “Research Essay,” located on page 12 of Historica Canada’s **Women in Canadian History Education Guide**.

Research the evolution of women’s rights over the century since most women first won the right to vote in federal elections. Once you have conducted research to answer your questions, you can formulate a thesis, then develop well-rounded arguments that provide evidence to back up your thesis statement.

Use the template below to record your research, or take notes as you prefer. When you are done your research and note-taking, use the following tips, charts, and organizers to help plan and write your essay.

Questions to think about: What has changed? What remains the same? Do women enjoy an equal standing with men today? How was suffrage a significant step forward, and how was it not? To what extent did it shape our society? Make sure to incorporate the idea of intersectionality and other overlapping factors into your essay when you write about equality – factors other than sexism influenced the right to vote. Not all women (or men) in Canada could vote in 1918.

First, research your topic! Use key questions to target what you want to investigate about the subject. Keep track of your sources so you can cite them in your essay.

Sources	Research Notes
Source 1 (Author, Title, Publication Details)	
Source 2	
Source 3	
Source 4	
Source 5	

After you've done your research, plot your argument using the evidence you found. You may want to use a graphic organizer like the one below to structure your thoughts.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Essay Planning Graphic Organizer

THESIS (Topic & Stance)

Give general reasons to support your thesis. These work well as topic sentences for body paragraphs.

WHY? Because...

Reason 1

WHY? Because...

Reason 2

WHY? Because...

Reason 3

WHY? Because for example...

Concrete Example (statistic, personal experience, observation, comparison, expert testimony)

Explanation: (Why? How? So what?)

WHY? Because for example...

Concrete Example (statistic, personal experience, observation, comparison, expert testimony)

Explanation: (Why? How? So what?)

WHY? Because for example...

Concrete Example (statistic, personal experience, observation, comparison, expert testimony)

Explanation: (Why? How? So what?)

Support your reasons with evidence and explanation. Explain WHY, HOW, SO WHAT?

Note: You can provide additional concrete examples and explanations for each reason, but you should have at least one.

Finally, write your essay! Here's an example of how to organize your arguments and evidence:

When structuring your essay, treat it like a baseball game.

1. **Start at home plate:** State your position and outline your three main arguments. Those arguments should be framed in general terms as noted above. You will provide the specific details in the body of your essay. Remember: it's not "mystery history." Don't leave your readers wondering what you are going to be arguing and, in general, how you will argue it.
2. **Run to first base:** Restate your overall position and introduce your first argument. Share your specific evidence from your research (the "what") and explain how those facts support your position (the "so what"). If you only state facts, you are not making an argument. Someone else might use those same facts to argue the other side of the position. You must explain how the facts prove your position to make a solid case. Balancing evidence with analysis is critical.



▲ In 1943, Mary "Bonnie" Baker (Regina, Sask.) became the first Canadian woman to sign with The All-American Girls Professional Baseball League (AAGPBL). Photo credit: Courtesy of the Saskatchewan Sports Hall of Fame Archives.

3. **Continue to second and third base:** For each new point, restate your overall position, introduce your next general argument, and then outline your evidence and analysis to make your point.
4. **Stay out of the outfield:** Only include information and arguments that are relevant to your position. Avoid including facts that are interesting but do not further your argument.
5. **Cross home plate:** Restate your overall position and your three main arguments.