

VOTES FOR WOMEN

EQUALITY
FOR ALL



WOMEN IN CANADIAN HISTORY

EDUCATION
GUIDE

STOP
VIOLENCE
AGAINST
WOMEN

RALLY-DEMONSTRATION

CONVOCATION HALL
UNIVERSITY OF TORONTO
11 A.M. SHARP
Interpreted for the hearing impaired

JARVIS COLLEGIATE
JARVIS & WELLESLEY
1:00 - 5:00 P.M.

PUBLIC FORUMS

Monday, March 5, 7:30 p.m.

Trinity-St. Paul's United Church
427 Bloor Street W

Tuesday, March 6, 7:30 p.m.

Women's Perspective on
War & Imperialism
Trinity-St. Paul's United Church
427 Bloor Street W

DANCES

Saturday, March 3, 8 p.m.

Ukrainian Labor Temple
300 Bathurst Street
Proceeds to Pro-choice Defense Fund
Sponsored by Ontario Coalition

\$6.00 advance / \$7.00 door /
\$4.00 unemployed
Women & men welcome

Saturday, March 10, 8:30 p.m.

The Party Centre
167 Church Street (below Shuter)
Produced by Branching Out
\$5.00 advance / \$6.00 door
All Women welcome

Childcare provided
John, Calvin, Brian 591-1434
or Taylor 964-3278

For information, call 789-4541

We apologize for the fact
that these locations are
not wheelchair accessible.



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MESSAGE TO TEACHERS

This guide complements provincial and territorial curricula in middle and high school history and social science classes. The historical thinking framework developed by Dr. Peter Seixas and the Historical Thinking Project has inspired classroom activities to promote research and analysis, engage critical thinking, promote communication skills, and explore ethical questions. The lessons may be used sequentially or individually.

Owing to demand for more resources exploring recent history, this guide concentrates on the 20th century. As we celebrate a century of women's suffrage, it's important to recognize that while this victory was a landmark achievement, social change and the push for equality weren't born from, nor completed by, achieving the right to vote. Putting girls and women into social studies and history narratives begins with a recognition of their diversity, as well as a recognition that not all perspectives are represented in this guide. Students are encouraged to remember that the experiences of one woman or group are not representative of everyone, and many stories remain untold. The complicated nature of recorded history, curricular requirements, and space limitations do not allow us to tell everyone's stories, and we hope that teachers will share other perspectives, experiences, and stories. Teachers may want to highlight these stories during Women's History Month in October.

Historica Canada's bilingual education guides are a collaborative process that engages history educators, academic historians, and community stakeholders in content creation and lesson planning.

NOTE ON ACCESSIBILITY

Accommodations for Special Education, ELL, and ESL students are included under the appropriate sections, and identified as **Modification**. Many of the activities in this guide require advanced reading skills. Consider pairing ELL students with stronger readers.

ONLINE RESOURCES

Recommended articles (*in italics*) can be accessed by visiting the [Women in Canadian History Collection](#) on The Canadian Encyclopedia. Supplementary worksheets (noted **in bold** throughout) can be downloaded on the [Historica Canada Education Portal](#).

The following list of bilingual resources supports educators and students but is not exhaustive.

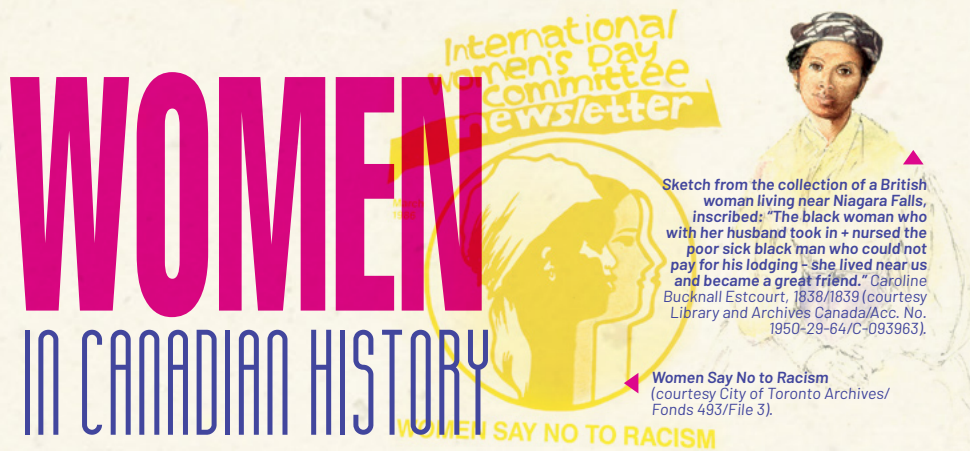
The Canadian Encyclopedia
the canadianencyclopedia.ca

Historica Canada Education Portal
education.historicacanada.ca/

Passages Canada
passagestocanada.com/

Dictionary of Canadian Biography
biographi.ca/en/

Women's History Videos
[celebratewomenshistory.ca](#)



Women have played a crucial role in the story of the past and how it shapes the present, but official histories often overlooked women's contributions. Until recently, history textbooks were usually written by and about men. Those accounts tended to minimize the place of women and girls in the national narrative, instead focusing on men's public roles, particularly in wars and politics. Family histories were more inclusive, presenting women's diverse roles. Today, historians are starting to recover the complicated reality in which both women and men have shaped human history. Women's history seeks to write women back into the parts of the narrative from which they have been omitted, with the goal of telling a more complete story. Women and girls were (and are) agents of change, and ignoring their role leaves history biased, incomplete, and misleading.

Women's history in this land began with Indigenous women, and later French, British, and African women arrived. Over the following centuries, immigrants from around the world began to arrive, finding a home and shaping the land that would become Canada. Women from every corner of the world now share in creating Canada's history. This education guide examines key moments and figures, acknowledging broad changes over time and the diversity this entails. Class, race, ethnicity, language, religion, gender identity, sexual orientation, politics, and geography all influence women's experiences. No single guide can capture the full range of human experience, but these pages introduce Canada's on-going story of diversity, with a focus on girls and women. They provide snapshots of important moments in women's history, though thousands of other stories are left unexplored. Our job as historians and students is to continue to investigate those stories after we put down our texts.

KEY CONCEPTS FOR USING THIS GUIDE

This guide aims to incorporate diverse perspectives on women's history. The activities weave together key ideas and methodologies that teachers may want to unpack with students.

The **Historical Thinking Concepts** help students analyze the past and understand what happened and what those events mean. For more on the Historical Thinking Concepts, visit historicalthinking.ca.

Historical Significance is a measure of what makes someone or something important in the historical narrative. People and events in the past are historically significant if they created change that affected many people over time, or if they reveal something about larger issues in history or the present day. However, historical significance is subjective: what is significant to one group may not be to another.



HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE CRITERIA

Prominence: Was the person or event recognized as significant at the time? Why or why not? What did it mean to be "significant"?

Consequences: What effect(s) did the person or event have?

Impact: How widespread and long-lasting was the person or event's impact?

Revealing: What does the person or event reveal about the larger historical context or current issues? How do they inform our understanding of a historical issue or period?

The Ethical Dimension asks us to avoid making ethical judgments about an event, policy, or person until we first examine the context from different perspectives. Our current beliefs and values shape how we view the past, and we need to be aware that past worldviews can differ from our own. Good historical scholarship does not ignore or attempt to cover up discrimination, crimes, or events, but considers their ethical meaning in the context of the time in which they occurred.

Continuity and Change shows how events, ideas, and people in the past are connected. Human societies are interrelated and evolving rather than isolated. Continuity and change can be assessed through



E. Pauline Johnson, a Mohawk poet, writer, artist, and performer, ca. 1900 (courtesy Vancouver Public Library/Cochran of Ontario/9429).



Peace, Pink, Power by Cheryl Braganza, 2014. Braganza was a Montreal artist and human rights activist who spoke for women and minorities through her art, which continues to send a message of empowerment to girls and women.



A mural in Digby, NS, tells the story of the Acadian people (Dreamstime.com/Meunierd/43286617).

KEY TERMS

Feminism: The belief that women and men are equal and should be treated as such. The feminist movement seeks to achieve equality on all fronts, including social, political, economic, educational, and personal. Feminism can be classified into three waves, with each wave dealing primarily with a different aspect of the movement toward equality. First-wave feminism focused mainly on legal issues, including women's right to vote (suffrage) as well as temperance, property, parental, and marriage rights. Second-wave feminism, beginning in the 1960s, was connected to the women's liberation movement, which worked toward social equality for women in issues like reproductive rights, legal barriers, sexuality, family, the workplace, and domestic violence. Third-wave feminism began in the 1990s, continuing the work of the second wave but focusing on more inclusive representation; it sought to eliminate gender-role stereotyping and to include women with diverse racial and cultural identities. Feminism continues to evolve, just as it continues to work on changing attitudes and perceptions for a more equal society.

Intersectionality: The idea that social identities and categories are inherently interconnected was developed by Black feminist thinker Kimberlé Crenshaw to identify how systems of power (advantage and disadvantage) affect everyone, benefit some, and exclude others

comparisons between moments in the past and the present, or between two points in the past. We evaluate change over time using turning points and the ideas of progress and decline.

Primary Source Evidence is the raw material that historians use to assess the past. When evaluating sources — letters, newspaper articles, photographs, diaries, government records, etc. — we search for clues to help us understand the rationale and aim of the creators, and the historical context of the source.

Cause and Consequence: Historians want to understand both the causes and impacts of past events. Exploring this complex relationship reminds us that historical events are not inevitable. The origins and causes of events are multi-dimensional: we must explore long- and short-term factors, study context (conditions, attitudes, and ideologies), and consider the power that humans exercise. Some consequences are expected, while others are unanticipated.

Exploring **Historical Perspectives** involves working toward a better understanding of the actions, decisions, worldviews, and experiences of people who lived in different historical contexts. We must not imagine or guess what someone from the past believed or valued, but examine evidence to draw observations and inferences. The perspective of one person from the past can provide a wealth of evidence about an event, an experience, or a worldview, but we must consider multiple perspectives to develop a broad understanding of the different views that existed in the past.

by reason of class, race, sexual orientation, age, ability, and gender. Many women face marginalization, exclusion, and poverty because of multiple, systemic forms of discrimination.

Institutionalized/Systemic Discrimination: Discriminatory treatment by society and its institutions, including patterns of behaviour, policies, or practices that create or perpetuate disadvantages for marginalized people through bias or unequal treatment. It can be intentional or unintentional, and many people are not conscious of the discrimination.

Privilege: Certain advantages are available only to particular groups of people, and social inequalities apply only to certain groups. Privilege can include things like race, class, gender, ability, education, and many more. Students should learn that their perspectives may be shaped by their privileges or disadvantages to build understanding of different situations, opinions, and actions.

Presentism: The imposition of present ideas on people in the past, including the tendency to interpret past events in terms of modern values. When exploring historical perspectives, we should avoid presentism.

¹ Adapted from "Considering Significance," TC2, https://tc2.ca/pdf/T3_pdfs/EHT_TheGreatestHits.pdf

ACTIVITIES

1. MUSEUM PANELS: 1600-1900
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Create a collaborative museum exhibit exploring the significance of women and girls’ contributions to Canada.

Museums can provide windows into the past. Many museum exhibits share history in a way that emphasizes the experiences and roles of men, distorting our perception of history. Imagine your class is responsible for a new exhibit that highlights a diverse range of women who made a difference in their times and ours.

1.

Working as a pair or small group, choose a woman or group from the list below to research.
2.

Note your findings in the **Museum Panel Graphic Organizer**, available on the **Education Portal**. Begin your research on *The Canadian Encyclopedia* or the *Dictionary of Canadian Biography*, and use other sources.

• Indigenous women in the fur trade such as [Charlotte Small](#) and [Thanadelthur](#)

• Early workers and entrepreneurs such as [Lady Sara Kirke](#), [Martha Black](#), and [Isobel Gunn](#)

• Religious leaders such as [Jeanne Mance](#), [Marguerite Bourgeays](#), and [Marie de l’Incarnation](#)

• *Filles du roi*

• Indigenous women who encountered settlers, such as [Saint Kateri Tekakwitha](#), [Mikak](#), [Molly Brant](#), and [Tookoolito](#)

• White pioneer women such as [Catherine Parr Traill](#) and [Susanna Moodie](#)

• Early Indigenous activists such as [Nahneebahwequa](#) (Catherine Sutton)

• Enslaved Black women such as [Chloe Cooley](#) and [Marie-Joseph Angélique](#)

• Anti-slavery activists such as [Mary Ann Shadd Cary](#)

• Western settlers such as [Marie-Anne Gaboury](#) (Lagemodière)

• Women in Métis communities, such as [Sara Riel](#)

• Rural teachers, such as [Mathilda Davis](#)

Abolitionist and publisher Mary Ann Shadd Cary, ca. 1855–1860 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/C-028977).



L'arrivée des Filles du Roi by Eleanor Fortescue Brickdale (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Acc. no 1996-371-1/C-020126).



3.

Using the Historical Significance Criteria (see page 3), assess the importance of the woman you researched. Justify why she should be highlighted in a museum exhibit.
4.

Create a descriptive museum panel on a poster or digitally, including the following:
 - A brief description of the woman or group of women
 - An explanation of what they reveal about life at the time
 - An argument about their significance in Canada’s history
 - Images that illustrate your perspective, if available
5.

Present the panel to the class, and together create a collaborative museum gallery.

MODIFICATION: CHOOSE A WOMAN FROM THE LIST TO RESEARCH. ANSWER THE 5WS. HOW LONG-LASTING WAS HER IMPACT ON SOCIETY? WAS SHE RECOGNIZED AS SIGNIFICANT IN HER OWN TIME? JUDGE THE IMPORTANCE OF HER CONTRIBUTIONS. PRESENT THIS INFORMATION ORALLY TO THE CLASS.

Teacher Tip: Have each pair or group research a different woman or group. If they choose another woman or group, ensure adequate research material.

Molly Brant, also known as Koñwatsi'tsiaiéñini (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/©Canada Post Corporation/e000008247).



2. WOMEN & WORK: 1600-1900
PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

Explore women and girls’ diverse roles, workplaces, and conditions using primary sources. What do they reveal about early Canadian history?

Women in Canada have always worked, performing different roles in a variety of workplaces. The majority were expected to bear and raise children and to care for men, the disabled, and the elderly. Women and girls remained overwhelmingly responsible for domestic labour even as paid work became increasingly common by the 20th century (especially before marriage). Jobs, whether in other’s homes, factories, offices, or shops, were often low-paying, exploitative, and offered little hope of independence. Class and race determined opportunity. Take these factors into account when examining the treatment of women in the workplace.

1.

Working in small groups, choose one of the primary sources from the **Women and Work Worksheet**, available on the **Education Portal**.
2.

Complete each step of the **Primary Source Analysis Graphic Organizer**.
3.

Imagine you’re the woman or girl in the source. Write a letter to a loved one, describing (if you can) your working conditions and wages. Include your day-to-day experiences and challenges, thinking about things like troubles with sick children, limited job prospects, desire for money, legal issues, or how your family or the community view you and your work.

Teacher Tip: Suggest to your students that after finishing the primary source analysis chart, they can take notes on any unclear language and seek out definitions for unfamiliar words. Tell them to break down difficult sections and re-write these passages in their own words.

MODIFICATION: THINK/PAIR/SHARE: WHAT IS THE ORIGIN OF THE SOURCE? WHAT IS THE PURPOSE OF ITS CREATION? WHAT DOES THIS EVIDENCE TELL US ABOUT THE PAST?



"My poor husband, you complain of your ten hours of work. I've been working fourteen hours, and my day is not yet over." By Joseph Swain, 1871 (courtesy McCord Museum/C572_A.02.532.1).

An advertisement in the *Upper Canada Gazette* selling a young woman as a slave, 1795 (courtesy Archives of Ontario/N-31).



Women scraping and stretching deer skin, North West Territories, 1936 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Canada. Dept. of Interior/PA-047987).



Women vendors at Montcalm Market, Québec City, ca. 1890 (courtesy McCord Museum/ MP-1877.182.1).

WOMEN & THE FIRST WORLD WAR

To learn about women’s important role in the First World War, explore the **First World War Education Guide** on the **Education Portal**, and watch the *Nursing Sisters Heritage Minute*.

3. BREAKING BARRIERS
HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

MODIFICATION: PARTNER WITH A STUDENT WHO HAS CHOSEN A GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL THAT INTERESTS YOU. DRAW A BEFORE-AND-AFTER VISUALIZATION FOR THEIR WRITING, ILLUSTRATING WHAT YOUR GROUP OR INDIVIDUAL CHANGED.

Reflect on a woman or organization in the early 20th century who pioneered equality, questioned prejudices, or challenged oppression, and write a textbook “Special Feature” page about her and her achievements.

Early organized women’s activist groups, often referred to as first-wave feminists, began to achieve success in the early 20th century as they campaigned for suffrage, pacifism, temperance, and labour and health rights along with legal and political equality. Prepare a one-page special feature section for a new Breaking Barriers textbook that focuses on women and girls in Canadian history, working to incorporate diverse perspectives and narratives in history classes. As a class, combine your work to create a new textbook for students at your school.

1.

Using the criteria for historical significance (see page 3) to structure your research, investigate an organization or individual from the “Changemakers” tab in the **Women in Canadian History collection** on *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.
2.

To prepare your specific textbook page, identify:
 - the person or group
 - what they did (five detailed and informative facts)
 - when and where they were most active
 - the specific barrier they tackled
 - an overall assessment of their historical significance

If possible, include a primary source for extra interest. This might be a photograph, a painting, a poem, a letter, or a newspaper story about the topic.



Group of Black women in front of a Y.W.C.A. boarding house, Toronto, Ontario, 1917 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/William James/PA-126710).



Women's Bureau officers at Québec, 1928 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Edwards/C.G. Motion Picture Bureau/C-045113).



Miss A. Thomas, a Cree registered nurse at the Women's Pavilion of the Winnipeg General Hospital, 1960 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Canada. Dept. of Indian Affairs and Northern Development/PA-202475).



Women prospectors on their way to the Klondike, 1898 (courtesy US Library of Congress/Prints and Photographs Division/B. W. Kilburn/LC-USZ62-2129/201264647).

4. THE PERSONS CASE
PERSPECTIVE TAKING

Write a petition from the perspective of one of the Famous Five.

At the end of the First World War, most women were granted the right to vote in federal elections and stand for elected office. However, under Canada’s constitution, the 1867 *British North America Act*, women were not officially “persons” and thus could not be appointed to the Canadian Senate. Alberta’s Famous Five challenged this exclusion. Emily Murphy, Nellie McClung, Louise McKinney, Henrietta Muir Edwards, and Irene Parlby, all white women, petitioned the Supreme Court of Canada, but in 1928 it ruled that “persons” did not include women. The Five appealed to Canada’s highest court, the British Privy Council, which in 1929 overrode the earlier decision and declared women legal persons under the law. It was not until much later that all Indigenous and Asian-Canadian women were given the fundamental rights of full citizenship, but the Famous Five did not concern themselves with this exclusion.²

Teacher Tip: Students may need extra research to answer the questions. Propose further resources, assign this as homework, or give groups extra time.

MODIFICATION: WITHIN YOUR CHOSEN GROUP, CREATE A COMIC STRIP OF SIX PANELS TO ILLUSTRATE HOW YOUR FAMOUS FIVE LEADER VIEWED THE TOPIC YOUR GROUP RESEARCHED.

- 1. Divide the class into five groups, with each group assigned a member of the Famous Five.
- 2. Read the articles *Famous Five* and *Persons Case*, and the article on your member on *The Canadian Encyclopedia*, and use other sources as needed.
- 3. Each group should explore the perspective of their subject on one of the following key aspects of the suffrage movement:

- The right of some women to vote
- The right of some women to hold public office
- Temperance and prohibition
- Improvements in women’s rights, including property, mothers’ rights, equal pay, etc.
- Improvements in public health

- 4. Each group will research, write, and present a petition. Be creative in your three-minute presentation, during which all members must participate. The petition will be no more than 300 words and must be grounded in evidence.
- 5. Questions to address in the petition:

- What values or ideas does the woman you chose reflect, specifically in relation to your chosen aspect?
- How were her understandings of the rights and role of women different from those of suffrage opponents? Show the other side, but stay on message.
- How would you attempt to convince your opponents that suffrage is an essential right of all women and that the area you examined must be reformed?

Learn more about suffrage and the right to vote with the **Women’s Suffrage in Canada Education Guide**, available on the **Education Portal**.

A model of the “Women Are Persons!” statue, honouring the contributions of the Famous 5. The sculpture by Barbara Paterson was unveiled on Parliament Hill in 2000 (courtesy Famous 5 Foundation).



5. COMMEMORATING HISTORICAL FIGURES
ETHICAL DIMENSION

Explore the moral dilemmas we face when we commemorate controversial historical figures, and write a research-based persuasive letter.

Experiences, values, worldviews, and beliefs reflect the era in which people lived. The way people viewed the world in the past, and the choices they made, were a product of many influences and cannot be labelled simply “good” or “evil.” We usually remember the Famous Five for the positive change the Persons Case brought for women, and their commitment to equal pay for equal work and joint custody of children. These women, however, supported policies that most Canadians now consider discriminatory and wrong, such as the forced sterilization of people with developmental disabilities (a key element of the eugenics movement, which supported controlled selective human reproduction), the denial of the vote to most Indigenous and Asian women, and racially restrictive immigration. How should modern Canadians make sense of this, and how should we remember these women?



Henrietta Muir Edwards, ca. 1890 (courtesy Glenbow Archives/ Pittaway/NA-2607-7).

Nellie McClung, 1914 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Cyril Jessop/PA-030212).

Irene Parlby, ca. 1910-1918 (courtesy Glenbow Archives/NA-273-1).

Emily Murphy (courtesy Provincial Archives of Alberta/A3460).

Louise McKinney, 1925 (courtesy Glenbow Archives/NA-825-1).

² To learn about the restrictions on voting rights applied to women, read *Indigenous Women and the Franchise*, *Right to Vote in Canada* (Asian Canadians section), *Black Voting Rights in Canada*, and *Women’s Suffrage in Canada* on *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.

6. WOMEN & LABOUR
IN THE GREAT DEPRESSION

PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS, PERSPECTIVE TAKING

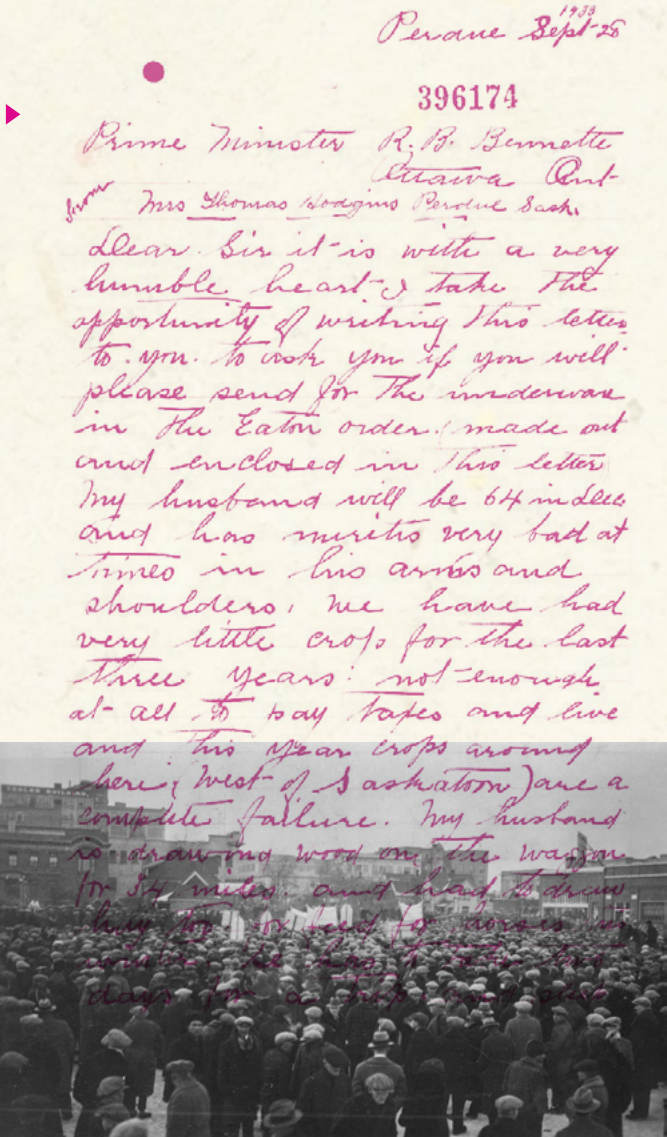
Read letters written during the Great Depression to understand women’s beliefs, attitudes, and perspectives on what was happening to them, their families, Canada, and the world.

Canadians were hit hard by the Great Depression of the 1930s. In difficult times, many women needed to take on paid work, while still being expected to care for their families. Many struggled to keep families fed and clothed, barely able to cover basic living expenses. Unemployment, destitution, and violence were widespread. Not only were they often the lowest paid, but women were offered a limited range of jobs and their opportunities were generally inferior to men’s. Many struggling women (and men) addressed their concerns, anger, and despair by writing to Prime Minister R.B. Bennett. They told of commonplace tragedy, and asked for relief (a common term for social welfare), or help in getting jobs. Sometimes they demanded his government find solutions to the economic crisis.

- 1. Working in small groups, read a letter written by a Canadian woman to Prime Minister Bennett in the **Women in the Great Depression Worksheet**, available on the **Education Portal**. What does it reveal about the impact of the Depression?
- 2. Using this letter and *The Canadian Encyclopedia* article *Great Depression*, complete each step of primary source analysis with the **Primary Source Pyramid**, located on the **Education Portal**.

MODIFICATION: FOCUS ON ONE OF THE LETTER WRITERS. WRITE A DIARY ENTRY FROM HER PERSPECTIVE THAT OUTLINES HER DAY-TO-DAY EXPERIENCES. BASE YOUR ENTRY ON HISTORICAL EVIDENCE FROM YOUR RESEARCH ABOUT WOMEN’S LIVES DURING THE GREAT DEPRESSION.

Request for assistance from Mrs. Thomas Hodgins to Prime Minister R. B. Bennett, September 28, 1933 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Microfilm reel M-1321/396173-396182).



Hunger March during the Great Depression, Edmonton, 1932 (courtesy Provincial Archives of Alberta/Roy Berlando/A9214).

PART A:

- 1. As a class, establish four to six criteria to determine if a person should be commemorated, and if they are controversial, how to commemorate them. Consider the political and social context of the historical figures involved. What shaped their beliefs and actions? Were other choices available? What are the benefits and the dangers of imposing today’s standards as we judge public figures from the past?

PART B:

- 1. Working individually, read *Eugenics* on *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.
- 2. Choose one of the Famous Five to research, and read the corresponding *Canadian Encyclopedia* article: **Nellie McClung**, **Henrietta Muir Edwards**, **Louise McKinney**, **Emily Murphy**, or **Irene Parlby**. Teachers, make sure each woman is represented.
- 3. Complete the 5Ws for your choice: Who is she? What did she do? When and where was she active? Why was she important? Answers can focus on positive or negative contributions. Note which social and economic groups these women came from, and why this is important.
- 4. Record beliefs, actions, or opinions that might be considered controversial today, and consider how this affects your understanding.

- 5. Using the criteria you created in Part A, determine whether she should be commemorated, and how.
- 6. Write a persuasive letter that incorporates your research and includes both sides of the debate. It could take the form of:
 - a letter to today’s Government of Canada arguing to keep or remove the statue of the Famous Five from Parliament Hill;
 - a letter to a school board that has a school named for Nellie McClung, defending or objecting to the name;
 - a letter to the City of Edmonton, which has parks named after each of the Famous Five, arguing that it rename or preserve one of the parks;
 - a letter to the Government of Canada defending or opposing the “honorary senator” status given to the Famous Five in 2009.

Extension: Research and discuss other examples of controversial figures and their memorialization across North America with your class.

MODIFICATION: COMPLETE A T-CHART WITH POSITIVE CONTRIBUTIONS ON THE LEFT AND NEGATIVE CONTRIBUTIONS ON THE RIGHT. WRITE AN EXIT SLIP ANSWERING THE QUESTION “HOW SHOULD WE COMMEMORATE PEOPLE WHOSE POLITICS ARE UNACCEPTABLE BY TODAY’S STANDARDS?”

7. WOMEN & THE SECOND WORLD WAR

PRIMARY SOURCES & HISTORICAL PERSPECTIVES

Explore the meaning of propaganda posters for attitudes toward and beliefs about women during the Second World War.

During the war, the government and various organizations produced thousands of propaganda posters that used powerful images and slogans to boost morale, generate investment, and promote patriotism, enlistment, military production, and sacrifice. Many were explicitly aimed at women. Some showcased traditional roles such as motherhood and nursing and highlighted protection and moral superiority, while others promoted women's entry into jobs traditionally filled by men. All were intended to rouse women to support the war effort.



- Individually or in small groups, choose one of the posters available in the [Second World War Posters Worksheet](#) on the [Education Portal](#).
- Analyze the poster using the [Primary Source Pyramid](#), available on the [Education Portal](#).
- Answer the following questions:
 - Describe the poster. What language and/or symbols are used? Who is represented in the posters and who is not? Think about race, age, class, standards of beauty, etc.
 - What is the intended message? What is left out? Who is the intended audience?
 - Does the poster represent a departure from or a continuation of roles women traditionally played?
 - What does the poster tell us about views and expectations about the roles of women during the war?
- Present your poster and analysis to the class. Explain what you learned about women's experiences and discuss what these posters leave out.

MODIFICATION: HAVE STUDENTS FILL OUT A K/W/L CHART ABOUT THEIR POSTER.

◀ **From left to right:**
"Attack on all Fronts," Second World War propaganda campaign, by Hubert Reginald Rogers, 1943 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/The Hubert Rogers Collection/Gift of Mrs. Helen Priest Rogers/Acc. No. 1987-72-105/C-103527).
"Shoulder to Shoulder," poster promoting the Canadian Women's Army Corps, ca. 1944 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/e003900663).
Recruitment poster for the Women's Royal Naval Service, 1943 (courtesy Jean MacDonald/The Memory Project/Historica Canada).

WOMEN & THE SECOND WORLD WAR

For more information on the history of women in the Second World War, visit [thememoryproject.com](#) and the [Second World War Collection](#) on *The Canadian Encyclopedia* (choose the "Women" tab), and explore the [Second World War Education Guide](#) on the [Education Portal](#).

8. GREAT WOMEN IN THE ARTS

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Develop an argument about why we should commemorate a certain woman, and explain her historical significance.

Women have made vital and groundbreaking contributions to Canada's arts and culture scene, writing, dancing, acting, and painting their way into history. Imagine you must commemorate one woman's influence on the cultural landscape. Choosing a woman who was active from 1950 onward, nominate her for a Great Canadian Contributor Award, which is awarded to a woman who has made a significant contribution to Canada's cultural landscape.

- Choose a woman from the list below and read the corresponding article on *The Canadian Encyclopedia*. Take notes on her significance (see page 3).

ALANIS OBOMSAWIN	DEEPA MEHTA	JUDY KANG
ALICE MUNRO	DIONNE BRAND	K.D. LANG
ANITA RAU BADAMI	DJANET SEARS	KENOJUAK ASHEVAK
ANNE HÉBERT	EDEN ROBINSON	KIM THÚY
ANNE MURRAY	EMILY CARR	MARGARET ATWOOD
ANTONINE MAILLET	ESI EDUGYAN	MARGARET LAURENCE
BUFFY SAINT-MARIE	GABRIELLE ROY	PORTIA WHITE
CAROL SHIELDS	JONI MITCHELL	TANTOO CARDINAL
CÉLINE DION	JOYCE WIELAND	TREY ANTHONY
DAPHNE ODJIG	JOY KOGAWA	YING CHEN
- Prepare an award nomination arguing why your choice should be honoured, using the historical significance criteria to justify her importance.



▶ **Singer-songwriter K.D. Lang** (Dreamstime/30075897/Carriehenson1). | **Author Gabrielle Roy, 1946** (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Ronny Jaques/R3133-679-3-E). | **Inuit artist Kenojuak Ashevak drawing inside her tent, Cape Dorset, Nunavut, 1960** (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Rosemary Gilliat Eaton/e010835887). | **Film director and screenwriter Deepa Mehta, 1996** (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Susan King/R11941-5/e006610231).

9. WOMEN & THE QUIET REVOLUTION

CAUSE & CONSEQUENCE

This activity explores the origins and effects of the Quiet Revolution for women in Québec.

The 1960s was a period of great change in Canada, particularly in Québec. During the Quiet Revolution, the provincial government made sweeping reforms to provide Québécois with greater control over their culture and economy; the power of the Catholic Church in society and education waned; and a modern and nationalist sentiment emerged. These reforms, coupled with social change across Canada, led to a fundamental shift for women. Legislation and civil law offered women new freedoms and a generation of feminists pursued equality through organizations such as the *Fédération des femmes du Québec* (FFQ).

- Consider the causes and consequences of change for Québécoise women as you read *Women and the Quiet Revolution* on *The Canadian Encyclopedia*.
- Using the developments listed in the [Quiet Revolution Worksheet](#), available on the [Education Portal](#), read the brief corresponding article from the *Musée québécois de culture populaire* and complete the chart.
- On a scale of 1 (no influence) to 5 (high influence), rank the importance of the four topics in the chart. Who and what is missing?

- Write a newspaper article on one of the four developments (see worksheet) for women during the Quiet Revolution. Your article should answer the following:
 - What happened?
 - When and where did it happen?
 - Who was involved? Who was affected?
 - Why and how did it happen?
 - What were the short-term and long-term consequences? What might be some unintended consequences?

Teacher Tip: Encourage students to consider the impact that race, class, (dis)ability, and/or sexual orientation might have had on how women responded to the key developments.

Extension: Complete your exploration of this topic with a small group or class debate about whether the Quiet Revolution was as "revolutionary" for women as it was for Québec society.

MODIFICATION: DIVIDE STUDENTS INTO SMALL GROUPS, AND ASSIGN EACH GROUP AN ARTICLE TO READ. ASK STUDENTS TO COMPLETE A FISHBONE CHART ASSESSING THE CAUSES OF THEIR ASSIGNED EVENT, AND HAVE THEM IDENTIFY THREE CONSEQUENCES. GROUPS CAN PRESENT THEIR FINDINGS TO THE CLASS.

Thérèse Casgrain, feminist, politician, and senator, 1937 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Yousuf Karsh/PA-178177). ▶



10. THE ROYAL COMMISSION ON THE STATUS OF WOMEN

CONTINUITY & CHANGE

Explore some key recommendations of the Report of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women to determine the extent to which progress has been made.

The Royal Commission on the Status of Women was established in 1967 in response to demands by multiple women's groups that Ottawa tackle prejudice in institutions as well as in the personal sphere to counteract the real human costs of discrimination. After extensive public hearings and thousands of letters and testimonies, the Commission issued a report in 1970, making 167 recommendations for federal action to achieve equality between men and women. Leading issues included political representation, education, poverty, family law, birth control and abortion rights, child care, maternity leave, pay equity, and the status of Indigenous women.

- In pairs or small groups, select one of the recommendations from the Report in the [Royal Commission Worksheet](#), available on the [Education Portal](#).
- Determine how well your selected issue has been addressed before the report, after the report, and today. Remember that change occurs at different rates; provinces and territories may have various approaches to the Report's recommendations.
- Come together as a class to share your research. After learning about the various recommendations, discuss the following questions:
 - To what extent did the Royal Commission on the Status of Women make a difference in women's lives in Canada? Which women?
 - Was the Royal Commission a turning point in Canadian history?
 - Which recommendation had the greatest lasting impact? Why? On whom?
 - What issues still require action today?

Extension: Investigate women who were active participants in the push for women's rights, such as Florence Bird, Dorothea Palmer, or Barbara Cadbury.

MODIFICATION: CREATE A FLOW CHART VISUALIZING YOUR SELECTED ISSUE. HOW WAS IT ADDRESSED BEFORE THE REPORT, AFTER THE REPORT, AND TODAY?

Meeting of the Royal Commission on the Status of Women in Canada (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Dominion Wide Photographs Limited/1971-191 NPC). ▶



CRIMINAL LAW AMENDMENT ACT/ OMNIBUS BILL, 1969

In the 1960s, a "Second Feminist Wave" demanded legislative reforms to create a more equal society, including issues of peace and disarmament, greater political representation, reproductive rights, pay equity in employment, legal rights, and more. On December 21, 1967, then-Justice Minister Pierre Trudeau signaled a major change for Canadian society when he declared that "there's no place for the state in the bedrooms of the nation." His government's Criminal Law Amendment Act (CLAA) legalized abortion under certain conditions and decriminalized homosexuality, contraceptives, and birth control (among other things) to "[bring] the laws of the land up to contemporary society."

11. DECEMBER 6, 1989

CAUSE & CONSEQUENCE, HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Explore the Montreal Massacre events and violence against women and girls.

On December 6, 1989, a man entered Montreal's École Polytechnique and separated male and female students, shooting and killing 14 women while screaming "You are all feminists." Canadians were shocked and horrified, but where some saw only a crazed individual gunman, others identified institutionalized anti-feminism and violence against girls and women. The bloodshed encouraged many to take this event, known as the Montreal Massacre, seriously as an expression of a wider problem. In 1991, Canada declared December 6 a National Day of Remembrance and Action on Violence Against Women.

In your classroom, you will create a memorial poster that honours victims and educates students about the continued reality of violence against women and girls.

1. As a class, watch the following video from the CBC Archives, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ndkw0yK85z4>, and read about the victims and survivors of the massacre at <http://www.cbc.ca/montreal/features/remember-14/> and <http://montrealgazette.com/news/local-news/polytechnique-massacre-lives-forever-changed>. Read more about the events on *The Canadian Encyclopedia* and in media reports.

2. Partner up to research the events.

- What happened?
- Why did it happen? What is the context of this event?
- Why is this event historically significant?
 - » How did this event result in change?
 - » How is this event told to us?
- Why did the Montreal Massacre produce such an overwhelming response? What did it reveal about the larger issue of violence against women and girls in Canadian society?

Plaque on the exterior wall of L'École Polytechnique commemorating the victims of the Montreal Massacre (courtesy wikicommons/Bobanny).



3. Decide as a class what themes and components would be appropriate, and then create a poster using materials of your choice.
4. Conduct a gallery walk and debrief.

Extension: Have a class discussion about misogyny in current events, addressing the emergence of the #MeToo and #TimesUp movements. Discuss what has changed and what has not.

MODIFICATION: PAIR STUDENTS. HAVE ONE STUDENT CONDUCT THE RESEARCH, AND THE OTHER COMPLETE THE VISUALS.

Courtesy Rise Up Feminist Archive. riseupfeministarchive.ca/culture/buttons/stopviolenceagainstwomen/.



12. NEWSPAPER EXPOSÉ

CAUSE & CONSEQUENCE

Write a newspaper exposé that explores violence against Indigenous women and girls.

Indigenous women are subject to higher rates of gender-based violence than non-Indigenous Canadians.³ The severity of this violence, including physical and sexual assault as well as murder, only became visible through exposés by Indigenous women activists and their allies. By the beginning of the 21st century, Canadians faced, as never before, the nation's fundamental failure of human rights. Exploring the origins of these issues is essential if we are to eliminate gender-based violence and fulfill our human rights commitments.

Draft a newspaper exposé that explores the origins and persistence of one facet of violence against Indigenous women and girls, and suggest measures toward its elimination.

1. Choose one of the following facets to research:

- **The Root Causes of Violence**
 - » Consider the underlying factors (colonialism, government policies such as the *Indian Act*, the impact of Residential Schools and intergenerational trauma, and institutionalized racism)
- **The Immediate Causes of Violence**
 - » Consider the systemic social, political, economic, and cultural conditions (inadequate housing, poverty, access to services, racism, poor levels of education, low employment and income rates, etc.)
- **The Effects of Violence**
 - » Consider both the direct and indirect consequences for Indigenous women and girls



▲ *Tears In Heaven* by Tanisha Spotted Bull, 2017 (courtesy Indigenous Arts & Stories/Historica Canada).

Potential sources for your research include:

- [The Truth & Reconciliation Commission of Canada](#)
- [The Inquiry into Missing & Murdered Indigenous Women & Girls](#)
- [Native Women's Association of Canada: Sisters in Spirit](#)
- [Status of Women Canada](#)
- [UNiTE to End Violence against Women](#)
- 2. Your exposé should include a breakdown and analysis of your research, and five calls to action. Things to consider:
 - What do Indigenous women and girls have to say about strategies to eliminate gender-based violence?
 - What recommendations or strategies could help tackle the tragedy?

13. IMMIGRATION & MULTICULTURALISM IN MODERN CANADA

PRIMARY SOURCES

Investigate immigration through a primary source, and research how women experience intersectionality as they confront challenges to integration.

Much of Canada's population today is made up of people whose roots lie elsewhere. The majority of the earliest colonial settlers were men, though women soon arrived, sometimes as *filles du roi*, slaves, or indentured servants. The tide of newcomers ebbed and flowed over the centuries, and the population became increasingly diverse as racist barriers to immigration were dismantled. In the more recent past, waves of immigration have brought women from around the globe to Canada to make new lives. Stories from immigrant women can highlight challenges facing female newcomers.

1. Split the class into small groups, and have each watch a different video from **Passages Canada**:

vimeo.com/64650501
vimeo.com/65146477
vimeo.com/64751078

vimeo.com/60271499
vimeo.com/64588465
vimeo.com/64650498

vimeo.com/64907519
vimeo.com/64751079

2. Take notes on how the interviewee describes life in her home country and in Canada.
3. Create a T-chart with "Life before Immigration" and "Life in Canada" headings and use your notes to describe experiences.
 - What challenges did the woman face?
 - What aspects of her life does she not discuss? What might women not want to share (with strangers or even with family members)? What might silence tell us?
 - What changed, and what stayed the same?
 - Note stories or statements you find thought-provoking.
4. Form new groups to present your findings: each student in the new group will have watched a different video. Take turns presenting the videos to the new group.
5. Once each student in the new group has presented a video, answer the following together:

- What challenges and obstacles are most common?
- Examine the meaning of intersectionality (see page 3): What are the root causes of the challenges? To what extent are these challenges based on gender and to what extent are they the result of another factor (ethnicity, sexual orientation, socio-economic status, education, disability, political instability, etc.)? How might challenges have influenced each other? How or why might we consider her challenges intersectional?

Extension: Interview an immigrant woman in your community about her experience in Canada. Consider asking her to compare her role within her community in her home country to her role here.

Gender has been understood differently by different civilizations and cultures throughout history. In Canada, roles, appearance, clothing and other forms of gender identity and expression have not always been fixed according to one's biological sex. For example, some Indigenous groups have recognized more than two genders, and others have a concept called two-spirit to refer to someone who personifies both a masculine and feminine spirit. Today, gender is an evolving term, and people from many communities continue to debate its meaning, as well as the associated stereotypes and impacts.

14. WOMEN'S ACTIVISM IN CANADA

HISTORICAL SIGNIFICANCE

Write a letter requesting funding for an activist organization, exploring the significance of its goals and achievements in a larger historical context.

Beginning in the 1960s, women in Canada reinvigorated their efforts to push for equality. Over the following decades, feminism developed into a more representative women's movement, allied with workers, Indigenous peoples, and other marginalized Canadians, and they embraced increasingly diverse initiatives.

1. Research a women's activist group in Canada. Begin by reading *The Canadian Encyclopedia* article on your chosen group and visiting its website, if applicable:

- [Women's Legal Education and Action Fund](#)
- [DisAble Women's Network Canada](#)
- [Egale Canada](#)
- [Native Women's Association of Canada](#)
- [Abortion Rights Coalition of Canada](#)
- [Child Care Advocacy Association of Canada](#)

▼ **Abortion Caravan**, a feminist protest movement opposing amendments to the Criminal Code, 1970 (courtesy Archives of Ontario/Julien LeBourdais/C 193-2).

▼ **Founders of the Idle No More movement**, 2012 (courtesy Marcel Petit).



◀ **Sign from the Women's March in Toronto**, January 2017 (Dreamstime.com/Arindam Banerjee/850359990).

- [National Action Committee on the Status of Women](#)
- [Canadian Voice of Women for Peace](#)
- [Equal Voice](#)
- [Fédération des femmes du Québec](#)
- [National Council of Jewish Women of Canada](#)

14. WOMEN'S ACTIVISM IN CANADA - CONT'D

- Using what you have learned, write a request for funding for the organization. You could direct your request to individual citizens or to governments that provide grants to non-profit organizations that contribute positively to society. In your request, include:

- A brief history of the organization, including the 5Ws
 - Who** — describe the people involved.
 - What** — what does the organization stand for? What spurred its creation? Provide facts for someone who does not know the group, including strategies used to create change.
 - When** — what years were they active?

Teacher Tip: Consider having your students concentrate their exploration on a local woman or activist organization.

- Where** — identify places in which they were active.
- Why** — is this organization historically significant? Consider how its actions reveal something about the time and/or nation, how those actions resulted in change, and their lasting impact.

- A few of their significant accomplishments
- Future goals of the organization
- How funding would help the organization continue its work
- A call to action outlining why funding is necessary, and what it will accomplish

MODIFICATION: HAVE STUDENTS COMPLETE A 5WS CHART ABOUT AN ACTIVIST ORGANIZATION.



Fighting Racism & Sexism Together (courtesy City of Toronto Archives/Fonds 493/File 3).

15. RESEARCH ESSAY

Women won a victory with suffrage in 1918. Women's rights are in constant evolution, and we've come a long way over the last 100 years. But do women enjoy an equal standing with men today?

Write a research essay that examines the significance of suffrage on the road to women's equality. How was it a significant step forward, and how was it not? To what extent did it shape our society?

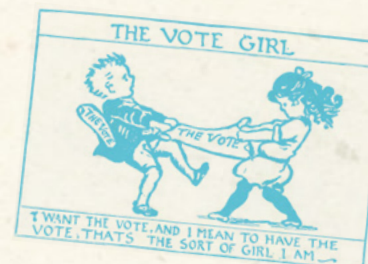
Make sure to incorporate the idea of intersectionality and other overlapping factors into your essay when you write about equality — factors other than sexism influenced the right to vote. Not all women (or men) in Canada could vote in 1918.

As you prepare your essay, keep the following in mind:

- Define your criteria:** How can you determine if something is a major turning point? Refer to the Historical Significance Criteria on page 3.
- Organize your thoughts:** Can you frame your arguments around general themes such as social, political, or economic impact?
- Do your homework:** What specific evidence will you use?
- Research, research, research!** Read widely and from different perspectives on your topic. Start with basic sources like *The Canadian Encyclopedia* and use their recommended resources to expand your sources. Use libraries, university resources, and online journals. Try not to decide what to argue until you have completed your research.

For tips on structuring your essay, visit the [Writing a Research Essay Worksheet](#) on the [Education Portal](#).

MODIFICATION: INSTEAD OF WRITING AN ESSAY, RESPOND TO THE QUESTION IN THE FORM OF AN INFOGRAPHIC USING THE GUIDANCE ABOVE.



▲ **From left to right:** Canadian Nursing Sisters vote in France in the 1917 election. The *War-time Elections Act* enfranchised women serving in the military, as well as those with a father, brother, or son overseas (courtesy Canadian War Museum/George Metcalfe Archival Collection/19930013-578). | "Votes for Women" pennant (courtesy Manitoba Museum/H9-38-198). | Jeanne Sauvé, Canada's first female Governor General (© Yousuf Karsh/Miller Comstock). | Cartoon in *Grain Grower's Guide*, July 8, 1914 (courtesy Glenbow Archives/NA-3818-14).

TRAILBLAZERS: VIDEOS

Women have faced barriers in many arenas. Watch the following videos to learn about three extraordinary women whose stories tell of overcoming adversity to create positive change in Canadian society. Find the videos sharing these inspirational stories at celebratewomenshistory.ca.



MARY TWO-AXE EARLEY

was a Mohawk leader from Kahnawake, and an activist who founded the organization Equal Rights for Indian Women. She was key in fighting the *Indian Act's* discriminatory policy that denied Status Indian women treaty rights if they married non-Status men. She was the first woman to have her status reinstated when the policy was reversed.



MICHELLE DOUGLAS

joined the Canadian military in 1986 but was dismissed in 1989 for being "Not Advantageously Employable Due to Homosexuality." She sued the Department of National Defence. In 1992, just before her case went to trial, the Canadian military abandoned its policy banning gays and lesbians and settled out of court.



ROSEMARY BROWN

was the first Black woman elected to a legislature in Canada. She was a leader in recognizing that discrimination affects women on many levels, and that we need to strive for equality on all of them. She emigrated from Jamaica to attend university and emerged as a leading human rights campaigner and the first woman of colour to contest the leadership of a major Canadian political party.

▲ **From left to right:** Mary Two-Axe Earley receiving the Governor General's Persons Case Award for contributing to equality for women and girls in Canada, 17 October 1979 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Status of Women Canada/E002415954). | Michelle Douglas in Ottawa, July 2018 (courtesy Ryan Barnett/Historica Canada). | Rosemary Brown, 1990 (courtesy Library and Archives Canada/Barbara Woodley/1993-234/PA-166871).