

Film guide

Suffragette

UK | 2015 | Cert. 12 | 106 min
Director: Sarah Gavron

Set in early 20th century London, this is a powerful depiction of the escalation of the Suffragette campaign from peaceful protest to aggressive demonstrations seen through the eyes of working-class laundry worker Maud. As a newly recruited suffragette she is drawn into its underground workings, despite her husband's disapproval. But as the movement becomes more radical, so do the police's reactions and Maud's commitment is tested.



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Talk about it (before the film)

Who were the suffragettes and what did they do?

Talk about it (after the film)

- Think back to key scenes such as the window breaking protest or when Emmeline Pankhurst speaks – what did you notice about how they are filmed? Whose point of view does the camera take? Why would the director choose to film in this way?
- How is Emmeline Pankhurst introduced in the film? Why do you think she only appears at this point? How does this help you understand Pankhurst's role in the suffragette movement and her influence over Maud and the other women?
- Consider the character of Edith - how does her position differ to that of Maud and Violet? The actress who plays Edith is called Helena Bonham-Carter – research who her great-grandfather was and how this relates to the suffragette movement.
- How are men depicted in the film? Do you think it is a fair depiction? Why?
- Why do you think archive footage is placed at the end of the film? What effect does this have on your reaction to the rest of the film?

Write about it

Bring your ideas together in a review and share it on our Into Film clubs' website. You could include a summary of the story, mention other films that it's similar to, describe what you particularly liked or disliked and give it your star rating.

Extension Activities

Consider the timeline of when women won the vote across the world in the end credits. Get students to discuss to what extent gender inequality still exists in today's society and give examples of figures that are particularly known for fighting for gender equality today?