

History Level 10

Chapter 1 — Overview: the modern world

Distribution note: this document may be distributed, and whole pages may be removed from it, provided only WHOLE pages are removed (never part of a page). This allows teachers to remove tests, exams and subtopics they do not want to issue.

This work is licensed under the Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International License. To view a copy of this license, visit <http://creativecommons.org/licenses/by-nc-nd/4.0/> or send a letter to Creative Commons, PO Box 1866, Mountain View, CA 94042, USA.

Attribution: Classbasics Pty Ltd, vwx.au

Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander content has been excluded as accuracy cannot be guaranteed, and it is better to be respectful than cover the entire curriculum inaccurately.

Significant effort has been made to ensure this content is legal. Please send any areas of concern to admin@vwx.au with appropriate document/legal references so errors can be verified and changes be made.

NOT YET AUDITED — living document. This booklet is a pre-audit preview. Content, coverage and question quality have not yet been through the full estate audit cycle. Treat it as a draft: use it for planning and familiarisation, but expect corrections before the audited edition is released.

The Industrial Revolution, the movement of peoples and European imperialism: causes and consequences

History 10 • Chapter 1 — Overview: the modern world • Section 1A

Victorian Curriculum 2.0 • History, Levels 9 and 10 Content description

VC2HH10K01 (strand: Historical Knowledge and Understanding; sub-strand: Overview: Levels 9 and 10), verbatim: “*causes and consequences of the Industrial Revolution, the movement of people and European imperialism*” This section draws on elaborations .E01, .E02, .E03, .E04.

Between 1750 and 1914, three big stories changed the world. First, machines and factories transformed how things were made, beginning in Britain. Second, more people moved across oceans and continents than ever before in recorded history — some by choice, many by force. Third, European states took control of vast areas of Africa and Asia. These three stories are not separate. The factories made empires possible, empires fed the factories, and both pushed and pulled peoples across the world. This section maps the causes and consequences of all three.

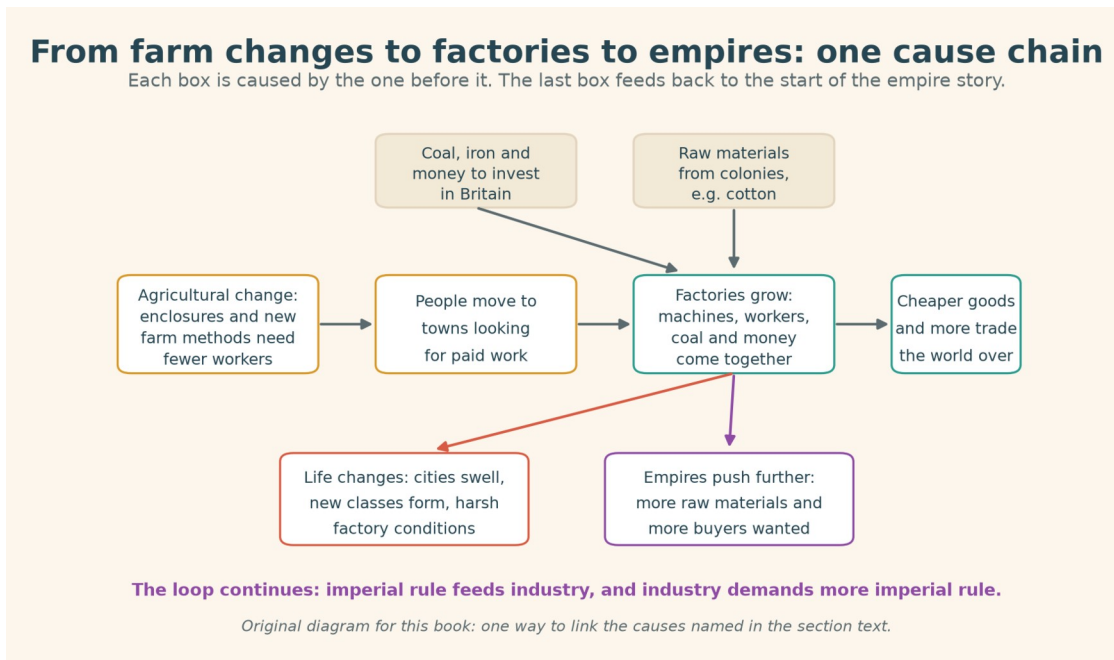
Before you begin: empire words are contested terms

This section uses the words *imperialism*, *empire* and *colonisation*. These are **contested terms**: historians do not define them in exactly the same way, and the definition you choose can change the conclusions you reach. In this section, **imperialism** means one state extending its rule over other lands and peoples, by conquest or by economic control; an **empire** is the system of rule that results; **colonisation** means planting settlers and institutions from the ruling country in those lands, which displaces the people already living there. These are the senses used in standard histories of the period — for example, C.A. Bayly, *The Birth of the Modern World 1780–1914* (2004). Other definitions exist and are not interchangeable with these. When you use one of these words in your own answers, use this section’s definition.

Teaching sequence

1. The big picture: three connected stories (VC2HH10K01)

Figure 1 shows one way to link the three stories as a cause chain: farm changes freed workers from the land; towns and factories grew; cheaper goods needed more buyers and more raw materials; and that need pushed European states to take control of more of the world. The consequences of each step became the causes of the next.



Cause-chain diagram linking agricultural change, the growth of towns, the growth of factories, cheaper goods and world trade, and the knock-on effects on everyday life and on empires

Figure 1 · From farm changes to factories to empires: one cause chain.

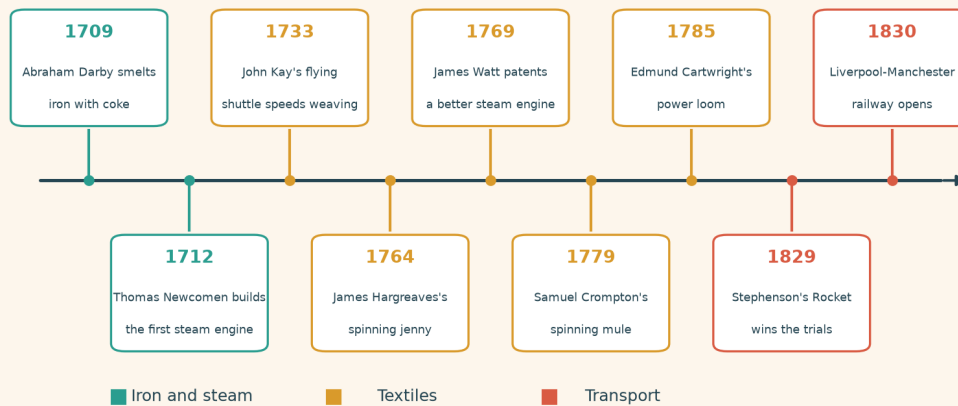
2. The Industrial Revolution: what changed, and why Britain first (VC2HH10K01.E01)

Why Britain first. Four long-term causes came together in Britain in the mid-1700s. (1) **Farm change** — the Agricultural Revolution: enclosures (the fencing of old open fields into private farms) and new farm methods fed more people with fewer workers, so workers were free to move to towns. (2) **Coal and iron** in easy reach. (3) **Money to invest**, built up from trade and empire. (4) **Growing trade**, including trade with colonies, which gave British makers raw materials to work up and markets to sell to.

The technical developments. Figure 2 sets out the key inventions, with the people and dates usually attached to them. Each one moved work from the home and the small workshop towards the machine. Three terms help read the timeline: a **jenny** and a **mule** were machines for spinning thread; a **power loom** wove cloth by machine; and **smelting** means drawing metal out of its ore with heat (coke is a fuel made from coal).

Key developments of the Industrial Revolution, 1709-1830

Dates are the year of the invention or first use. Colours show the industry each development changed.

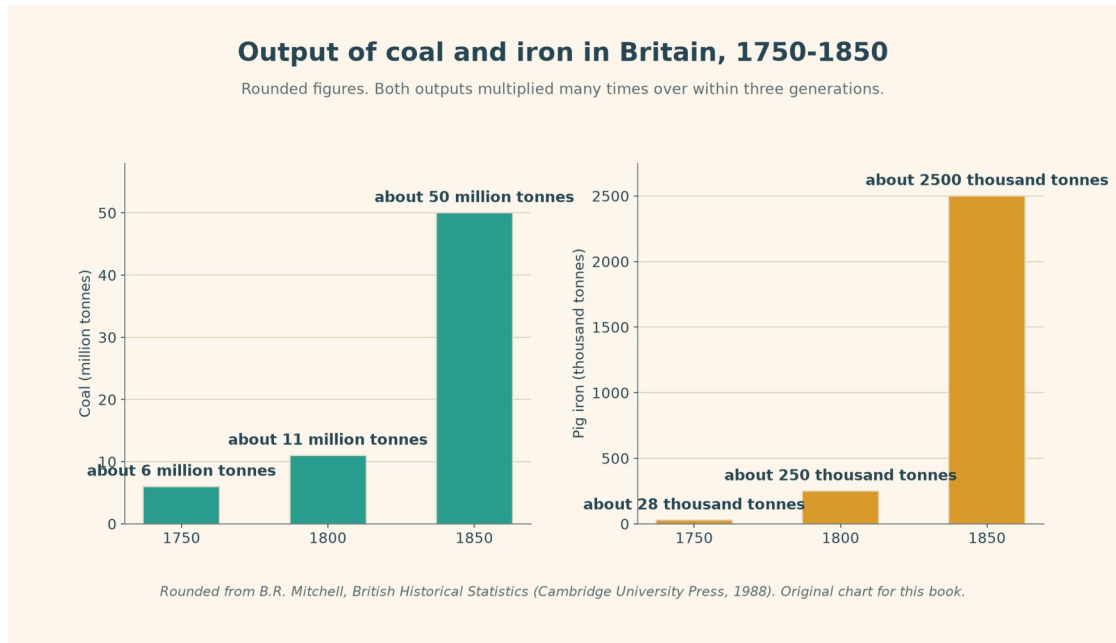


Original diagram for this book. Named inventors and dates are the standard ones recorded in the sources listed in the section text.

Horizontal timeline from 1709 to 1830 showing nine dated developments of the Industrial Revolution — Darby's coke smelting, Newcomen's steam engine, Kay's flying shuttle, Hargreaves's spinning jenny, Watt's steam engine, Crompton's spinning mule, Cartwright's power loom, Stephenson's Rocket and the Liverpool–Manchester railway — colour-coded by iron and steam, textiles and transport

Figure 2 · Key developments of the Industrial Revolution, 1709–1830.

Impact on manufacturing. Machines, workers, coal and money came together under one roof: the factory. Richard Arkwright's water-powered cotton mill at Cromford (1771) is usually counted the first true factory. The result shows in the output data (Figure 3): within three generations, coal and iron output multiplied many times over.



Two bar charts showing British coal output rising from about 6 million tonnes in 1750 to about 11 million in 1800 and about 50 million in 1850, and pig iron output rising from about 28 thousand tonnes to about 250 thousand and about 2,500 thousand over the same years

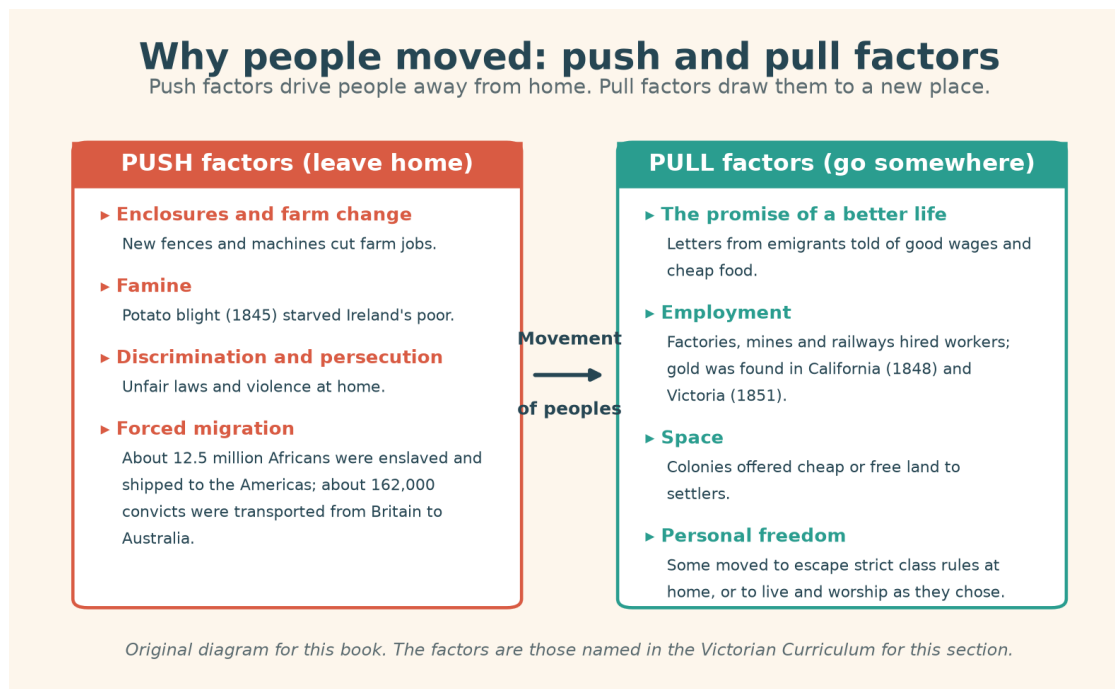
Figure 3 · Output of coal and iron in Britain, 1750–1850. Source: rounded from B.R. Mitchell, *British Historical Statistics* (Cambridge University Press, 1988).

Impact on social organisation. Factory work ran by the clock and the machine, not the seasons. Two new classes grew: an industrial middle class of owners and an industrial working class of wage earners. Cities swelled: the census of 1851 was the first in which more people in Britain lived in towns than in the countryside (Source: UK census of 1851). Factory conditions were often harsh and dangerous; the campaigns that answered them are covered in Section 1B.

Impact on trade. British trade changed shape. Raw cotton came in from the Americas, where it was grown by enslaved Africans; finished cotton cloth went out to the world. Cheap mill cloth was sold into India, where hand weavers lost their work — one of the consequences of empire picked up in part 4.

3. The movement of peoples: push and pull (VC2HH10K01.E02, VC2HH10K01.E04)

Historians sort the causes of movement into **push factors** (things that drive people away from home) and **pull factors** (things that draw them somewhere new). Figure 4 lists the push and pull factors named in the curriculum; Figure 5 summarises six of the great movements of the period.



Two-panel diagram listing push factors — enclosures and farm change, famine, discrimination and persecution, and forced migration — and pull factors — the promise of a better life, employment, space and personal freedom — with an arrow of movement between them

Figure 4 · Why people moved: push and pull factors.

Movements of peoples, c. 1750-1914: six big flows

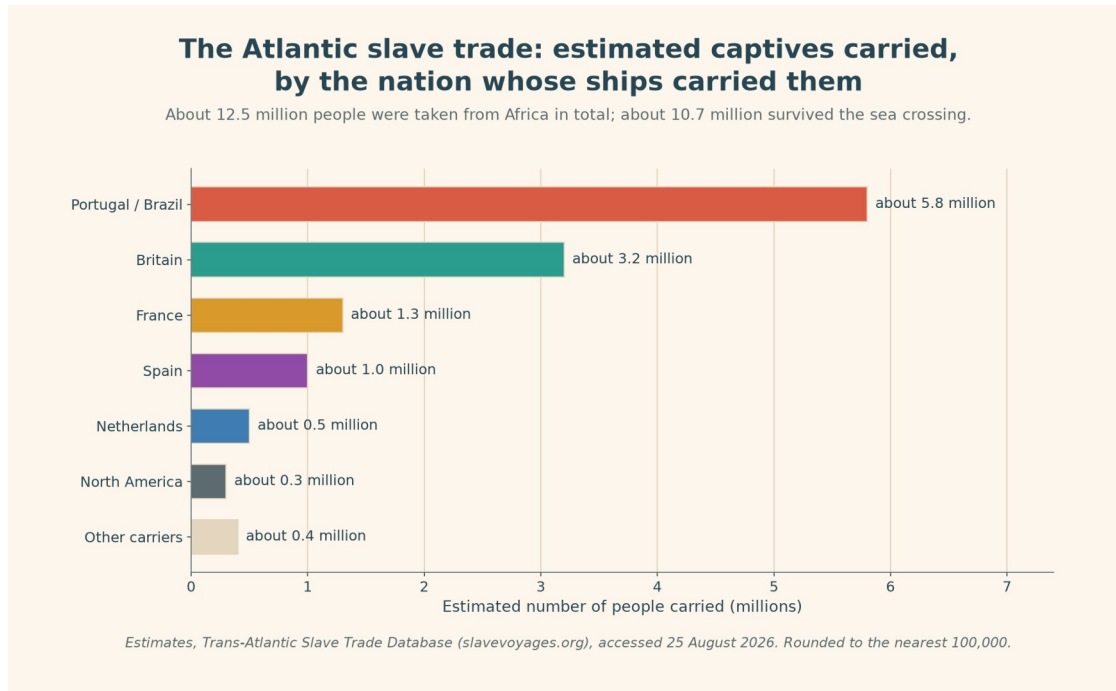
Movement	Years	Forced or voluntary?	How many (approx.)	From → to
Atlantic slave trade	1500s-1860s	Forced	12.5 million taken (estimate)	West and Central Africa → the Americas (Portuguese, British, French, Spanish, Dutch, North American ships)
Convict transportation	1788-1868	Forced	about 162,000	Britain and Ireland → Australian colonies
Irish Famine migration	1845-1855	Driven by famine	about 1.5 million	Ireland → USA, Canada, Britain, Australia
Gold-rush migration	1848-1860s	Voluntary	hundreds of thousands	Worldwide → California (1848-), Victoria (1851-)
Indentured labour	1834-1917	Contract work, harsh terms	over 1.5 million	Mostly India → British sugar colonies in the Caribbean, Mauritius and Fiji
British emigration	all of the 1800s	Voluntary	millions	Britain → North America, Australasia, southern Africa

Numbers are rounded estimates; sources are listed in the section text. Original table for this book.

Table of six great movements of peoples between about 1750 and 1914 — the Atlantic slave trade, convict transportation, Irish Famine migration, gold-rush migration, indentured labour and British emigration — with dates, whether each was forced or voluntary, rough numbers and the routes travelled

Figure 5 · Movements of peoples, c. 1750–1914: six big flows. Numbers are rounded estimates; sources are given in the text below.

Forced migration: the Atlantic slave trade. The largest forced movement in the period was the Atlantic slave trade. Figure 6 shows the estimated number of captives carried by the ships of each nation; the curriculum’s list — Portugal, Britain, France, Spain and North America — is all visible in the data. The sea crossing from West Africa to the Americas is called the **Middle Passage**. Source A (Figure 7) is a first-hand account of it. Historians have debated some details of Equiano’s life story — including whether he was born in Africa or in South Carolina — but his book’s account of the Middle Passage shaped British public opinion either way.



Horizontal bar chart of estimated captives carried in the Atlantic slave trade by carrying nation: Portugal/Brazil about 5.8 million, Britain about 3.2 million, France about 1.3 million, Spain about 1.0 million, Netherlands about 0.5 million, North America about 0.3 million and other carriers about 0.4 million, with a note that about 12.5 million people were taken in total and about 10.7 million survived the crossing

Figure 6 · The Atlantic slave trade: estimated captives carried, by nation. Source: estimates, Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database (slavevoyages.org), accessed 25 August 2026.

Source A — a first-hand account of the Middle Passage

Olaudah Equiano, The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African, written by himself and published in London, 1789 (chapter 2).

'The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. ... The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable.'

Equiano was taken from West Africa as a boy in the 1750s and survived the Middle Passage. He later bought his freedom, settled in Britain, and his book became a bestseller that helped turn public opinion against the slave trade.

Primary source reproduced for this book. The Middle Passage was the sea crossing from West Africa to the Americas.

Source card reproducing an extract from Olaudah Equiano's 1789 autobiography describing the crowding, heat and horror of the Middle Passage, with a note on who Equiano was

Figure 7 · Source A — a first-hand account of the Middle Passage.

Forced migration: convict transportation. Britain transported about 162,000 convicts to the Australian colonies between 1788 and 1868 (Source: convict transportation returns, per the National Archives of Australia, naa.gov.au, accessed 25 August 2026). Chapter 2 returns to what this meant for Australia.

The Irish Potato Famine. From 1845, a plant disease called blight destroyed the potato crop for several seasons. The poor of Ireland lived largely on potatoes grown on tiny rented plots, so the failure brought hunger and fever. Figure 8 shows the result in the census figures and where the emigrants went — the curriculum's destinations: the USA, Canada and Australia, plus Britain. About 1 million people died and about 1.5 million left between 1845 and 1855.

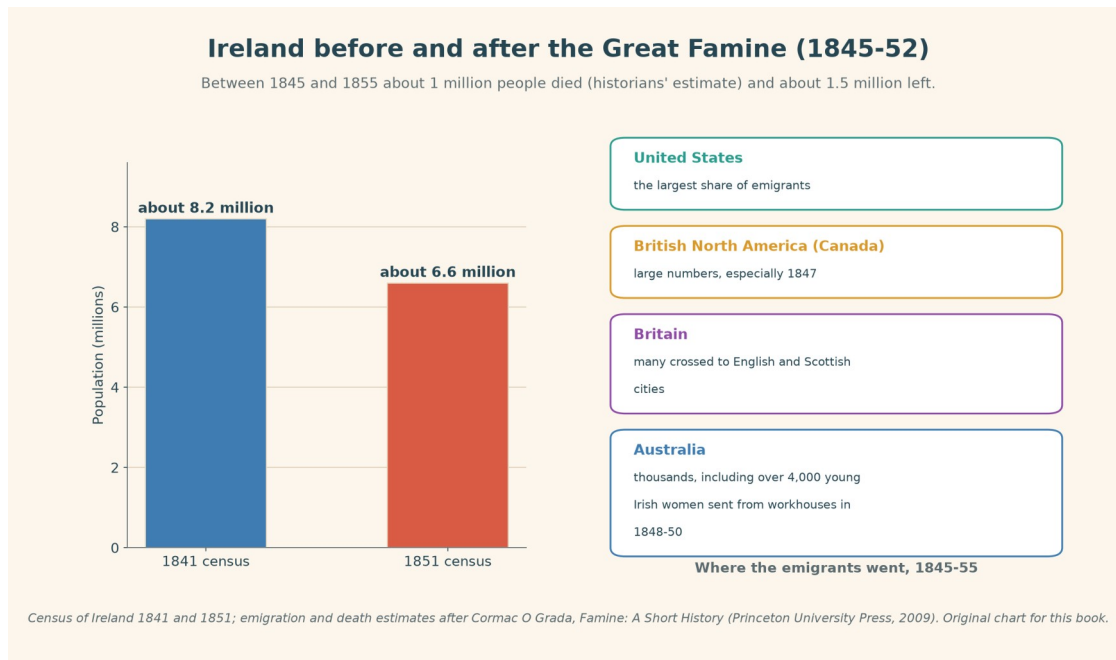


Chart showing Ireland's population falling from about 8.2 million at the 1841 census to about 6.6 million at the 1851 census, beside cards for the main destinations of famine emigrants — the United States, British North America (Canada), Britain and Australia, including over 4,000 young Irish women sent from workhouses in 1848–50

Figure 8 · Ireland before and after the Great Famine. Source: Census of Ireland 1841 and 1851; death and emigration estimates after Cormac Ó Gráda, *Famine: A Short History* (Princeton University Press, 2009).

Indentured labour. After Britain ended slavery in its colonies (from 1834), plantation owners turned to **indentured** labour: workers bound by contract to work for a fixed term, on harsh terms and for little pay. Over 1.5 million Indians went as indentured labourers between 1834 and 1917, mostly to British sugar colonies in the Caribbean, Mauritius and Fiji (Source: after Hugh Tinker, *A New System of Slavery: The Export of Indian Labour Overseas*, 1974).

Discrimination and persecution. Some moved to escape unfair laws and violence. In Ireland, earlier **penal laws** had shut Catholics out of public life and land ownership, a memory that shaped emigrant choices. In the Russian Empire, waves of violent attacks on Jewish communities — **pogroms** — broke out from 1881. About 2 million Jews left the Russian Empire between 1881 and 1914, most of them for the United States (Source: United States Holocaust Memorial Museum, Holocaust Encyclopedia, 'Pogroms', encyclopedia.ushmm.org, accessed 25 August 2026).

Pull factors. Letters home told of good wages and cheap food. Factories, mines and railways hired workers. Colonies offered cheap or free land. Gold was found in California (1848) and Victoria (1851). And some moved simply to live and worship as they chose.

4. European imperialism and its consequences (VC2HH10K01.E03)

By 1914, European powers ruled about nine-tenths of Africa and large parts of Asia. Two stories show how it worked.

India. At the Battle of Plassey (1757), the East India Company — a British trading company with its own army — defeated the ruler of Bengal and began collecting taxes there. Company rule spread for a century. The revolt of 1857 (which Indians also call the First War of Independence) ended it: from 1858 the British Crown ruled India directly. Source B (Figure 9) shows how British officials thought about Indian education. Indian hand weavers lost their work to British mill cloth, and export crops — indigo, opium, tea — pushed out food crops. Around 1700, India produced roughly a quarter of the world's manufactured goods; by 1900, under a tenth (Source: Angus Maddison, *Contours of the World Economy*, Oxford University Press, 2007).

Source B — a British official on schooling in India

*Thomas Babington Macaulay, 'Minute on Indian Education', 2 February 1835.
Macaulay sat on the Governor-General's council in charge of education in British India.*

'It is, I conceive, impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern — a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect.'

Macaulay's minute decided that government money for Indian education would be spent on English-language teaching rather than on India's own languages and learning. English remained the language of government in India long after 1835.

Primary source reproduced for this book.

Source card reproducing an extract from Thomas Babington Macaulay's Minute on Indian Education of 2 February 1835, in which he proposes forming a class of interpreters 'Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect', with a note on what the minute decided

Figure 9 · Source B — a British official on schooling in India.

Africa. Until the 1870s, European rule in Africa was mostly coastal. Then, in little more than twenty years, almost the whole continent was claimed. The Berlin Conference of 1884–85 let European powers draw Africa's borders between themselves; no Africans were at the table. By

1914 only two African states remained fully independent: Liberia, and Ethiopia, whose emperor Menelik II defeated an Italian army at the Battle of Adwa in 1896.

Consequences for colonised peoples. The curriculum names three consequences ‘such as’ dispossession, disease and destruction of existing social structures and cultures. Figure 10 sets these out with dated examples from the stories above, plus a fourth — poverty and hunger — that the examples support.

Consequences of imperialism for colonised peoples The curriculum's list begins 'such as' — it is a start, not the full list.		
Consequence	What it meant	Examples from this section
Dispossession	Land taken for plantations, mines and settlers; people pushed onto poor, small plots.	India: export crops (indigo, opium, tea) pushed out food crops. Ireland: the poor rented tiny potato plots. Africa: settlers seized the best farmland.
Disease	Crowded ships, towns and work sites helped disease travel further and faster.	Cholera spread from Bengal across the world from 1817. In Ireland, the starving died of fever in their thousands.
Destruction of existing social structures and cultures	Local rulers, laws, languages and ways of earning a living were pushed aside.	India: weavers lost work to mill cloth; the British Crown ruled after 1857. Ireland: penal laws shut Catholics out of power. Africa: borders drawn in Berlin (1884-85) ignored existing societies.
Poverty and hunger	Wealth flowed to the colonising country; hunger grew where food was exported.	Ireland: the Great Famine, 1845-52. India: famines in the late 1800s killed millions.

Original table for this book; the dated examples are developed in the section text.

Table of the consequences of imperialism for colonised peoples — dispossession, disease, destruction of existing social structures and cultures, and poverty and hunger — each with what it meant and dated examples drawn from India, Ireland and Africa

Figure 10 · Consequences of imperialism for colonised peoples.

A contested judgement: what mainly drove imperial expansion?

- The case for economics: factories needed raw materials such as cotton and new buyers for their cloth; steamships, railways and rifles made conquest cheap; where profit pointed, flags followed.
- The case against economics as the whole story: some colonies were taken for strategy (naval coaling stations, the road to India) or for prestige (keeping up with rival powers), and some took over places that made no profit at all.

A strong answer uses both: economics explains the pressure, and strategy and prestige explain the timing and the places. State which driver you rank first, and why.

5. Causes and consequences: sorting them like a historian (VC2HH10K01)

Two habits keep causal thinking sharp. First, sort causes by **time span**: short-term causes (the blight of 1845) sit on top of long-term causes (Ireland's tiny potato plots). Second, sort consequences by **intention**: intended consequences (profit for the colonising power) beside unintended ones (disease carried further by crowded ships and towns). Section 8B builds these habits into a full method; this section applies them. Worked inquiry 2 models exactly this sorting.

Worked inquiries

Worked inquiry 1 (scaffolded) — What does the slave-trade data tell us?

Use Figure 6 and Source A (Figure 7).

Step	Working	Comment
1. Read the chart	About 12.5 million people were taken from Africa in total; about 10.7 million survived the crossing. The largest share was carried on Portuguese/Brazilian ships (about 5.8 million), then British (about 3.2 million), French, Spanish, Dutch and North American ships.	Read totals first, then the breakdown the question asks for.
2. Check the curriculum's list	The nations named in the curriculum — Portugal, Britain, France, Spain and North America — are all present in the data, in that order of size.	Match data to the elaboration's list exactly.
3. Read the human record against the data	Source A puts experience onto the numbers: the crowding ('scarcely room to turn himself'), the heat, the 'scene of horror'. The gap between 12.5 million and 10.7 million is roughly the number of people who died at sea.	Data and testimony are stronger together.
4. Trace consequences	For Africa: the loss of millions of people to raiding and war. For the Americas: plantation economies built on	Consequences on both sides of the Atlantic.

Step	Working	Comment
5. Test the limits	enslaved labour, which in turn fed British industry with cheap cotton. The figures are estimates, rounded to the nearest 100,000, and no chart can record what enslavement felt like — that is what Source A is for.	Know what your data can and cannot do.

Worked inquiry 2 (scaffolded) — Why did European empires expand so fast after 1850, and with what consequences?

Use Figure 1, Figure 10 and part 4 of the teaching sequence.

Step	Working	Comment
1. Sort the causes	Long term: the Industrial Revolution created the motive (raw materials, markets) and the means (steamships, railways, rifles). Short term: rivalries between European powers after 1880 turned the motive into a race.	Time span first, always.
2. Anchor with evidence	By 1914 European powers ruled about nine-tenths of Africa; in India, Company rule gave way to Crown rule in 1858.	Every cause claim gets a dated anchor.
3. Sort the consequences	For the colonising powers: intended wealth and power. For colonised peoples: dispossession, disease, and destruction of existing social structures and cultures (Figure 10), plus poverty and hunger where food was exported.	Intended beside unintended; one side's gain beside the other's loss.
4. Reach a judgement	The Industrial Revolution was not the only cause of imperial expansion, but it was the engine behind most of the others: it explains both the pressure to expand and the power to do so.	Pick a ranking and defend it.

Figure 11 shows a model answer paragraph for step 4, labelled to show how it is built.

A model paragraph: causes and consequences of imperialism
 Question: Why did European empires expand so fast after 1850, and what were the consequences?

CLAIM	One long-term cause of European imperial expansion was the Industrial Revolution.
EVIDENCE	British factories needed raw materials such as cotton and new buyers for their cloth, while steamships and railways made distant conquest possible. By 1914 European powers ruled about nine-tenths of Africa.
EXPLANATION	Industry created both the motive and the means of empire: profit from raw materials and markets on one hand, and machines, weapons and fast transport on the other.
LINK	The same changes that pushed and pulled peoples across the world also drove empires to expand - bringing intended wealth to the colonising powers and devastating consequences for colonised peoples.

Original model for this book. Marks are awarded for the reasoning steps, not for reaching this exact wording.

Model paragraph answering why European empires expanded so fast after 1850 and with what consequences, with its claim, evidence, explanation and final link labelled

Figure 11 · A model paragraph: claim → evidence → explanation → link back to the question.

Practice tasks

Scaffolded

Q1. Match each development (1–5) to the person most associated with it (a–e): 1 spinning jenny, 2 improved steam engine, 3 flying shuttle, 4 power loom, 5 first water-powered cotton mill at Cromford. (a) James Watt, (b) Richard Arkwright, (c) James Hargreaves, (d) John Kay, (e) Edmund Cartwright.

Q2. Use Figure 3. (a) State the change in British coal output between 1750 and 1850. (b) State the change in pig iron output over the same years. (c) In one sentence, say what both changes together tell us about manufacturing.

Q3. Sort the following into push factors and pull factors: potato blight in Ireland; letters home describing good wages; enclosures cutting farm jobs; gold found in Victoria (1851); pogroms in the Russian Empire; colonies offering cheap land.

Q4. Copy the table below and use Figure 5 to fill the empty cells.

Movement	Forced or voluntary?	How many (approx.)?
Atlantic slave trade		

Movement	Forced or voluntary?	How many (approx.)?
Convict transportation		
Irish Famine migration		
Indentured labour		

Q5. Match each consequence (1–4) to one dated example from Figure 10 (a–d): 1 dispossession, 2 disease, 3 destruction of existing social structures and cultures, 4 poverty and hunger. (a) Cholera spread from Bengal across the world from 1817. (b) Borders drawn at Berlin in 1884–85 ignored existing African societies. (c) Settlers seized the best farmland. (d) Famines in India in the late 1800s killed millions.

Q6. Using Figure 1, write the boxes of the cause chain in order, starting with ‘Agricultural change’. Then name the two consequence boxes the chain leads to.

Un scaffolded

Q7. Explain two long-term reasons the Industrial Revolution began in Britain before other countries. Support each with a dated example from this section.

Q8. ‘Most movement of peoples between 1750 and 1914 was forced.’ Using Figure 5, argue for and against this claim, then state your own judgement with reasons.

Q9. Which consequence in Figure 10 did the most lasting damage to colonised peoples? Justify your choice with two dated examples, and explain why a historian could reasonably rank a different consequence first.

Q10. ‘The Industrial Revolution was the main cause of European imperial expansion.’ Steelman both sides of this claim, then state your own judgement with reasons. Marks are awarded for the quality of your reasoning, not for the side you reach.

Source-based inquiry

Q11. Read the two sources (also shown in Figures 7 and 9), then answer the questions below.

Source A — Olaudah Equiano, *The Interesting Narrative of the Life of Olaudah Equiano, or Gustavus Vassa, the African*, published in London, 1789 (chapter 2):

“The closeness of the place, and the heat of the climate, added to the number in the ship, which was so crowded that each had scarcely room to turn himself, almost suffocated us. ... The shrieks of the women, and the groans of the dying, rendered the whole a scene of horror almost inconceivable.”

Source B — Thomas Babington Macaulay, ‘Minute on Indian Education’, 2 February 1835:

“It is, I conceive, impossible for us, with our limited means, to attempt to educate the body of the people. We must at present do our best to form a class who may be interpreters between us and the millions whom we govern — a class of persons, Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect.”

(a) According to Source A, what were the conditions on the Middle Passage like? Support your answer with two details from the source.

- (b) Source B was written by a British official governing India. What perspective does this give Macaulay, and whose interests does his plan serve first?
 - (c) Do Sources A and B corroborate each other about how European power treated other peoples? Explain your answer.
 - (d) Whose perspectives are missing from both sources? Name one group and explain why its voice is absent.
 - (e) Formulate one further historical question that Sources A and B together raise.
-

Answer guide

Q1. 1–c, 2–a, 3–d, 4–e, 5–b.

Q2. (a) Coal rose from about 6 million tonnes (1750) to about 50 million tonnes (1850). (b) Pig iron rose from about 28 thousand tonnes to about 2,500 thousand tonnes. (c) Accept any one-sentence claim about scale. Example: machine-powered manufacturing multiplied Britain's output of the two key materials many times over within three generations.

Q3. Push: potato blight in Ireland; enclosures cutting farm jobs; pogroms in the Russian Empire. Pull: letters home describing good wages; gold found in Victoria (1851); colonies offering cheap land.

Q4. Atlantic slave trade: forced; about 12.5 million taken. Convict transportation: forced; about 162,000. Irish Famine migration: driven by famine; about 1.5 million. Indentured labour: contract work on harsh terms; over 1.5 million.

Q5. 1–c, 2–a, 3–b, 4–d.

Q6. Order: agricultural change → people move to towns → factories grow → cheaper goods and more trade. The two consequence boxes: life changes (cities swell, new classes form, harsh factory conditions) and empires push further (more raw materials and more buyers wanted).

Q7. Accept any two long-term causes with dated support. Example: farm change (enclosures and new methods freed workers from the land) and coal, iron and money to invest (Figure 3 shows coal at about 6 million tonnes in 1750, already ahead of rivals); or growing trade with colonies, which supplied raw cotton and markets.

Q8. For: the two largest flows by number — the Atlantic slave trade (about 12.5 million) and indentured labour (over 1.5 million) — were forced or near-forced, and convict transportation (about 162,000) was forced. Against: millions more moved for pull factors (British emigration, gold-rush migration) and famine migrants, though pushed by hunger, chose their destination. A strong answer weighs the numbers and defines 'forced' before judging.

Q9. Accept any consequence with two dated examples and a genuine alternative ranking. Example: destruction of existing social structures and cultures did the most lasting damage, because borders drawn at Berlin (1884–85) and the sidelining of local rulers, laws and languages outlasted the empires themselves. A reasonable alternative: dispossession, because land taken for plantations, mines and settlers left colonised peoples poor in their own countries for generations.

Q10. Steelman for: industry created the motive (raw materials such as cotton, markets for cloth) and the means (steamships, railways, rifles); the expansion raced fastest exactly when industry was strongest (1880s–1914). Steelman against: some colonies made no profit; some were taken for strategy (naval stations, the road to India) or prestige; conquest began before full industry (Plassey, 1757). A strong answer ranks the drivers, uses dated evidence for both sides, and says why its ranking holds.

Q11. (a) Any two details: the place was so crowded that each person had scarcely room to turn; the heat and closeness almost suffocated the captives; the shrieks of the women and groans of the dying made it ‘a scene of horror almost inconceivable’. (b) Macaulay writes as one of the rulers of India; his plan serves British rule first — education is meant to produce ‘interpreters’ between the rulers and ‘the millions whom we govern’, not to benefit the body of the people. (c) Accept a supported answer either way. Example yes: both sources record European power treating other peoples as means to an end — labour to be carried (A) and subjects to be remade (B) — so each corroborates the other’s picture of rule without consent. Example partly: A is an attack on that system and B is a defence of it, so they agree on the facts of power but not on its rightness. (d) Any one group with a reason. Example: the enslaved women Equiano hears but cannot quote — their voices survive only as ‘shrieks’; or Indian villagers, who are described (‘the millions whom we govern’) but never consulted. (e) Any genuine, researchable historical question. Example: ‘How far did first-hand accounts like Equiano’s change British policy on the slave trade?’ (Section 1B takes up that campaign.)

Where next: Section 1B traces the ideas, reforms and revolutions that grew alongside industry and empire; Chapters 2–6 take the depth this overview surveys.

Significant ideas and developments and their impacts on society and politics

History 10 • Chapter 1 — Overview: the modern world • Section 1B

Victorian Curriculum 2.0 • History, Levels 9 and 10 Content description

VC2HH10K02 (strand: Historical Knowledge and Understanding; sub-strand: Overview: Levels 9 and 10), verbatim: “*significant ideas and developments and their impacts on society and politics*” This section draws on elaborations .E01, .E02, .E03, .E04, .E05, .E06.

Between 1750 and the early 1900s, a small set of powerful ideas changed how people were governed, how they worked, and what they believed they were owed. These ideas were not just discussed in books. They were printed in pamphlets, argued over in chapels and meeting halls, and carried across oceans by ship — and they produced revolutions, new laws and new rights. This section maps the key ideas of the period, then looks at four moments when ideas struck politics: the American Revolution (1776), the religiously backed campaign to end the slave trade, Chartism in Britain (1838–48), and the revolutions that swept Europe in 1848.

Before you begin: the ‘-isms’ are contested terms

This section uses words such as *democracy*, *capitalism*, *nationalism*, *liberalism* and *imperialism*. These are **contested terms**: historians do not use them in exactly the same way, and the definition you choose can change the conclusions you reach. In this section each of them is used in the sense given in standard histories of the period — for example, E. Hobsbawm, *The Age of Revolution: 1789–1848* (1962) — and each is defined where it first appears. Other definitions exist and are not interchangeable with these. When you use one of these words in your own answers, use this section’s definition.

Teaching sequence

1. The key ideas of the modern world (VC2HH10K02.E01)

Figure 1 sets out the five ideas that most shaped the period, with their origins and their impacts on society and politics.

The key ideas of the modern world: meanings, origins and impacts

Idea	What it means	Where and when it grew	Impacts on society and politics
Democracy	Power rests with the people, who exercise it through elected representatives.	Roots in ancient Athens; reborn in the American and French revolutions, in Chartism and in the Reform Acts.	Spread of voting rights; governments answerable to the governed; mass political movements.
Liberalism	Individual rights, equality before the law, and government by consent.	John Locke's 1689 book on government; the American and French revolutions.	Written constitutions; bills of rights; limits on the power of kings.
Nationalism	Loyalty to a nation — a people sharing language, history or culture — and the belief that they should govern themselves.	Spread by the French Revolution; fired the 1848 revolutions.	Unification of Italy (1861) and Germany (1871); independence movements; rivalry between states.
Capitalism	Private owners invest money to produce goods for profit; workers earn wages.	Merchants and manufacturers of 18th-century Britain; Adam Smith, <i>The Wealth of Nations</i> (1776).	The factory system; growth of cities; new middle and working classes; demands for political voice.
Imperialism	One state extends its rule over other lands and peoples, by conquest or by economic control.	Britain's empire grew from the 1600s and expanded fast in the 1800s.	Colonies and empires; global trade; colonised peoples lost land and freedom.

Definitions used in this section. Historians sometimes define these terms differently — see the box Before you begin.

Table of five key ideas — democracy, liberalism, nationalism, capitalism and imperialism — showing the meaning of each idea, where and when it developed, and its impacts on society and politics

Figure 1 · The key ideas of the modern world: meanings, origins and impacts.

The same period produced four more ideas that you will meet in later chapters:

- **Conservatism** — the defence of established institutions such as monarchy, the church and property, and a preference for slow, careful change rather than revolution. Edmund Burke's *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790) is its most famous early statement.
- **Socialism** — the idea that the wealth industry creates should be shared, and that factories, land and machinery should be owned in common or by the state rather than by private investors. Robert Owen's model mills at New Lanark in Scotland (from 1800) were an early experiment; Karl Marx and Friedrich Engels published *The Communist Manifesto* in 1848.
- **Anarchism** — the rejection of imposed government of any kind. Early thinkers included William Godwin (*Enquiry Concerning Political Justice*, 1793) and Pierre-Joseph Proudhon.
- **Egalitarianism** — the belief that all people are of equal worth and should be treated as equals. It powered abolitionism, Chartism and the campaigns for women's rights.

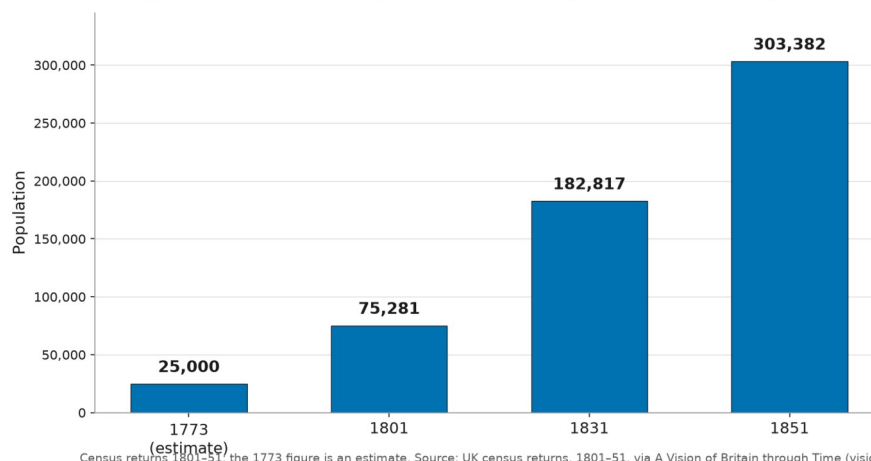
2. Ideas meet industry: capitalism reshapes society (VC2HH10K02.E02)

The Industrial Revolution began in Britain in the mid-1700s; Section 1A covers its machines, its causes and the movement of peoples. Here the focus is what capitalist ideas did to society and politics.

- **Work practices.** Work moved from homes and small workshops into factories. Workers sold their labour for wages, kept the hours of the clock and the machine rather than the seasons, and could be hired or dismissed at their employer's will. In the textile mills, twelve-to-fourteen-hour days were common until the Factory Act 1833 began to limit the hours of children.

- **Social structures.** Two new classes grew. An industrial **middle class** of mill owners, merchants and bankers held wealth but little political power. An industrial **working class** held neither. Much of the politics of the 1800s is the story of these two groups pressing to be heard.
- **Cities.** Industry pulled people into towns faster than houses, water or drains could be built. Manchester — the world’s first great industrial city — grew from roughly 25,000 people in 1773 to 303,382 by the census of 1851 (Figure 2). Overcrowding, open drains and foul water brought outbreaks of cholera. Friedrich Engels, a German businessman who worked in Manchester in the 1840s, wrote in *The Condition of the Working Class in England* (1845) that the city was laid out so that prosperous people could live their whole lives without ever seeing how working people lived.
- **Politics.** Workers without votes organised anyway: trade unions (legal again from 1824–25), mass petitions and, eventually, Chartism. Parliament answered with protective laws: the Factory Acts of 1833 and 1847 and the Mines Act 1842.

The growth of Manchester, the world's first great industrial city



Bar chart showing the population of Manchester growing from about 25,000 in 1773 to 75,281 in 1801, 182,817 in 1831 and 303,382 in 1851

Figure 2 · The growth of Manchester, the world’s first great industrial city. Census returns 1801–51; the 1773 figure is an estimate. Source: UK census returns, 1801–51, via A Vision of Britain through Time (visionofbritain.org.uk), accessed 2026-08-25.

3. The American Revolution: rights become politics (VC2HH10K02.E04)

Causes. The Seven Years’ War (1756–63) left Britain’s government deep in debt. Parliament chose to tax its thirteen American colonies — the Stamp Act (1765), the Townshend duties (1767) and the Tea Act (1773). The colonists’ objection was not mainly to the amounts but to the principle: they elected no members of Parliament, so they argued that Parliament had no right to tax them. Their slogan was “no taxation without representation”. After the Boston Tea Party (December 1773) Britain passed punishing laws, and in April 1775 fighting began at Lexington and Concord.

Behind the dispute stood Enlightenment ideas. In his famous 1689 book on government, the English philosopher John Locke had argued that governments rule by the consent of the governed and exist to protect natural rights — life, liberty and property.

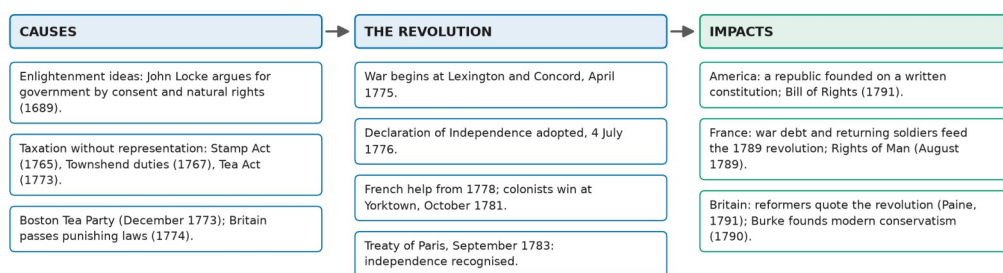
The revolution. On 4 July 1776 the colonies adopted the Declaration of Independence, drafted mainly by Thomas Jefferson. It put the American case on Locke’s ideas (Source A, Figure 4). With French help from 1778, the colonists won the decisive battle of Yorktown (October 1781), and Britain recognised American independence by the Treaty of Paris (September 1783). The new nation’s Constitution (1787) and its Bill of Rights (1791) put rights into writing.

Impacts on politics and citizens’ rights.

- **In America**, a large republic was founded on a written constitution rather than on a king — a working model of Enlightenment politics that other nations studied and copied.
- **In France**, French officers (including the Marquis de Lafayette) and soldiers carried home what they had seen, and French support for the colonists pushed the monarchy deeper into debt. Revolution broke out in 1789, and in August of that year the revolutionaries issued the *Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen*: “Men are born and remain free and equal in rights.”
- **In Britain**, reform societies quoted American and French principles, and Thomas Paine’s *Rights of Man* (1791) spread them in cheap print. The government answered with repression; Edmund Burke answered with *Reflections on the Revolution in France* (1790), which founded modern conservatism.

One limit is worth naming. The Declaration’s “all men are created equal” did not include enslaved people, women or most non-Europeans. In the decades that followed, abolitionists and women’s-rights campaigners turned the Declaration’s own words back on it, demanding that its promises be kept for everyone.

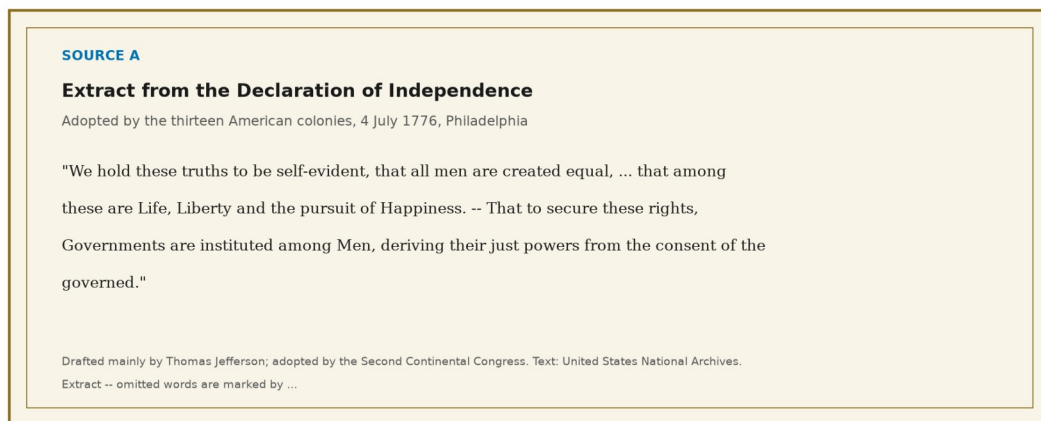
The American Revolution: causes, course and impacts on three countries



Dates: 1765–1791. Impacts traced for America, France and Britain, as the content description asks.

Labelled flow diagram of the causes, events and impacts of the American Revolution, with impacts shown separately for America, France and Britain

Figure 3 · The American Revolution: causes, course and impacts on three countries.



Source card reproducing an extract from the Declaration of Independence, 4 July 1776, with its provenance line

Figure 4 · Source A — extract from the Declaration of Independence (4 July 1776).

4. Faith as a force for reform (VC2HH10K02.E05)

Religious belief was one of the engines of reform in this period. Four movements show it.

Ending the slave trade. From 1783, Quakers (members of the Religious Society of Friends) sent petitions to Parliament against the trade in enslaved Africans. In 1787 Granville Sharp, Thomas Clarkson and the MP William Wilberforce formed the Society for Effecting the Abolition of the Slave Trade. Clarkson gathered evidence from sailors; the potter Josiah Wedgwood produced thousands of medallions asking “Am I Not a Man and a Brother?”; and formerly enslaved writers told the public what the trade really was — above all Olaudah Equiano, whose autobiography (1789) became a bestseller. In the House of Commons on 12 May 1789, Wilberforce declared:

“So enormous, so dreadful, so irremediable did the trade appear, that my own mind was completely made up for abolition.” — William Wilberforce, House of Commons, 12 May 1789, as recorded in Thomas Clarkson, *The History of the Rise, Progress, and Accomplishment of the Abolition of the African Slave-Trade by the British Parliament* (1808).

After twenty years of defeats, Parliament passed the Slave Trade Act in March 1807, and the Slavery Abolition Act 1833 ended slavery in most British colonies from 1834.

A contested judgement. Historians disagree about how much credit the parliamentary campaign deserves. The strongest case for the campaign points to its persistence, its evidence-gathering, and the mass petitions that hundreds of thousands of ordinary people signed. The strongest case against giving it all the credit points to enslaved people’s own resistance — rebellions and escapes — which made slavery harder and costlier to maintain, and argues that the campaign needed that pressure to win. A strong answer weighs both cases against the evidence; it does not pick a side first.

Factory and mine reform. Devout members of the Church of England led much of this work, above all Lord Ashley (later Earl of Shaftesbury). Parliament passed the Factory Act 1833 (no children under nine in textile mills; shorter hours for the young; the first government inspectors), the Mines Act 1842 (no women, girls or boys under ten working underground) and the Ten Hours Act 1847. Methodist and Quaker Sunday schools also taught working people to read — and, in time, to organise.

Women’s right to vote. Quaker networks were early organisers. Anne Knight founded the Sheffield Female Political Association in 1851, often called the first British society devoted to women’s suffrage. In the United States, the abolitionists Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton — both shaped by Quaker faith — organised the Seneca Falls Convention of July 1848, which demanded civil rights for women, including the vote.

The rise of organised labour. Methodist chapels gave working men meeting rooms, practice in public speaking, and a language of moral rights. In 1834 six Dorset farm labourers — the Tolpuddle Martyrs, all Methodist lay preachers — were convicted under an old law against secret oaths for forming a union, and were transported to the Australian colonies. A mass campaign won their pardons by 1840, and their case became a founding story of British trade unionism.

Faith as a force for reform: four movements and their achievements

Movement	Key campaigners	The faith link	What was achieved
Ending the slave trade	William Wilberforce (MP), Thomas Clarkson, Olaudah Equiano; Quaker networks organised petitions.	Devout Anglicans and Quakers argued that the trade broke the Christian teaching that all people are equal before God.	British slave trade abolished, 1807; slavery ended in most British colonies, 1833.
Factory and mine reform	Lord Ashley (Earl of Shaftesbury) in Parliament; Richard Oastler in Yorkshire.	Reformers called factory and mine conditions a moral evil that Christians were bound to fight.	Factory Acts from 1833; Mines Act 1842; Ten Hours Act 1847.
Votes for women	Anne Knight (Quaker); in the United States, Lucretia Mott and Elizabeth Cady Stanton.	Quaker belief in the spiritual equality of women pushed them from abolition work into women’s rights.	Seneca Falls Convention, 1848; organised suffrage campaigns in Britain and the United States from the 1850s.
Organised labour	The Tolpuddle Martyrs (1834); Chartist organisers.	Methodist chapels gave working people practice in running meetings, speaking in public and keeping records.	Trade unions legal in 1824; the Martyrs pardoned 1836-39; unions grew steadily from the 1850s.

Dates: 1807-1850s. Campaigners named are all real, sourced figures; see Source use notes in the text.

Table of four reform movements — ending the slave trade, factory and mine reform, women’s right to vote, and organised labour — showing key campaigners, the religious beliefs behind each movement, and what each achieved with dates

Figure 5 · Faith and reform: four movements, their campaigners and their achievements.

5. Chartism: the People’s Charter of 1838 (VC2HH10K02.E03)

Why the idea emerged. The Great Reform Act 1832 gave the vote to middle-class men — roughly one adult man in five could now vote — but it excluded working men by design. Reformers who had helped pass the Act felt betrayed. In 1836 the cabinet-maker William Lovett and others formed the London Working Men’s Association, and in May 1838 it published the **People’s Charter**: six demands that together would have made Britain a democracy (Figure 6). The name was chosen to recall Magna Carta (1215) — the historic symbol of rights forced from the powerful.

The People's Charter, 1838: six demands — and how long each took

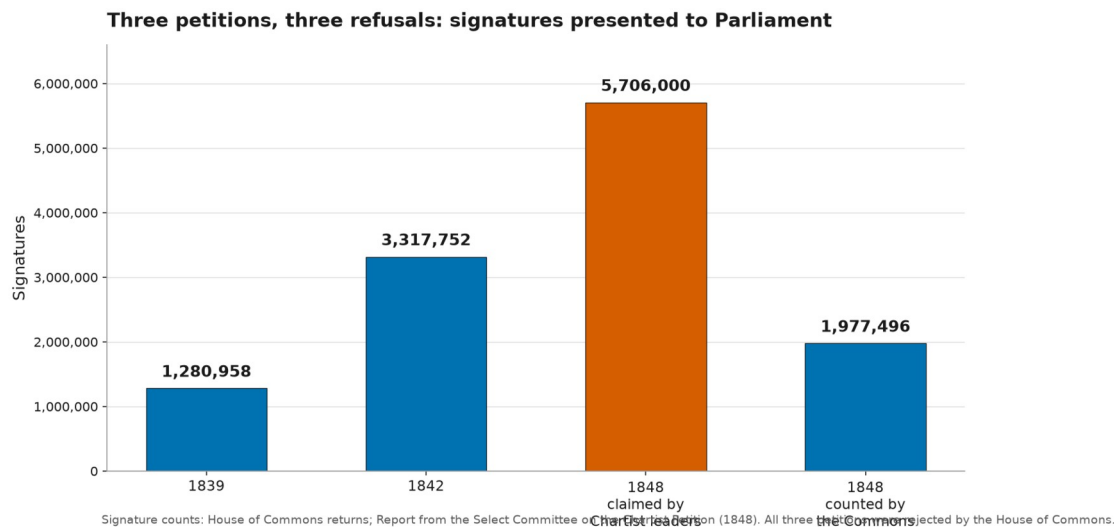
Point	The Charter's demand (1838)	Achieved?
1	A vote for every adult man	1918: all men over 21 could vote
2	Voting by secret ballot	Ballot Act 1872
3	No property qualification for MPs	Removed 1858
4	Payment of MPs, so working men could serve	Parliament Act 1911
5	Equal-sized electorates	Redistribution Act 1885
6	Parliaments elected every year	Never achieved

The six points are quoted from the People's Charter (1838). Dates of reform: UK Acts of Parliament.

The six demands of the People's Charter of 1838, with the year in which each demand was eventually met, or the note that it never was

Figure 6 · The six points of the People's Charter (1838), and when each was achieved.

The movement. Chartism became the world's first mass working-class political movement. It sent three enormous petitions to Parliament — in 1839, 1842 and 1848 (Figure 7). Each time, the House of Commons rejected the Charter's demands. Some Chartists turned to force: the Newport Rising of November 1839 ended when soldiers fired on the marchers, and its leaders were transported. Most Chartists stuck to petitions, mass meetings and newspapers.



Bar chart of the signatures on the three Chartist petitions, with the 1848 bar split to show the claimed figure against the much lower figure counted by the House of Commons

Figure 7 · Signatures on the three Chartist petitions. Parliament rejected all three. Sources: House of Commons returns; Report from the Select Committee on the Chartist Petition (1848).

Notice the 1848 gap: the petition claimed 5,706,000 signatures, but Commons clerks counted about 1,977,496, many of them copied or forged names. The gap is itself historical evidence — ask whose interests were served by inflating the count, and whose interests were served by exposing it.

Why it faded. After 1848, rising wages, government repression and splits between its leaders drained the movement away. As an organisation, Chartism had largely disappeared by the mid-1850s.

The changes that came from it. Five of the Charter's six points eventually became law: no property qualification for MPs (1858), the secret ballot (Ballot Act 1872), fairer electoral districts (redistribution laws from 1885), payment of MPs (Parliament Act 1911), and — through the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884 — votes for most adult men. Only annual parliaments never came. Chartism failed in its own time, but it trained a generation of working-class politicians and set the agenda that British democracy then followed for fifty years.

6. 1848: the Springtime of Peoples (VC2HH10K02.E06)

In 1848, revolution broke out across Europe — in France, the German states, the Italian states and across the Austrian Empire. Historians call the wave the “Springtime of Peoples”.

Causes. Liberal and nationalist ideas had been spreading for a generation. Bad harvests in 1846–47 brought hunger and high bread prices. Governments were slow to reform and quick to censor.

What happened.

- **France.** Barricades in Paris forced King Louis-Philippe to flee in February. The new Second Republic introduced universal male suffrage. In June, workers' protests were violently put down, and in December Louis-Napoleon Bonaparte, nephew of the late emperor, won the presidential election by a huge margin.
- **Austrian Empire.** Crowds in Vienna forced the long-serving Chancellor Metternich to resign and flee in March 1848. Uprisings followed in Prague and in Budapest, and the empire abolished serfdom. By 1849 its armies — helped in Hungary by Russian troops — had crushed the revolts.
- **German states.** Several rulers granted constitutions. An elected assembly met at Frankfurt — the first all-German parliament — and in 1849 it offered the crown of a united Germany to the King of Prussia, who refused to accept it from elected representatives.
- **Italian states.** Uprisings broke out in Milan, Venice and Rome. Rome became a republic under Giuseppe Mazzini in 1849, until French troops restored the pope.

Consequences for political institutions. Most of the revolutions were defeated within a year or two. Yet their effects on institutions lasted: serfdom did not return; France kept universal male suffrage; Piedmont's constitution (the Statuto Albertino, March 1848) survived until 1946; and 1848 trained the nationalists who unified Italy in 1861 and Germany in 1871. In April 1848 the new French republic also abolished slavery in France's colonies.

The 1848 revolutions — the 'Springtime of Peoples'

Place	What happened in 1848-49	Outcome
France	King Louis-Philippe fled in February; the Second Republic was proclaimed; Louis-Napoleon won the presidential election in December.	December 1851: Louis-Napoleon seized power in a coup; from 1852 he ruled as Emperor Napoleon III.
Austrian Empire	Uprisings in Vienna, Prague and in Hungary; the chief minister Metternich fled abroad.	By late 1849 the army had crushed the risings; the young emperor Franz Joseph restored firm central rule.
German states	Revolutions in Berlin and across the states; a national assembly met at Frankfurt to design a united, constitutional Germany.	The Prussian king refused the assembly's crown in 1849; unification failed then, and came later by war (1871).
Italian states	Risings against Austrian rule in Milan and Venice, and for constitutions across the states; republics briefly proclaimed in Venice and Rome.	Austrian and French troops had restored the old rulers by 1849; unification came in 1859-61.

Events of 1848-52 in France, the Austrian Empire, the German states and the Italian states.

Table of the 1848 revolutions in France, the Austrian Empire, the German states and the Italian states, showing what happened in 1848 to 1849 and the outcome in each case

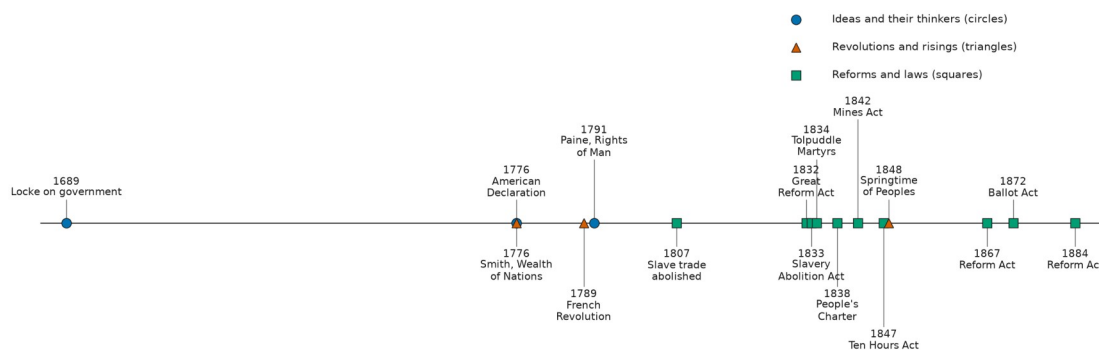
Figure 8 · The 1848 revolutions: events and outcomes.

A contested judgement: were the 1848 revolutions a failure?

- The case for “yes”: every revolutionary government outside France was overthrown; in France itself the republic gave way to Louis-Napoleon’s coup (1851) and then his empire; the old monarchies kept their armies and most of their power.
- The case for “no”: measuring 1848 only by what survived in 1849 sets the bar impossibly high. Serfdom and feudal dues ended across much of central Europe. Constitutional government put down permanent roots in several states. And the movements that unified Italy and Germany were organised, and learned, in 1848.

Whether “failure” is the right word depends on the time span you choose — the short term (1848–49) or the long term (1848–71). State your time span when you answer.

An age of ideas, revolutions and reform, 1689-1884



Dates: 1689-1884. Each event is covered in this section.

Horizontal timeline of key ideas, reforms and revolutions from 1689 to 1884, colour-coded by kind — ideas in blue, reforms and laws in green, revolutions and risings in red

Figure 9 · The big picture: ideas, reforms and revolutions, 1689–1884.

Worked inquiries

Worked inquiry 1 (scaffolded) — How did the American Revolution change politics and citizens' rights?

Use Source A (Figure 4) and part 3 of the teaching sequence.

Step	Working	Comment
1. Identify the source	Source A is an extract from the Declaration of Independence, adopted by the thirteen American colonies on 4 July 1776 and drafted mainly by Thomas Jefferson.	Say what it is, who made it and when.
2. Place it in context	Britain had taxed the colonies without their consent; fighting had begun in April 1775; the colonies were now explaining their break to the world.	A source is written for a reason, at a moment.
3. Identify its message	It makes two Enlightenment claims: people have natural rights (“Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness”), and governments rule only “by the consent of the governed”.	Both ideas come from Locke (1689).
4. Trace its impacts	America: rights were written into the Bill of Rights (1791). France: revolutionaries issued the Rights of Man (1789). Britain: reformers quoted it; Paine spread it in cheap print.	Impacts in three countries, as the content description asks.
5. Test its limits	“All men are created equal” did not include enslaved people, women or most non-Europeans; later reformers used those same words to demand the promises be kept.	Evaluate the source, do not just describe it.

Worked inquiry 2 (scaffolded) — Was Chartism a failure?

Use Figures 6 and 7 and part 5 of the teaching sequence.

Step	Working	Comment
1. Define the term	“Failure” needs a time span:	Contested judgements need

Step	Working	Comment
	failure by 1850, or failure judged across the century?	defined terms.
2. Case for “yes”	All three petitions (1839, 1842, 1848) were rejected; Newport (1839) was crushed; the movement had collapsed by the mid-1850s.	Evidence with dates.
3. Case for “no”	Five of the six Charter points became law (1858–1911); the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884 gave most adult men the vote; Chartism trained the first generation of working-class politicians.	Same standard of evidence.
4. Reach a judgement	Chartism failed as a movement in its own time but succeeded as an idea across the century that followed.	Pick a side and say why — the reasoning is what is marked.

Figure 10 shows a model answer paragraph for step 4, labelled to show how it is built.

A model paragraph: judging the impact of Chartism

CLAIM	Chartism failed in the short term but succeeded in the long term.
EVIDENCE	As a movement it failed: all three petitions (1839, 1842, 1848) were rejected by the House of Commons, the Newport Rising of 1839 was crushed, and the movement had collapsed by the mid-1850s.
EXPLANATION	As an idea, however, it succeeded: five of the Charter's six points became law, including the secret ballot (1872) and payment of MPs (1911), and the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884 gave most adult men the vote. Chartism also proved that working people could organise national politics.
LINK	Judged over its own lifetime it failed; judged over the century that followed, it reshaped British democracy.

Each coloured part does one job: claim, evidence, explanation, link.

Model paragraph answering whether Chartism was a failure, with its claim, evidence, explanation and final link labelled

Figure 10 · A model paragraph: claim → evidence → explanation → link back to the question.

Practice tasks

Scaffolded

Q1. Match each idea (1–5) with its definition (a–e): 1 democracy, 2 capitalism, 3 nationalism, 4 liberalism, 5 imperialism. (a) Private owners invest money to produce goods for profit; workers earn wages. (b) Power rests with the people, who exercise it through elected representatives. (c) One state extends its rule over other lands and peoples, by conquest or by economic control. (d) Individual rights, equality before the law, and government by consent. (e) Loyalty to a nation — a people who share language, history or culture — and the belief that they should govern themselves.

Q2. Use part 2 of the teaching sequence and Figure 2. (a) State two ways the factory system changed work practices. (b) State two effects of industrial growth on cities. (c) Name the two new social classes that grew.

Q3. Sort the following into two lists — causes of the American Revolution, and impacts of the American Revolution: the Stamp Act (1765); the Bill of Rights (1791); the Boston Tea Party (December 1773); the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789); the Townshend duties (1767); Thomas Paine’s *Rights of Man* (1791).

Q4. Match each reformer to their movement (one movement takes two names): William Wilberforce; Olaudah Equiano; Lord Ashley (Earl of Shaftesbury); Anne Knight; the Tolpuddle Martyrs. Movements: ending the slave trade; factory and mine reform; women’s right to vote; the rise of organised labour.

Q5. Using Figure 6, list the six points of the People’s Charter. Beside each, write whether it had become law by 1911.

Q6. Copy the table below and use Figure 8 to fill the empty cells.

Place	What happened in 1848–49	Outcome
France		
Austrian Empire		
German states		
Italian states		

Un scaffolded

Q7. “Ideas can cause revolutions.” Using the American Revolution and the 1848 revolutions, explain one way ideas caused political change in each case. Support each explanation with a dated example.

Q8. Historians disagree about how much credit the parliamentary campaign deserves for ending the British slave trade in 1807. Explain the two strongest cases — for and against giving the campaign most of the credit — then state which you find more convincing, and why.

Q9. Which of the six points of the People’s Charter mattered most for democracy? Justify your choice, and explain why a historian could reasonably rank a different point first.

Q10. “The 1848 revolutions were a failure.” Steelman both sides of this claim, then state your own judgement with reasons. State the time span you are judging over. Marks are awarded for the quality of your reasoning, not for the side you reach.

Source-based inquiry

Q11. Read the two sources, then answer the questions below.

Source B — Adam Smith, *The Wealth of Nations*, Book I, Chapter II (1776):

“It is not from the benevolence of the butcher, the brewer, or the baker, that we expect our dinner, but from their regard to their own interest. We address ourselves, not to their humanity but to their self-love, and never talk to them of our own necessities but of their advantages.”

Source C — the population data in Figure 2 (Manchester census returns, 1801–51; the 1773 figure is an estimate).

- (a) According to Source B, what actually makes trade happen?
 - (b) Smith was writing in 1776, before the factory age peaked. What perspective does this give him, and what could he not yet see?
 - (c) Does Source C corroborate anything about the society Smith’s ideas describe? Explain your answer.
 - (d) Whose perspectives are missing from both sources? Name one group and explain why its voice is absent.
 - (e) Formulate one further historical question that Sources B and C together raise.
-

Answer guide

Q1. 1–b, 2–a, 3–e, 4–d, 5–c.

Q2. (a) Any two of: work moved from homes and small workshops into factories; workers sold their labour for wages; the clock and the machine, not the seasons, set the pace of work; employers could hire and dismiss workers at will; long hours (twelve to fourteen hours in the textile mills before 1833). (b) Any two of: rapid unplanned growth (Figure 2: roughly 25,000 in 1773 to 303,382 in 1851); overcrowded housing; open drains and foul water; outbreaks of cholera. (c) The industrial middle class and the industrial working class.

Q3. Causes: the Stamp Act (1765); the Boston Tea Party (December 1773); the Townshend duties (1767). Impacts: the Bill of Rights (1791); the Declaration of the Rights of Man and of the Citizen (1789); Thomas Paine’s *Rights of Man* (1791).

Q4. Ending the slave trade: Wilberforce and Equiano. Factory and mine reform: Lord Ashley (Earl of Shaftesbury). Women’s right to vote: Anne Knight. Organised labour: the Tolpuddle Martyrs.

Q5. Votes for all adult men — achieved in stages by the Reform Acts of 1867 and 1884 (most adult men by 1885; all adult men came later, in 1918). The secret ballot — achieved (Ballot Act 1872). No property qualification for MPs — achieved (1858). Payment of MPs — achieved

(Parliament Act 1911). Equal electoral districts — achieved in stages (redistribution laws from 1885). Annual parliaments — never achieved. Five of the six points had become law by 1911.

Q6. France: barricades in Paris; King Louis-Philippe fled; a Second Republic with universal male suffrage; Louis-Napoleon elected president in December 1848 → outcome: the republic survived the year but Louis-Napoleon seized power in a coup in 1851. Austrian Empire: Metternich resigned and fled; uprisings in Prague and Budapest; serfdom abolished → outcome: the revolts were crushed by 1849 (with Russian troops in Hungary), the monarchy survived, but serfdom stayed abolished. German states: rulers granted constitutions; the Frankfurt assembly offered the crown of a united Germany to the King of Prussia, who refused it → outcome: unification failed in 1849; the idea survived to 1871. Italian states: uprisings in Milan, Venice and Rome; Mazzini's Roman Republic of 1849 was crushed by French troops → outcome: Austrian and papal rule were restored, but Piedmont kept its constitution (the Statuto Albertino) until 1946.

Q7. Accept any answer that gives one mechanism for each revolution with dated support. Example: in America, Locke's idea of government by consent made taxation without representation seem unjust and justified independence (Declaration of Independence, 4 July 1776). In 1848, liberal and nationalist ideas had spread for a generation through newspapers and meetings, so that when hunger came in 1846–47, people demanded constitutions and national unity, not just bread (for example, the Frankfurt assembly, May 1848).

Q8. Case for the campaign: twenty years of persistence; evidence-gathering by Clarkson; hundreds of thousands of petition signatures; Wilberforce kept the question alive in Parliament year after year. Case against giving it all the credit: enslaved people's own resistance (rebellions and escapes) made slavery costlier and harder to maintain; mass support outside Parliament pressured MPs; some historians also point to changing economic interests. A strong answer weighs the two cases against specific evidence and states a reasoned preference.

Q9. Accept any point with a genuine justification. Example: votes for all adult men mattered most, because without votes no other demand could be won peacefully in Parliament. A reasonable alternative: the secret ballot, because open voting let employers and landlords punish voters, so without the ballot a vote was not free.

Q10. See the two steelmanned cases in part 6 of the teaching sequence. Award marks for: both sides argued in their strongest form with dated evidence; a stated time span; a judgement consistent with that time span; reasoning that links evidence to claims. Do not mark the conclusion itself.

Q11. (a) Self-interest: each trader supplies others in order to gain, not out of kindness. (b) Smith wrote as capitalism's logic was forming; he could see markets and the division of labour, but not yet the factory system, the industrial cities, or the conditions of the working class that Engels described in 1845. (c) Accept either direction if it is supported. Example yes: Smith expected people pursuing their own interest to create wealth and growth; Figure 2 shows Manchester growing more than twelve-fold in 78 years, consistent with a market economy drawing labour to industry. Example partly: the data shows growth but says nothing about who gained from it. (d) Any one group with a reason. Example: the workers themselves — Smith writes about them from outside, and census figures count people without recording their voices. Example: enslaved and colonised peoples, whose labour fed Atlantic trade but who appear in neither source. (e) Any

genuine, researchable historical question. Example: “Who gained most from Manchester’s growth between 1801 and 1851?”

Where next: Section 1C surveys global change since 1945; Chapters 2–6 take the depth this overview surveys.

Global change since 1945: World War II, the United Nations, the Cold War and technologies

History 10 • Chapter 1 — Overview: the modern world • Section 1C

Curriculum links

Owens	VC2HH10K03 (Levels 9 and 10 band)
Draws on	VC2HH10K03.E01 • VC2HH10K03.E02 • VC2HH10K03.E03 • VC2HH10K03.E04

Content description (verbatim): *significant developments and events since 1945 that have contributed to global change, such as World War II, the United Nations, the Cold War and technologies*

In this section you will learn to:

1. explain why 1945 is treated as a turning point in world history, and describe the state of the world at the end of World War II;
2. explain why the United Nations was founded in 1945, what it was built to do, and where its power runs out;
3. describe the Cold War between the United States and the Soviet Union — its causes, its key conflicts, and the consequences of its end in 1991;
4. identify the technologies since 1945 that changed the household, travel and trade, and communications, and explain how one development caused the next;
5. use evidence about population, life expectancy and natural resources to explain global change since 1945, and describe how the environmental movement rose in response to it.

This section is the book's wide-angle view of the world since 1945. It gives the broad pattern — the sweep of events, ideas and inventions that made the modern world — and hands the depth to the investigations in Chapters 3 to 6. Keep one question running through it: *what changed after 1945, what caused the change, and what were its consequences?*

1.1 The world in 1945: a year that turned history

In the space of a few months in 1945, the largest war in history ended and a new world began.

Germany surrendered in May 1945 (the Allies marked 8 May as Victory in Europe Day). The war in the Pacific ended only after the United States dropped atomic bombs on the Japanese cities of Hiroshima on 6 August and Nagasaki on 9 August 1945 — weapons of a kind never used before or since. Japan announced its surrender on 15 August and signed it on 2 September 1945 aboard the USS *Missouri* in Tokyo Bay. Section 3F examines the race to build the atomic bomb and its consequences in depth.

The war's cost explains everything that follows. An estimated 50 to 70 million people died, most of them civilians. Cities across Europe and Asia lay in ruins. The old European powers — above all Britain and France — were weakened and deep in debt, and the empires they had ruled before

the war began to loosen. Two countries stood apart from the ruin: the **United States**, whose homeland had not been bombed and whose factories had supplied the Allied war effort, and the **Soviet Union** (the USSR), which had suffered the largest death toll of any country and whose armies now occupied Eastern Europe.

Three consequences of the war shaped the rest of this section:

1. **A new international organisation.** Because the League of Nations (founded 1920) had failed to stop the slide into war, the Allies built a new one — the United Nations — before the war even ended (Section 1.2).
2. **A new rivalry.** With Germany and Japan defeated, the USA and the USSR became the world's two **superpowers** — countries strong enough to shape events across the globe. Their rivalry became the Cold War (Section 1.3).
3. **A new pace of change.** Wartime research — radar, jet engines, early computers, atomic energy — turned into peacetime technologies that remade daily life (Section 1.4).

Figure 1 sets out the whole sweep of the section as an annotated timeline. Refer back to it as you read.

Global developments, 1945 to the present — an annotated timeline

● Politics and conflict ● Institutions ● Decolonisation and new nations ● Technology ● The environment
● The world economy ● World society

- 1945** ● **End of World War II**
Germany surrenders in May; Japan in September, after the atomic bombs fall.
- 1945** ● **United Nations founded**
Charter signed 26 June in San Francisco; in force 24 October. 51 founding members.
- 1947** ● **Transistor invented**
Bardeen, Brattain and Shockley at Bell Labs — the seed of all modern electronics.
- 1947** ● **Cold War takes shape**
Truman Doctrine and Marshall Plan; Europe divides into rival blocs.
- 1947** ● **India and Pakistan independent**
Britain's largest colony wins freedom; decolonisation begins in earnest.
- 1948** ● **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**
Adopted by the UN General Assembly on 10 December.
- 1950-53** ● **Korean War**
The Cold War's first major proxy war; Korea remains divided.
- 1952** ● **First jet airliner**
The de Havilland Comet begins passenger service.
- 1956** ● **Container shipping begins**
Malcom McLean's Ideal X sails — one of the hidden causes of globalisation.
- 1957** ● **Ghana independent**
First colony in sub-Saharan Africa to win independence, under Kwame Nkrumah.
- 1957** ● **Sputnik — first satellite**
The USSR opens the space race.
- 1958** ● **First microchip**
Jack Kilby and Robert Noyce build the first integrated circuits.
- 1960** ● **The Year of Africa**
Seventeen African colonies become independent states; the UN passes its decolonisation declaration.
- 1961** ● **First human in space**
Yuri Gagarin orbits the Earth.
- 1962** ● **Cuban Missile Crisis**
Thirteen days in October bring the superpowers closest to nuclear war.
- 1962** ● **Silent Spring published**
Rachel Carson's book launches the modern environmental movement.
- 1969** ● **First Moon landing**
Apollo 11 astronauts walk on the Moon.
- 1969** ● **First ARPANET message**
The ancestor of the internet sends its first message between two computers.
- 1970** ● **First Earth Day**
About 20 million Americans take part; environment becomes mass politics.
- 1975** ● **Vietnam War ends**
Saigon falls; the Cold War's longest proxy war closes.
- 1979** ● **Soviet-Afghan War begins**
The USSR invades Afghanistan; it withdraws a decade later.
- 1987** ● **Montreal Protocol**
Nearly every country phases out the gases destroying the ozone layer.
- 1989-91** ● **Cold War ends**
The Berlin Wall falls in November 1989; the Soviet Union breaks apart in December 1991.
- 2001** ● **China joins the World Trade Organization**
The rise of new global economic powers accelerates.
- 2001** ● **The War on Terror begins**
After the 11 September attacks, the USA invades Afghanistan.
- 2008** ● **Global Financial Crisis**
Banks fall, world trade shrinks; the deepest recession since the 1930s.
- 2010** ● **China becomes the world's second-largest economy**
Overtaking Japan — a measure of how far economic power has shifted.
- 2015** ● **Paris Agreement**
Nearly 200 countries agree to hold global warming well below 2 degrees.
- 2020-21** ● **Global pandemic**
The sharpest worldwide disruption in decades; global life expectancy falls.

Developments of the kinds in the key ran side by side: politics, technology, decolonisation and the environment each shaped the others.

An annotated timeline of global developments from 1945 to the present, with events grouped by type — politics and conflict, institutions, decolonisation, technology, the environment and the world economy — including the end of World War II, the founding of the United Nations, the Cold War and its key conflicts, the invention of the transistor, manned space flight, decolonisation, the end of the Cold War, the rise of the internet, the War on Terror, the Global Financial Crisis, the rise of new economic powers and the pandemic

Figure 1 — Global change since 1945 at a glance. Each dot is colour-coded by the kind of development it marks, so you can see politics, technology, decolonisation and the environment changing side by side. (Original figure for this book; dates rounded to the year.)

Check point. Look at Figure 1. Which development came first — the founding of the United Nations or the invention of the transistor? Find one example of each: a political event, a technological development and an environmental milestone.

1.2 The United Nations: built from the failure of the last peace

The League of Nations had been created after World War I to keep the peace. It failed: it could not stop Japan's seizure of Manchuria in 1931, Italy's invasion of Abyssinia in 1935, or the slide into World War II. In 1945 the victorious Allies were determined not to repeat that failure.

The name “United Nations” was already in use during the war itself: it described the Allied countries fighting the Axis powers, and 26 governments had pledged themselves under that name as early as January 1942. From April to June 1945, delegates from 50 countries met in San Francisco and wrote the **United Nations Charter** — the treaty that created the organisation. The Charter was signed on 26 June 1945 and came into force on 24 October 1945 (still marked each year as United Nations Day). Poland, not present at the conference, signed afterwards, making 51 founding members. Today the UN has 193 member states — most of them countries that did not yet exist in 1945.

The United Nations at a glance — built in 1945 from the failure of the last peace

About the UN	Details
Founded	Charter signed 26 June 1945 in San Francisco; came into force 24 October 1945 (United Nations Day). 51 founding members; 193 member states today — most of them countries that did not exist in 1945.
Why it was founded	The League of Nations (founded 1920) had failed to stop the slide into World War II. The Allies wanted a stronger body to keep the peace.
Its purposes, from the Charter	To keep international peace and security; to develop friendly relations among nations; to solve international problems; and to promote respect for human rights.
Main bodies	General Assembly (every member, one vote) · Security Council (keeps peace and security; five permanent members — the USA, Russia, the UK, France and China — each hold a veto) · Secretariat, led by the Secretary-General · International Court of Justice at The Hague.
Agencies and work	UNICEF (1946, children) · UNESCO (1945, education, science and culture) · World Health Organization (1948, health — declared smallpox eradicated in 1980) · peacekeeping forces between enemies.
Human rights	Universal Declaration of Human Rights adopted 10 December 1948; drafted by a committee chaired by Eleanor Roosevelt.
Its limits	The veto can block any Security Council action; the UN has no army and no power to tax; through the Cold War the Council was often frozen by the USA-USSR rivalry.

Membership grew from 51 to 193 as decolonisation created new nations — the new members joined the body that had backed their independence.

A table setting out the key facts of the United Nations — its founding, its purposes, its main bodies, its agencies and the limits on its power

Figure 2 — The United Nations at a glance. (Original figure.)

The UN's founders gave it four main purposes, in the words of the Charter: to keep international peace and security, to develop friendly relations among nations, to solve international problems, and to promote respect for human rights. Its main bodies divide that work: the **General Assembly**, where every member gets one vote; the **Security Council**, responsible for peace and security, whose five permanent members (the USA, the USSR — now Russia — the United Kingdom, France and China) each hold a **veto** — the power to block any resolution; the **Secretariat**, led by the Secretary-General; and the **International Court of Justice** at The Hague.

The UN has done more than hold meetings. Its agencies work where states cannot or will not: UNICEF (founded 1946) for children, UNESCO (1945) for education, science and culture, and the World Health Organization (1948), whose campaigns include the global eradication of smallpox, declared complete in 1980. UN peacekeeping forces have stood between enemies in conflicts from Korea (1950) to the present. And on 10 December 1948, the General Assembly adopted the **Universal Declaration of Human Rights**, drafted by a committee chaired by **Eleanor Roosevelt** — the first statement of the rights owed to every person, everywhere. Section 6B tells that story in full.

The limits are just as real. The veto means the UN cannot act when a permanent member, or its close ally, is involved. Through the Cold War, the Security Council was often frozen by the USA–USSR rivalry. The UN is not a world government: it has no army and no power to tax, only the authority its members lend it. Its record is mixed — failures as well as successes — and historians still debate how much difference it has made. What is beyond debate is its durability: no international body created in the 20th century has lasted longer or gathered more of the world into one room.

Check point. Why did the failure of the League of Nations matter to the founders of the UN? Name one UN body and one UN agency, and say what each does. Give one reason the UN is sometimes unable to act in a crisis.

1.3 The Cold War: forty-five years of standoff

Within two years of the victory of 1945, the wartime alliance between the USA and the USSR had collapsed into a rivalry that would shape every region of the world until 1991.

A word about words — *the Cold War* The curriculum uses the term *Cold War* but does not define it. In this section, the Cold War is used to mean the state of deep and lasting hostility, competition and distrust between the United States and the Soviet Union, and their respective allies, from about 1945 to 1991 — a rivalry that stopped short of direct war between the two superpowers themselves. The English writer George Orwell used the phrase “cold war” in an essay of October 1945, and the American journalist Walter Lippmann popularised it in his 1947 book *The Cold War*. Other definitions exist and are not interchangeable with this one.

The two sides stood for different ways of ordering society:

	The United States and its allies	The Soviet Union and its allies
Politics	Liberal democracy: elected governments, multiple parties, protected rights	One-party rule by Communist parties, modelled on the USSR
Economics	Capitalism — an economic system in which businesses are privately owned and compete for profit	Communism — a system in which the state runs the economy in the name of the workers; in practice, the Communist party directed what was produced and owned
Military alliance	NATO, founded April 1949	The Warsaw Pact, founded May 1955

The causes of the Cold War ran deep: disagreement over what post-war Europe should become, Soviet control over the Eastern European countries its armies occupied, and the American monopoly of the atomic bomb until 1949. The rivalry became policy in 1947: President Harry

Truman’s **Truman Doctrine** (March 1947) promised American support to countries resisting communist takeover, and the **Marshall Plan** (announced June 1947) poured American money into rebuilding Western Europe. The Soviet Union responded by tightening its grip on the East. In 1948–49, the first crisis: the USSR blockaded West Berlin, and the Western allies flew supplies in for almost a year until the blockade was lifted.

The competition ran on two other fronts. The **arms race**: both sides built ever larger stockpiles of nuclear weapons, each trying to deter the other — to make the cost of attack so terrible that no one would start one. And the **space race**: the USSR launched the first satellite, Sputnik, in 1957 and put the first human in space, Yuri Gagarin, in 1961; the USA landed the first humans on the Moon with Apollo 11 in July 1969. You will meet these technologies again in Section 1.4.

The superpowers never fought each other directly, but they fought through others. A **proxy war** is a war in which rival powers support opposite sides rather than fighting each other themselves. Figure 3 sets out the Cold War’s key conflicts.

The Cold War's key conflicts — the superpowers never fought each other directly			
Conflict	When	Who was involved	Outcome
Korean War	1950–53	North Korea invaded the South. UN forces led by the USA supported the South; China and the Soviet Union supported the North.	Ended in an armistice (a formal truce), not a peace treaty. Korea remains divided today.
Cuban Missile Crisis	October 1962	The USSR placed nuclear missiles in Cuba; the USA blockaded the island and demanded their removal.	Thirteen days later the missiles were withdrawn. The closest the superpowers ever came to nuclear war.
Vietnam War	1955–75 (US combat troops 1965–73)	Communist North Vietnam against the US-backed South; the USSR and China armed the North.	The USA withdrew in 1973; Saigon fell in 1975 and Vietnam was unified under communist rule.
Soviet–Afghan War	1979–89	The USSR invaded to prop up a communist government; Afghan fighters were backed by the USA and others.	The Soviet Union withdrew in 1989 — a defeat that helped hasten its own end.

A proxy war is a war in which rival powers support opposite sides rather than fighting each other directly. All four conflicts above were proxy wars of the USA–USSR rivalry.

Decolonisation ran alongside the Cold War: many new nations became arenas — and prizes — of the rivalry.

A table of the four key conflicts of the Cold War — the Korean War, the Cuban Missile Crisis, the Vietnam War and the Soviet–Afghan War — giving when each happened, who was involved, and what the outcome was

Figure 3 — The Cold War’s key conflicts. Notice that the two most dangerous moments — Korea and Cuba — came early, and that every conflict ended without a direct USA–USSR war. (Original figure.)

While the superpowers faced off, the map of the world was being redrawn by **decolonisation** — the process by which colonies won independence from imperial rule. (The term is used here in its standard historical sense: the ending of colonial rule and the creation of new independent states.) It began almost at once: India and Pakistan became independent from Britain in August 1947. Ghana, led by **Kwame Nkrumah**, became the first colony in sub-Saharan Africa to win independence, in March 1957. The year 1960 became known as the “Year of Africa”: seventeen

African colonies became independent states. In December 1960 the UN General Assembly passed its Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples. The new nations joined the UN — which is why its membership grew from 51 to 193 — and many became arenas, and prizes, of Cold War competition. Chapter 5 studies one Asian society’s passage through these changes in depth.

The end came suddenly. In 1985, the Soviet leader **Mikhail Gorbachev** began reforms intended to open up and rebuild the Soviet system. Instead of propping the system up, the reforms loosened its grip. In 1989, peaceful revolutions swept Eastern Europe; on 9 November 1989, crowds began dismantling the Berlin Wall. Germany reunited in October 1990. In December 1991, the Soviet Union itself broke apart into fifteen independent states, and the Cold War was over.

The consequences are still being lived. The USA was left as the world’s single superpower. New conflicts opened as old unions dissolved — the wars that tore Yugoslavia apart in the 1990s were among them. The institutions of the post-1945 order, from the UN to NATO, had to find a new purpose. And the question the Cold War had carried for forty-five years — how societies should be ordered, and who decides — was settled in no one’s mind completely.

Check point. Using the two-column table above, explain in one sentence what each superpower stood for. Define “proxy war” in your own words and give one example from Figure 3. Which two events in 1989–91 most clearly mark the end of the Cold War?

1.4 The technologies that changed the world

Wars end; technologies spread. The developments below changed where people lived, what they owned, how they moved and how they speak to one another — and each one made the next one possible. That chain of causes is the point to track.

A word about words — *globalisation* The curriculum uses the term *globalisation* but does not define it. This section therefore treats globalisation as the process by which goods, money, people and information move between countries in growing amounts, binding the world’s economies and cultures more tightly together, and every question here is answerable on that definition alone.

Technologies since 1945 — three areas of life, remade

Area	Named developments — people and dates	What it changed
The household	Television — from a few thousand US sets in 1946 to about nine in ten homes by 1960; the 1953 coronation of Queen Elizabeth II drove sales in Britain and Australia.	News and entertainment moved into the home; the evening gathered around one screen.
The household	Washing machines, refrigerators, central heating and air conditioning; the microwave oven — Percy Spencer at Raytheon, patented 1945, first sold 1947.	Housework, food storage and cooking were remade; homes became more comfortable.
Travel and trade	The passenger jet — the British de Havilland Comet, 1952; the Boeing 707 crossed the Atlantic from 1958.	Travel between continents took hours instead of days; tourism and business went global.
Travel and trade	Container shipping — Malcom McLean's Ideal X sailed 26 April 1956 with uniform metal containers.	Goods moved cheaply from factory to shop across oceans — one of the hidden causes of globalisation.
Globalisation and communications	The transistor — Bardeen, Brattain and Shockley, Bell Labs, 1947; the microchip — Kilby (1958) and Noyce (1959); the Intel 4004 processor, 1971; personal computers — Apple II 1977, IBM PC 1981.	Computing shrank into everything; the digital age began.
Globalisation and communications	Satellites — Sputnik 1957, Telstar 1 carried live TV across the Atlantic in 1962; ARPANET's first message, 1969; the World Wide Web — Tim Berners-Lee at CERN, 1989-93.	Live global television, then an internet linking the world's information and people.

Track the chain of causes: wartime electronics → the transistor → the microchip → personal computers → networks. Each development is both a consequence of the last one and a cause of the next.

A table of key technological developments since 1945 in three areas — the household, travel and trade, and globalisation and communications — naming each development, the people and dates attached to it, and what it changed

Figure 4 — Technologies since 1945, by area. Read across each row: a named development, its people and dates, and the change it caused. (Original figure.)

The household. In 1946, only a few thousand homes in the United States had television sets; by 1960, about nine in ten did. The coronation of Queen Elizabeth II in 1953 was one of the first events that drove families to buy sets, in Britain and Australia among other countries. Washing machines, refrigerators, central heating and air conditioning changed the daily round of housework, and the microwave oven — invented by the American engineer **Percy Spencer** at the Raytheon company (patented 1945, first sold 1947) — changed cooking itself.

Travel and trade. Two developments shrank the world. In the air: the British de Havilland Comet became the world's first jet airliner in 1952, and from October 1958 the American Boeing 707 flew passengers across the Atlantic — a trip that had taken days by ship now took hours. At sea: on 26 April 1956, the American trucking owner **Malcom McLean** sent the converted tanker *Ideal X* from Newark to Houston carrying 58 uniform metal containers. Container shipping meant goods could move from factory to shop with almost no handling in between. The container is one of the unsung causes of globalisation: cheap transport is what made it possible to make things in one country and sell them in another.

Globalisation, mass consumption and communications. The most important invention of the era fits in your hand. In December 1947, at the Bell Laboratories in the United States, **John Bardeen, Walter Brattain** and **William Shockley** made the first **transistor** — a tiny switch that could control electric current without the fragile glass valves used until then (they shared the 1956 Nobel Prize in Physics). In 1958 and 1959, **Jack Kilby** and **Robert Noyce**, working separately, built the first integrated circuits — the **microchip** — packing many transistors onto

one small slice of silicon. In 1971 the Intel 4004 packed a whole processor onto a single chip, and personal computers followed: the Apple II in 1977, the IBM PC in 1981.

Above them flew the satellites: the USSR's **Sputnik**, the first artificial satellite, in October 1957, and **Telstar 1** in July 1962, which carried the first live television pictures across the Atlantic. And linking them ran the digital systems that became the internet. On 29 October 1969, the first message was sent on ARPANET, the American research network — the word was meant to be “LOGIN”, and the system crashed after the first two letters. In 1989, at CERN in Switzerland, the British scientist **Tim Berners-Lee** proposed the World Wide Web: a way of linking documents across the internet so that anyone could read and publish them. By the mid-1990s the Web was open to everyone — and globalisation had a nervous system.

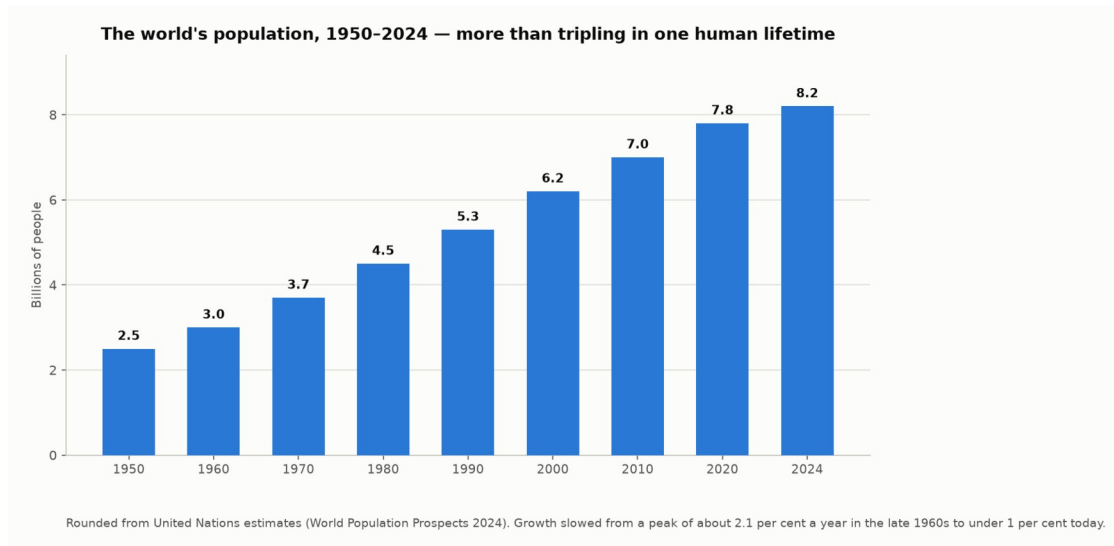
Notice the chain: wartime electronics → the transistor → the microchip → personal computers → networks. Historians call this a pattern of **cumulative** change — each development is both a consequence of the last one and a cause of the next.

Check point. Name the three inventors of the transistor and the year of their invention. Explain one way container shipping caused globalisation. Which came first: Sputnik or Telstar?

1.5 More people, longer lives, thinner resources

Technology and politics changed the world's systems. This section looks at what happened to the world's people — and what their growing numbers did to the planet.

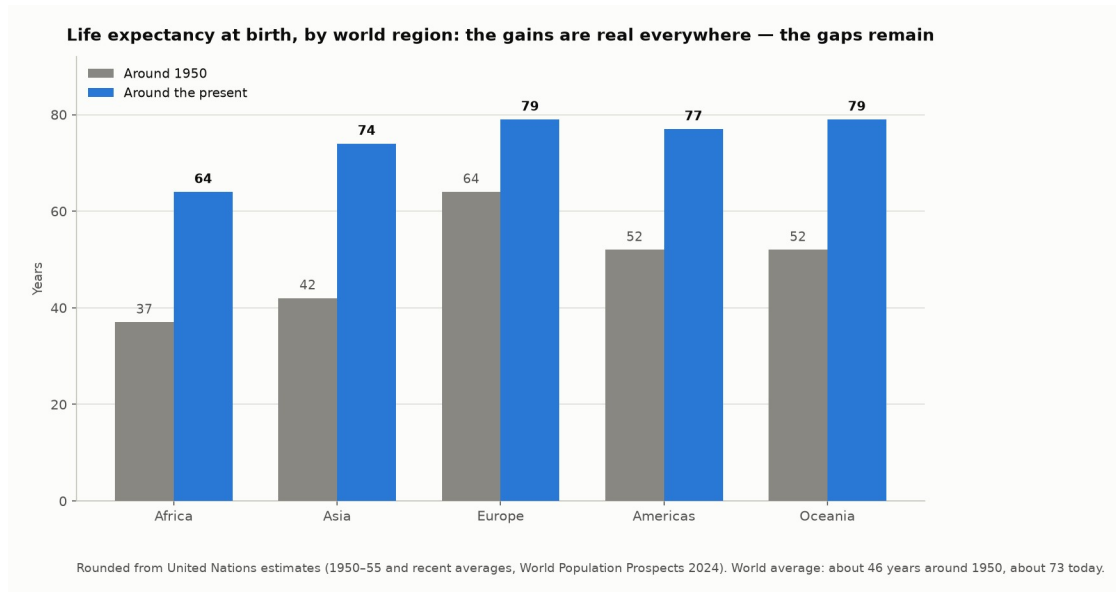
Population. In 1950, about 2.5 billion people lived on Earth. By 2024, the United Nations counted about 8.2 billion — more than three times as many in one human lifetime. The growth rate peaked at about 2.1 per cent a year in the late 1960s and has since slowed to under 1 per cent; the UN's 2024 projection expects the world's population to peak at about 10.3 billion in the 2080s. The cause of the growth was not that people suddenly had more children, but that far fewer of them died young — which is the story of the next paragraph.



A bar chart showing the growth of the world population from about 2.5 billion in 1950 to about 8.2 billion in 2024, in ten-year steps

Figure 5 — The world’s population, 1950–2024. Values are rounded from the United Nations’ estimates. (Original figure; source cited at the end of this section.)

Life expectancy — the average number of years a newborn could expect to live if current death rates applied through its life — is the clearest measure of the change. In 1950, global life expectancy was about 46 years; today it is about 73. The causes are among the most important in modern history: **antibiotics** (penicillin came into wide use during and after World War II), **vaccines** (the World Health Organization declared smallpox — a disease that had killed hundreds of millions — eradicated in 1980), cleaner water and better sanitation, and more reliable food supplies (the crop improvements known as the Green Revolution earned its leading figure, **Norman Borlaug**, the Nobel Peace Prize of 1970).



A grouped bar chart comparing life expectancy at birth in five world regions — Africa, Asia, Europe, the Americas and Oceania — around 1950 and around the present

Figure 6 — Life expectancy at birth by world region, around 1950 and around the present. The gains are real everywhere — and the gaps between regions have narrowed without disappearing. (Original figure; rounded UN estimates; source cited at the end of this section.)

Read Figure 6 as a perspective exercise. The averages rise everywhere, but they do not rise equally: the region with the lowest life expectancy in 1950 is still the lowest today, and the gap between it and Europe remains about fifteen years. Averages also hide differences inside countries — between rich and poor, city and country. And progress is not one-way: in 2021, the global life expectancy figure fell to about 71 as the pandemic took millions of lives — the sharpest setback since the records began — before recovering. The pandemic sits on the Figure 1 timeline for exactly this reason: it is one of the events that changed the whole world at once.

Resources. More people, living longer, consuming more, put pressure on the planet’s natural resources — and since 1945 that pressure has grown faster than the population. The **depletion** of a resource means using it up faster than it can be replaced. The United Nations’ International Resource Panel estimated that the amount of material humanity digs, harvests and quarries each year — minerals, fossil fuels, crops and timber — almost tripled between 1970 and 2017, from about 27 billion tonnes to about 92 billion tonnes. Figure 7 sets out four pressures to keep in mind.

Four pressures on the planet's natural resources

Pressure	What has changed since 1945	The evidence
Material extraction	The material humanity digs, harvests and quarries each year — minerals, fossil fuels, crops and timber — almost tripled between 1970 and 2017.	United Nations International Resource Panel, Global Resources Outlook 2019: from about 27 billion tonnes to about 92 billion tonnes a year.
Fossil fuels	Coal, oil and gas powered the post-war boom — cars, planes, plastics, fertiliser — and their burning adds the gases that warm the climate.	International Energy Agency: fossil fuels still supply about 80 per cent of the world's energy.
Fish stocks	Bigger fleets, sonar and freezer ships pushed fishing far beyond what stocks can replace.	UN Food and Agriculture Organization, 2022: about one-third of the world's fish stocks are fished beyond sustainable levels.
Fresh water	Withdrawals from rivers, lakes and groundwater keep rising with population and irrigation; many regions now face scarcity for part of every year.	United Nations world water assessments report growing scarcity across Africa, Asia and the Middle East.

Depletion means using a resource up faster than it can be replaced. That is what links all four rows.

The same growth that raised living standards and lengthened lives is wearing down the resources it depends on.

A table of four pressures on natural resources since 1945 — material extraction, fossil fuels, fish stocks and fresh water — with what has happened and the evidence for it

Figure 7 — Four pressures on the planet's resources. Each row names what has changed and the evidence behind it. (Original figure; sources cited at the end of this section.)

Here is the tension that drives the next section: the same developments that raised living standards and lengthened lives — growth, energy use, consumption — are the ones wearing down the resources they depend on. The response to that tension is a movement.

Check point. Describe the change in world population since 1950 in one sentence, and give one cause of it. Using Figure 6, name the region whose life expectancy rose the most and the region that remains lowest today. What does “depletion” mean?

1.6 The rise of the environmental movement

The environmental movement is the organised effort, growing since the 1960s, to protect the natural world from the damage caused by growth. Its history is one of perspectives changing: questions that seemed settled — that smoke meant progress, that chemicals meant better harvests, that resources would simply last — came to be asked, and then asked loudly.

The movement has a conventional starting point. In 1962 the American marine biologist **Rachel Carson** published *Silent Spring*, a book showing how the pesticide DDT moved up food chains, poisoning birds and threatening human health. The chemical industry attacked the book and its author; Carson held her ground and testified before the American government. Within a decade,

DDT was banned in the United States, and a way of thinking had shifted: for the first time, a wide public accepted that human inventions could damage the natural world on a large scale.

From that seed, the movement grew a calendar of milestones — Figure 8 sets them out.

The rise of the environmental movement — milestones, 1962-2015

Year	Milestone	What changed
1962	Silent Spring	Rachel Carson shows how pesticides poison food chains. For the first time a wide public accepts that inventions can damage the natural world on a large scale.
1970	First Earth Day, 22 April	About 20 million people take part in the United States alone. The environment becomes mass politics.
1972	UN Stockholm Conference; UNEP founded	The environment becomes a matter of international diplomacy, with a UN body to carry it.
1987	Montreal Protocol	Nearly every country agrees to phase out the gases destroying the ozone layer. Proof that global agreement can repair environmental damage — the layer is now recovering.
1987	Our Common Future	The Brundtland Commission defines sustainable development: meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.
1992	Rio Earth Summit	Nearly every government accepts that environment and development must be planned together.
1997	Kyoto Protocol	The first treaty to bind wealthy countries to cut the greenhouse gases that warm the climate.
2015	Paris Agreement	Nearly 200 countries agree to hold global warming well below 2 degrees — each by its own promises.

From one book in 1962 to an agreement of nearly 200 countries in 2015: perspectives on the natural world changed within one lifetime.

A table of eight milestones of the environmental movement from 1962 to 2015 — from Silent Spring to the Paris Agreement — giving the year, the event, and what changed because of it

Figure 8 — Milestones of the environmental movement, 1962–2015. (Original figure.)

Two of these milestones deserve a closer look:

- **The Montreal Protocol (1987)** is the movement’s clearest success. In the 1980s scientists found that certain gases (CFCs) were destroying the ozone layer that shields the Earth from the sun’s harmful rays. Almost every country on Earth agreed to phase those gases out, and the ozone layer is now recovering. It stands as proof that, given clear evidence, international action can work — which is why it is cited in every later climate debate.
- **The Paris Agreement (2015)** brought nearly 200 countries together to hold global warming well below 2 degrees Celsius above pre-industrial levels. Unlike Montreal, Paris relies on each country’s own promises, and whether it will succeed is still an open question.

The movement also changed how people think about the future. In 1987, a UN commission chaired by the Norwegian prime minister **Gro Harlem Brundtland** published *Our Common Future* and gave the debate its most famous term.

A word about words — *sustainable development* The curriculum uses the term *sustainability* but does not define it. This section uses the definition given by the World Commission on Environment and Development in *Our Common Future* (1987): development that meets the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs. The term is contested — what counts as a “need”, and how much weight future generations should be given, are argued about — and that contest is part of the history.

In daily life, the changed perspectives are visible everywhere. **Recycling** moved from a fringe habit to a routine service: kerbside collection of paper, glass and metals began in many countries in the 1970s and 1980s and is now standard in Australian cities. **Renewable energy** — energy from sources that renew themselves, such as sunlight and wind, rather than from finite fossil fuels — moved from experiments to economics: the cost of electricity from large solar farms fell by roughly nine-tenths between 2010 and 2019 alone, and in many places solar and wind are now the cheapest new sources of power.

And yet the debate is not over — and a fair historian sets out each side as its own supporters would.

One debate, two strongest cases — judged on reasoning, not on which side you start on

Theme	Act on the environment now — the strongest case	Growth and jobs first — the strongest case
The economy	An economy that wears out its own resources, water and climate is borrowing from the future. Montreal showed that repairing damage later costs far more than preventing it.	Growth is what has lifted billions out of poverty since 1945 — and only a richer world can pay for cleaner technology.
Jobs	New industries — renewable power, recycling, repair — create work while protecting what life depends on.	Fossil fuels, mining and manufacturing still employ millions; changing too fast risks whole communities.
Fairness	The poorest communities suffer most from pollution and climate change, though they did least to cause it.	It is unfair to ask poorer countries to give up the cheap energy that wealthier countries used to get rich.
Risk	Some damage — lost species, melted ice — cannot be undone. Where the stakes are that high, act before total certainty arrives.	Policies built on forecasts can waste resources that urgent present needs — health, housing, food — would use better.

Judging between them: which risks weigh more heavily? Whose perspective are you starting from? What evidence would change your mind?

A two-column table setting out the strongest case for acting on the environment now and the strongest case for putting growth and jobs first, with a row of questions for judging between them

Figure 9 — The strongest case on each side of the growth-versus-environment debate, set out side by side before any judgement is made. (Original figure.)

Both columns contain real claims with real evidence behind them, and the judgement between them depends on which risks you weigh more heavily, and on whose perspective you start from. That is what makes it a genuinely contested question rather than a settled one. Section 6C takes one option — the history of the environmental movement itself — in depth.

Check point. What did Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* argue, and what was one of its consequences? Give one reason the Montreal Protocol is treated as a success and one reason the Paris Agreement’s success is still uncertain. State the strongest case on each side of the growth-versus-environment debate, in your own words.

Close study 1 — a primary source: the preamble of the UN Charter (1945)

A **primary source** is a source made at or near the time of the events it shows. The United Nations Charter, signed in San Francisco on 26 June 1945, is a primary source for the hopes of that moment. Read its opening words — the preamble — carefully. The wording is the signed text, reproduced here as written in 1945.

WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED

to save succeeding generations from the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind, and

to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women and of nations large and small, and

to establish conditions under which justice and respect for the obligations arising from treaties and other sources of international law can be maintained, and

to promote social progress and better standards of life in larger freedom,

AND FOR THESE ENDS

to practice tolerance and live together in peace with one another as good neighbours, and

to unite our strength to maintain international peace and security, and

to ensure, by the acceptance of principles and the institution of methods, that armed force shall not be used, save in the common interest, and

to employ international machinery for the promotion of the economic and social advancement of all peoples,

HAVE RESOLVED TO COMBINE OUR EFFORTS TO ACCOMPLISH THESE AIMS.

Source: Preamble to the Charter of the United Nations, signed San Francisco, 26 June 1945 (un.org).

Work with the source.

1. The preamble states four main aims in its first block of lines. Identify them in your own words.
 2. "...the scourge of war, which twice in our lifetime has brought untold sorrow to mankind." Which two events does this phrase refer to? Explain why that phrase is strong evidence of what *caused* the founders to build the UN.
 3. The preamble begins "We the peoples" — but in 1945 only 51 governments signed, and most of the world's people lived under colonial rule, in territories whose rulers signed for them. Whose perspectives are missing from this source, and how does that affect what the source can tell us?
 4. What can this source tell a historian about 1945 — and what can it *not* tell them? (Think about the difference between what people hoped would happen and what actually did.)
-

Close study 2 — a secondary interpretation: Hobsbawm's "Golden Age"

A **secondary source** is a source made later, often by someone who was not there, interpreting the past. In *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991* (1994), the British historian **Eric Hobsbawm** (1917–2012) offered one of the most influential interpretations of the post-1945 world.

Hobsbawm argued that the decades from 1945 to the early 1970s were the most extraordinary period of economic growth and social transformation in human history — so much so that he called them the "Golden Age". In those decades, he argued, the human relationship with the natural environment changed faster and more profoundly than in all earlier history combined: more people moved to cities, more goods were made and consumed, and more of the planet's resources were used, than in any period before. He also argued that the Golden Age ended in the early 1970s, when the growth slowed and its side-effects began to show.

Notice what Hobsbawm has done: he has taken the facts of Sections 1.4 and 1.5 — technologies, population, consumption — and given them an interpretation: not just that change happened, but that it was the fastest and deepest change in human experience.

Work with the interpretation.

1. Is "Golden Age" a fact or an interpretation? Explain your answer.
 2. Perspective question: for whom might these decades *not* have been golden? Think about people living under colonial rule before decolonisation, and about the natural resources of Section 1.5.
 3. Using evidence from Section 1.5, state the strongest case **for** Hobsbawm's claim that these decades were the most transformative in history, and the strongest case **against** it. Which case do you find stronger, and why?
-

Practice

Scaffolded

Q1. Use Figure 1 (the annotated timeline).

- Put these four developments in chronological order: the founding of the United Nations; the invention of the transistor; the first Moon landing; the fall of the Berlin Wall.
- For each of the following, write one consequence: the end of World War II; the Cold War; the pandemic.
- Copy two events from the timeline into your book and add your own note to each — one sentence saying why it counts as global change.

Q2. Match each development to the area of life it changed. Copy the table and draw your lines.

Development	Area
the microwave oven	globalisation and communications
container shipping	the household
the microchip	travel and trade
the passenger jet	
the communications satellite	
the television set	

Q3. Use Figure 3 (the Cold War’s key conflicts).

- Write two facts about the Korean War.
- Why was the Cuban Missile Crisis considered the most dangerous moment of the Cold War?
- Complete this sentence frame: “*A proxy war is ..., and one example from Figure 3 is ...*”

Q4. Complete the gaps with your own words, using Section 1.2.

“The United Nations was founded in ... because Its Charter was signed in ..., and came into force in The five permanent members of the Security Council each hold a ..., which is one reason the UN”

Q5. Use Figures 5 and 6.

- Describe the change in the world’s population between 1950 and 2024.
- Which region’s life expectancy rose the most between around 1950 and today? Which region remains lowest?
- Give two causes of the rise in life expectancy since 1945.

Q6. Group investigation — extend the timeline. In pairs, choose two developments since 1945 that do not appear in Figure 1 and that you believe count as global change. Research each one and add it to a copy of the timeline with a one-line note: what happened, when, and why it changed the world. Be ready to defend your choices to the class.

Unscaffolded

Q7. Explain how the Cold War shaped global change after 1945. Use two specific examples from this section.

Q8. “*Technology has changed the world more than any war or institution since 1945.*” Do you agree? Give reasons and use evidence from this section.

Q9. Choose **one**: the United Nations **or** the environmental movement. Explain the causes of its rise and describe two consequences of it, using dated evidence from this section.

Q10. Hobsbawm called the post-war decades the “Golden Age” — the most transformative period in human history. Evaluate this interpretation using two pieces of evidence from Sections 1.4–1.6. Give the strongest case on each side before you reach your own judgement.

Answers

Q1. a) Founding of the United Nations (1945) → invention of the transistor (1947) → first Moon landing (1969) → fall of the Berlin Wall (1989). b) Example consequences: the end of World War II — the founding of the United Nations, the rise of two superpowers, and the beginning of decolonisation. The Cold War — proxy wars in Korea, Vietnam and Afghanistan, the arms race and the space race. The pandemic — a fall in global life expectancy in 2021 and the deepest disruption to daily life in decades. c) Answers will vary; a good note names the development's global effect, not just the event itself.

Q2. Microwave oven → the household. Container shipping → travel and trade. Microchip → globalisation and communications. Passenger jet → travel and trade. Communications satellite → globalisation and communications. Television set → the household.

Q3. a) Any two of: it ran from 1950 to 1953; North Korea invaded the South; UN forces led by the USA supported the South while China supported the North; it ended in an armistice (a formal truce), not a peace treaty; Korea remains divided today. b) For thirteen days in October 1962, Soviet nuclear missiles in Cuba and the American response brought the superpowers closer to direct nuclear war than at any other moment. c) Example: *A proxy war is a war in which rival powers support opposite sides rather than fighting each other themselves, and one example from Figure 3 is the Vietnam War.*

Q4. Model: *The United Nations was founded in 1945 because the League of Nations had failed to stop the slide into World War II. Its Charter was signed in June 1945, and came into force in October 1945. The five permanent members of the Security Council each hold a veto, which is one reason the UN is sometimes unable to act in a crisis.*

Q5. a) The world's population grew from about 2.5 billion in 1950 to about 8.2 billion in 2024 — more than tripling in one lifetime. b) Asia's life expectancy rose the most (from about 42 to about 74 years); Africa remains lowest today (about 64 years). c) Any two of: antibiotics such as penicillin; vaccines (smallpox was eradicated by 1980); cleaner water and sanitation; more reliable food supplies through the Green Revolution.

Q6. Answers will vary. Check that each chosen development is real, dated and genuinely global in its effects, and that the note states the effect rather than simply describing the event.

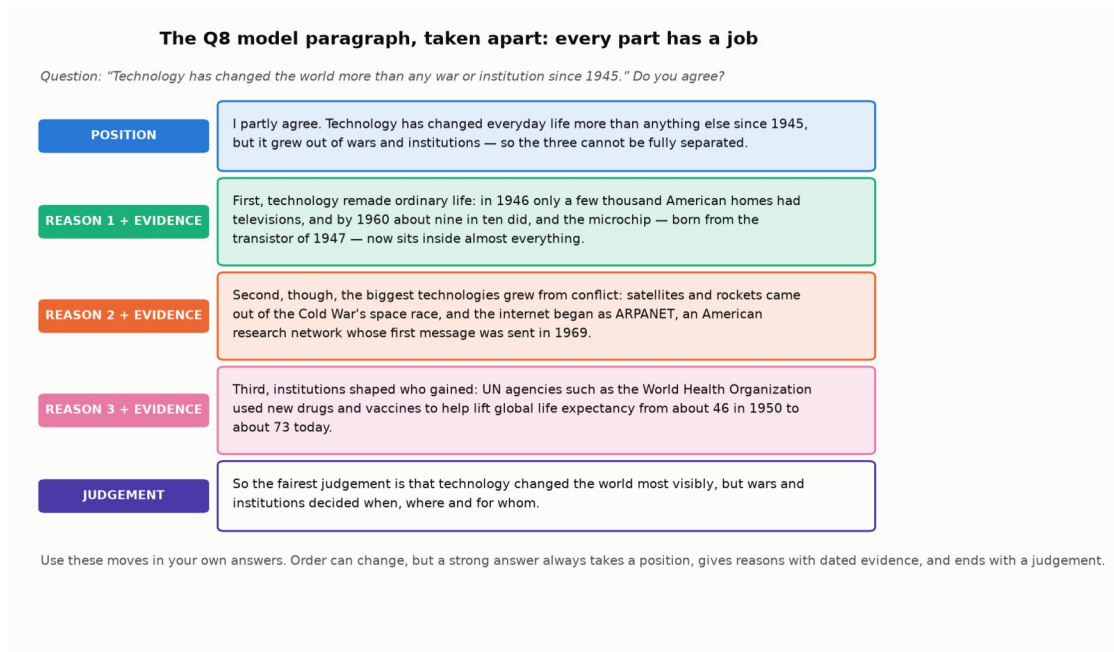
Q7–Q10. See the model responses below. Marks rest on defined terms, correct dated evidence and clear reasoning — not on reaching any one conclusion.

Model responses

Model for Q8 (agree/disagree question):

I partly agree. Technology has changed everyday life more than anything else since 1945, but it grew out of wars and institutions — so the three cannot be fully separated. First, technology remade ordinary life: in 1946 only a few thousand American homes had televisions, and by 1960 about nine in ten did, and the microchip — born from the transistor of 1947 — now sits inside almost everything. Second, though, the biggest

technologies grew from conflict: satellites and rockets came out of the Cold War's space race, and the internet began as ARPANET, an American research network whose first message was sent in 1969. Third, institutions shaped who gained: UN agencies such as the World Health Organization used new drugs and vaccines to help lift global life expectancy from about 46 in 1950 to about 73 today. So the fairest judgement is that technology changed the world most visibly, but wars and institutions decided when, where and for whom.



A labelled version of the Q8 model paragraph, with each part labelled to show its job: position, reason with evidence, second reason, third reason, and final judgement

Figure 10 — The Q8 model paragraph, taken apart. Every part has a job. Use these moves in your own answers. (Original figure.)

Model for Q10 (evaluation of an interpretation):

Hobsbawm's claim that the post-war decades were the most transformative in human history is strong, but it needs limits. The strongest case for it is the sheer speed of change: the world's population more than tripled from about 2.5 billion in 1950 to over 6 billion by 2000, global life expectancy rose from about 46 years to about 73, and technologies from the transistor to the internet remade how people live and communicate within a single lifetime. The strongest case against it is that the "gold" was unevenly shared and came at a cost: many of these decades were spent under colonial rule by peoples who saw little of the growth, and the same growth tripled humanity's use of natural resources between 1970 and 2017, creating the environmental crisis the movement of Section 1.6 exists to answer. On balance, I accept Hobsbawm's claim about the scale of change, but not the label: an age that was golden for some, and costly to the planet, needs a more careful name.

Sources for this section

Retrieval date for all web sources: 2026-08-25.

1. VCAA, *Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0: Humanities — History*, Levels 9–10 content description VC2HH10K03 and elaborations E01–E04 (VCAA export retrieved 2026-07-29).
2. *Charter of the United Nations*, signed San Francisco, 26 June 1945; in force 24 October 1945 — Preamble and membership facts (un.org/en/about-us/un-charter).
3. United Nations Department of Economic and Social Affairs, *World Population Prospects 2024* — world population 1950–2024, life expectancy at birth by region, and the 2021 pandemic decline (population.un.org/wpp).
4. UNEP / International Resource Panel, *Global Resources Outlook 2019* — global material extraction, about 27 billion tonnes in 1970 to about 92 billion tonnes in 2017 (unep.org/resources/global-resources-outlook-2019).
5. International Energy Agency, *World Energy Outlook* reporting — share of fossil fuels in global energy supply, about 80 per cent ([iea.org](https://www.iea.org)).
6. Food and Agriculture Organization of the United Nations, *The State of World Fisheries and Aquaculture 2022* — share of fish stocks fished beyond sustainable levels ([fao.org](https://www.fao.org)).
7. International Renewable Energy Agency (IRENA), *Renewable Power Generation Costs in 2019* (2020) — fall in large-scale solar electricity costs, 2010–2019 ([irena.org](https://www.irena.org)).
8. Carson, Rachel, *Silent Spring* (Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1962).
9. World Commission on Environment and Development, *Our Common Future* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1987) — definition of sustainable development.
10. Hobsbawm, Eric, *Age of Extremes: The Short Twentieth Century, 1914–1991* (London: Michael Joseph, 1994).
11. Orwell, George, “You and the Atomic Bomb”, *Tribune*, 19 October 1945; Lippmann, Walter, *The Cold War: A Study in the Foreign Policy of the United States* (New York: Harper, 1947).
12. Nobel Prize outreach — Nobel Prize in Physics 1956 (Bardeen, Brattain, Shockley); Nobel Peace Prize 1970 (Norman Borlaug) (nobelprize.org).
13. United Nations, *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, adopted Paris, 10 December 1948 (un.org); UNEP Ozone Secretariat, *Montreal Protocol on Substances that Deplete the Ozone Layer*, 1987 (ozone.unep.org); UNFCCC, *Paris Agreement*, adopted 12 December 2015 (unfccc.int).
14. Computer History Museum — ARPANET first message, 29 October 1969 (computerhistory.org); CERN — Tim Berners-Lee and the origin of the World Wide Web, 1989–1993 (home.cern).

Movements for social and political change since 1945

History 10 · Chapter 1 — Overview: the modern world · Section 1D · Content description
VC2HH10K04

The big picture

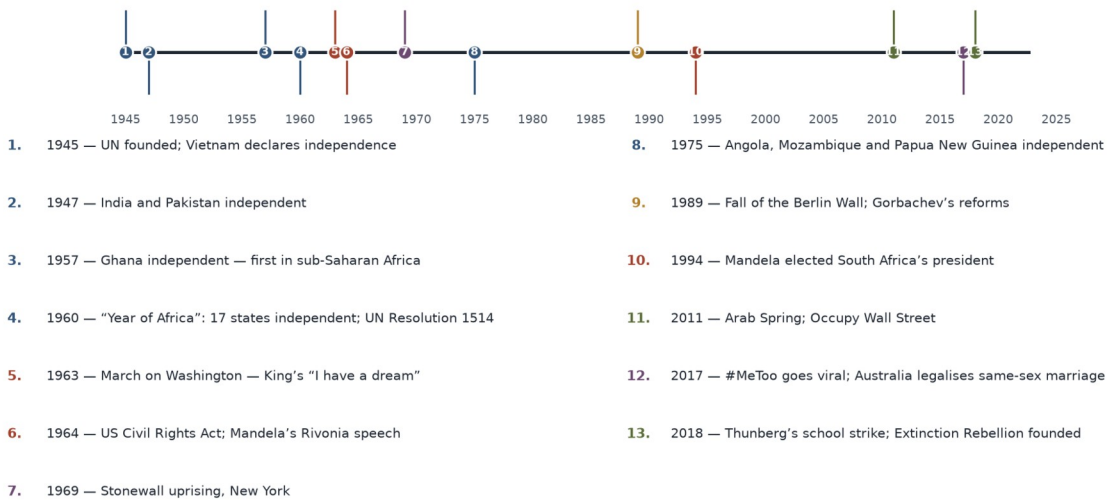
Since 1945, ordinary people have organised to change laws, governments and daily life. A **movement** (or social movement) is a large, organised group of people who work over time for — or sometimes against — social or political change. Movements are not political parties: parties try to win elections and form government, while movements try to change laws, policies or attitudes, and they often work from outside parliament.

This section surveys the major movements for social and political change since 1945: **independence and nationalist movements, civil rights movements, women's rights, LGBTQI+ rights** (the rights of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer and intersex people), **environmentalism** and **conservative political movements**. It asks four questions about each one:

- **Causes and consequences** — why did the movement begin, and what did it change?
- **Continuity and change** — what stayed the same, and what changed, as the movement grew?
- **Perspectives** — who supported the movement, who opposed it, and why?
- **Evidence** — which sources show this, and how reliable are they?

Movements for social and political change since 1945 — milestones

Follow the numbered points on the spine; the key below gives each milestone.



Compiled from the dated events taught in Section 1D (VC2HH10K04).

Timeline of major movements for social and political change since 1945, showing milestones for independence movements, civil rights, feminism, environmentalism and digital-age protests.

Figure 1 — Movements since 1945 at a glance.

Two contested terms, defined before use. Several words in this section are *contested terms* — words with competing definitions, where the definition you pick can change your conclusion (see Section 8D).

Self-determination. In this section, *self-determination* is used in the sense given by the United Nations Charter (1945, Article 1): the right of peoples to freely choose their own government and political status. Other definitions exist and are not interchangeable with this one.

Populism. The Victorian Curriculum uses the term *populism* but does not define it. This section therefore treats it as politics that claims to speak for “ordinary people” against a powerful “elite”, and every question here is answerable on that definition alone.

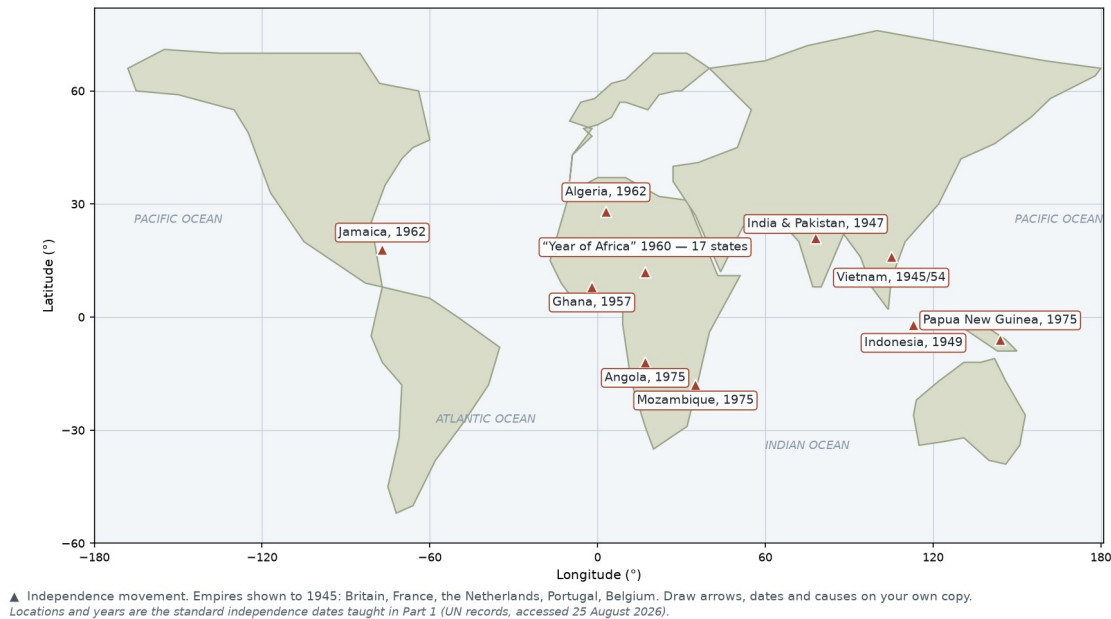
Teaching sequence

Part 1 — The empires wind back: independence movements since 1945

In 1945, most of Asia, Africa and the Pacific was ruled by European empires — above all Britain, France, the Netherlands, Portugal and Belgium. Within thirty years, most of those colonies had become independent states. The process by which colonies become self-governing countries is called **decolonisation**.

Major independence movements since 1945

Simplified classroom map — annotate your own copy with at least eight movements and their years.



Annotated world map showing major political independence movements since 1945, with key countries and their independence years labelled across Asia, Africa, the Caribbean and the Pacific.

Figure 2 — Major independence movements since 1945. Use this map as a model, then annotate your own blank world map: draw arrows or dots for at least eight independence movements and label each one with its name and year.

Why did decolonisation happen after 1945? Several causes worked together:

1. **World War II weakened the empires.** Britain and France won the war but were left deep in debt and short of military power. Japan's rapid conquests in Asia in 1941–42 had also broken the image of European invincibility.
2. **Nationalist movements grew stronger.** *Nationalism* — loyalty to, and identification with, one's own nation — fuelled organised demands for self-rule, led by people educated in the colony or abroad (for example, Ho Chi Minh in Vietnam, Kwame Nkrumah in Ghana and Jawaharlal Nehru in India).
3. **The superpowers pressured the empires.** In the Cold War, both the USA and the USSR opposed old-style empire — the USSR on principle, and the USA because it wanted open trade and feared that colonial wars would push new nations towards communism.
4. **The United Nations gave independence a legal footing.** In 1960 the UN General Assembly passed Resolution 1514, the *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*, which declared that colonial rule denied fundamental human rights and that power should be transferred to colonial peoples at once (see Worked inquiry 1).

The pattern, region by region.

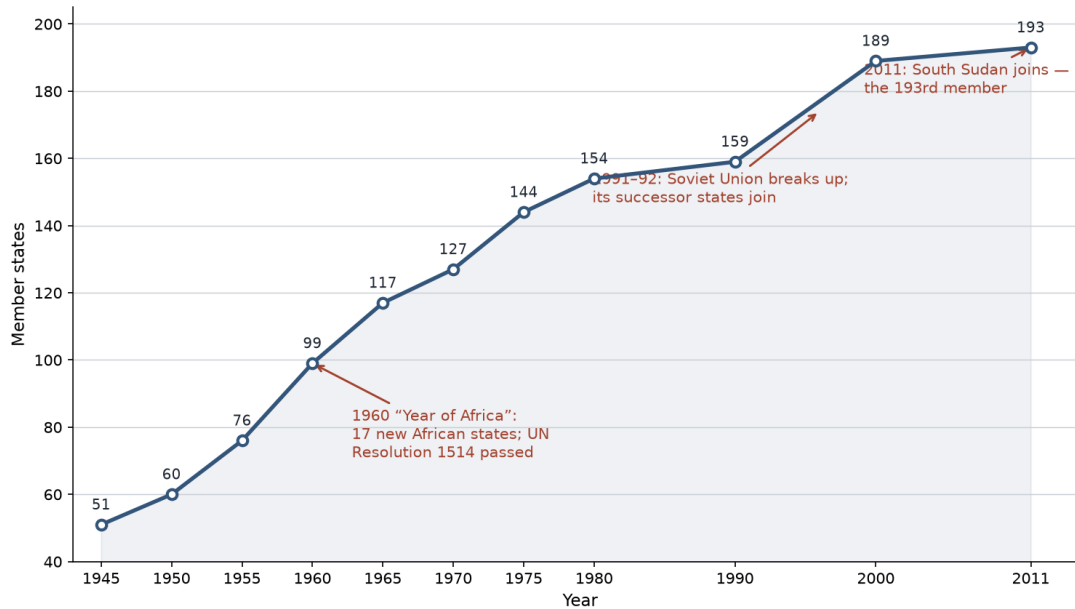
Region	Key moments
South Asia	India and Pakistan became independent from Britain in August 1947, after decades of nationalist campaigning led by the Indian National Congress and Mohandas Gandhi's non-violent resistance. Ceylon (now Sri Lanka) followed in 1948.
Southeast Asia	Ho Chi Minh declared Vietnam's independence in 1945; France fought to keep the colony until its defeat at Dien Bien Phu in 1954. Indonesia declared independence in 1945 and the Netherlands recognised it in 1949.
Africa	Ghana became the first colony in sub-Saharan Africa to win independence from Britain (6 March 1957), led by Nkrumah. In 1960 — the "Year of Africa" — seventeen African countries became independent, most of them from France. Algeria won independence from France in 1962 after a long, bitter war (1954–62). Portugal's colonies, including Angola and Mozambique, became independent in 1975 after long wars.
Caribbean and Pacific	Jamaica became independent from Britain in 1962 and Papua New Guinea from Australia in 1975.

Source: dates of independence above are the standard dates recorded by the United Nations and by the governments named; accessed 25 August 2026.

The results are visible in the membership of the United Nations itself: new states joined as soon as they won independence, and membership rose from 51 founding members in 1945 to 193.

United Nations member states, 1945–2011

New nations joined as they won independence — the steep 1960s climb is the “Year of Africa” wave.



Line chart showing United Nations membership rising from 51 member states in 1945 to 193 by 2011, with the fastest growth in the 1960s.

Figure 3 — United Nations member states, 1945–2011. The steep rise around 1960 matches the “Year of Africa” and the wave of decolonisation. Source: United Nations, “Member States”, un.org; accessed 25 August 2026.

Continuity and change. In many new nations, colonial borders stayed the same (continuity) while governments, flags and national identity changed. Many independence movements also had to decide *how* to win: some, like India’s, relied mainly on non-violent protest and negotiation; others, like Algeria’s and Vietnam’s, fought long wars. This choice of technique is examined in Part 3.

Part 2 — Key activists for change

Movements are made of thousands of ordinary people, but certain individuals gave movements their voice, strategy and symbols. The curriculum names ten such figures. The table below summarises who they were; the right-hand column gives one reason each one is **significant** (historians judge significance by importance, depth of impact, number of people affected, durability of results and relevance today — you will apply these criteria in Section 8C).

Activist	Life	Where	Movement	What they did	Why it is significant
Ho Chi Minh	1890–1969	Vietnam	Independence	Founded the Viet Minh; declared Vietnam’s independence	Built the movement that ended French colonial rule

Activist	Life	Where	Movement	What they did	Why it is significant
				in 1945 and led the wars against France and, later, the USA	and shaped modern Vietnam
Martin Luther King Jr	1929–1968	USA	Civil rights	Baptist minister who led non-violent direct action — the Montgomery bus boycott (1955–56), the Birmingham campaign (1963) and the March on Washington (1963); Nobel Peace Prize 1964	His tactics and speeches helped win the Civil Rights Act 1964 and the Voting Rights Act 1965
Nelson Mandela	1918–2013	South Africa	Anti-apartheid	Lawyer in the African National Congress (ANC); co-founded its armed wing in 1961; imprisoned 1962–90; negotiated the end of apartheid and became South Africa's first black president in 1994	Proved a divided society could move to democracy without civil war; Nobel Peace Prize 1993
Ernesto	1928–1967	Argentina,	Revolution	Helped Fidel	Became a

Activist	Life	Where	Movement	What they did	Why it is significant
“Che” Guevara		Cuba, Bolivia		Castro win the Cuban Revolution (1959); urged revolutionaries to spread armed struggle; killed fighting in Bolivia	worldwide symbol of revolution for the young and the poor
Mao Zedong	1893–1976	China	Communist revolution	Led the Chinese Communist Party to victory in 1949 and ruled the People’s Republic of China until his death	Unified China and made it a major power; but his Great Leap Forward (1958–62) and Cultural Revolution (1966–76) caused famine and persecution in which millions died
Betty Friedan	1921–2006	USA	Women’s rights	Wrote <i>The Feminine Mystique</i> (1963), naming “the problem that has no name” — the unhappiness of women confined to housework; co-founded the National Organization for Women	Her book sparked the “second wave” of feminism in the USA

Activist	Life	Where	Movement	What they did	Why it is significant
Mikhail Gorbachev	1931–2022	USSR	Political reform	(1966) Soviet leader from 1985; introduced openness of speech and information (<i>glasnost</i>) and a restructuring of the economy; refused to use force to hold Eastern Europe	His reforms helped end the Cold War; the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 and the USSR dissolved in 1991
Margaret Thatcher	1925–2013	UK	Conservative politics	Britain's first woman prime minister (1979–90); privatised state industries, curbed union power and kept strong defence	Defined modern conservatism; loved and opposed in equal measure
Greta Thunberg	b. 2003	Sweden	Climate action	Began striking from school each Friday in August 2018, holding a "School Strike for Climate" sign outside Sweden's parliament; spoke at the UN in 2019	Her strike grew into the global Fridays for Future movement of millions of young people
Malala Yousafzai	b. 1997	Pakistan	Girls' education	Campaigned for girls'	The youngest-

Activist	Life	Where	Movement	What they did	Why it is significant
				schooling under Taliban rule; shot by the Taliban in 2012 and survived; addressed the UN in 2013	ever Nobel Peace Prize winner (2014); a global voice for the right to education

Sources: Nobel Prize archives (nobelprize.org) for the prize facts; United Nations records for the 1945 and 2013 speeches; accessed 25 August 2026.

Notice the spread: these ten include **revolutionaries and reformers, men and women, winners of power and winners of hearts and minds**. Significance does not only belong to people who held office — Thunberg was fifteen when she started, and Malala was a teenager.

Part 3 — Techniques: how movements push for change

Movements use different **techniques** (methods of action). Three of the most important are **direct action, civil disobedience** and **legal campaigns**.

- **Direct action** — acting directly to force change or to block something, rather than asking others to act: boycotts, strikes, sit-ins, marches and blockades. Example: in the Montgomery bus boycott (1955–56), black citizens refused to ride city buses for over a year until segregation on the buses was ruled unlawful.
- **Civil disobedience** — breaking, on purpose and in the open, a law judged to be unjust, and accepting the punishment in order to expose the injustice. Example: in December 1955, Rosa Parks was arrested in Montgomery for refusing to give up her bus seat to a white passenger; her arrest triggered the bus boycott.
- **Legal campaigns** — working through courts, parliaments and petitions: lawsuits, lobbying and new laws. Example: the civil rights group NAACP won *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954), in which the US Supreme Court ruled segregated schools unlawful; later, the Civil Rights Act (1964) and the Voting Rights Act (1965) made discrimination in public life and voting unlawful.

Three techniques used by movements for change

Movements usually combine all three — Part 3 asks when, and why.

DIRECT ACTION	CIVIL DISOBEDIENCE	LEGAL CAMPAIGNS
WHAT IT IS Acting directly to force change or block it — boycotts, strikes, sit-ins, marches, blockades. DATED EXAMPLE The Montgomery bus boycott, 1955–56: over a year without city buses until bus segregation was ruled unlawful. WEIGH IT Hits hard and wins public attention — but can provoke a backlash.	WHAT IT IS Deliberately and openly breaking a law judged unjust, and accepting the punishment, to expose the injustice. DATED EXAMPLE Rosa Parks, December 1955: arrested for refusing to give up her bus seat — her arrest sparked the boycott. WEIGH IT Makes injustice visible and hard to dismiss — but protesters pay in arrests and violence.	WHAT IT IS Working through courts, parliaments and petitions — lawsuits, lobbying, new laws. DATED EXAMPLE Brown v. Board of Education (1954), then the Civil Rights Act 1964 and the Voting Rights Act 1965 in the USA. WEIGH IT Change becomes binding and durable — but slow, and needs sympathetic courts or votes.

Check your understanding: sort the five examples in Q3 into these three columns.

Comparison chart of three movement techniques — direct action, civil disobedience and legal campaigns — each defined and paired with a dated example.

Figure 4 — Three techniques compared.

Most successful movements **combined** techniques. The US civil rights movement used boycotts and marches *and* court cases *and* lobbying for federal laws. Independence movements mixed negotiation with protest — and sometimes with armed struggle: the FLN fought a war for Algerian independence (1954–62), and in South Africa the ANC formed an armed wing (Umkhonto we Sizwe) in 1961 after peaceful protest was met with violence at Sharpeville in 1960, where police killed sixty-nine protesters.

Contested perspectives. Should movements break the law to change it? Steelman both sides:

- *The case for civil disobedience*, as Martin Luther King Jr argued from a Birmingham jail in 1963: unjust laws will not repeal themselves; peaceful, open law-breaking — accepting the penalty — awakens the conscience of a community that would otherwise ignore the issue.
- *The case against it*, as governments and many citizens argued: order and the rule of law protect everyone; change should come through courts and elections, and street action provokes violence and backlash.

Notice that the two sides disagree about *means*, often not *ends*. When you answer questions about techniques, the mark goes to the quality of your reasoning — defined terms, evidence, limits acknowledged — not to which side you reach.

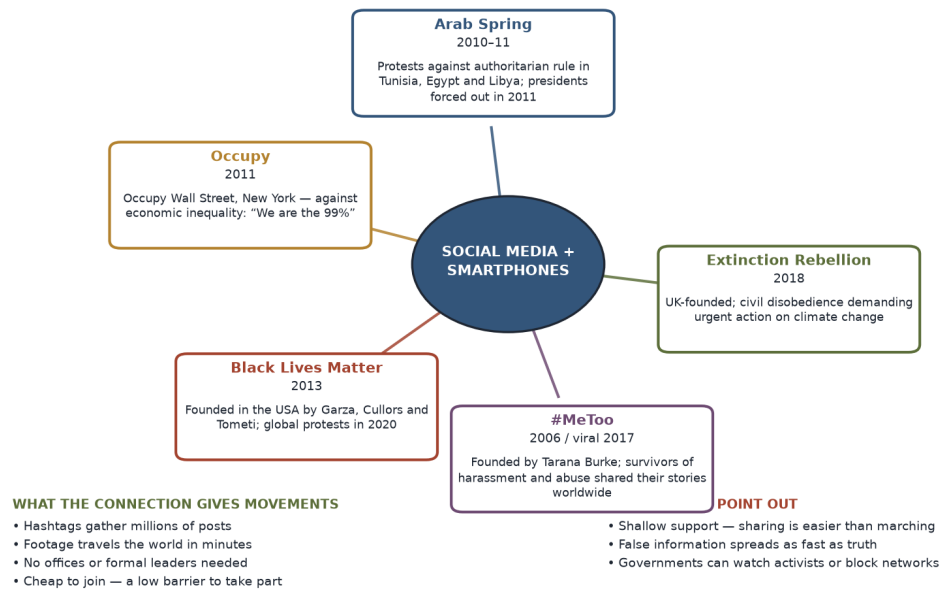
Part 4 — Movements in the digital age

In the 21st century, smartphones and social media changed how movements organise. Ideas and footage now travel globally in minutes; hashtags gather millions of posts around one demand; and people can coordinate protests without formal leaders or offices. The curriculum names five digital-age movements:

Movement	Began	Where and why	Digital connection
Arab Spring	December 2010	Protests against authoritarian rule began in Tunisia and spread to Egypt, Libya and beyond. Tunisia's president fled in January 2011; Egypt's president resigned in February 2011	Social media organised rallies and carried footage worldwide; when Egypt's government cut the internet in January 2011, protest continued on the ground
Occupy	September 2011	Occupy Wall Street, New York, protested economic inequality under the slogan "We are the 99%"	Leaderless, networked organisation; camps copied in hundreds of cities
Black Lives Matter	2013	Founded in the USA by Alicia Garza, Patrisse Cullors and Opal Tometi; protests against police killings of black Americans went global in 2020	The hashtag #BlackLivesMatter spread the movement; 2020 marches were among the largest protests in US history
#MeToo	2006, viral 2017	Founded by US activist Tarana Burke to support survivors of sexual harassment and abuse; went globally viral in October 2017	Millions shared stories online; led to workplace and legal changes in many countries
Extinction Rebellion	2018	Founded in the UK; demands urgent government action on climate change	Combines striking visuals, civil disobedience (blocking roads and bridges) and social media

Movements in the digital age

Five movements, one shared tool: global connectivity through social media (VC2HH10K04.E05).



Movements and dates as taught in Part 4. Egypt's government cut the internet in January 2011 — the protests continued on the ground.

Network diagram of digital-age movements connected through social media, showing shared features such as hashtags, fast sharing and global reach.

Figure 5 — Movements in the digital age.

Contested perspectives. Optimists argue that digital tools give movements speed, reach and a voice for people shut out of mainstream media. Skeptics reply that online support can be shallow (sharing is easier than marching), that false information spreads as fast as truth, and that governments can watch activists, block networks or spread counter-propaganda. Both claims can be tested against evidence — for example, by asking what the Arab Spring *started* (demands for reform) versus what it *finished* (results varied: reform in Tunisia, civil war in Syria and Libya). Cause and consequence are not the same thing.

Part 5 — Movements change over time

Movements are not static: their goals, methods and membership change, and different factions within one movement often disagree (perspectives within movements).

The waves of feminism

A teaching model — historians debate it: real change was messier than four tidy breaks.

FIRST WAVE

1890s–1920s

Focus: *suffrage* — the right to vote

- New Zealand, 1893 — first self-governing country where women won the national vote
- Australia: federal vote, 1902
- Britain 1918 and 1928; USA 1920

SECOND WAVE

1960s–1980s

Focus: *work and home* — equal pay

- Betty Friedan, *The Feminine Mystique* (1963)
- Equal-pay laws in many countries
- National Organization for Women (NOW), USA, 1966

THIRD WAVE

1990s–2000s

Focus: *diversity* — identity and culture

- New voices in music, media and politics
- Questions second-wave priorities
- Stresses that experiences differ by race, class and culture

FOURTH WAVE

c. 2010–present

Focus: *digital* — online organising

- #MeToo goes viral, 2017
- Women's marches worldwide
- Campaigns against harassment and everyday inequality

Continuity across all four waves: the goal of equal rights. Change: methods moved from petitions and marches to online organising, and the focus widened from votes to work, safety, diversity and digital campaigns.

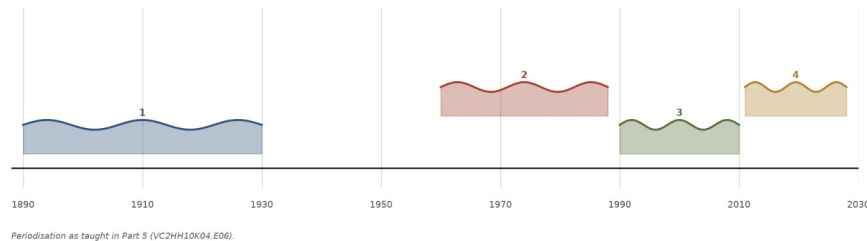


Chart showing the four waves of feminism from the 1890s to today, each labelled with its main focus and key events.

Figure 6 — The waves of feminism. The wave model is a useful teaching tool, but historians debate it: change between waves was messier than four tidy breaks, and some argue the model hides the continuous work of activists between “waves”.

Feminism — the movement for women’s equal rights — is the clearest example of change over time:

Wave	Rough period	Focus	Key moments
First wave	1890s–1920s	Suffrage — the right to vote	New Zealand (1893) was the first self-governing country where women won the vote in national elections; Australian women voted in federal elections from 1902; Britain 1918 (women aged 30 and over) and 1928 (from 21); the USA 1920
Second wave	1960s–1980s	Work and home: equal pay, workplace rights, protection from violence	Betty Friedan’s <i>The Feminine Mystique</i> (1963); equal-pay laws in many countries
Third wave	1990s–2000s	Diversity: women’s experiences differ by	New voices in music, media and politics

Wave	Rough period	Focus	Key moments
		race, class and culture; challenge to second-wave priorities	
Fourth wave	c. 2010–present	Digital: online organising against harassment and everyday inequality	#MeToo (viral 2017); women’s marches worldwide

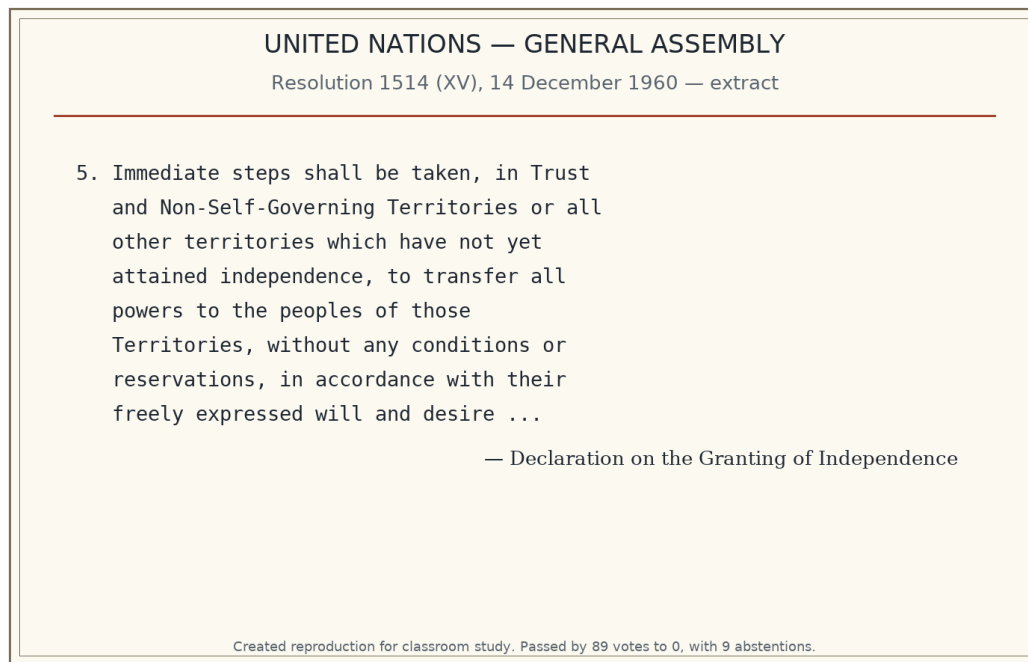
Other movements show the same pattern of **continuity and change**:

- **Civil rights lineage.** The anti-slavery movement of the 1700s and 1800s, the US civil rights movement of the 1950s–60s and Black Lives Matter since 2013 share a goal — racial equality — while their methods and contexts changed completely.
- **LGBTQI+ rights.** In 1945, relationships between people of the same sex were against the law in most Western countries. Change came slowly: decriminalisation, then anti-discrimination laws, then same-sex marriage — New Zealand in 2013, the USA in 2015, Australia in 2017 — and current debate about the rights of transgender people. A turning point was the Stonewall uprising in New York in June 1969, when patrons of a gay bar resisted police arrest.
- **Environmentalism.** The movement began as **conservation** — protecting wild places — then shifted to pollution after Rachel Carson’s *Silent Spring* (1962) exposed the harm of pesticides; the first Earth Day was held on 22 April 1970; and since the 1990s the focus has been climate change, with international agreements (the Paris Agreement, 2015) and youth activism (Thunberg, 2018).
- **Conservative political movements** organise *against* some kinds of change, to conserve established institutions, values or economic arrangements. In the late 1970s and 1980s a “New Right” rose to power: Margaret Thatcher in Britain (1979) and Ronald Reagan in the USA (1981) — privatised state industries, cut regulation and stressed individual responsibility, family and strong defence.
- **Populism** (defined above) has surged on both the political left and right in the 21st century, claiming to speak for “the people” against “the elite”. **Self-determination** remains a driving idea for movements seeking independence or autonomy today, and **decolonialism** — the view that colonial-era ideas, institutions and inequalities persist after independence and should be dismantled — shapes current debates about museums, education and reparations.

Contested perspectives — conservatism versus reform. Steelman both sides of the Thatcher–Reagan era: supporters argued that governments had grown too big and controlling, and that free markets and individual responsibility created more wealth and freedom for everyone; critics answered that privatisation and deregulation widened inequality and weakened public services for those who needed them most. Both positions appeal to “freedom” — they disagree about *freedom from what*. That is a contested term at work.

Worked inquiry 1 — Reading a decolonisation source

Source 1.1 — United Nations General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV), the *Declaration on the Granting of Independence to Colonial Countries and Peoples*, 14 December 1960 (extract). Passed by 89 votes to 0, with 9 abstentions.



Reproduction of an extract from United Nations Resolution 1514 of 14 December 1960, stating that immediate steps shall be taken to transfer all powers to colonial peoples.

Figure 7 — Source 1.1. The resolution also declared (Article 1) that foreign rule over peoples denied fundamental human rights and was contrary to the UN Charter.

Scaffolded questions.

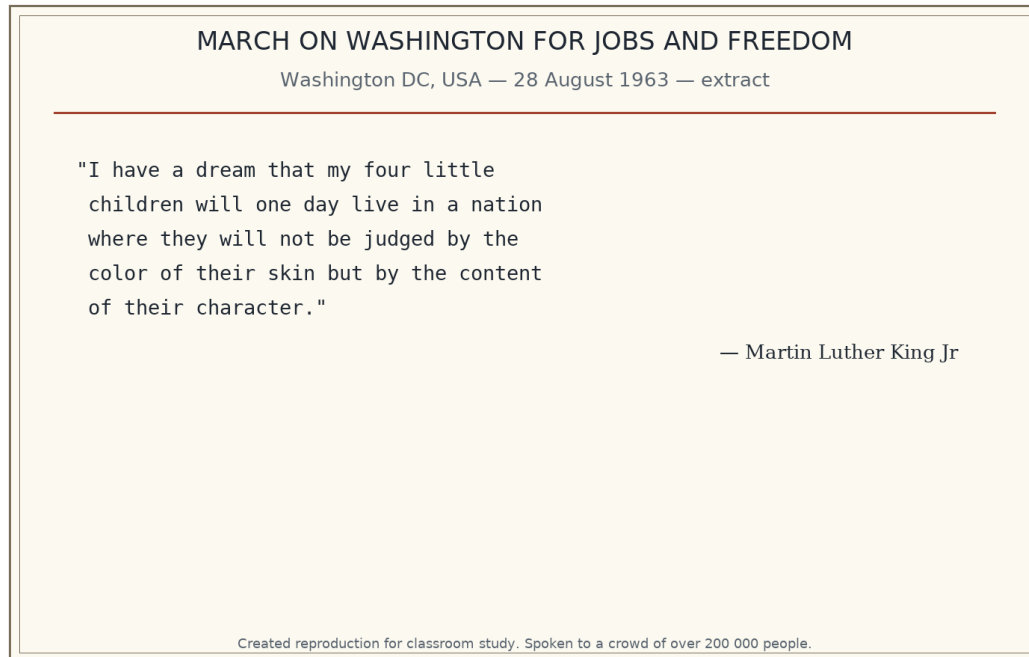
1. **Identify.** What does the resolution demand happen in colonies that “have not yet attained independence”? (Use the source’s own words.)
2. **Context.** What was happening in Africa in 1960, and how did World War II change the power of Europe’s empires? (See Part 1.)
3. **Purpose.** Who was this resolution aimed at, and what pressure did it place on them?
4. **Perspective.** Which side of the decolonisation debate is *not* given a voice in this document? What might colonial governments have argued in reply?
5. **Consequence.** Give two independence movements (with dates) that gained support from the world community after 1960.

Model answers appear in the Answers section at the end of this section.

Worked inquiry 2 — Two voices, two techniques

Compare these two speeches, made eight months apart, by two of the century's most significant activists.

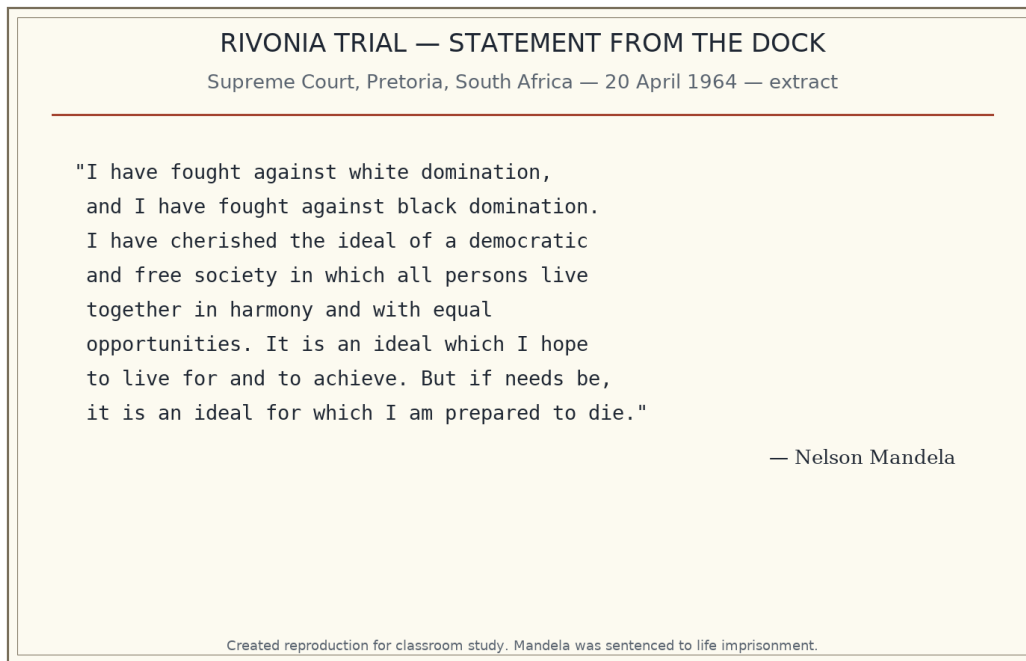
Source 1.2 — Martin Luther King Jr, “I Have a Dream”, March on Washington, USA, 28 August 1963 (extract).



Reproduction of an extract from Martin Luther King Jr's I Have a Dream speech of 28 August 1963, beginning "I have a dream that my four little children".

Figure 8 — Source 1.2. King spoke to a crowd of over 200 000 at a peaceful march demanding jobs and freedom for black Americans. *Source: Martin Luther King Jr, address at the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, 28 August 1963; accessed 25 August 2026.*

Source 1.3 — Nelson Mandela, speech from the dock, Rivonia Trial, Pretoria, 20 April 1964 (extract). Mandela and other ANC leaders were on trial for sabotage; he was sentenced to life imprisonment and served 27 years in prison.



Reproduction of the closing lines of Nelson Mandela's Rivonia Trial speech of 20 April 1964, ending "it is an ideal for which I am prepared to die".

Figure 9 — Source 1.3. By 1964, Mandela had already spent two decades in peaceful protest and had co-founded the ANC's armed wing after the Sharpeville killings of 1960. *Source: Nelson Mandela, statement from the dock, Supreme Court of South Africa, Pretoria, 20 April 1964; accessed 25 August 2026.*

Scaffolded comparison.

1. What **technique** (from Part 3) does each speech reflect? Give one phrase from each source as evidence.
2. Both men name the same **goal**. Quote the words that show it.
3. **Cause:** why did Mandela's movement turn to armed struggle while King's stayed non-violent? (Hint: look at what each government did to peaceful protest.)
4. **Perspective:** whose point of view does each speaker claim to speak for?
5. **Judgement:** do these two sources show that non-violence "worked" and armed struggle "failed", or something else? Explain your reasoning.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Look at Figure 2. (a) Name five independence movements shown on the map, each with its year. (b) Which region saw the most independence movements in 1960? (c) Give one cause of this wave of decolonisation.

Q2. Copy and complete: “Betty Friedan is significant to the ... movement because ...; Mikhail Gorbachev is significant to ... because ...; Malala Yousafzai is significant to ... because ...”

Q3. Define **direct action**, **civil disobedience** and **legal campaign**. Then sort these examples into the three techniques: (i) Rosa Parks refusing to give up her bus seat; (ii) the NAACP’s court case *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954); (iii) the Montgomery bus boycott (1955–56); (iv) Extinction Rebellion blocking a bridge; (v) the Voting Rights Act (1965).

Q4. Use Figure 3. (a) Describe the trend in UN membership 1945–2011. (b) In which decade did membership grow fastest? (c) Explain one cause of that growth.

Q5. Copy the waves-of-feminism table from Part 5 and fill in one key moment for each wave. Then answer: what is one *continuity* and one *change* across the four waves?

Q6. (a) Name the five digital-age movements from Part 4, with the year each began. (b) Give one benefit and one risk of social media for movements. (c) The claim “social media makes movements stronger” has assumptions built into it. Identify two of those assumptions and say what evidence would test each one.

Un scaffolded

Q7. Choose one activist from Part 2. Explain their significance for a movement since 1945, using at least two of the significance criteria (importance, depth, number of people affected, durability, relevance).

Q8. “Movements succeed fastest when they combine direct action, civil disobedience and legal campaigns.” Evaluate this claim using one movement studied in this section. Define your terms and state the limits of your evidence.

Q9. Compare one pre-internet movement (for example, civil rights or Algerian independence) with one digital-age movement (for example, #MeToo or Black Lives Matter). What changed in how movements organise, and what stayed the same?

Q10. Martin Luther King Jr and Nelson Mandela pursued similar goals with different techniques. Explain why movements with similar goals can choose different methods. Present at least one perspective from *each* movement’s opponents.

Source inquiry task

Task. “Which technique — direct action, civil disobedience or legal campaigns — contributed most to change in one movement since 1945?”

Choose one movement from this section. Choose two sources: one from the movement’s supporters (a speech, poster or song) and one showing the response of a government or opponent (a law, a police report, a newspaper editorial — your teacher will help you locate originals). Then write a 300–400 word answer.

Marking guide (marks are for reasoning, not for the conclusion you reach):

Step	Marks
Defines the technique(s) at first use	1
Uses dated, named evidence from the movement	2
Explains cause and consequence (what the technique caused; what followed)	2
Presents the opposing perspective in its strongest form before evaluating it	2
States a limitation of the evidence or of the claim	1
Reaches a judgement supported by the reasoning above	2

Answers

Q1. (a) Any five from the map, e.g. India (1947), Indonesia (1949), Ghana (1957), Algeria (1962), Jamaica (1962), Papua New Guinea (1975), Angola (1975). (b) Africa — seventeen countries in 1960 alone. (c) Any cause from Part 1: European weakness after WWII, stronger nationalist movements, superpower pressure, or UN support (Resolution 1514).

Q2. Betty Friedan — the women's rights movement: her 1963 book *The Feminine Mystique* sparked the second wave of feminism and she co-founded the National Organization for Women (1966). Mikhail Gorbachev — political reform in the USSR: his policies of openness and economic restructuring helped end the Cold War, the Berlin Wall fell in 1989 and the USSR dissolved in 1991. Malala Yousafzai — girls' education: she survived a Taliban attack in 2012, became the youngest Nobel Peace Prize winner (2014) and campaigns worldwide for the right to education.

Q3. Direct action: acting directly to force or block change (boycotts, strikes, blockades). Civil disobedience: openly breaking a law judged unjust and accepting the punishment to expose it. Legal campaign: working through courts, parliaments and petitions. (i) civil disobedience; (ii) legal campaign; (iii) direct action (economic boycott); (iv) direct action (also civil disobedience where laws are broken on purpose); (v) legal campaign (its result).

Q4. (a) Membership rose steadily from 51 to 193. (b) The 1960s (from 99 in 1960 to 127 in 1970 — twenty-eight new members). (c) Decolonisation: the “Year of Africa” and the wave of newly independent states joining, supported by UN Resolution 1514 (1960).

Q5. First wave: women's suffrage, e.g. New Zealand 1893 or Australia 1902. Second wave: equal pay and workplace rights, e.g. Friedan's *The Feminine Mystique* (1963). Third wave: focus on diversity of women's experiences in the 1990s–2000s. Fourth wave: digital campaigning, e.g. #MeToo (2017). Continuity: the goal of equal rights. Change: methods moved from petitions and marches to online organising, and the focus widened from voting to work, culture and safety.

Q6. (a) Arab Spring (2010), Occupy (2011), Black Lives Matter (2013), #MeToo (2006, viral 2017), Extinction Rebellion (2018). (b) Benefit: speed, reach, low cost, a voice for people shut out of mainstream media. Risk: shallow participation, false information, or government surveillance and shutdowns. (c) Example assumptions: that “stronger” means more members, or faster change, or more policy wins — each needs a measure; and that social media is the cause of success rather than one factor among many (test: compare movements with and without internet access, e.g. Egypt's shutdown in January 2011).

Q7. Award 1 mark for naming the activist and movement with dates; 2 marks for applying two significance criteria to specific evidence (e.g. Mandela: *durability* — South Africa's democratic constitution since 1994; *depth* — ending apartheid without civil war). The conclusion need not match the model; reasoning does.

Q8. Strong answers define all three techniques, show the movement using at least two of them (e.g. US civil rights: Montgomery boycott + Parks' arrest + *Brown v. Board* + the 1964 and 1965 Acts), and weigh which carried most weight. Marks go for defined terms, dated evidence, a stated limitation (e.g. “success also depended on TV coverage and Cold War politics”) and a supported judgement.

Q9. Change: organising shifted from offices, churches and unions to networks and hashtags; leadership shifted from named leaders to loose networks; speed of global spread increased. Continuity: goals (equality, justice), courage of participants, and the reaction of authorities (surveillance, arrests, concessions) stayed similar. Strong answers name one movement each side with dates.

Q10. Methods depend on what the state allows: the US system gave black Americans citizenship and (in theory) courts to use, so non-violence could shame the system into enforcing its own laws; in apartheid South Africa, peaceful protest was met with bans, arrests and the Sharpeville killings (1960), so the ANC formed an armed wing in 1961. Opponents' perspectives: US authorities argued for "law and order" and gradual change through the courts; the South African government argued that the ANC's armed struggle was terrorism and that apartheid kept order between races. Present both fairly, then evaluate.

Worked inquiry 1. 1. Immediate steps "to transfer all powers to the peoples of those Territories, without any conditions or reservations". 2. In 1960 seventeen African countries became independent (the "Year of Africa"); WWII had left Britain and France weak in money and military power. 3. Colonial powers holding "Trust and Non-Self-Governing Territories"; it turned independence from a request into a right recognised by the world body. 4. Colonial governments. They might have argued that colonies were not ready for self-rule, that independence needed gradual preparation, or that their rule brought development — arguments the resolution rejects by demanding no "conditions or reservations". 5. Examples: Algeria (independence 1962 after war with France), Angola and Mozambique (1975), Jamaica (1962), Papua New Guinea (1975).

Worked inquiry 2. 1. King — civil disobedience and peaceful direct action ("I have a dream": moral appeal, no violence). Mandela — willingness to use armed struggle: he explains that non-violence failed because the state answered it with force, yet his stated goal is still a free, democratic society. 2. Both: a society where people are equal and free — King's "judged by the content of their character"; Mandela's "a democratic and free society in which all persons live together in harmony and with equal opportunities". 3. The US government eventually enforced civil rights law, so non-violence could win federal support; the South African government met peaceful protest with Sharpeville (1960) and banning, so the ANC judged peaceful channels closed. 4. King: black Americans and the nation's conscience; Mandela: the oppressed majority of South Africa — naming "all persons", not one race. 5. The sources show something else: both men shared one ideal and chose different means because their states behaved differently. Judgement should weigh evidence, not declare one technique superior.

Curriculum traceability

- **Content description** VC2HH10K04 (verbatim): "the contribution of significant movements for social and political change since 1945, such as independence, nationalist and conservative political movements, indigenous rights, civil rights, women's rights, LGBTQI+ rights and environmentalism".
- **Elaborations taught:** .E01 (annotated world map — Figures 1–2), .E03 (all ten named activists — Part 2), .E04 (techniques compared — Part 3, Figure 4), .E05 (all five named

digital-age movements — Part 4, Figure 5), .E06 (waves of feminism and change over time, including populism, self-determination and decolonialism — Part 5, Figure 6).

- **Elaboration .E02** (comparing Indigenous-rights campaigns in the USA, Canada, Australia and New Zealand) is excluded from teaching under §2A of this build’s TOC (CONTENT_POLICY Rule 1); its id is retained as a linkage key. The “indigenous rights” strand of the content description is recorded **ACCEPTED**.
- **Skills links:** source analysis questions draw on VC2HH10S03–S06 (purpose, context, perspective, absent voices — see Sections 7C–7F); significance criteria in Part 2 and Q7 link to VC2HH10S09 (Section 8C); the cause/consequence framing links to VC2HH10S08 (Section 8B).
- **Sources.** Quotations are from the original documents named, retrieved 25 August 2026: UN General Assembly Resolution 1514 (XV), 14 December 1960 (un.org); Martin Luther King Jr, March on Washington address, 28 August 1963; Nelson Mandela, Rivonia Trial statement, 20 April 1964; UN Charter, 1945 (Article 1, for the definition of self-determination). Dates, prize facts and UN membership counts from United Nations records and the Nobel Prize archives (nobelprize.org), accessed 25 August 2026.

The women's movement in Australia: events, individuals and change

What we teach here — VC2HH10K05 (Victorian Curriculum F–10 Version 2.0, History, Levels 9 and 10): “the significant events, individuals and groups in the women’s movement in Australia, and how they have changed the role and status of women”.

Draws on elaborations (linkage, not teaching order):

- VC2HH10K05.E01 — “investigating events connected to the changing roles and rights of women in the workforce since 1945, such as the repeal of the ‘marriage bar’, the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, the changing nature of participation in employment and the gender pay gap”
- VC2HH10K05.E02 — “examining the contributions of significant female leaders in Australian public life, for example political leaders and activists, social reformers, sporting identities, artists and entertainers”

In our words: this section traces how Australian women won a larger share of working life and public life after 1945. The story runs from the *marriage bar* — the rule that forced women out of permanent Commonwealth public service jobs on their wedding day — through the equal pay decisions of 1969 and 1972 and the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, to the first women to lead states and the nation. Along the way we meet the individuals — activists, lawyers, politicians, athletes and artists — whose actions changed what women in Australia could do, earn and become, and we ask how much changed and how much stayed the same.

Chapter note: this is an Overview section — it gives the broad pattern, not a deep study. Women winning the vote is taught in 1F; the worldwide “waves” of feminism are taught in 1D. This section stays with Australian events and individuals from 1945 forward.

Teaching sequence

Part 1 — Framing the movement

One term needs a definition before it is used. The curriculum names *the women’s movement* but does not define it, and historians use the term in different ways. In this section, *the women’s movement* is used in the sense set out here: the individuals, organisations and campaigns that worked — inside parliaments and outside them — to change the laws, the pay and the standing of women in Australia. On that definition the movement includes union test cases, street protests, lobby groups and members of parliament who pushed bills. Other definitions exist — some historians reserve the term for the organised campaigns of the late 1960s and 1970s — and every question in this section is answerable on the definition given here.

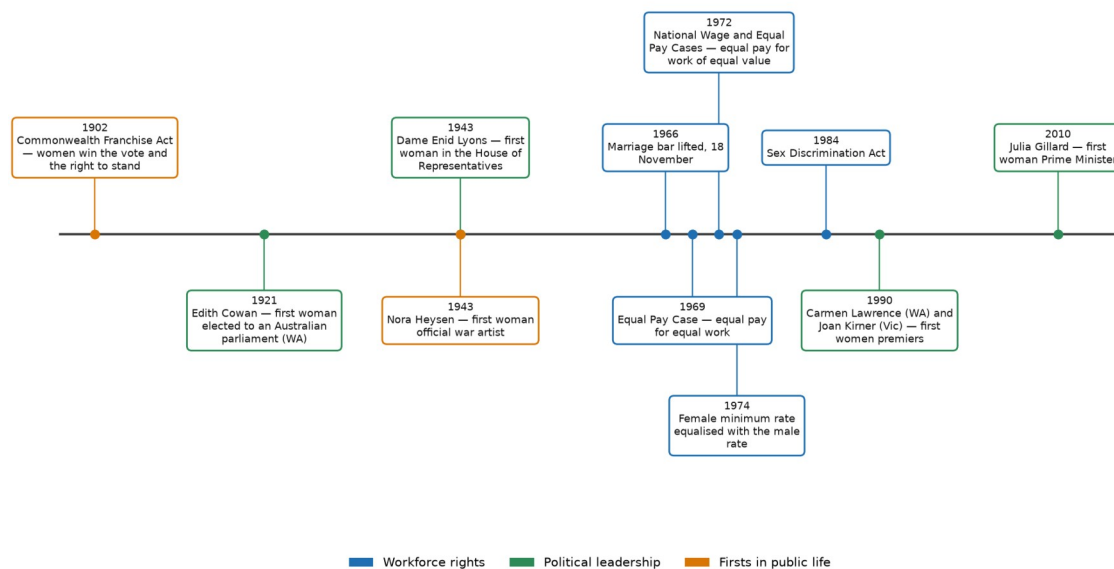
Two orientation facts, both dated:

- Australian women have voted in federal elections since 1902, when the Commonwealth Franchise Act gave women the vote and the right to stand for parliament. In 1921 **Edith Cowan** became the first woman elected to any Australian parliament, winning the seat of

West Perth in Western Australia's Legislative Assembly. So by 1945 the vote itself was not the fight; section 1F carries the suffrage story. Here the question is what women could *do* — at work and in public life — once they could vote.

- World War II pulled women into paid work in large numbers. In 1943 the artist **Nora Heysen** became Australia's first woman official war artist, commissioned specifically to record women's wartime work. When the war ended in 1945, many women wanted to keep their place in the workforce — and the decades that follow show how hard that place was to keep, and how it was slowly widened.

Milestones of the women's movement in Australia, 1902-2010



A horizontal timeline from 1902 to 2010 with eleven dated milestone boxes above and below the axis, colour-coded by theme: workforce rights in blue, political leadership in green and firsts in public life in orange. Milestones include the Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902, Edith Cowan's election 1921, the repeal of the marriage bar 1966, the equal pay decisions 1969 and 1972, the Sex Discrimination Act 1984, the first female state premiers 1990 and Julia Gillard becoming Prime Minister 2010.

Read the timeline across: the workforce-rights milestones (blue) cluster in 1966–1986, and the political-leadership firsts (green) follow them. That ordering — law first, then office — is one pattern worth testing as you read on.

Part 2 — Workforce rights since 1945 (E01)

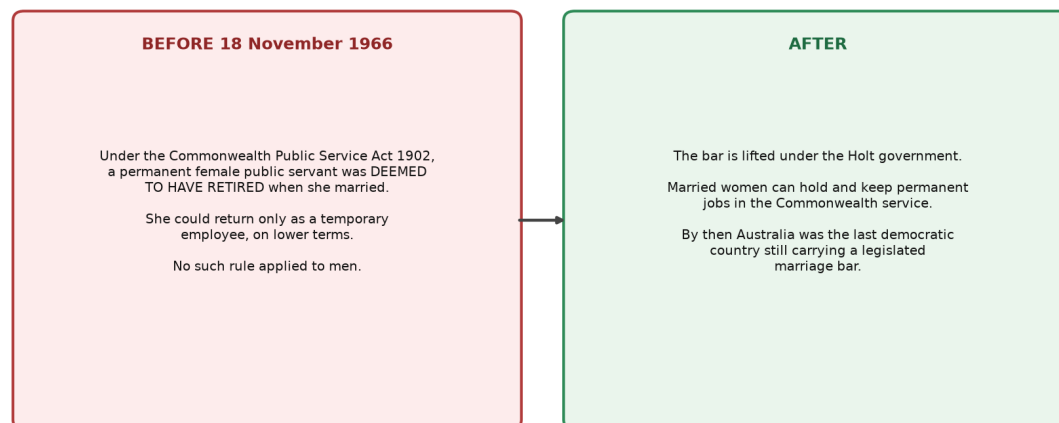
The marriage bar

From 1902, under the Commonwealth Public Service Act, a permanent female public servant was deemed to have retired when she married. She could come back only as a temporary employee, on lower terms. This was the **marriage bar** — a rule that treated marriage as the end of a woman's career, applied to no man.

The bar survived for sixty-four years. In 1949 women were admitted to the clerical division of the Commonwealth service, but the bar stayed. It was finally lifted on **18 November 1966**, under

the Holt government — and by then Australia was the last democratic country still carrying a legislated marriage bar. The repeal mattered in two ways: directly, it let married women hold permanent jobs in the Commonwealth service; as a symbol, it removed the official statement that a woman's working life ended at her wedding.

The Commonwealth marriage bar — before and after 18 November 1966



A two-panel comparison card explaining the marriage bar. The left panel, labelled *Before 18 November 1966*, shows a permanent Commonwealth public service job ending automatically when a woman married. The right panel, labelled *After*, shows the same job continuing, with married women able to be appointed and to stay.

The two equal pay decisions

Wages in Australia were largely set by **awards** — pay rates fixed for whole industries by an independent tribunal, not negotiated job by job. The tribunal in this story is the **Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission** (its name in 1956–1973). Until the late 1960s, award law allowed the minimum wage for women to be set **25 per cent below** the male rate.

A contested term lives inside this story: *equal pay*. Two definitions competed, and the choice between them decided who benefited.

Definition 1 — equal pay for equal work: a woman earns the same as a man only when she does the *same job*. This was the definition adopted in **1969**.

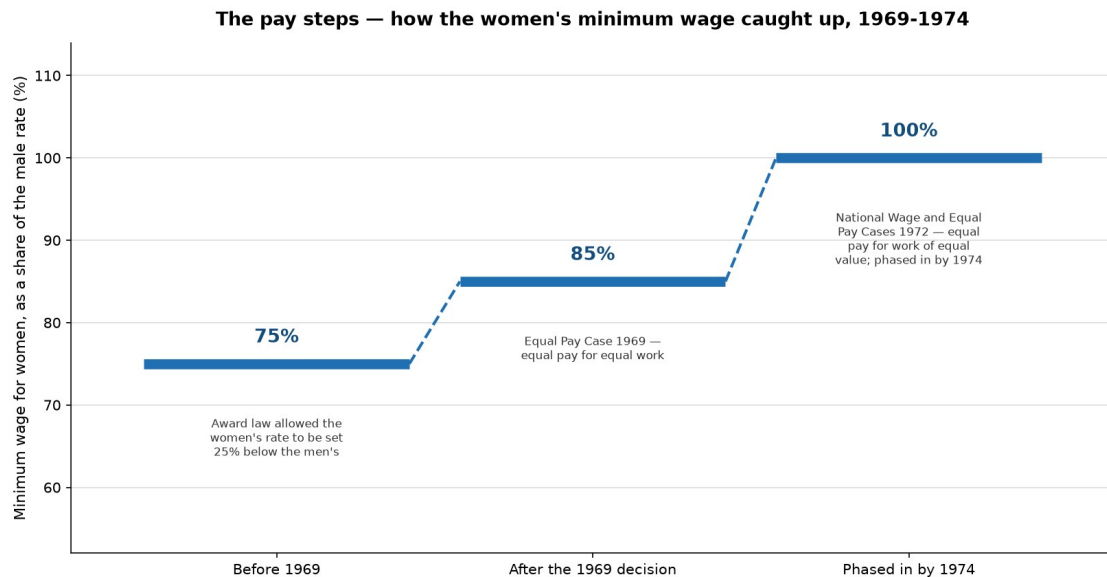
Definition 2 — equal pay for work of equal value: a woman earns the same when her job, even if different, is judged of *equal worth* to a man's job. This was the definition adopted in **1972**.

The difference is not a detail. Under Definition 1, a woman in an all-female job — a nurse, a typist, a cleaner — had no male doing the “same work” to compare with, so her pay stayed low. Definition 2 reached her. The definitions are quoted from the tribunal's own decisions (the Equal Pay Case 1969 and the National Wage and Equal Pay Cases 1972).

- **The Equal Pay Case, 1969.** The Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union brought the case against the Meat and Allied Trades Federation of Australia. The Commission

ruled that women doing the same work as men must receive the same award pay, and lifted the general female minimum wage to 85 per cent of the male rate. But the reach was narrow: by 1972 only about **18 per cent** of women workers had received any benefit from the decision.

- **The National Wage and Equal Pay Cases, 1972.** After the federal election of 2 December 1972, the incoming Whitlam government re-opened the case, briefed 29-year-old barrister **Mary Gaudron** to argue it, and appointed **Elizabeth Evatt** as a presidential member of the Commission. In December 1972 the Commission widened the principle to *equal pay for work of equal value*. By 1974 the female minimum rate was equalised with the male rate.



A step chart showing the minimum wage for women as a share of the male minimum wage across three stages: 75 per cent before the 1969 decision, 85 per cent after the Equal Pay Case 1969, and 100 per cent after the 1972 decision was phased in by 1974.

Two federal decisions, two definitions of equal pay

	1969	1972
Case	Equal Pay Case	National Wage and Equal Pay Cases
Year	1969	1972
Tribunal	Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission	Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission
Pushed by	Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union (test case)	Re-opened by the Whitlam government; argued by Mary Gaudron, aged 29; pressure from the Women's Electoral Lobby
Principle	Equal pay for equal work	Equal pay for work of equal value
Result	General female minimum wage lifted to 85% of the male rate	By 1974 the female minimum rate matched the male rate
Reach	Only women doing the same work as men; by 1972 about 18% of women workers had benefited	Reached women in all-female jobs too, where no man did the same work beside them

A comparison table of the two federal equal pay decisions. Rows compare the case name, year, tribunal, who brought or argued the case, the principle adopted, and the limit of each decision: the 1969 case applied only to women doing the same work as men and benefited about 18 per cent of women workers by 1972, while the 1972 case extended the principle to work of equal value.

Anti-discrimination law

Pay decisions set rates; they did not make discrimination unlawful. That step came with the **Sex Discrimination Act 1984**, an Act of the federal parliament that made discrimination on the ground of sex unlawful in areas including work, education and the provision of goods and services, and created the office of **Sex Discrimination Commissioner** (the Australian Human Rights Commission investigates alleged breaches of the Act). Senator **Susan Ryan** — the first woman from the Australian Labor Party to serve in cabinet, and Minister Assisting the Prime Minister for the Status of Women from 1983 to 1988 — had introduced a private senator's bill in 1981 that was crucial to the development of the Act. Her work also led to the **Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986**, which required employers to plan for the equal treatment of women. In 2012 the **Workplace Gender Equality Agency** was created by statute to keep measuring and improving equality in workplaces.

Changing participation

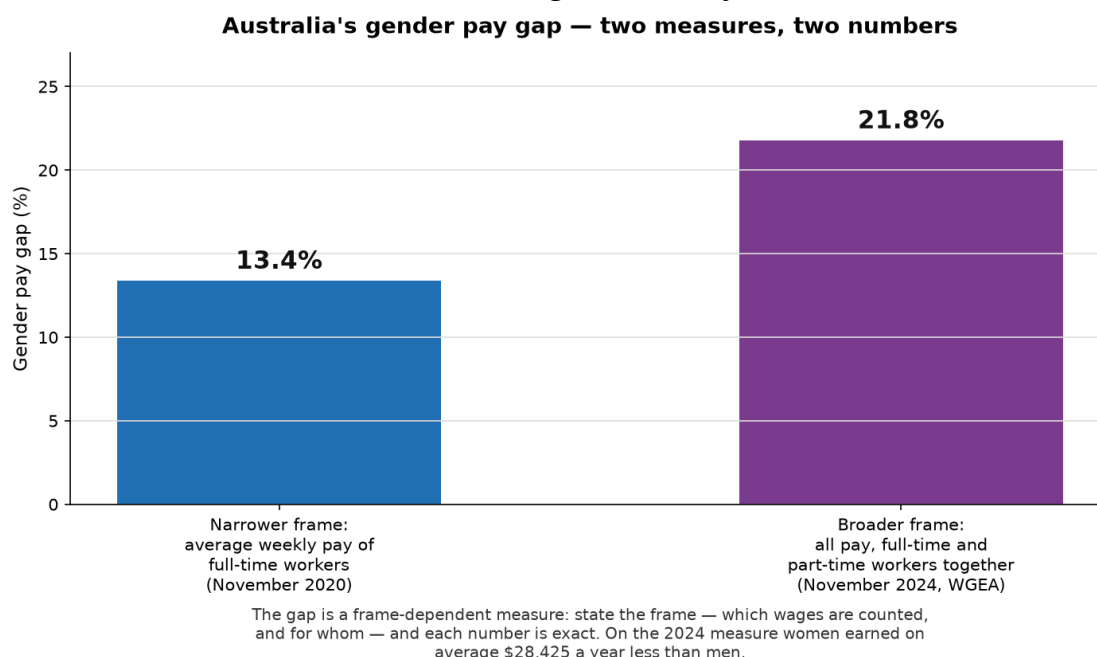
The legal changes ran alongside slow, stubborn changes in who worked where. Resistance to employing women in some industries lasted well into the 1970s: women were not admitted as drivers on Melbourne's trams until 1975, and the airline Ansett refused to train women as pilots

as late as 1979. Over the whole period, women's share of the workforce kept rising — by 2015, **58.6 per cent** of Australian women were in the labour force.

The gender pay gap

The **gender pay gap** is the difference between women's and men's average pay, usually written as a percentage of men's pay. It is a frame-dependent measure: state the frame — which wages are counted, and for whom — and the number is exact; change the frame and the number changes. Australia tracks it in two main ways, and the two frames give different answers:

- The narrower frame — average weekly pay for full-time workers (the measure reported from the national statistics) — put the gap at **13.4 per cent** in November 2020.
- The broader frame — all pay, counting full-time and part-time workers together (the measure used by the Workplace Gender Equality Agency) — put the national gap at **21.8 per cent** in November 2024, a fall of 0.6 of a percentage point from the year before; on that measure women earned on average **\$28,425 a year less** than men.



A two-bar chart comparing the two main measures of Australia's gender pay gap: the narrower full-time weekly earnings measure at 13.4 per cent in November 2020, and the broader all-pay measure at 21.8 per cent in November 2024, each bar labelled with its measure and date.

Neither number says equal pay failed; both say it is not finished. The gap survives because pay is shaped by more than award rates — by who works part-time, who takes time out of the workforce to care for family, and which jobs are male-dominated or female-dominated. Explaining the gap, not just measuring it, is part of this elaboration's work.

Part 3 — How the change was made: methods and a debate

Movements do not win by wanting; they win by method. Four methods did most of the work in this section's story:

How the change was made — four methods, four named examples

Method	Named example from this section
Legal and industrial cases	The 1969 union test case; the equal pay case re-opened by the Whitlam government in 1972
Direct action	Zelda D'Aprano chained herself to the doors of the Commonwealth Building in Melbourne on 21 October 1969; ten days later Alva Geikie and Thelma Solomon joined her at the Arbitration Court doors
Organised lobbying	The Women's Electoral Lobby surveyed candidates at the 1972 federal election on equal pay, child care and sex discrimination, and has made more than 900 submissions to inquiries
Legislation	Senator Susan Ryan's 1981 bill was crucial to the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 and the Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986

A table matching four methods of change to named Australian examples: legal and industrial cases such as the 1969 union test case and the 1972 re-opened case; direct action such as Zelda D'Aprano chaining herself to the Commonwealth Building in Melbourne on 21 October 1969; organised lobbying such as the Women's Electoral Lobby's candidate survey at the 1972 election and its more than 900 submissions to inquiries; and legislation such as Susan Ryan's 1981 bill leading to the Sex Discrimination Act 1984.

One individual deserves a closer look as a case study in method. **Zelda D'Aprano** worked as a union official in Melbourne. Her own union's claim was used as the test case in the 1969 Equal Pay Case; when the result fell short of what most women needed, she acted. On **21 October 1969** she chained herself to the doors of the Commonwealth Building in Melbourne in protest. Ten days later she was joined by **Alva Geikie** and **Thelma Solomon**, who chained themselves to the doors of the Arbitration Court. The following year the three women founded the Women's Action Committee, and in 1972 they founded the Women's Liberation Centre in Little Latrobe Street, Melbourne. One person, one chain, one doorway — and a sequence of organisations behind her.

The movement also met a real argument, and history students should meet it in its strongest form, not as a cartoon.

Position A — gradual change. The tribunals that set wages saw their job as keeping the whole economy working, not only righting a wrong. Their concern, stated fairly, was that forcing full equal pay at once onto industries built on lower female rates could push up costs, cut hiring and harm the very workers the change was meant to help. That is one reason the 1969 decision was narrow and the 1972 decision was phased in by 1974.

Position B — equal pay now. The activists and unions answered that pay below the male rate was not an economic fact but a choice: women doing the same work were paid less because they were women, and every year of phasing was a year of underpayment for real workers. Stated

fairly, this position points to the numbers: the narrow 1969 rule had reached only about 18 per cent of women workers by 1972, so caution was protecting the existing arrangement more than it was protecting workers.

Both positions appeal to women's interests and reach different answers — that is what makes the debate worth studying. You are not asked to pick a side to pass this section; you are asked to say *what evidence each position rests on*, and what the 1969 and 1972 outcomes suggest about which reading of the risk was closer to the mark.

Part 4 — Significant female leaders in Australian public life (E02)

The elaboration sorts leaders into four groups: political leaders and activists, social reformers, sporting identities, and artists and entertainers. Here are dated individuals from each group to anchor the pattern; the figure below carries more names.

- **Political leaders.** The ladder of federal firsts: Edith Cowan first elected to any Australian parliament (WA, 1921); Dame **Enid Lyons** first woman elected to the House of Representatives (1943, Division of Darwin, Tasmania) and first woman in federal cabinet (1949–1951); Senator **Annabelle Rankin** first woman to hold a ministerial portfolio (Minister for Housing, 1966); Senator **Margaret Guilfoyle** first woman to hold a cabinet-level portfolio (1975; she later held Social Security and Finance); **Rosemary Follett** first woman head of government in an Australian state or territory (Chief Minister of the ACT, May 1989); **Carmen Lawrence** first woman premier of a state (Western Australia, February 1990); **Joan Kirner** first woman premier of Victoria (August 1990); **Julia Gillard** first woman Deputy Prime Minister (2007) and first woman Prime Minister (24 June 2010 to 27 June 2013).
- **Activists.** **Jessie Street** was Australia's only woman delegate at the founding of the United Nations in San Francisco in 1945 and played a central role in making sure the UN Charter named sex as a ground from which no one may be discriminated against; she became first Vice President of the UN Commission on the Status of Women. In 1972 **Beatrice Faust** called the meeting in her Melbourne home that founded the **Women's Electoral Lobby (WEL)**, whose first act was to survey candidates at the 1972 federal election on equal pay, child care and sex discrimination — and whose pressure helped produce the equal pay decision of 1972 and the equalising of the female minimum rate in 1974. Melbourne-born writer **Germaine Greer** became internationally famous in 1970 with her book *The Female Eunuch*.
- **Social reformers.** **Dame Roma Mitchell**, admitted to the bar in 1934, was Australia's first woman Queen's Counsel (1962), Australia's first woman judge (Supreme Court of South Australia, 1965) and the first woman governor of an Australian state (South Australia, 1991–1996). **Elizabeth Evatt** was the first woman judge of an Australian federal court and the first Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia (1976–1988), and the first Australian elected to the United Nations Human Rights Committee (1992). **Mary Gaudron**, who argued the 1972 equal pay case at 29, became the first woman Justice of the High Court of Australia in 1987.
- **Sporting identities.** Swimmer **Dawn Fraser** won Olympic gold in the 100 metres freestyle at three successive Games (Melbourne 1956, Rome 1960, Tokyo 1964), in 1962 became the first woman to swim the distance in under a minute, and in 1988 was elected

to the New South Wales parliament. At the 1972 Olympic Games, 15-year-old swimmer **Shane Gould** won five medals — three gold — setting a world record in each of her three gold-medal races, having held every freestyle world record from 100 to 1500 metres. Tennis player **Margaret Court** won 24 Grand Slam singles titles, the most in women’s tennis history, completing the Grand Slam in 1970.

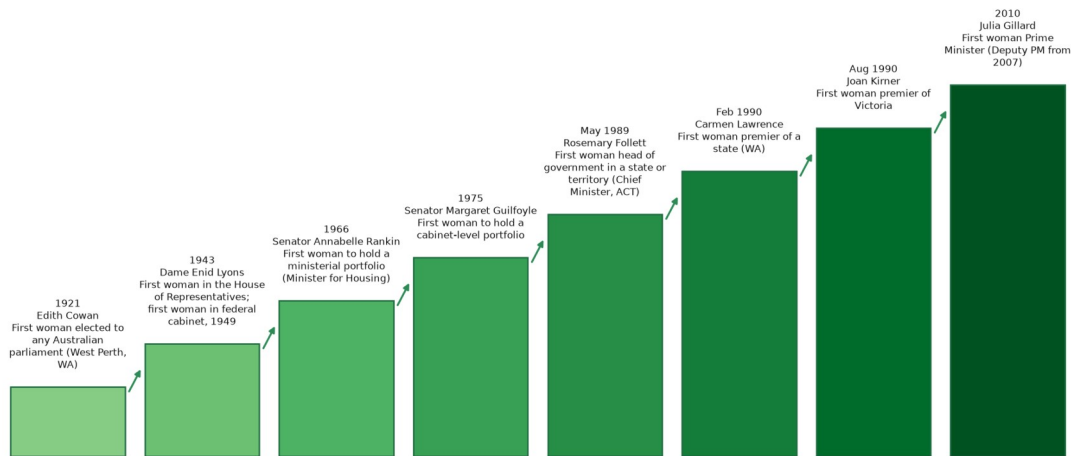
- **Artists and entertainers.** **Nora Heysen** was the first woman to win the Archibald Prize (1938, for her portrait of Madame Elink Schuurman) and Australia’s first woman official war artist (1943). Opera singer **Dame Joan Sutherland**, known as *La Stupenda*, launched an international career from Covent Garden’s *Lucia di Lammermoor* in 1959 and became the first Australian to win a Grammy Award (1962).

Significant female leaders in Australian public life (E02)

Political leaders and activists	Social reformers	Sporting identities	Artists and entertainers
Edith Cowan — first woman elected to an Australian parliament, WA, 1921. Dame Enid Lyons — first woman in the House of Representatives, 1943; first woman in federal cabinet, 1949	Dame Roma Mitchell — Australia's first woman judge, 1965; first woman governor of a state, 1991-96	Dawn Fraser — 100m freestyle gold at three Olympic Games in a row, 1956, 1960, 1964	Nora Heysen — first woman to win the Archibald Prize, 1938; first woman official war artist, 1943
Jessie Street — Australia's only woman delegate at the founding of the United Nations, 1945; first Vice President of the UN Commission on the Status of Women	Elizabeth Evatt — first Chief Justice of the Family Court of Australia, 1976; first Australian elected to the UN Human Rights Committee, 1992	Shane Gould — at the 1972 Olympic Games, aged 15: five medals, three gold, with a world record in each gold-medal race	Dame Joan Sutherland — <i>La Stupenda</i> ; first Australian to win a Grammy Award, 1962
Zelda D'Aprano — chained herself to the Commonwealth Building doors, Melbourne, October 1969. Beatrice Faust — called the 1972 meeting that founded the Women's Electoral Lobby	Mary Gaudron — argued the 1972 equal pay case aged 29; first woman Justice of the High Court, 1987. Susan Ryan — her 1981 bill led to the Sex Discrimination Act 1984	Margaret Court — 24 Grand Slam singles titles, the most in women's tennis history; won all four major titles in 1970	Germaine Greer — her 1970 book <i>The Female Eunuch</i> made her internationally known

A grid of significant female leaders in Australian public life, organised in four columns matching the elaboration’s categories: political leaders and activists, social reformers, sporting identities, and artists and entertainers, with each cell giving names and dated achievements.

A ladder of firsts in Australian political life, 1921-2010



A vertical ladder diagram of firsts in Australian political life from 1921 to 2010: Edith Cowan first woman elected to any Australian parliament 1921; Enid Lyons first woman in the House of Representatives 1943 and first woman in cabinet 1949; Annabelle Rankin first woman with a ministerial portfolio 1966; Margaret Guilfoyle first woman with a cabinet portfolio 1975; Rosemary Follett first woman head of government ACT May 1989; Carmen Lawrence first woman state premier WA February 1990; Joan Kirner first woman premier of Victoria August 1990; Julia Gillard first woman Deputy Prime Minister 2007 and first woman Prime Minister 2010.

Ask of each name: did this person change what women could *do* (a barrier removed), what they were *seen as able to do* (an example set), or both? The two kinds of change are different, and a single career often carries both.

Part 5 — Primary source close study: the UN Charter (1945) and Jessie Street

A **primary source** comes from the time being studied. Ours is the founding document of the United Nations, signed in San Francisco on 26 June 1945, with Australia among the founding members — and an Australian woman's fingerprints on it.

PRIMARY SOURCE

United Nations Charter, 1945

From the Preamble

"WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED ... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women ..."

From Article 1 — a purpose of the United Nations

... promoting "respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion".

United Nations Charter, signed 26 June 1945, San Francisco. Australia was a founding member. Delegate Jessie Street — Australia's only woman delegate — played a central role in keeping "sex" in the non-discrimination clause.

Reading prompts

- 1 Who made this document, and why?
- 2 Where is the Australian connection?
- 3 What can it tell us — and what can it not tell us — about change at home?

A source card presenting two excerpts from the United Nations Charter of 1945: the preamble's words on fundamental human rights and the equal rights of men and women, and Article 1's purpose clause naming sex among the grounds of non-discrimination, followed by a note on Jessie Street's role at the San Francisco conference and three reading prompts.

From the Preamble: "WE THE PEOPLES OF THE UNITED NATIONS DETERMINED ... to reaffirm faith in fundamental human rights, in the dignity and worth of the human person, in the equal rights of men and women ..."

From Article 1: one purpose of the United Nations is promoting "respect for human rights and for fundamental freedoms for all without distinction as to race, sex, language, or religion".

(United Nations Charter, signed 26 June 1945, San Francisco. Jessie Street, Australia's only woman delegate at the conference, played a central role in securing the inclusion of sex in the Charter's non-discrimination clause.)

Read it like a historian:

- **Who made it, and why?** Fifty nations drafting the rules of the post-war world in 1945. It is a statement of intent, not a domestic law: it binds governments to a purpose, not to a wage rate.

- **Where is the Australian connection?** Street worked inside the Australian delegation and across others to keep “sex” in the text. Without that work, the Charter might have spoken of human rights while leaving women’s rights unnamed.
- **What is its value as evidence?** It shows that by 1945 the equal-rights claim had reached the highest level of international agreement — and that Australian women were among those who put it there.
- **What is its limit?** A promise on paper does not change an award wage. In 1969 — twenty-four years later — Australian women’s minimum pay was still set at 85 per cent of the male rate, and the marriage bar had only just gone. The Charter is evidence of the *claim*; the events of Part 2 are evidence of how slowly the claim became law at home.

Part 6 — What changed, what continued

The content description asks *how* events, individuals and groups changed the role and status of women. A summary in two columns:

Changed since 1945:

- the legal right to keep a career after marriage (marriage bar lifted, 1966);
- the legal right to the same pay for the same work (1969), then for work of equal value (1972), with the female minimum rate equalised by 1974;
- the legal protection against sex discrimination in work, education and services (1984), and duties on employers to plan for equality (1986);
- the opening of jobs once closed to women — tram drivers (1975), pilots (1979, after Ansett’s refusal ended), the judiciary (Mitchell, 1965), the High Court (Gaudron, 1987);
- the presence of women at every level of political leadership, up to the prime ministership (2010).

Continued:

- a measurable pay gap under both measures (Part 2), with the size of the gap depending on the frame used;
- patterns of part-time work and caring responsibilities that still fall mainly on women, and which feed the broader gap measure;
- debate about the right pace of change — the gradual-versus-now argument of Part 3 is still a live argument in policy.

Historians’ judgement about this balance differs, and that is expected: the same evidence supports “a transformation across forty years” and “a slow, unfinished catching-up”. Your task is to hold both columns at once and use dated evidence when you weigh them.

Worked inquiries

Inquiry 1 — Reading a primary source like a historian (scaffolded)

Use the UN Charter source card in Part 5. Task: establish the source’s origin and purpose, then its value and its limit.

Working	Comment
Step 1 — Origin: an international treaty signed at San Francisco on 26 June 1945 by fifty founding nations, including Australia.	Origin tells you who made a source and for what setting. A treaty speaks for governments, not for private citizens.
Step 2 — Purpose: to state the aims of the new United Nations, including human rights “without distinction as to ... sex”.	Purpose explains why the words exist. The Charter aims to bind nations to shared purposes after a world war.
Step 3 — The Australian angle: delegate Jessie Street worked to keep “sex” in the non-discrimination clause, and became first Vice President of the UN Commission on the Status of Women.	Individuals shape documents. The clause did not write itself.
Step 4 — Value: the source shows the equal-rights claim reaching the highest international level in 1945, with an Australian woman’s hand in it.	Value is always tied to a question — here, “how early, and how high, did the claim travel?”
Step 5 — Limit: the Charter set no pay rate and changed no Australian award; in 1969 women’s minimum pay was still set below the male rate.	Every source is both useful and partial. Say both, with dated evidence.

Inquiry 2 — Explaining change: the pay steps 1969 to 1974 (scaffolded)

Question: *How did the minimum wage for women rise from 85 per cent to 100 per cent of the male rate between 1969 and 1974?* The model below shows the shape your paragraph should have: claim, evidence, explanation, link back.

Model paragraph — How did the minimum wage for women rise from 85% to 100% of the male rate between 1969 and 1974?

CLAIM

The rise came through two tribunal decisions, pushed along by a union case, a new government and organised lobbying.

EVIDENCE

In 1969 the Commission lifted the female minimum wage to 85% of the male rate, but only women doing the same work as men won full equal pay — by 1972 just 18% of women workers had benefited. In December 1972, with Mary Gaudron arguing for the new Whitlam government and pressure from the Women's Electoral Lobby outside, the Commission moved to equal pay for work of equal value; by 1974 the female minimum rate matched the male rate.

EXPLANATION

The change of definition — from "same work" to "work of equal value" — widened equal pay from a minority of women to most of them. That is why the second decision, not the first, completed the rise.

LINK BACK

Between 1969 and 1974, tribunal decisions plus union, government and lobby action lifted women's minimum pay from 85% to 100% of the male rate.

A model paragraph broken into four labelled parts — claim, evidence, explanation, link back — answering the question “How did the minimum wage for women rise from 85 per cent to 100 per cent of the male rate between 1969 and 1974?” using the two equal pay decisions and the people who pushed them.

Working	Comment
Claim: the rise came through two tribunal decisions, pushed along by a union case, a new government and organised lobbying.	One clear point, one sentence — name the actors, not just the outcome.
Evidence: in 1969 the Commission lifted the female minimum wage to 85 per cent of the male rate, but only women doing the same work as men won full equal pay, and by 1972 just 18 per cent of women workers had benefited. In December 1972, with Mary Gaudron arguing for the new Whitlam government and WEL pressure outside, the Commission moved to equal pay for work of	Evidence must be named and dated: who, where, when.

Working	Comment
equal value; by 1974 the female minimum rate matched the male rate.	
Explanation: the change of definition — from “same work” to “work of equal value” — widened equal pay from a minority of women to most of them, which is why the second decision, not the first, completed the rise.	This is where marks live: connect the evidence to the claim.
Link back: between 1969 and 1974, tribunal decisions plus union, government and lobby action lifted women’s minimum pay from 85 to 100 per cent of the male rate.	Mirror the words of the question so the reader sees the answer.

Practice questions

Scaffolded

Q1. Use Part 2. (a) What did the marriage bar require of a permanent Commonwealth public servant who married? (b) On what date was it lifted, and under which prime minister? (c) Give one thing the repeal changed directly and one thing it changed as a symbol.

Q2. Use the two-cases figure in Part 2. (a) Which union brought the 1969 Equal Pay Case? (b) What principle did the 1969 decision adopt, and to what share of the male rate did it lift the general female minimum wage? (c) Why had only about 18 per cent of women workers benefited from the 1969 decision by 1972?

Q3. The 1972 decision changed a definition. (a) State the 1969 definition of equal pay and the 1972 definition in your own words. (b) Name two people whose work the section links to the 1972 case. (c) By what year was the female minimum rate equalised with the male rate?

Q4. Use Part 2. (a) What did the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 make unlawful? Name two areas of life it covered. (b) What office did the Act create? (c) What part did Susan Ryan’s 1981 bill play in the story?

Q5. Use the pay-gap figure in Part 2. (a) State the two gap figures shown, with their dates. (b) Explain in two sentences why the two measures give different numbers. (c) On the broader 2024 measure, how much less per year did women earn on average?

Q6. Use the political-firsts ladder in Part 4. Match each first to the right woman: (a) first woman elected to any Australian parliament; (b) first woman in the House of Representatives; (c) first woman with a ministerial portfolio; (d) first woman with a cabinet portfolio; (e) first woman premier of a state; (f) first woman Prime Minister.

Un scaffolded

Q7. “The 1969 Equal Pay decision was both a victory and a disappointment.” Use evidence from this section to explain why both readings are defensible.

Q8. Choose one named woman from Part 4 (any category). Explain how her contribution changed the role or status of women in Australia, and say whether the change was a barrier removed, an example set, or both.

Q9. The gradual-versus-now debate of Part 3: state each position in its strongest form, identify one piece of evidence each position could use, and say which reading the outcome of 1972–1974 supports more closely, giving a reason.

Q10. Identify two changes and two continuities in women’s working lives from 1945 to the present, each backed by a dated example from this section. Which do you judge to be the more historically significant, and why?

Source inquiry (extended)

ER1. Read the UN Charter source in Part 5 again. (a) Formulate three historical questions the source could help answer. (b) Identify its origin and purpose. (c) Explain one value and one limit of the source as evidence for the women’s movement in Australia, using dated material from this section. (d) Write one to two paragraphs: how did Australia’s 1945 commitment at San Francisco relate to the later changes of 1966, 1969, 1972 and 1984? Use the claim–evidence–explanation–link shape from Inquiry 2.

Answers

Q1. (a) She was deemed to have retired from the permanent Commonwealth public service on marriage. (b) 18 November 1966, under Harold Holt. (c) Directly, married women could hold and keep permanent Commonwealth jobs; as a symbol, the state stopped declaring that a woman's career ended at her wedding.

Q2. (a) The Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union. (b) Equal pay for equal work — women doing the same work as men; it lifted the general female minimum wage to 85 per cent of the male rate. (c) Because the rule applied only where women did the same work as men, and most women worked in all-female jobs with no male doing the same job beside them.

Q3. (a) 1969: a woman is paid the same as a man only if she does the same job. 1972: a woman is paid the same if her work is of equal value to a man's work, even if the jobs differ. (b) Any two of: Mary Gaudron (argued the case for the Whitlam government), Elizabeth Evatt (appointed a presidential member of the Commission), Gough Whitlam's government (re-opened the case); WEL's pressure may also be credited. (c) 1974.

Q4. (a) Discrimination on the ground of sex; any two of work, education, the provision of goods and services (later amendments added further grounds). (b) The Sex Discrimination Commissioner. (c) Her 1981 private senator's bill was crucial to the development of the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 (and of the Affirmative Action Act 1986).

Q5. (a) 13.4 per cent (November 2020, full-time weekly measure) and 21.8 per cent (November 2024, all-pay measure). (b) The narrower measure counts only full-time workers' weekly pay, while the broader measure counts all pay including part-time workers, so it picks up differences in hours, roles and the share of women in part-time work. (c) On average \$28,425 a year less.

Q6. (a) Edith Cowan (WA, 1921). (b) Dame Enid Lyons (1943). (c) Senator Annabelle Rankin (Minister for Housing, 1966). (d) Senator Margaret Guilfoyle (1975). (e) Carmen Lawrence (WA, February 1990; first woman premier of a state). (f) Julia Gillard (2010).

Q7. Sample: victory — it was the first federal decision to order equal pay, and it lifted the general female minimum wage to 85 per cent of the male rate; disappointment — its definition ("equal pay for equal work") reached only women doing the same jobs as men, so by 1972 only about 18 per cent of women workers had benefited. (Accept any answer that uses both the principle and the reach of the decision.)

Q8. Sample (Zelda D'Aprano): she turned the 1969 disappointment into direct action, chaining herself to the doors of the Commonwealth Building in Melbourne on 21 October 1969, then founding organisations that kept the campaign alive — an example set and pressure applied that fed the climate in which the 1972 decision came. Sample (Roma Mitchell): her appointments — first woman Queen's Counsel (1962), first woman judge (1965), first woman state governor (1991) — removed barriers to women in law and public office and set visible examples of women holding authority. (Accept any named woman with a dated, correctly described contribution and a reasoned barrier/example judgement.)

Q9. Sample: gradual — tribunals argued that forcing full equal pay at once could raise costs and cut hiring, harming the workers it was meant to help; evidence available to this position:

industries with many low-paid women would face sudden cost jumps. Now — activists argued lower pay was a choice, not an economic fact; evidence: the narrow 1969 rule reached only 18 per cent of women workers by 1972, and once the 1972 decision was made it was phased in by 1974 without the harm the gradual position feared. The 1972–1974 outcome supports Position B more closely: the feared economic damage did not prevent the change, while the delay of 1969–1972 had cost women real pay. (Accept either conclusion if the reasoning ties the named evidence to the position.)

Q10. Sample changes: the end of the marriage bar (1966) and the equalising of the female minimum wage (1974), or the opening of once-closed jobs (tram drivers 1975; pilots 1979) and women reaching the highest offices (premier 1990; Prime Minister 2010). Sample continuities: the gender pay gap persists under both measures (13.4 per cent in 2020; 21.8 per cent in 2024), and patterns of part-time work and family caring still shape women’s pay. A significant judgement might weigh the 1972 definition change most heavily, because it widened equal pay from a minority to most women — the reasoning matters more than the choice. (Accept other dated changes and continuities correctly used.)

ER1. (a) Sample questions: How did the equal-rights claim reach the UN Charter in 1945? What role did Australian delegates — and Jessie Street in particular — play in its wording? Why did international promises take decades to show up in Australian pay decisions? (b) Origin: a treaty signed by fifty founding nations at San Francisco on 26 June 1945, Australia among them; purpose: to state the aims of the new United Nations, including respect for human rights without distinction as to sex. (c) Value: it shows the claim reaching the highest international level in 1945 with Australian input — Street’s work on the non-discrimination clause; limit: it set no pay rate in Australia, and in 1969 the female minimum wage was still 85 per cent of the male rate, so the source alone cannot evidence change at home. (d) A strong response links the 1945 commitment to later events — the marriage bar lifted 1966, equal pay for equal work 1969, equal pay for work of equal value 1972, the Sex Discrimination Act 1984 — and argues whether the Charter was a cause, a resource campaigners could point to, or mainly a symbol, using dated evidence and the claim–evidence–explanation–link shape.

Sources for this section

- **United Nations Charter (1945)**, Preamble and Article 1, signed at San Francisco 26 June 1945 — primary source; wording checked against the Wikipedia article “United Nations Charter”, retrieved 25 August 2026.
- **Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902; Commonwealth Public Service Act 1902; Sex Discrimination Act 1984; Affirmative Action (Equal Employment Opportunity for Women) Act 1986; Workplace Gender Equality Act 2012** — named legislation, all Acts of the Commonwealth Parliament; details checked against the Wikipedia articles “Marriage bar”, “Sex Discrimination Act 1984” and “Gender pay gap in Australia”, retrieved 25 August 2026.
- **Equal Pay Case 1969** (Australasian Meat Industry Employees Union v Meat and Allied Trades Federation of Australia) and **National Wage and Equal Pay Cases 1972**, Commonwealth Conciliation and Arbitration Commission — checked against the

Wikipedia articles “Gender pay gap in Australia” and “Equal pay for equal work”, retrieved 25 August 2026.

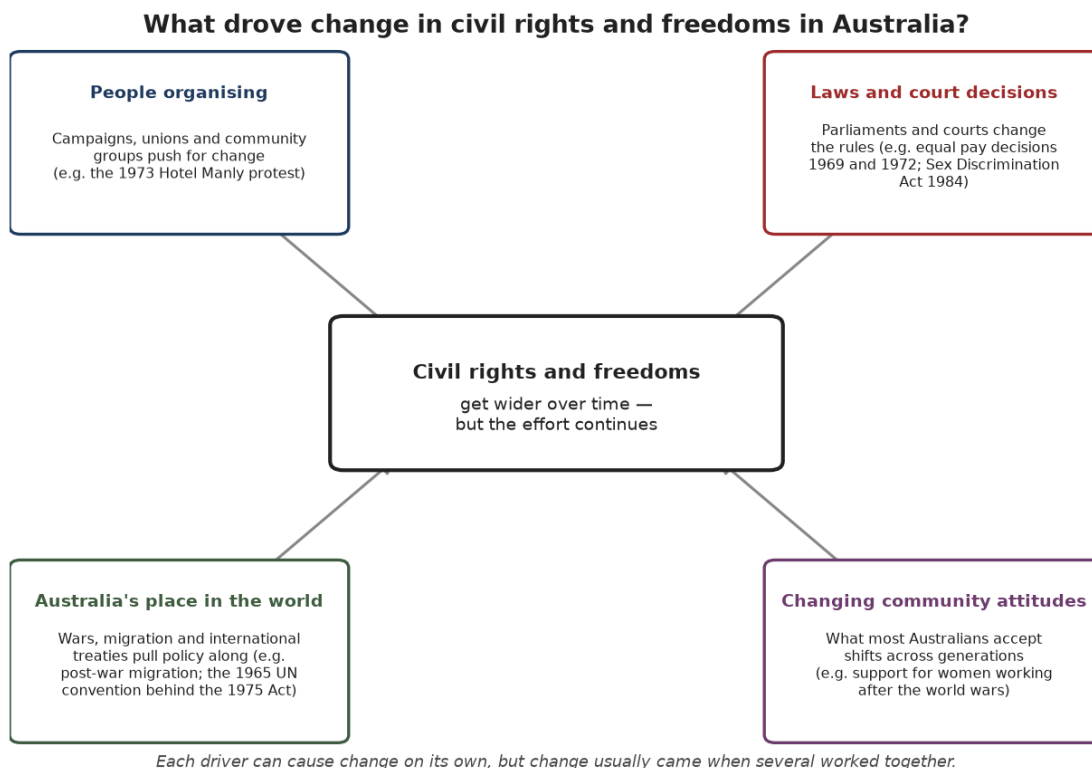
- Biographical details — **Edith Cowan, Dame Enid Lyons, Dame Annabelle Rankin, Dame Margaret Guilfoyle, Susan Ryan, Rosemary Follett, Carmen Lawrence, Joan Kirner, Julia Gillard, Jessie Street, Zelda D’Aprano, Beatrice Faust and the Women’s Electoral Lobby, Dame Roma Mitchell, Elizabeth Evatt, Mary Gaudron, Dawn Fraser, Shane Gould, Margaret Court, Nora Heysen, Dame Joan Sutherland, Germaine Greer** — checked against the corresponding Wikipedia articles, retrieved 25 August 2026. Shane Gould’s world records (set in each of her three gold-medal races at Munich 1972) and Dame Joan Sutherland’s Grammy Award (presented at the 4th Annual Grammy Awards in 1962) re-checked against web sources the same day.
- **Marriage bar lifted 18 November 1966**; women admitted to the clerical division of the Commonwealth service in 1949; Australia the last democratic country to lift a legislated marriage bar — Wikipedia, “Marriage bar” and “Women in Australia”, retrieved 25 August 2026.
- **Gender pay gap figures**: 13.4 per cent (November 2020, full-time weekly measure) — Wikipedia, “Women in Australia”; 21.8 per cent (November 2024, all-pay measure, Workplace Gender Equality Agency), the \$28,425 annual difference, and the 0.6-point fall from the previous year — Wikipedia, “Gender pay gap in Australia”; both retrieved 25 August 2026.
- **Women’s labour force participation 58.6 per cent (2015)**; women admitted as Melbourne tram drivers in 1975; Ansett refusing to train women pilots as late as 1979 — Wikipedia, “Women in Australia”, retrieved 25 August 2026.
- Whitlam government dates (5 December 1972 to 11 November 1975), the re-opening of the equal pay case and the appointments of Mary Gaudron and Elizabeth Evatt — Wikipedia, “Whitlam government” and “Mary Gaudron”, retrieved 25 August 2026.

Continuing efforts to create change in civil rights and freedoms in Australia

Curriculum trace: VC2HH10K06 — “the continuing efforts to create change in the civil rights and freedoms in Australia, for Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander Peoples, migrants and women” (verbatim). This section teaches the content description through the migrants and women strands (elaborations .E02 and .E03). **Draws on:** .E02, .E03. (D3: .E01, .E04 excluded — ids retained as linkage keys. The First Nations strand named in the content description is not covered in this book; see the front-of-book note.)

The big picture

Rights and freedoms in Australia did not arrive all at once, and they did not grow by themselves. They grew through **continuing efforts**: people organising and protesting, parliaments passing new laws, courts making new decisions, and Australia’s place in the world changing around it. This section surveys two of those efforts — the long campaign for **women’s rights**, and the slow shift in **migration policy** from restriction based on race to a system that made race-based discrimination unlawful.



A labelled diagram showing four drivers of change in civil rights and freedoms in Australia: people organising, laws and court decisions, Australia’s place in the world, and changing community attitudes, each pointing to a central box

Defining the key terms. Words like *rights*, *freedoms* and *equality* are **contested terms**: different people and groups use them in different senses, and which sense you choose can change your conclusion. This section therefore states the sense it is using at first mention, per the house rule for contested terms:

- **Civil rights** — here, the rights that protect a person's part in public life: the right to vote, to stand for parliament, to be treated equally before the law, and to use public places. (This is the sense used in the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*, 1948, which lists civil and political rights among its articles.)
 - **Freedoms** — here, areas of life where a person should be free to live without unfair interference, such as freedom from being treated worse than others at work, in housing or in public places.
 - **Discrimination** — here, treating a person or group worse than others because of who they are. For race, this section uses the sense given by the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Commonwealth): making a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin that stops a person enjoying a right or freedom on an equal footing with others. Other definitions exist and are not interchangeable with this one.
-

Part 1 — Women's rights: from the vote to parliament, work and safety

1.1 Winning the vote — and the right to stand

The effort began with **suffrage** — the right to vote in elections. Australian women won the vote colony by colony before Federation, and the new Commonwealth parliament gave women the federal vote and the right to stand for election in 1902. But the right to *vote* and the right to *stand* did not always arrive together, and the last state did not let women stand until 1923.

When Australian women won the vote — and the right to stand

The vote let women choose members of parliament; the right to stand let them run for election.

Jurisdiction	Women could vote	Women could stand for parliament
South Australia	1895	1895
Western Australia	1899	1920
Commonwealth (federal)	1902	1902
New South Wales	1902	1918
Tasmania	1903	1921
Queensland	1905	1915
Victoria	1908	1923

South Australia was first in the world to give women both rights in the same law — passed in 1894, with women voting there for the first time in 1896. The Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902 (assented 12 June 1902) gave women the federal vote and the right to stand for the federal parliament.

A table showing when women in each Australian colony and state won the right to vote and the right to stand for parliament, from South Australia in 1895 to Victoria in 1908, with the Commonwealth granting both in 1902

South Australia's 1894 law was a world first: it gave women the vote **and** the right to stand in the same act. The *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902* (assented 12 June 1902) did the same for the new federal parliament.

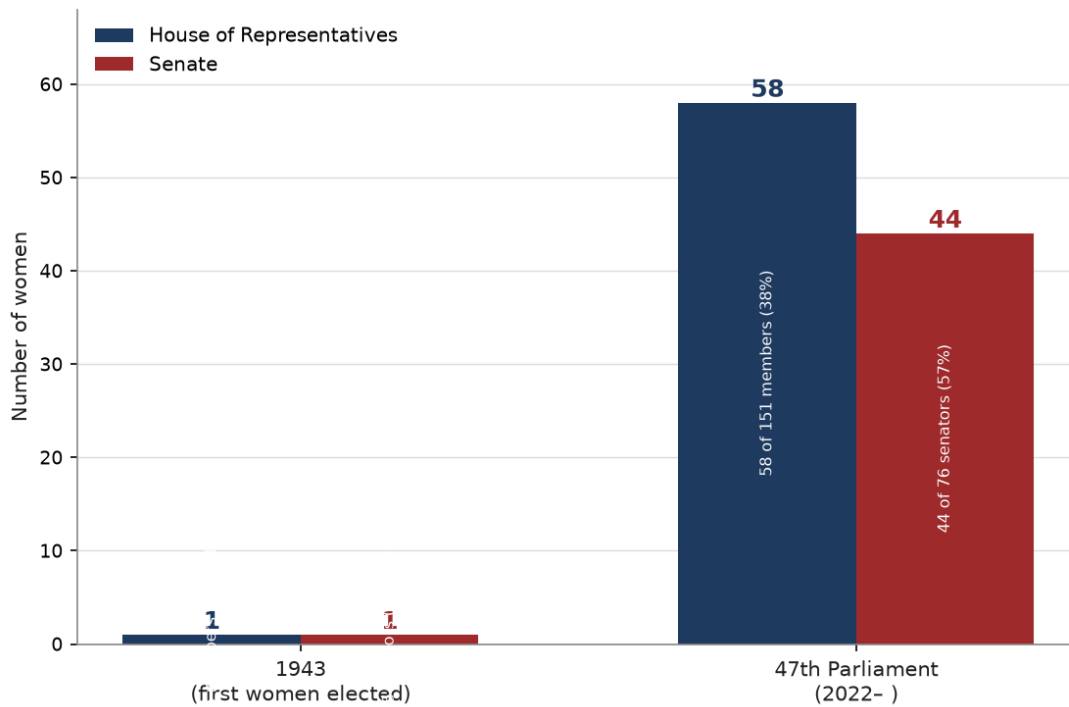
1.2 First in the door: women enter parliament

Having the right to stand and winning a seat are different things. It took nearly two decades after 1902 before a woman won a seat in any Australian parliament:

- **1921 — Edith Cowan** won the seat of West Perth in the Western Australian Legislative Assembly: the first woman elected to any Australian parliament. She campaigned on laws for women and children, including children's courts.
- **1943 — Enid Lyons** became the first woman in the House of Representatives, and **Dorothy Tangney** the first woman in the Senate.
- **1989 — Rosemary Follett** (Labor) became the first female head of government in Australia, as Chief Minister of the ACT.
- **2010 — Julia Gillard** became Australia's first female Prime Minister.

Even after 1943, numbers grew slowly. The 47th Parliament (from 2022) holds the record: 58 of 151 members of the House of Representatives (38%) and 44 of 76 senators (57%) were women.

Women serving in the federal parliament: 1943 and the 47th Parliament



The 47th Parliament holds the record for women in both chambers. The 1943 figures count the first women elected to each chamber: Dame Enid Lyons (House of Representatives) and Dorothy Tangney (Senate). Source: Parliament of Australia records; Wikipedia, '47th Parliament of Australia' (retrieved 25 August 2026).

A bar chart comparing women serving in the federal parliament in 1943, when one woman entered each chamber, with the 47th Parliament from 2022, when women made up 38 per cent of the House of Representatives and 57 per cent of the Senate

Worked inquiry 1 — Reading Source 1 like a historian

SOURCE 1

**Words attributed to Edith Cowan's first speech,
Western Australian Legislative Assembly, 1921**
*"It is a great responsibility to be the only woman
in Parliament, and I feel that it is up to me to
justify the presence of women there."*

Edith Cowan (1861–1932) was elected for the seat of West Perth in 1921, becoming the first woman elected to any Australian parliament. These words have appeared on Australia's fifty-dollar note since it was first issued on 4 October 1995.

Source: Edith Cowan, first speech, 1921; text as printed on the Australian \$50 banknote (Reserve Bank of Australia), cross-checked via Wikipedia, 'Edith Cowan' (retrieved 25 August 2026).

A cream source card titled Source 1, showing the words attributed to Edith Cowan's first speech to the Western Australian Legislative Assembly in 1921, with attribution to the Australian fifty-dollar note

Read Source 1, then work through the scaffolded questions below. A historian reading a source asks four layers of question: **origin** (who made it, when, where), **content** (what it says), **context** (what was happening around it) and **inference** (what it lets us work out beyond its surface).

Scaffolded questions — Source 1

S1. Origin. Who spoke these words, in which parliament, and in what year?

S2. Content. In your own words, what does Cowan say she feels responsible for?

S3. Context. Use the suffrage table above: how long had women been able to stand for the Western Australian parliament before Cowan won her seat? (Hint: check the table row for Western Australia.)

S4. Inference. Cowan says it is “up to me to justify the presence of women” in parliament. What does this suggest about how some people at the time viewed a woman's place in politics?

S5. Usefulness. Give one reason Source 1 is useful evidence about women's entry into parliament, and one limit on its usefulness. (Hint: think about whose experience it shows — and whose it does not.)

1.3 Rights at work

Winning the vote changed who could make laws; changing daily life took more effort.

- **The marriage bar.** From 1902, the Commonwealth public service forced women to resign when they married — a rule known as the marriage bar. A 1958 report recommended its end, and the rule was finally removed on **18 November 1966**.
- **Equal pay.** In **1969**, a federal pay decision established “equal pay for equal work” for women. In **1972**, a second decision went further: “equal pay for work of equal value” — the idea that work mostly done by women should be paid no less than different work of similar worth.
- **The Sex Discrimination Act 1984** made discrimination on the basis of sex unlawful in work, education, housing and the provision of goods and services, and also covered sexual harassment.

(You will meet the marriage bar and the equal-pay decisions in more depth in **Section 1E**, which studies the women’s movement in detail.)

1.4 Rights in public places

Until the early to mid-1970s, women were barred from drinking in the public bars of Australian hotels; they were admitted only to separate “ladies’ lounges”, often only with a male companion. Queensland changed its law in 1969. In January 1973, women protested their exclusion at the Hotel Manly in Sydney, and within a few years the exclusion had largely ended in the cities, backed later by state and federal anti-discrimination law.

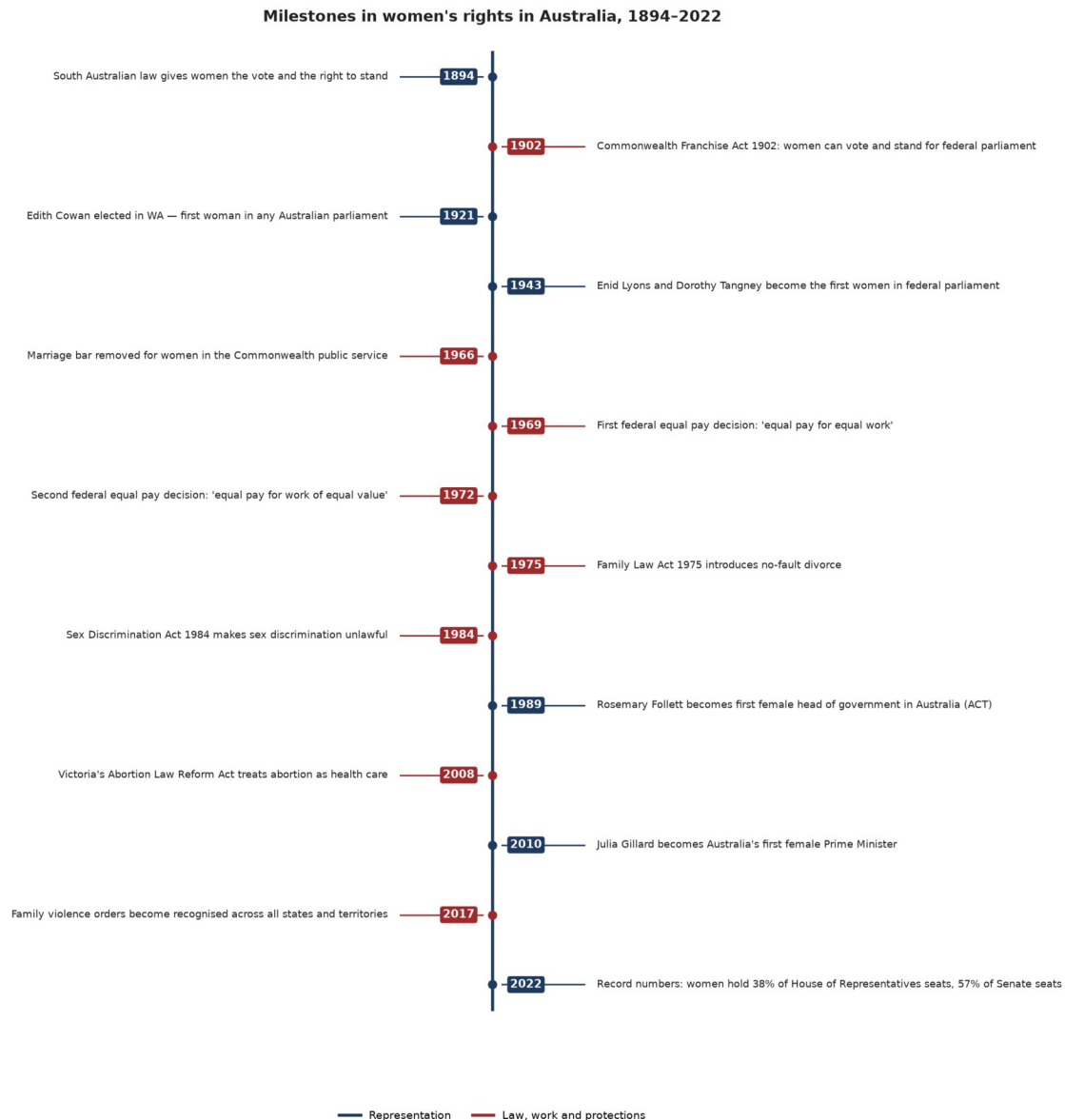
1.5 Rights over their own bodies

Reproductive rights — a person’s rights over whether and when to have children — also changed through law. South Australia reformed its abortion law in 1969, and in the same year a Victorian court ruling (the Menhennitt ruling) set out when an abortion was lawful in Victoria. Decades later, Victoria’s *Abortion Law Reform Act 2008* treated abortion as health care rather than a crime, and New South Wales removed abortion from its criminal law in 2019.

1.6 Protection from domestic and family violence

Another continuing effort: protection from **domestic and family violence** — violent, threatening or controlling behaviour by someone in a family or domestic relationship. For much of the 20th century this violence was treated as a private matter rather than a public one. The change unfolded step by step:

- The *Family Law Act 1975* (Whitlam government) created the Family Court and no-fault divorce, giving women a legal way out of broken marriages without having to prove wrongdoing.
- States and territories passed dedicated family-violence laws — the ACT in 1986, South Australia in 1994, Tasmania in 2004, Victoria’s *Family Violence Protection Act 2008*, Queensland in 2012.
- From **25 November 2017**, family violence orders became recognised automatically across all states and territories, so protection follows the person protected.
- Two national plans (2010–2022 and 2022–2032) made reducing this violence a stated national goal.



A vertical timeline of milestones in Australian women's rights from 1894 to 2022, alternating left and right, colour-coded into representation and changes in law, work and protections

Part 2 — Migration policy: reflecting Australia's changing place in the world

2.1 Restriction at Federation

One of the first acts of the new federal parliament in **1901** was the *Immigration Restriction Act*. Its key tool was the **dictation test** — read Source 2.

SOURCE 2

Immigration Restriction Act 1901 (Commonwealth), section 3(a) — the dictation test

*"The following persons are prohibited immigrants: ...
(a) Any person who when asked to do so by an officer
fails to write out at dictation and sign in the
presence of the officer a passage of fifty words in
length in a European language directed by the
officer."*

Because the officer chose which European language the test was given in, it could always be used to fail people the government wanted to keep out — even if they already spoke English. In 1901 this was the key tool of what was known as the White Australia policy.

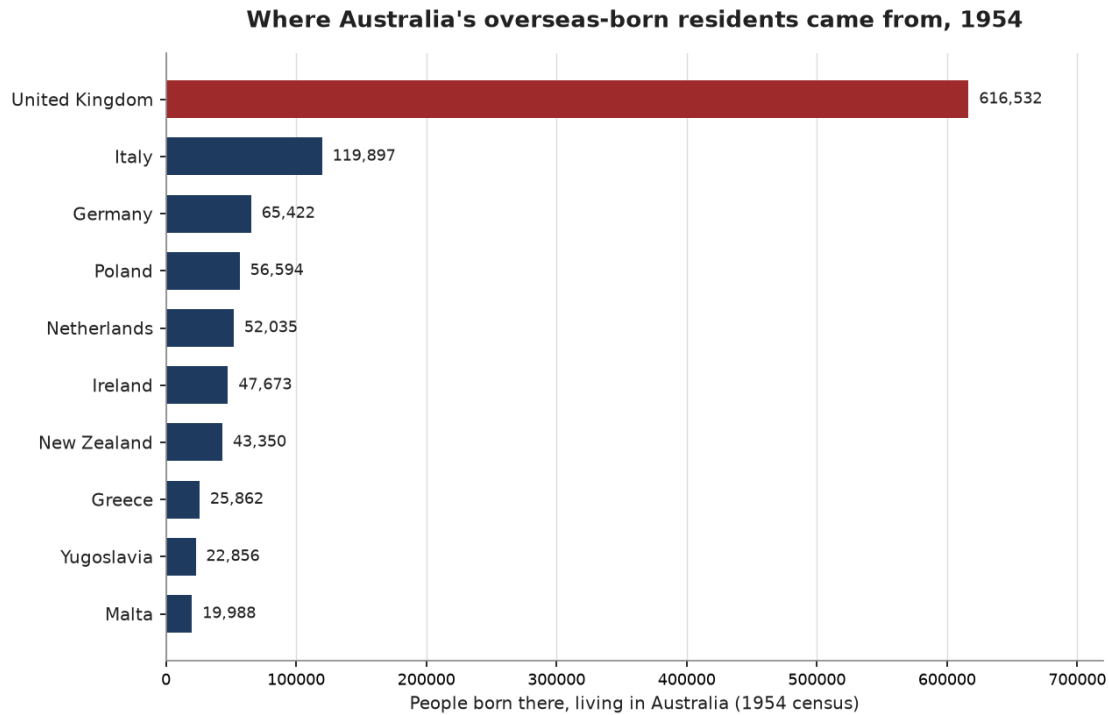
Source: Immigration Restriction Act 1901 (Commonwealth), Act No. 17 of 1901, s 3(a), as enacted; retrieved 25 August 2026.

A cream source card titled Source 2, showing the text of section 3(a) of the Immigration Restriction Act 1901, the dictation test, with a note explaining how officers could use any European language to fail applicants

Hearing past perspectives — steelmanned. Historians try to understand why people in the past acted as they did, even when we judge their actions harshly. In 1901, supporters of restriction argued that keeping non-European arrivals out would protect the wages and conditions of local workers and keep society stable; they presented the policy as a defence of what they saw as a British Australia. Opponents — including some churches, traders with links to Asia, and the governments of Japan and India — argued that a test based on race was unjust and damaged Australia's friendships in the region. Both positions are stated here in the strongest form their holders would recognise; stating them is not endorsing them. The policy's effect was to sort arrivals by race for decades, and judging that effect is part of the historian's task.

2.2 After World War II: "populate or perish"

World War II changed Australia's position in the world, and with it, migration policy. The war had shown that a small population would struggle to defend a large continent. Under the Chifley government, the first Minister for Immigration, **Arthur Calwell**, launched a mass migration program from 1945, summed up in the slogan "**populate or perish**". More than **1 million British people** came under the assisted-passage scheme (the "Ten Pound Poms"), and hundreds of thousands of displaced Europeans also came. Since 1945, more than 7 million people have settled in Australia. The 1954 census already showed the change:

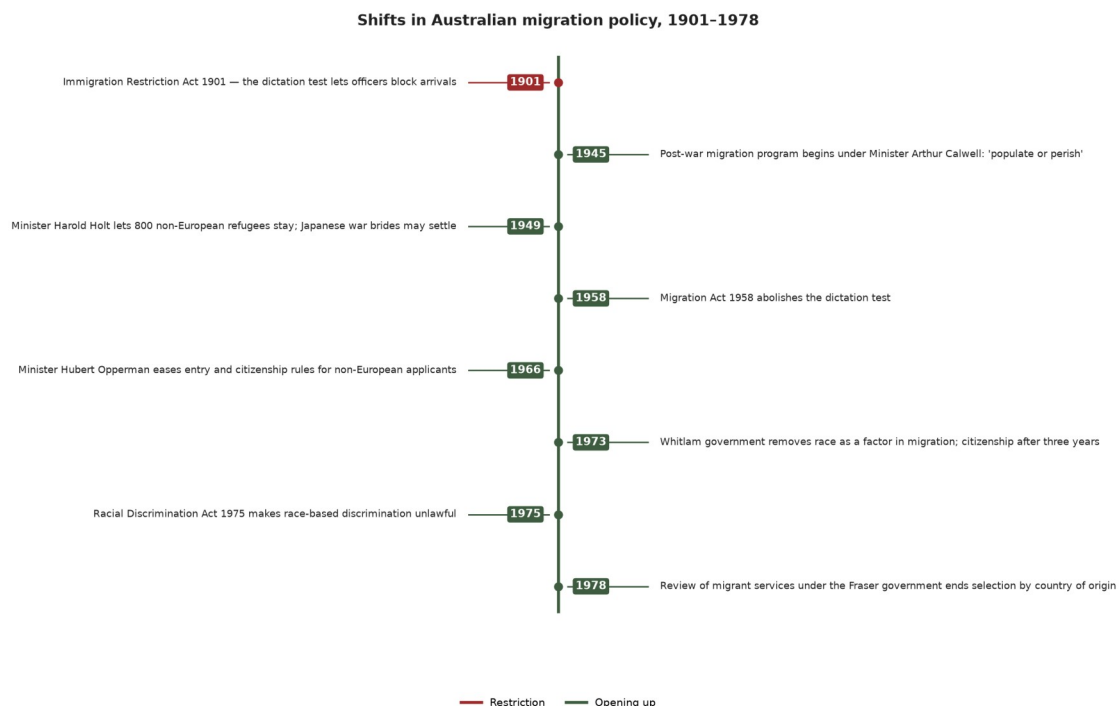


*After World War II, most arrivals were still from Britain — but hundreds of thousands also came from southern and eastern Europe, changing the make-up of Australian society.
Source: Australian census 1954, overseas-born residents; Wikipedia, 'Immigration to Australia' (retrieved 25 August 2026).*

A horizontal bar chart of overseas-born residents in Australia at the 1954 census, showing the United Kingdom largest at 616,532, followed by Italy, Germany, Poland, the Netherlands, Ireland, New Zealand, Greece, Yugoslavia and Malta

2.3 The long opening, 1949–1978

The restriction system was then dismantled step by step over nearly three decades:



A vertical timeline of shifts in Australian migration policy from 1901 to 1978, alternating left and right, colour-coded as restriction in red and opening up in green

Year	Change	Who
1949	800 non-European refugees allowed to stay; Japanese war brides may settle	Harold Holt, Minister for Immigration
1958	The <i>Migration Act 1958</i> abolishes the dictation test	Alick Downer, Minister for Immigration
1966	Entry and citizenship rules eased for non-European applicants	Hubert Opperman, Minister for Immigration (under Prime Minister Holt)
1973	Race removed as a factor in migration; citizenship after three years	Whitlam government
1975	<i>Racial Discrimination Act 1975</i> — race-based discrimination made unlawful	Whitlam government (assented 11 June 1975)
1978	Selection by country of origin ends after a review of migrant services	Fraser government

The 1975 Act is the key marker. Read Source 3.

SOURCE 3

The Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth), section 9(1) — in plain words

"Section 9(1) makes it unlawful for a person to do any act that treats people differently — by making a distinction, exclusion, restriction or preference — where that treatment is based on race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin, and where it has the purpose or effect of stopping any person enjoying a human right or basic freedom on an equal footing with others."

The Act was passed by the Whitlam government and received assent on 11 June 1975.

It put Australia's agreement to the 1965 United Nations convention against racial discrimination into Australian law — and it applied to government decisions too,

Source: *Racial Discrimination Act 1975 (Commonwealth)*, s 9(1), summarised; including decisions about who could migrate, assent 11 June 1975, retrieved 25 August 2026.

A cream source card titled Source 3, summarising section 9(1) of the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 in plain words and noting that the Act implemented Australia's agreement to the 1965 United Nations convention against racial discrimination

2.4 Why did policy change?

The changes in Part 2 did not happen in a vacuum. They **reflect and shape Australia's changing place in the world** — which is exactly what elaboration .E03 asks you to investigate:

- **Security and the economy.** Post-war defence fears and the need for workers drove the big intake from 1945, which made the old race-based rules harder to maintain.
- **Australia's region.** As trade and diplomacy with Asia grew, a migration policy based on race did not sit well with Australia's nearest neighbours.
- **International obligations.** Australia agreed to the 1965 United Nations convention against racial discrimination; the *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* put that agreement into Australian law.
- **Community attitudes.** Migrants themselves, community groups and a generation that had lived through a world war pushed against the old restrictions.

Worked inquiry 2 — Comparing two primary sources

Compare Source 2 (1901) and Source 3 (1975). Both are laws passed by the federal parliament, but they do opposite work: one sorts people by race at the border, the other protects people from race-based treatment. Use the scaffolded questions, then read the model text.

Scaffolded questions — Sources 2 and 3

- C1. Origin.** For each source, state what it is, the parliament that made it, and its date.
- C2. Content.** In one sentence each: what does Source 2 allow officers to do? What does Source 3 make unlawful?
- C3. Context.** Give one feature of Australia's place in the world in 1945–1975 that helps explain why Source 3 followed Source 2 (use Section 2.4).
- C4. Change and continuity.** Name one clear change between the two sources, and one thing that stayed the same (hint: who makes migration decisions?).
- C5. Significance.** Which source do you judge to be the more significant turning point in Australian migration history? Give one criterion (importance, scale, lasting effect) and defend your choice in two or three sentences.

MODEL TEXT

Comparing Source 2 (1901) and Source 3 (1975)

In 1901 the new federal parliament passed the Immigration Restriction Act, which used a dictation test to keep non-European migrants out of Australia. Seventy-four years later, the Racial Discrimination Act 1975 made it unlawful to treat people differently because of their race, colour, descent or national or ethnic origin. The two sources show change over time: the law moved from using race to sort people at the border to protecting people from race-based treatment. They also show that change was slow — it took decades of pressure from migrants, from community groups and from Australia's changing place in the world before the shift was written into law.

Why this paragraph works:

- It names both sources with their dates.
- It uses evidence from each source (the dictation test; the listed grounds of discrimination).
- It uses the language of change ('moved from ... to ...') and explains the cause (pressure over decades).
- It does more than describe — it reaches a judgement about pace: change was real, but slow.

A model paragraph card comparing Sources 2 and 3, followed by four bullet points explaining why the paragraph works

Skills focus — the language of continuity, change, cause and consequence

This section is built from the two concepts that run through the Levels 9–10 band:

- **Continuity and change.** Change can be fast (the marriage bar removed in one day, 18 November 1966) or slow (women's seats in parliament growing over eighty years). Continuity persists even inside change: the federal parliament that passed the dictation test in 1901 was the same institution that repealed it. Ask: *what changed, what stayed, and how fast?*
 - **Cause and consequence.** Causes can be short-term (a protest, like the Hotel Manly action in 1973) or long-term (decades of changing community attitudes). Consequences can be intended (the 1975 Act was meant to stop race-based treatment) or unintended (post-war migration also changed Australian food, sport, language and religion). Ask: *what drove the change, and what flowed from it?*
-

Practice

Scaffolded

- Q1.** Using the suffrage table, name the two colonies where women had the vote before Federation, and the year each gained it.
- Q2.** Name the first woman elected to an Australian parliament, the year, the seat and the parliament she entered.
- Q3.** What was the marriage bar, when did it end in the Commonwealth public service, and which report had recommended its end?
- Q4.** Using Sections 1.4 and 2.3, place these events in order: the dictation test abolished; the *Racial Discrimination Act*; the Hotel Manly protest; 800 non-European refugees allowed to stay.
- Q5.** Give two reasons from Section 2.4 why Australian migration policy changed after 1945.
- Q6.** Copy this sentence starter into your book and complete it using evidence from Section 1.3: "Winning the vote changed who could make laws, but ..."

Un scaffolded

- Q7.** Explain why the right to vote and the right to stand are different rights, using one example from the suffrage table.
- Q8.** "The changes in women's rights after 1945 mattered more than the vote." Discuss this claim, giving evidence on both sides before reaching your own judgement.
- Q9.** Explain how ONE post-war development in Australia's place in the world led to a change in migration policy. Use the language of cause and consequence.
- Q10.** Using Sources 2 and 3 and Section 2.3, write a short explanation (one paragraph) of why historians describe the dismantling of the dictation test as gradual rather than sudden.

Source-based inquiry

Q11. Choose either Source 2 or Source 3. Write a source analysis of about 150–200 words covering: its origin (what it is, who made it, when); its content (what it provides); its context (what was happening in Australia’s place in the world at the time); and its value and limitation as evidence for the effort to create change in civil rights and freedoms. Use the four-layer method of Worked inquiry 1 and the model text as your guides.

Checking your understanding

Q1. South Australia (1895) and Western Australia (1899). Women in both colonies voted in the first federal election in 1901, before the *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902* gave the federal vote to women in the other states.

Q2. Edith Cowan, 1921, the seat of West Perth, the Western Australian Legislative Assembly.

Q3. A rule forcing women out of their jobs when they married — in the Commonwealth public service it ran from 1902 until 18 November 1966; the 1958 Boyer Report had recommended its end.

Sources used in this section

- *Commonwealth Franchise Act 1902* (Commonwealth), assented 12 June 1902.
- *Immigration Restriction Act 1901* (Commonwealth), Act No. 17 of 1901, s 3(a), as enacted.
- *Racial Discrimination Act 1975* (Commonwealth), s 9(1), summarised; assented 11 June 1975.
- Edith Cowan, words from her first speech, Western Australian Legislative Assembly, 1921, as printed on the Australian \$50 banknote (Reserve Bank of Australia, first issued 4 October 1995).
- Parliament of Australia, records of women in parliament (members elected 1943; 47th Parliament).
- Australian census 1954, overseas-born residents by birthplace.
- Wikipedia: “Women’s suffrage in Australia”, “Edith Cowan”, “Australian fifty-dollar note”, “Marriage bar”, “Julia Gillard”, “Rosemary Follett”, “Family Law Act 1975”, “Sex Discrimination Act 1984”, “Gender pay gap in Australia”, “Australian pub”, “Abortion in Australia”, “Domestic violence in Australia”, “White Australia policy”, “Racial Discrimination Act 1975”, “Immigration to Australia”, “47th Parliament of Australia”. All retrieved 25 August 2026.