



Historical Thinking Concepts:

Continuity and Change (All Grades)

Historians make sense of the past by analyzing what things change and what things stay the same.

Answer the questions using the photographs on the back of this page and your knowledge of history.

1. What do these photographs show? Who are the people in them?

2. Find three things that are the same in all three images:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

3. Find three things that change or evolve between the images:
 - a.
 - b.
 - c.

4. What explains the similarities between the images?

5. What historical movements can explain the differences between the images?



1920: Image F-09779 courtesy of the BC Archives.

1952: Image F-08357 courtesy of the BC Archives.

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The Road to Democracy

A Legislative Lesson Plan
for Students of All Ages

Historical Thinking Concepts: Continuity and Change

Use this lesson plan to teach students about the road to democracy in B.C. and to ask questions about how things change over time.

1. Introduce the fight for the vote

Students can learn about the fight for the vote by attending one of our Play and Tour for Schools sessions. To refresh your students on the story of the fight for the vote, visit this video from our website by using [this link](#) or scanning this QR code:



2. Complete the worksheet

Once students have learned about Laura Jamieson's story, encourage them to fill out the front page of the worksheet, either individually or in groups.

3. Class discussion

Ask students what they think about what they have learned:

- a) There are 32 years between the first two images and 70 years between the second and third. Do you think the rate of change at the Parliament Buildings got slower or faster?
- b) What do you think a photo of MLAs will look like 70 years in the future?
- c) What "mountains" exist in your day? How can you help climb them?

4. Empathizing with the past

As an extension activity, encourage the students to write a letter to Laura Jamieson explaining what things are like in the present. Would she be encouraged by the world today? Would she be worried by it?



The Road to Democracy

Additional Information for Teachers

Background

In 1872, the year after British Columbia joined Canada, two important events occurred: the first bill attempting to give women the right to vote was introduced in the Legislative Assembly (it failed), and the first bill to restrict the vote was introduced (it passed, barring Indigenous people and Chinese Canadians from voting.) These events mark the early turning points in the long fight for the right to vote in British Columbia.

The Suffrage Movement in British Columbia

Suffrage, or the right to vote, is the cornerstone of participation in a democratic system. In the 19th and 20th centuries, women around the world began to campaign for suffrage. Some women in B.C. had the right to vote in municipal elections since 1873, but there was a growing feeling that women's votes and voices were needed on the provincial stage – both as a matter of justice and as a means of influencing the policies of the day. Women began to fight for the right to vote by organizing petitions, giving speeches, and leading rallies.

When the First World War broke out in 1914, suffrage groups focused on supporting the war effort. By this time, many women were also working outside the home and paying provincial taxes, providing a powerful reason for giving women a voice in how the province was being run.

In January of 1916, Manitoba made history as the first province in Canada to grant women the right to vote and stand for election. Victories for the suffrage movement soon followed in Saskatchewan and Alberta. In 1916, B.C. Premier William Bowser agreed to hold a referendum on the issue at the same time as the provincial general election. The referendum results revealed that 65 percent of the men who voted were in favour of women's suffrage.

In April of 1917, B.C. became the fourth province in Canada to grant women the right to vote. In 1918, the very next year, Mary Ellen Smith was elected in a by-election, becoming the first woman to serve as a B.C. MLA, or Member of the Legislative Assembly. That same year, the federal government in Ottawa passed similar legislation, enabling women to vote in federal elections and be elected to the Canadian House of Commons.

While winning the right to vote was an historic milestone, change came slowly. Some former suffragists like Laura Jamieson kept advocating for gender equality and worked to spread the right to vote to all people, but other suffragists supported restricting the vote.

Additional Information for Teachers

“Double Victory!”

While women’s suffrage was an important step forward, it did not result in the vote for all people in B.C. For many, the path to suffrage took much longer, owing to persistent racial, ethnic, and religious discrimination. Prejudice and fear of immigration led the British Columbia government to prohibit many from voting, including Indigenous people, Chinese Canadians, Japanese Canadians, South Asian Canadians, and minority religious groups like Mennonites, Hutterites, and Doukhobors.

If the First World War was key to winning the vote for women, the Second World War helped other marginalized groups with their suffrage battle. For example, some Chinese Canadians joined the armed forces to fight for a “double victory” against Canada’s enemies abroad and for the right to vote at home. Having proved their loyalty to Canada, it became more difficult for governments to deny these groups the right to vote.

At the same time, the creation of the United Nations and the start of the civil rights movement lent strength to voices calling for an end to racist policies. In 1947, Chinese and South Asian Canadians won the right to vote, and in 1949, Indigenous people and Japanese Canadians won that right. By 1952, when all religious groups were enfranchised, the eighty-year story of discriminatory voting laws in B.C. was over.

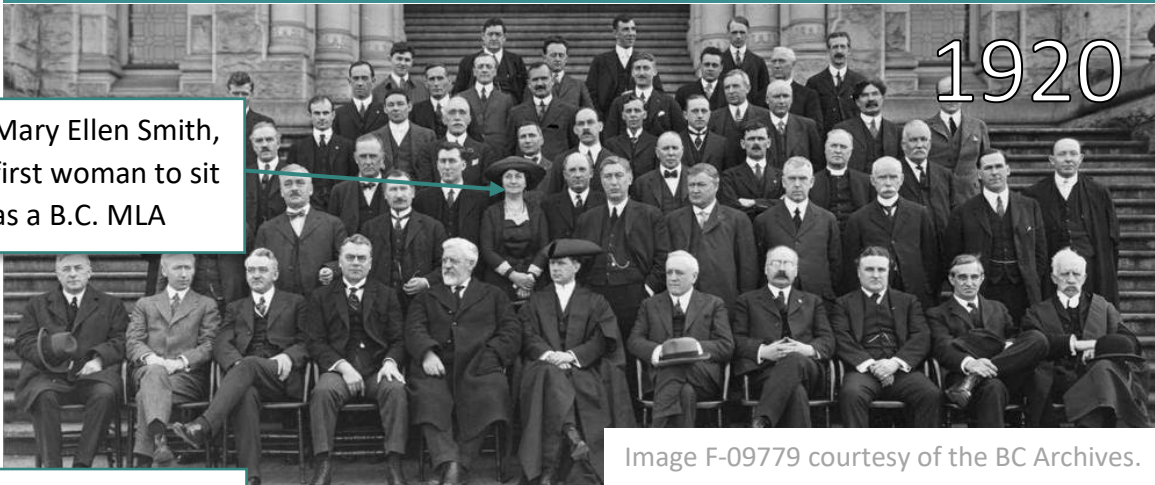
Over time, the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia became more reflective of the makeup of the province. Important milestones include the election of Frank Calder, the first Indigenous MLA in B.C., in 1949, and the election of Melanie Mark, the first First Nations woman to sit as an MLA in B.C., in 2016. For a full voting timeline, visit www.leg.bc.ca/wotv/pages/timeline.aspx

Answer Key

1. The photographs depict Members of the Legislative Assembly of British Columbia.
2. Examples of three things that are the same in all three images:
 - a. All the MLAs are dressed in suits or fancy clothes.
 - b. All the images are taken at the Legislative Assembly.
 - c. All the images have one person dressed in black robes.
3. Examples of three things that evolve between the images:
 - a. More women are in later images.
 - b. More Indigenous people and people of colour are in later images.
 - c. The latest image is in colour.
4. The images are similar because our system of government has remained similar.
5. The changes can be explained by the suffrage movement, the civil rights movement, and other efforts to fight for equal rights, as well as changes in technology and fashion.



Additional Information for Teachers



Mary Ellen Smith,
first woman to sit
as a B.C. MLA

Image F-09779 courtesy of the BC Archives.



Laura Jamieson,
4th woman to sit
as a B.C. MLA

Frank Calder,
first Indigenous
B.C. MLA.

Image F-08357 courtesy of the BC Archives.



Melanie Mark, first
First Nations woman
to sit as a B.C. MLA.

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