



LADIES IN THE HOUSE
PODCAST SERIES

MOAD

Museum of Australian Democracy
at Old Parliament House



LADIES IN THE HOUSE EPISODE 4: ADELA PANKHURST

Lesson Plan

Learning Intention:

Understand the life of Adela Pankhurst and how often in our lives we might make mistakes and change our minds.

Success Criteria:

Reflect on the complicated nature of idolising historical figures and investigate some historical figures for both their triumphs and errors.

Before Listening:

Activity

One:

Pre-Listening
Vocabulary

Write up or project the
following words on the board:

- suffrage
- militant
- founding member
- communist party
- Internment camp



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Activity

One:

Pre-Listening
Vocabulary

In groups ask the students if they can put the words into one of the 4 categories.

- Don't know it at all
- Have seen or heard, but don't know the meaning
- I think I know the meaning
- I know the meaning and can explain it

If any of the students are in the 3rd or 4th category, see if they can explain it to the people in your group or to the class.

Share the following definitions for the vocabulary.

Definitions:

- **Suffrage** is the right to vote.
- People are **militant** if they believe in something very strongly and are active in trying to bring about political or social change, often in extreme ways that other people find unacceptable.
- A **founding member** of a club, group, or organization is one of the first members, often one who was involved in setting it up.
- The **communist party** is a political party that believes in Communism, which is a type of government as well as an economic system (a way of creating and sharing wealth).



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Activity One:

Pre-Listening
Vocabulary

- In a **Communist** system, individual people do not own land, factories, or machinery. Instead, the government or the whole community owns these things. Everyone is supposed to share the wealth that they create.
- An **internment camp** is a prison camp for the confinement of enemy aliens, prisoners of war, political prisoners, etc

Activity Two:

Before listening
discussion
questions

1. Imagine your class was voting on an important issue like a new school uniform, but **ONLY** the boys were allowed to vote. Why might this be an unfair system?
2. True or False: People can go to prison for their political beliefs.



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After Listening:

Activity Three:

After listening
reflection
questions

3. Why do you think that Adela disagreed with the militant tactics that her mother and sister were using in the WSPU?

4. When Adela sailed to Australia, she was given a letter of introduction to Vida Goldstein. Research who Vida Goldstein was and list 8 interesting facts about her life.

Activity Four:

Create a
children's story
with a moral.

- Why is it important to reflect on our past?

- Think of a time when you thought you were doing the right thing but later realised you made a mistake. What did you learn from that experience?

- Your job is to write a story suitable for children and the moral of the story is that sometimes you have to make a mistake so that you can learn. You can write from personal experience, or you can make up a fictional story.

- Once you have written and edited your story, turn it into a picture book or a comic strip. You can draw the illustrations or use a program on your computer to generate the images.



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Episode Transcript:

Hi, this is Kelly Chase and you are listening to Season 2 of a Museum of Australian Democracy and History Detective Collaboration: Ladies in the House. In this 3-part series we are going to celebrate the lives of three incredible women and how they contributed to Australian democracy.

In this episode I would like to introduce you to Adela Pankhurst Walsh.

If you have not heard the name Pankhurst before, it belonged to an incredibly famous suffragette in England. A suffragette was a woman fighting for the right to vote. Adela's mother, Emmeline Pankhurst, fought for decades to get women the right to vote in England. Adela dutifully worked for her mother's women's rights organisation the WSPU which stood for the Women's Social and Political Union. She was even sent to prison several times for her protesting. The problem was that Adela disagreed with the **militant** methods that her mother and sisters were using to fight for their rights.

Some of those militant tactics involved, smashing windows of shops and offices, cutting telephone wires, burning down houses of politicians, slashing paintings in art galleries and planting bombs in cathedrals. When Adela spoke out about the militant tactics, her mother bought her a one-way ticket on a boat to Australia. She gave her £ 20 and a letter of introduction to a famous Australian women's **suffragist** Vida Goldstein.

When Adela arrived in 1914, white Australian women already had the right to vote, but 1914 marked the beginning of another global event, World War I. And one thing that both Adela Pankhurst and Vida Goldstein opposed was conscription. Conscription is when the government makes it an official policy that people must join the army. Adela was a passionate public speaker and as the war went on, she became more vocal in her opposition to the war. In 1917 she was arrested for openly protesting against the war. Although in Australia we have the right to protest, during the war the government introduced a War Precautions Act, to ensure that the war effort was not undermined. The Prime Minister of the day, Billy Hughes, offered to release her from prison, if she promised not to protest against the war anymore, but she refused. And so, she spent 4 months in jail for that protest.

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Not only did Adela make speeches opposing the war, she also focused on issues such as equal pay, working conditions and children's rights. It would be easy to only show one side of Adela's life and put her on a pedestal as an activist for human rights, but it is always important in history to try and show a balanced perspective and also explore the different aspects of people's pasts. In 1920, Adela and her husband, a well-known union leader, became **founding members** of the Communist Party of Australia. However, within 3 years they decided that their ideals didn't align with the **Communist Party** anymore.

One problematic part of Adela's political career came in the early 1940s during the Second World War. You see Adela and her husband visited Japan and fell in love with the country, and when they came back to Australia, they began publishing pro-Japanese and anti-American pamphlets. It was also around this time that Adela and her husband joined the Australia First Movement. This organisation was aligned with the belief system of Hitler and the Nazi Party. In 1941, after the Japanese had bombed both Pearl Harbour and Darwin, Australia officially declared war on Japan. In March of 1942, when Adela was 57 years old, she and some other members of the Australia First Movement, were put in an **internment camp** under suspicion of working for the Japanese government. Although she requested early release to see her dying husband, she was denied release and remained there for around 6 months.

Throughout her life, Adela remained optimistic about human nature and had faith that society could one day operate with equality for all. What is important to remember is that underneath almost all renowned historical figures, is that often in the moment they think they are doing the right thing. However, we can all benefit from reflecting on and learning from the past. What I would like you to think about today, is a time in your life when you thought you were doing the right thing but upon reflection perhaps it was not the right thing to do? But more importantly, what have you learned from reflecting on your past?

This is Kelly Chase, on the case.

Before I go, if you are a teacher and would like a free lesson plan for this episode or any of the Ladies in the House season one and two episodes, you can head to the Classroom Resources page on the Museum of Australian Democracy website to download the lesson plan. Lessons include pre-listening vocabulary, reflection questions, a call to action activity and the transcript. You'll find a link to the page in the show notes.

See you next time!