**THE WOMEN’S COMMUNITY ACTIVISM IN PORTSMOUTH PROJECT.**

**SCHOOL’S RESOURCE PACK.**

**Compiled and written by Sarah Ghassemi, this resource is intended for use by school teachers and students who wish to make use of the audio archive created by the Women’s Community Activism Project. It is based on the 50 oral histories of Portsmouth-based women recorded over a year, between November 2018 – June 2019. This oral history archive and Learning resource, along with a number of other outputs including a booklet, 2 public lectures, travelling exhibition and a school ‘memory day, were made possible by funding from the Heritage Fund, with thanks to National Lottery players.**

**RESOURCES FOR TEACHERS & STUDENTS**

**Maths/Statistics/Geography/History**

Subject area: Research Methods

Curriculum ages: 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18

Lesson rational:

An exploration of the value of oral histories as a technique to collect primary and secondary data. Oral histories are an excellent research method to collect rich and detailed data. There are many remarkable, hardworking, inspired and inspiring women in this collection and for every Portsmouth woman whose oral history has been recorded in this one-year Heritage Funded project, there will be another who we have not yet recorded but whose story is as valuable. Students can evaluate the value of using oral histories as a data collection technique. There are a number of advantages and disadvantages to this data collection technique.

Activities:

1. Describe and explain the meaning of ‘oral history’.
2. Distinguish between quantitative and qualitative data. What type of data is an oral history?
3. The following is a text transcript of a section of the oral history shared by Sarah Coote, identify the reasons that motivated Sarah into action? Why did she take action? By doing this you are identifying a theme in the text.

“There was always a megaphone, and it was almost invariably in the hands of a man. Almost invariably it would be offered - and no woman would ever stand, step forward and take the megaphone. And looking back I think my goodness I actually did that - I would walk up the steps and take the megaphone and speak as a woman, just because there were no other women’s voices -there were women standing in the Guildhall Square, lots of them, but the people talking were obviously always men with these loud voices and their own perspective and although they were talking anti-war it was often quite aggressive sort of speak and yes – I’m amazed at myself sometimes.” Sarah Coote <http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=259>

1. Use the following text to identify what is being spoken about? Can you categorise sections of the text to find meaning?
2. What is a transcript? Create a transcript of the following audio clip <http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=259>

You may need headphones or a quiet environment to listen and successfully transcribe. What motivated Nicky Skinner to become an activist? You could listen to other audio clips and identify the motivations of some of the other activists, create a list to see how similar or varied the motivations are. Motivation can be considered a theme when analysing data.

1. Use other audio clips to, listen or transcribe and attempt to identify themes in the text. To do this you will need to consider what is being spoken about.
2. Research and create a table to demonstrate the advantages and disadvantages of using oral histories as a research method.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| Advantages | Disadvantages |
|  |  |

1. In 300 words “Evaluate oral histories as data collection technique”

Further reading:

<https://www.oralhistory.org/about/principles-and-practices-revised-2009/>

**Art/Fine Art/Photography**

**Subject area:** Portrait

**Curriculum ages:** 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18

**Lesson rational:**

One of the ways women have felt excluded from society and power is due to the lack of recognition of women's contribution to artistic and cultural production. Liz Moore has long considered that art or culture has been created for men by men, however, there are female artists that have historically challenged this notion. For example, Norma Broude and Mary Garrard were early leaders of the feminist movement in the US and similarly and earlier in art history, Frida Kahlo, a woman, an artist and a feminist. Frida also faced significant personal adversity similar to many of the participants of The Women’s Community Activism Project such as [Maureen Rothstein and Mandy Webb](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=385). And like Maureen and Mandy, Frida Kahlo was an artist who considered what was important to her as a woman. What is important to you? What is important to the participants of [The Women’s Community Activism Project](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=9) in particular what is important to Maureen Rothstein and Mandy Webb?

Activities:

1. Ask students what is important to them and why?
2. [Maureen Rothstein](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=385) is a participant of [The Women’s Community Activism Project](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=9) an artist, a potter, a socialist and an educator. Read Maureen’s story. What was important to her, what was her motivation? What did she value?
3. Frida Kahlo is an internationally known feminist artist. Research the life of Frida Kahlo and her artistic style. What were her influences? How did her life experiences influence her art? What was her artistic style? Frida Kahlo is known for her self portraits. What is a self portrait? Use mirrors in pairs for students to describe themselves to each other (eye/hair colour, face/eye shape etc). Ask learners to start sketching themselves. Model this for learners using the board or use videos to show them how to begin portrait sketching. ([*Pinterest*](https://www.pinterest.co.uk) *and YouTube can be used to support students in identifying sketching techniques).*
4. Create a [*Pinterest*](https://www.pinterest.co.uk)style board showcasing Frida Kahlo’s work, the work of [Mandy Webb](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=385) and the relationship between feminism and pottery, ceramics and textiles.
5. Using the women featured in The Women’s Community Activism Project; choose some of the participants to sketch. Later learners can undertake:
   * portrait painting in the style of Frida Kahlo
   * a pottery study piece inspired by feminism and the values of [Maureen Rothstein](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=385)
6. A textile project which is rooted in the story of Mandy Webb and her desire to draw attention to women in history and women’s place in society today and contemporary issues such as:
   * Austerity - “Mandy’s famous “Bollocks to Austerity dress” is something she has worn on demonstrations in London to make a political statement against the Conservative Party’s policy of austerity”
   * “There’s not enough room on a placard” ([Mandy Webb](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=385)) - Fast-fashion, climate change or plastic pollution could be a suitable alternative or addition to consider Mandy’s participation in activism. Learners could use recycled material to make a political statement about a political issue and create a piece.

**Photography**

**Subject area:** Portraiture

**Curriculum ages:** 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18

**Lesson rational:**

Portrait photography is more than just capturing an image of a person. It is more than a snapshot of that person in time; it is a way to capture the essence of that person. [The Women’s Community Activism Project](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=9) captures the image and essence of women from Portsmouth through the medium of photography as well as audio and visual imagery. Portrait photography is about a face, it captures the attitude, personality and identity of a person. The media available on the website can be utilised to develop student’s knowledge and understanding of portraiture, considering the key terminology involved. The website is an extraordinary starting point to move forward with a portrait or feminist photographic project.

**Activities**:

1. Research the meaning of feminist photography. Identify some famous feminist photographers and research their motivation.
2. Choose a contemporary female portrait photographer, identify their style. Choose three women in your life that you are able to take a series of photographs to document the formal elements of visual language; line, form, colour, tone, pattern, texture, in the context of lens and light-based media.
3. As you detail these photographs identify the title, genre, props, composition, perspective, focal point, light, atmosphere, story of the images collections.
4. Consider how images and artefacts detailed on The Women’s Community Activism Project website relate to social and historical contexts.
5. Choose an image from The Women’s Community Activism Project:
   1. What do you consider to be the focal point of this image? Are there other focal points? Are you drawn to these? How are you drawn to these?
   2. Observe at the lighting in this portrait. What do you think is the lighting source and where is it coming from?
   3. What is your understanding of the term ‘triangle of light’?
   4. In a portrait how does the lighting affect the tonal range and contrast in different areas of the image?
6. Choose an image from The Women’s Community Activism Project:
   1. What is the first thing you notice about the subject?
   2. How would you describe their facial expression? Come up with as many descriptive words as you can. How does this affect the way you look at the image?
   3. What does the woman in the portrait tell us?
   4. How important is it that you know who the person is in the portrait? How does it affect the way you study it?
   5. How do you think the photographer is trying to portray the subject? Could a photographer portray the subject differently to address the audience in this case? Could you? Consider how shapes, patterns, lighting and textures could be utilised to convey a message. Does a narrative to the portraits of the subjects exist? Does the narrative offered by the audio or visual information add to that of the visual image? What cultural/social/religious/ethical issues are being tackled by the images and audio/visual material?
7. In view of your own portraiture consider the following:
   1. How is the subject lit?
   2. What sources of light are used? Is there more than one? Is it a natural or artificial light? Subtle or dramatic?
   3. How does lighting add to the portrait?
   4. Does the lighting affect areas of contrast in the portrait?
   5. Is the composition of the portrait affected by the focal areas?
   6. Does the light convey the idea of form, texture, pattern or any other aspect of this photograph?

**English**

**Subject area:** Creative writing

**Curriculum ages:** 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18

**Lesson rational:**

Learners can choose one or more woman from the [Women’s Community Activism Project](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=389) to write a creative piece on. Creative writing can entertain the audience and, as is the case with this project, is a way to share human experience. Creative writing can help learners release their creativity, improve language and enhance their confidence in writing.

**Activities:**

1. Group or whole class activity – start with learners in groups, display the following page from the [Women’s Community Activism](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=9) website at the front of the class, what type of activism might the women displayed have been involved in? Ask learners to write a short paragraph about a chosen woman. Learners then contribute to a whole class piece of creative writing on the board.
2. Learners can individually write a story using only one syllable words, ask learners to choose a participant woman from the [Women’s Community Activism Project](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=385), tell their story in more detail, think about their challenges and successes.
3. “What happened next?” Create a story starting with one of the participant’s oral history. Learners need to think of what could have happened next? (Learners might need to understand what was happening politically and socially at the time to inform their “What happened next?”). What did *[insert your chosen participant]* do next? What could she do next? What did the rest of her life look like? What were her achievements, successes, challenges? What influence did she have on others?
4. Read the section on [Green Activism](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=389) and listen to the recordings. Describe and explain how you would help the women like [Delphine Leveyne](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=389) or [Claire Seek](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=389)  in their fight for the preservation of our environment today.
5. Analyse the creative writing work of a peer. Assess whether the components of the planning sheet are present in the writing.

Use the following worksheet to plan your creative writing.

**Creative writing story planning sheet:**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Beginning: | Introduce the setting: | |
| Introduce the characters, who is the main character? | |
| Introduce the circumstances: | |
| Mid-section: | What happens in the early stages of the story? | |
| What happens next? | |
| What happens after? | |
| Ending: | How does the story end? | |
| Conversations: | What are the subjects of the conversations between the characters? | |
| Adjectives & verbs: | List some adjectives you want to include: | List some verbs you want to include: |
| Similes & metaphors | List some similes you want to include: | List some metaphors examples you want to include: |
| Alliteration: |  | |
| Connecting words: |  | |

*Modified from* [*http://www.leraconteur.scriptmania.com/creativewritingchecklist.htm*](http://www.leraconteur.scriptmania.com/creativewritingchecklist.htm)

**English**

**Subject area:** Feminist writing, poetry

**Curriculum ages:** 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18

**Lesson rational:**

This is an opportunity to bring gender into the classroom to address equality, equity, bullying or discrimination. The Women’s Community Activism project evidences examples of challenges faced by Portsmouth women over time and provides examples of how local women have used activism to challenge.

**Activities**:

1. Begin a discussion with your class by asking learners to describe what feminism means to them, what does it look like? Learners can ThinkPairShare (Think for 1 minute, Pair for 2 minutes, Share for 3 minutes). Then give learner some definitions of feminism to discuss in small pairs/groups or ask learners to research various definitions of feminism. After some discussion ask learners to write a tweet style summary of their understanding of feminism.
2. Ask learners if feminism looks different to different groups of people? If you have access to IT in the classroom this could be presented as a class [Padlet](https://padlet.com) (use YouTube to find out how to create a Padlet wall) where all students can contribute to a shared document about feminism. Incorporate the following questions onto the Padlet or create a table to use:

* Definitions of feminism.
* Outline the history of the feminist movement.
* What are the goals of the feminist movement?
* What are the issues at the core of the feminist movement?
* Has the feminist movement improved life for people around the world? Give examples
* Ask learners to identify examples of feminism from the Women’s Community Activism project.

1. Provide learners with a copy of the poem lyrics [‘Pink or Blue’ by Holly McNish](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=NybJ-xHUpdc&vl=en&has_verified=1) or show them the whole video or clips from the video use the lyrics and language to generate a class discussion. Ask learners to use the sentence starters “I agree with” or “I think” in provoking thoughts from the class. After the discussion ask learners to write their own further verses or a new ending to the poem. Alternatively the poem can be printed and divided into section to give to groups of learners to discuss its meaning and the impact the stereotypes have on females and males. How does the gender divide make us feel. <https://www.forbes.com/sites/shelleyzalis/2019/09/05/busting-gender-stereotypes-the-pink-versus-blue-phenomenon/>
2. Ask learners to work in small groups and create a spider diagram of examples of where they believe they were treated differently because of their gender. Ask students to then add to their diagram to explain how it made them feel at the time.
3. Use images to identify the stereotypes presented by the Disney Princesses. Using your knowledge, learning and experience of feminism and stereotype so far, write a poem about one of the princesses. How do they feel? How do they see the world? How does the world see the princess? Does the princess care?
4. Use the [ReadWriteThink](http://www.readwritethink.org/files/resources/lesson_images/lesson398/biopoem.pdf) resource to write a biography poem about one of the participants from the Women’s Community Activism project. How have the women challenged stereotypes? What have been their challenges? What have been their successes?
5. As a longer term project and whole class activity and for older learners, learners could produce some blog posts centred on feminism in its broader sense. As a class, individually or in small groups consider and develop how to incorporate the oral histories of the [Women’s Community Activism](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=389) participants. Research would need to be undertaken to view other feminist writing.
6. Essay: What is the future for feminism? Do you want to be part of the feminist movement? Do you want to be an activist? What inspiration could you take from Portsmouth’s women activists?

**History/Geography**

**Subject area:** Protests against warfare and nuclear armaments

**Curriculum ages:** 11 to 14, Ages 14 to 16, Ages 16 to 18

**Lesson rational:**

The historical context is gained via feminism and the timeline provided by the project, this demonstrates the changing role of women in society over time as well as representing the stronger voice of women. There is an excellent opportunity to explore and delve into the contribution, challenges and successes of women throughout modern times.

**Activities:**

Using the [timeline](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=23) investigate the changing role of women in society over time. Describe and explain how the position of women in society has changed through the 1960s, 1970s, 1980’s 1990’s and through to the millennium and beyond. In groups learners can create an A3 timeline poster using PowerPoint or Google Slides. Use images and short annotations, make the poster visually interesting. Learners can work in pairs/small groups.

Engage learners in some independent research regarding Women’s History month and International Women’s Day; what are their origins? Why is there a Women’s History Month? What is the significance of the colours purple, green and white? Using the Women’s Community Activism participants engage learners in a discussion about women in post-war Britain, use the following sections as a starting point to investigate working life for women in Portsmouth [Women and work](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=380) and [Women and the Navy](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=376). Were women treated differently? Identify participants from the project that exemplify how women’s voices have become louder over time.

Research the Cold War and [Greenham Common](http://www.greenham-common.org.uk/ixbin/hixclient.exe?a=file&p=greenham&f=greenham.htm) and Embrace the Base. Create a factsheet about each, work in pairs or in small groups. Learners can create a [Padlet](https://padlet.com/) or a web story using [AdobeSparkPage](https://spark.adobe.com/about) in your browser (you will need to create and Adobe ID). Researching these events will give learners a good understanding of the backdrop to the activism that [Sarah Coote, Vida Henning, Rosy Bremner, Nicky Skinner and Jane Steffieri](http://womenscommunityactivism.projects.portsmouthuni.ac.uk/?page_id=259) were involved in.

Discussion points:

1. Why did the women chose this particular American base, was the date significant?
2. Why was the protest particularly undertaken by women?
3. What impact did the women have?

Research the creative work generated by women involved in the protesting against nuclear armaments. Find examples of artwork, posters and music associated with the protests. Based on their findings ask learners to create their own creative work based on a theme that has been significant and concerning women today or over the last 10 years. This could be a music or poster. Use Garage Band to create a music piece and use [AdobeSparkPost](https://spark.adobe.com/about) to create a poster that could be created for a fictional social media audience.

<https://garagebandforpcwindows.com/>

<https://www.apple.com/mac/garageband/>

Some of the issues highlighted by the resources and the Women’s Community Activism Project may also be relevant in teaching Government and Politics, Citizenship, PSHE, Philosophy, Religious Studies, Psychology, Sociology, Media Studies. This Schools Learning Resource Pack was made possible with funding from National Lottery players, thanks to the Heritage Fund.