

## Year 6 History Unit 3

### What Are Civil Rights?

Civil rights are rights of citizens to social and political freedom and equality. This means that people are entitled to equal social opportunities and equal protection under the law, regardless of their race, religion, gender, nationality, ethnicity or other personal characteristics.

Examples of civil rights include:

- The right to vote.
- The right to a fair trial.
- The right to government services.
- The right to a public education.
- The right to use public facilities.

### Votes For Women

In 1870, The Married Women's Property Act gave women the right to own inherited property and any money that they made.

In 1918, The Representation of the People Act gave all men over 21 years of age the right to vote, whether they owned a property or not. The vote was also given to some women over the age of 30.

As not all women had the right to vote, a group called the **Suffragettes** continued to fight for equal rights for women. Emmeline Pankhurst was a champion of the Suffragettes; she fought for 40 years, during which she was jailed three times. The aims of the suffragettes in this area were achieved in 1928 when the Equal Franchise Act was passed, giving women over the age of 21 the right to vote.



### The Right To Be Equal

In 2010, the Equality Act was introduced. This act brought together over 116 different pieces of existing anti-discrimination legislation including:

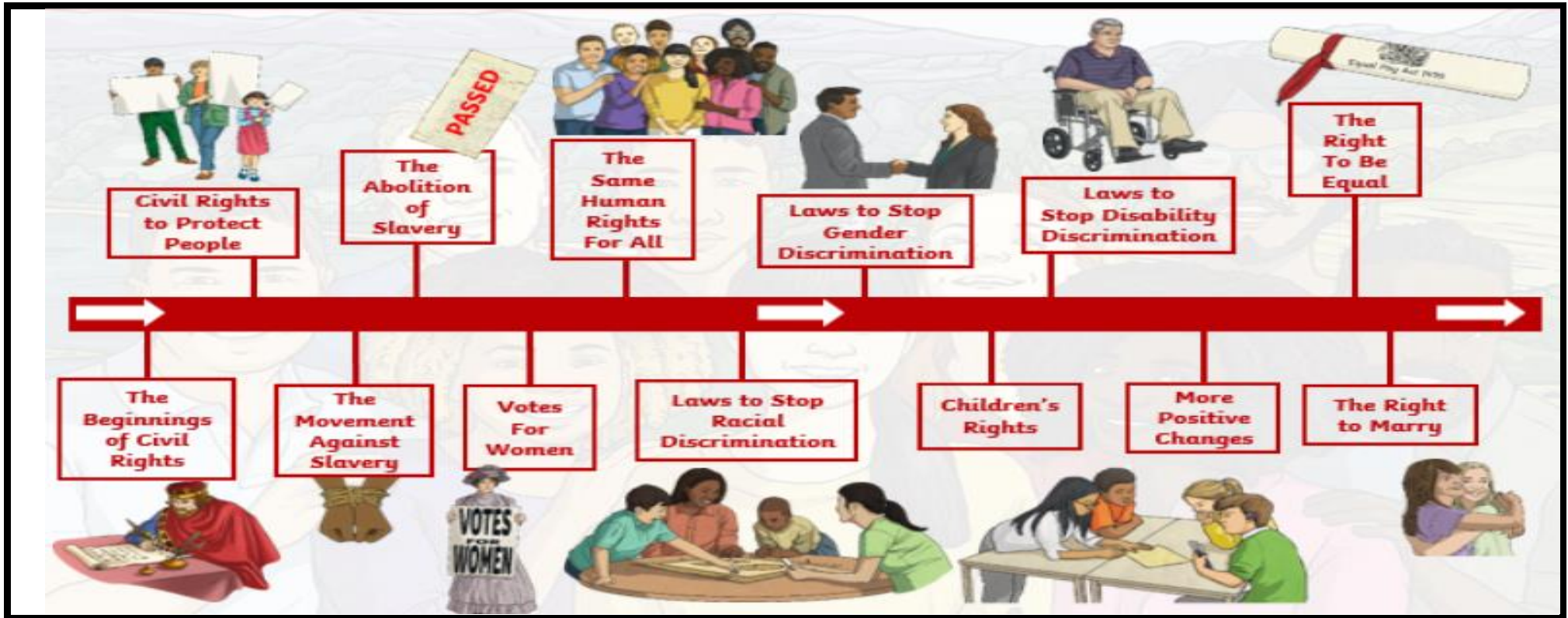
- Equal Pay Act 1970;
- Sex Discrimination Act 1975;
- Race Relations Act 1976;
- Disability Discrimination Act 1995;
- Employment Equality Regulations (for religion or belief, sexual orientation and age).



Its aim is to protect individuals from any unfair treatment and to promote a fair and equal society.



Civil Rights laws and legislation have changed over the years, depending on what groups of people in society needed to have rights protected. Here are some British Civil Rights activists.



A timeline showing the development of some key Civil Rights in Britain.

## THE UNITED NATIONS UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

After the Second World War the international community realised that there was a need for a universal set of human rights for everyone. Therefore, in 1948, the General Assembly of the United Nations adopted the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. This is a set of rights and freedoms which are the same for every person in the world. It was the first international agreement on human rights. It says that everyone is born free and equal and nobody can be treated differently because of their race, colour, gender, language or any other characteristic.



