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4. The Right to Political Participation

KS3 Art, History, English, Drama, Media

Art

Show a photograph of the Joseph Cowen statue on Westgate Road in Newcastle (https://co-curate.ncl.ac.uk/statue-of-joseph-cowen-westgate-road/). Ask students what they think it is about. Who is this person? What can you tell about them from how they looks, and their pose?

Record your thoughts and findings in one colour on a piece of paper. Read the comic. What have you learnt? Record your new learning in a different colour.

Points for discussion: what is the value of public art if people don't know the full story? Is the comic or the sculpture more effective at inspiring people?

Challenge students to create a 1-2 page comic another public figure who is commemorated by a statue. Go to https://co-curate.ncl.ac.uk/ and search for 'statues' to get started.

History

Research Joseph Cowen and Emily Wilding Davison. Compare their achievements.

Debate who has made the greatest contribution to British democracy.

Cowen was commemorated with a statue in Newcastle, Davison was commemorated with a plaque in a broom cupboard in the Houses of Parliament. How would you like to be remembered? What have you done, or what will you do, that is worth commemorating? What type of statue or item would be an appropriate monument to your work?

Monuments can attract controversy. Read about Maya Lin's design for the Vietnam Veterans Memorial in Washington, DC https://www.biography.com/news/maya-lin-vietnam-veterans-memorial

English. Write a letter from Cowen's point of view, arguing that miners should be given the right to vote.

Find out the reasons why Emily Wilding Davison was arrested. Write a letter calling for her release and drawing attention to the Women's Suffrage campaign.

Drama/Media. Interview Cowen or Wilding Davison on a contemporary issue. Are their views still radical today, or do they seem old fashioned?

Summary of comic: Joseph Cowen was MP for Newcastle (1874-1886). He helped secure votes for miners who were disenfranchised because of living in tithed cottages, not property owners. Cowen's statue is on Westgate Road. Emily Wilding Davison was a women's suffrage campaigner. Story of EWD hiding in House of Commons cupboard to be able to list it as her place of residence on 1911 census; one of many activities as part of women's suffrage campaign (noting violent and non-violent actions); later commemorated by plaque on cupboard in 1991.

Comic artist & writer: Mack Chater & Ian Mayor

Academic researcher: Joan Allen, Newcastle University
Read online: http://research.ncl.ac.uk/fccomics/chapters/

therighttopolitical participation. html