

CANADIAN GEOGRAPHIC IN THE CLASSROOM

Article 'Commemorate Canada - Agnes Macphail'



Time:

90 minutes

Developed by:

Canadian Geographic Education

Overview/focus question:

Who was Agnes Macphail? How was Agnes Macphail's position in the government significant? What important work did Agnes Macphail conduct? What are some examples of current important female politicians?

Subject/topic:

Geography, history, social studies

Grade level:

Grades 6-10

Learning Goals

Students will:

- Learn about Agnes Macphail and what impact she had on Canada.
- Create a profile on Agnes Macphail detailing her life in a biographical format.
- Compare Agnes Macphail's life to a current female political figure.
- Learn about Catherine McKenna and how she is encouraging girls and women to join politics.
- Look into an organization that supports equal rights for girls and women to learn how to take action.

Materials Needed

- Online copies of the article "[Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the election of Canada's first female MP, Agnes Macphail](#)" By David McGuffin.
- A projector or a way to watch the [GeoMinute: Agnes Macphail, a political trailblazer](#)
- The Canadian Encyclopedia article "[Agnes Macphail](#)"

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- [A Day in the Life of a Member of Parliament](#) video
- [Women in Power - Biography Worksheet](#)
- [Women in Power: Then versus Now - Venn Diagram Worksheet](#)
- A device with internet access for research

Connection to the Canadian Geography Framework

Concepts of Geographic Thinking

- Patterns and trends
- Interrelationships
- Geographic perspective

Inquiry Process

- Ask geographic questions
- Interpret and analyze
- Communicate
- Evaluate and Draw Conclusions
- Reflect and respond

Geospatial Skills

- N/A

Lesson Description

Minds on

This lesson will begin with a brief introduction to what a member of parliament does and why they are important. Students will watch the [GeoMinute: Agnes Macphail, a political trailblazer](#) and have a discussion about Agnes Macphail, the first female member of parliament (MP) in Canada. Students will use The Canadian Encyclopedia article to fill out the Agnes Macphail section of the Women in Power - Biography Worksheet.

Action

Students will read the article "[Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the election of Canada's first female MP, Agnes Macphail](#)" by David McGuffin. Students will use this article, as well as online research, to fill out the Catherine McKenna section of the Women in Power - Biography Worksheet. After researching both Agnes Macphail and Catherine McKenna, students will find and research their own female member of parliament to fill out the last section of the worksheet.

Conclusion

Students will have a class discussion about female politicians from the mid-1900s versus female politicians today. Students will then complete their Venn Diagram Worksheet. As a class, look into different organizations that support equal rights for girls and women.

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Lesson Implementation

Minds on

Begin the lesson by asking students what they can tell you about what it means to be a member of parliament in Canada. After letting students brainstorm, go over the following main points:

- A member of parliament (MP) is an individual elected to the House of Commons to represent a federal electoral district, also known as a riding.
- An MP has three main duties:
 1. Helping to make laws in parliament through a process of debate and voting
 2. Representing the interests and values of their riding and political party
 3. Serving their constituents' needs

For more information, show your students the video [A Day in the Life of a Member of Parliament](#). Ask students why having members of parliament is important.

Next, watch the [GeoMinute: Agnes Macphail, a political trailblazer](#) to introduce students to Agnes Macphail, who was the first female MP elected in Canada. Ask students to read through [The Canadian Encyclopedia article](#) to fill out the Agnes Macphail section of the Women in Power - Biography Worksheet, highlighting at least three important accomplishments and three interesting facts about her career.

Action

As a class, or individually, read the article "[Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the election of Canada's first female MP, Agnes Macphail](#)" by David McGuffin. This article features an interview with Catherine McKenna, who was elected as an MP in 2015. Students will use the information found in this article, as well as their own online research, to fill out the Catherine McKenna section of the Women in Power - Biography Worksheet.

Finally, after students have a greater understanding of both Agnes Macphail and Catherine McKenna, ask students to find and research their own female member of parliament to fill out the last section of the worksheet.

Conclusion and Consolidation

After students have finished all three sections of their Women in Power - Biography Worksheet, have a class discussion on the differences between the three women, what it took for them to get into parliament, and the things they have accomplished or the work they are looking to accomplish. As a class or independently, have students reflect on the issues that were important to female politicians from the mid-1900s to what is important to female politicians in the 21st century and have students complete the Women in Power: Then versus Now - Venn Diagram Worksheet.

To wrap up the lesson, have students look at organizations that aim to support or empower women and girls. Examples include:

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- [Girls Action Foundation](#)
- [Canadian Women's Foundation](#)
- [Plan International - Because I am a Girl](#)
- [Justice for Girls](#)

Extend your geographical thinking

- Have students create their own campaign to support women's rights.
- Create a timeline that shows women who have served as members of parliament since Anges Macphail (have students choose 10-20 women who they feel have achieved important things during their tenures).
- Using one of their biographies, have students create a poster and presentation on their chosen individual.
- Create a map that displays the ridings of all the current female MPs across Canada.

Modifications

- Students can complete this project individually or in groups.
- Students can be provided with the worksheets to complete online.
- Teachers can assign students a specific member of parliament to research for their final biography piece.
- Students can be assigned one of the three biographies rather than having them complete all three.

Assessment Opportunities

- Assess students' learning based on their participation in discussion throughout the lesson.
- Assess students' worksheets.

Sources and Additional resources

- [Celebrating the 100th anniversary of the election of Canada's first female MP, Agnes Macphail](#)
- [GeoMinute: Agnes Macphail, a political trailblazer](#)
- [Anges Macphail - The Canadian Encyclopedia](#)
- [A Day in the Life of a Member of Parliament](#)
- [CPAC - Route 388](#)

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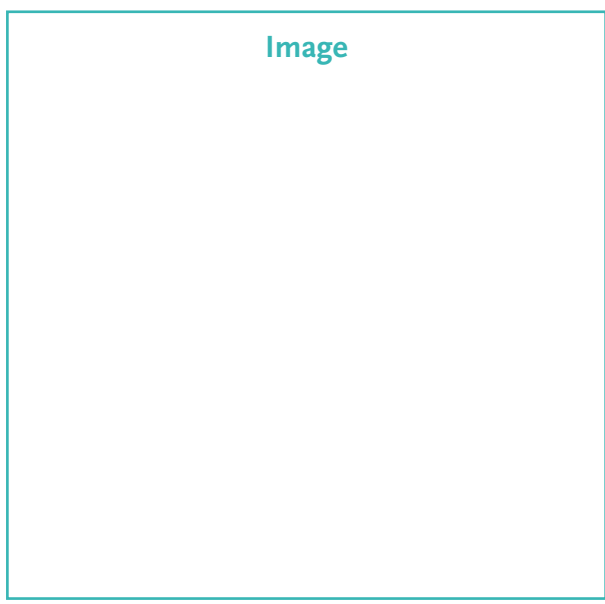
WOMEN IN POWER - BIOGRAPHY WORKSHEET

Agnes Macphail

Born: _____

Died: _____

Riding: _____



3 important accomplishments:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3 interesting facts:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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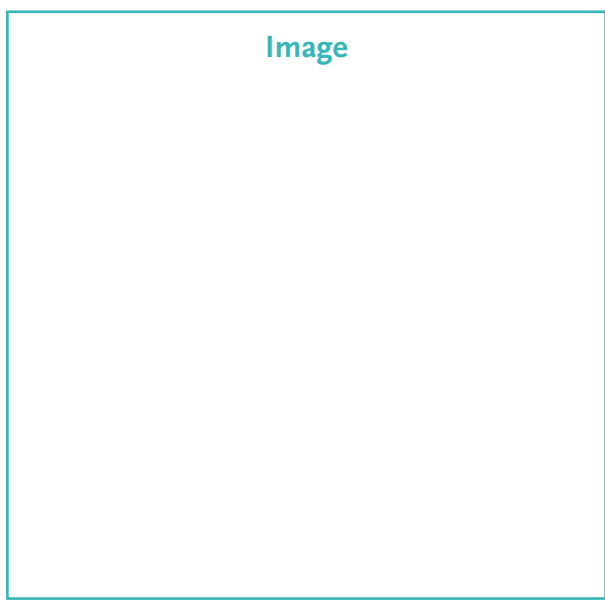
WOMEN IN POWER - BIOGRAPHY WORKSHEET

Catherine McKenna

Born: _____

Died: _____

Riding: _____



3 important accomplishments:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3 interesting facts:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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WOMEN IN POWER - BIOGRAPHY WORKSHEET

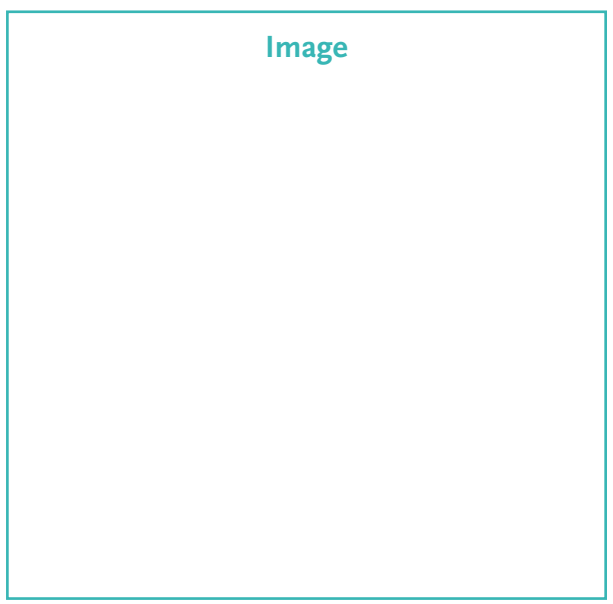
Current Female Member of Parliament

Name: _____

Born: _____

Died: _____

Riding: _____



3 important accomplishments:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

3 interesting facts:

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

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WOMEN IN POWER: THEN VERSUS NOW - VENN DIAGRAM WORKSHEET

