SUMMARY PART 1: 1890 - 1910

Introduction
Have you ever noticed how few pictures of women you find in history books? In the past, women's contribution to history was often not recognised or documented.

Women's Rights before the 1890's

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Right to Vote</th>
<th>Women</th>
<th>Men</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Right to attend University</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to join a Trade Union</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to join an Apprenticeship</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legal rights over children</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Right to stand for Parliament</td>
<td>No</td>
<td>Yes</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation in Parliament</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Representation in Trade Unions</td>
<td>0%</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Average salary</td>
<td>1/3-1/2 male rate</td>
<td>100%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

"Women's Place is in the Home"
The fact that women has so few rights was based on fixed notions about women's place. Women were considered "the weaker sex" and "women's place was in the home whilst man's duty was to be the breadwinner". Few women questioned what was seen as their main role - the unpaid work of bringing children into the world, and looking after the home.

Social Conventions
The Victorian ideal for women: ladylike, polite, gentle, frail and delicate. From an early age, girls were brought up to be wives and mothers, learning sewing, cooking and motherhood.

Jobs
Middle-class women could only enter "respectable" jobs: mainly office work, teaching and governnessing, and nursing. Working class women were limited to domestic services, or factory work. Working conditions in the factories were unhealthy. Women made up the vast majority of the poor.

This video contains a history of women in Australia in the last century concentrating on the following four periods:

- Part 1: 1890 - 1910
- Part 2: 1920 - 1935
- Part 3: 1939 - 1950
- Part 4: 1960 - 1990

These Teacher's Notes contain:

- Program Summary on each section
- Questions and Activities on each section

Recommended Use of the Video
We recommend watching the video with the class first in full, then returning to each section individually and following the questions and notes provided.

Sources:

1. "When I started, employers had all their own way... Working girls were treated like animals, and every ounce of their vitality was sapped up in long hours for the employer's profit." ("A Pioneer Interviewed", Clothing Trades Gazette, 1922)

2. "... We were subjected to ridicule, contempt, abuse, and to anything but flattering cartoons..." (Mrs Nellie Martel, The Women's Vote in Australia, 1902)

3. "This cry for female suffrage is surely a sign of great degeneracy of the race!..." (South Australian Hansard, 1984, Debate of Female Suffrage)

4. "The low wages paid for female labour are a disgrace to our civilisation... Equal pay for equal work should be the rule." (The Ballot for Working Women, 'The Dawn' Newsletter, Sept 1890)

5. "The Australian woman has displayed a strong preference for breadwinning and a marked disinclination to regard wifehood and motherhood as her primary vocation." (The Age, 12 Sept 1911)
3. What was the Victorian ideal picture of a woman?

2. Who do you think that women have been largely excluded from the writing of history?

Vida Goldstein stood unsuccessfully for Parliament in 1904. 

1907: Harvester Judgement

In 1907, a record court judgement was made in which men were awarded a Male Basic Wage, while women's wages remained at around half the male rate. It was assumed breadwinners would always be male, and women had no need to support a family.

Vida Goldstein

Vida Goldstein stood unsuccessfully for Parliament in several campaigns from 1909-1917.

SUMMARY PART 2: 1920 - 1935

After World War I, the economy went into a boom. Industry took on a new automation - the new factories and offices created more jobs for women. After the sadness of the war years, the atmosphere of the 1920s was one of optimism - of looking forward to a "bright new future".

Flappers

For the first time, young working women had some economic independence from their families. The so-called flapper epitomised new freedoms for women - short dresses, no chaperones, drinking in public, dancing till dawn.

Domesticity

Despite the new freedoms for women, most people still believed women's place was in the home. With the shortage of domestic servants, middle-class women for the first time, had to do their own housework and child-raising.

Domestic Science of Motherhood

Housekeeping and motherhood were promoted as a domestic science.

Source 7: "Regularity in all the events of the day should be maintained from birth. The mother should have a timetable for her baby and should adhere to it as strictly as possible." (M Harper, "The Parents' Book", Sydney 1928)
5. Discuss: "It is a woman's duty to keep the family together and this entails running the household so that all may be clean, orderly and efficient" (K Reiger, "Women's Labour Re-defined", 1982)

6. Prepare a letter to the paper in 1930 arguing a case for equal pay for women. Consider the work done, segregation of jobs, non-union membership, that perhaps men are afraid?

7. Throughout this section men are depicted as doing a variety of jobs. Many of these were considered unsuitable for women because women were considered to be physically inferior. Which of the jobs would women be able to do? Are there any reasons why they could not do them?

8. Why do you think only 1 in 50 women received the dole during the Depression, yet 1 in 4 families were supported by a female breadwinner?

9. Research. Find out why Aboriginal people were treated differently from the rest of Australians in health care, education and work. How might you learn what Aboriginal women felt about their treatment?

SUMMARY PART 3: 1940 - 1955

Women's contribution to the War

During World War II, the government was at first reluctant to use women in the services, or in men's jobs. But the turning point came in December 1941, with the treat of Japanese invasion.

Women's labour became essential to the war effort, with the need to release men for the forces and to increase war production. War propaganda now called on women to leave their housework and do some "real" work. For the first time in Australia, women stepped into men's jobs.

Women's Auxiliary Forces

The first Australian women's auxiliaries to the army, navy and airforce were formed.

Source 10: "We will train until we are good enough to teach the men... The girls will back up the army and be Australia's last line of defence." (‘Sydney Morning Herald’, 22 October 1940)

Munitions

Unlike World War I where munitions came from overseas, Australia now had to produce all its own war machinery. Recruitment campaigns began to get women into heavy industry - into the jobs up until now reserved for men alone.

Source 11: "To all of us it was an amazing revelation to see women who were used to working in beauty salons... who now stood behind mighty machines operating them with a skill and mastery that was little short of marvellous!" (Judge Foster, Chairman of the Women's Employment Board, 1942)

Women's Employment Board

With women working in men's jobs came the dilemma about what to pay them - in most industries women were still on about 54% of the male rate. Unions such as the post office and tramway workers put women on equal pay, to protect the jobs for men on their return.

The government's Women's Employment Board decided to award women 60-100% of men's wages, based on comparing their productivity to men.

Manpowering

As women deserted their low-paid jobs in the textile and food industries to take up the higher rates of pay, the government brought in a new regulation called "Manpowering". Under this law, workers were directed to particular jobs, and were not supposed to leave them.

Textile Strikes

Unable to move to better paid jobs, textile workers, still on the old 54% rate of male pay, went on strike. They won only a 6% increase.

The End of the War

Ex-servicemen were given the rights to their jobs again. Women who wanted to use their new skills were not allowed to acquire tradesmen's qualifications. The women's auxiliaries were disbanded and women who had served in the services received very few benefits.

The 1950s

After the hardships of war, families now wanted security. Many married women returned to the home and the birth rate rose dramatically.

Migrant Women

A migration campaign began to help to help rebuild the labour force after the war. Many migrant women, however, ended up in the low-paid jobs in industry, deserted by married women.

Rates of Pay

Rates of pay throughout the country ranged from 60% to 90% of male rates. Finally, in 1948, under pressure from women, women's rates were fixed at 75% of the male rate - 70 years after the first demands for equal pay.

QUESTIONS PART 3: 1940 - 1955

1. What methods were used to encourage women to become involved in the war effort?

2. The pictures indicate something about the work that women do. What do they tell you?

3. Why would someone make the comment in Source 11?

4. Were the women effective and productive in their new roles? What information can you provide to back up your answer?

5. Why do you think it was now in the government's interest to film women in these new roles?

6. The government wanted women to work for the war effort. Why did it still not allow full wages to be paid to women even though it was now obvious that women could do the same work as men?

7. Do you think that ex-service women felt cheated by the treatment after WWII?

8. Make a list of the features of the propaganda aimed at women during this period? Would it have been effective? Why? Why not?

9. What are the images of family life after the war? What is the woman's role?

10. Research. Find out about "manpowering". Write a page about it which would be suitable for inclusion in a history text book.
SUMMARY PART 4: 1960 - NOW

The 1960s
The 1960s and 1970s saw a new spirit of rebellion from the baby boomers, many of whom had reached their teens and twenties.

Working Women
In the ten years of the 1960s the number of women working rose from 28% to 43%, nearly half of these, married women.

Save Our Sons
Many women became involved in campaigning against conscription.

Women's Liberation Movement
By the 1970s, Australian women joined the "women's liberation" movement sweeping Britain and the United States. Liberationists capitalised on the new power of the media to attract widespread publicity.

Source 12: "I think its only when women demonstrate and demand something in a militant fashion that we're going to get anywhere - its not just going to come from government". (Women's Liberationist interviewed by ABC journalist)

Widening Discussion
Women extended the arguments for equal pay into new areas - funding for childcare, women's centres and refuges, rights over their bodies, and to challenge basic attitudes about women's place.

Source 13: "What we're doing now is challenging the whole concept that females are so basically different, and we're only able to do one sort of thing, be a housewife, mother bring up kids, perhaps be a sex symbol. We're challenging the whole basic role - the suffragettes never did this". (Gillian Leahy, interview 1970s)

Achievements
During the 1970s and 1980s, many of the concerns women had lobbied for were finally recognised by government and the wider community. Today, there is positive discrimination to encourage women in new careers and to give women promotions. Women are now eligible for apprenticeships - and can take any course at university and technical colleges.

Women at Work Today
Changes in attitudes take time - many women still choose employment in the poorly paid areas, historically stereotyped as women's work. So while women have achieved equal pay by law, they, on average, still earn only two-thirds that of men. Women are still under-represented in Parliament, in positions of power and in business.

QUESTIONS PART 4: 1960 - NOW
1. Make a list of the changes to society at this time, based on the video.
2. What is the basic change?
3. Why did women feel the need for the Women's Liberation Movement in this new society?
4. Why did the Liberationists believe they needed a militant approach to change attitudes?
5. How has the media become important to the issues which concern women? Do you think that the media can be relied on to assist effectively?
6. What changes have come about for women?
7. Discussion: Go back to the initial reactions you made at the beginning of the video. How can attitudes be changed in a positive way so that all people are treated equally in society? What work would you like to do when you leave school? Are you confident that it will enable you to do what you really want, or what society expects of you?
8. Research. Use the video and your own research to draw up three profiles: one for yourself, one for your mother, one for your grandmother. What changes have there been in the type of people you are and the expectations that you have for yourself?