

The Road to Suffrage: Activism for Equality

suf·frage

the right to vote in an election

universal suffrage [=the right of all adult citizens to vote in an election]

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Purpose: Students will use the **Suffrage Timeline** (<https://www.womenshistory.org/exhibits/timeline-woman-suffrage>) and supplemental resources to enhance their knowledge and understanding of the key ideas, events, and leaders of the suffrage movement.

Description: While women had discussed equality and the right to vote since the founding of the nation, the Suffrage Movement began in 1848 at the Seneca Falls convention held July 19-20, in Seneca Falls, New York. The meeting was not the first in support of women's rights, but suffragists viewed it as the meeting that launched a national movement and cause. For the next 70 years, suffrage supporters worked to educate the public and lawmakers about the legitimate right of women to vote.

In this lesson, students will use the Suffrage Timeline to explore the women, ideas, and action that led to the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920 and discuss the Suffrage Movement as a model for peaceful activism.

Grade Level: 9-12

Time Frame: One to two class sessions

Lesson Objectives:

- Students will define “suffrage” and discuss the significance of the Women’s Suffrage Movement
- Students will expand information about the historical timeline event they are assigned by:
 - Using a minimum of three sources to research their assigned event.
 - Discussing the significance of the event and provide two examples of how it impacted the Suffrage movement
 - Defining the role of key women associated with the event
- As a class, students will explore and define the legacy of the Suffrage Movement.

Pre-Requisites:

Students should have some familiarity with the goals of the Suffrage Movement after the Seneca Falls Convention.

Materials:

Historical Overview <https://www.womenshistory.org/resources/general/short-history-suffrage>

Opposing View overview <http://www.crusadeforthevote.org/naows-opposition>

Road to Suffrage Timeline Worksheet (last 2 pages)

Access to Power Point

Procedures:

Getting Started:

Discuss with your students the fact that women could not legally vote in the United States until the ratification of the 19th Amendment in 1920. Ask them to consider the fact that although the Constitution was ratified in 1787, women, by law, were not given the right to vote for 133 years.

Ask your students to consider the fact that from the late 18th century through 1920, there were women of all races who were united in the belief of universal suffrage and who demonstrated and protested for the right to vote. The formal beginning of the Suffrage Movement began in Seneca Falls, NY in 1848.

Discuss recent examples of activism for change. Ask students to identify and discuss at least two issues that have generated activism in some way. How are messages of protest or activism shared? Is there universal agreement?

Divide your students into small groups or pairs.

Assign each group two entries from the Woman Suffrage timeline.

(<https://www.womenshistory.org/exhibits/timeline-woman-suffrage>). Explain that each group will receive two entries from the timeline. After reading and discussing the entry, students will research the assigned timeline entries and the key woman/women associated with it, using the worksheet to help record facts

Each group, using a **minimum** of three cited sources, including at least one primary source, and one image; will create an informative and accurate historical “story”, or overview using the guidelines provided on the worksheet.

The entry should address:

- **What** is the event? What year did it happen? Where did it happen? Who participated? How did it impact the Suffrage Movement? Did it gain national attention? What do they think is the most important fact to know about this event? Why?
- **Who** organized it? What was the role of this woman or women in the Suffrage Movement? What was her (their) background? Was she (they) well known? If so, why? How did she/they lead or impact the Suffrage Movement? What is the most important fact to understand about this woman/women? Why?
- **In her own words.** Each group must include a quote from the woman/women in their entry. How do her words reflect her beliefs?

Each group will create a Create a power point timeline entry, incorporating a minimum of one image per entry. All projects will be combined to a class ***Suffrage Power Point Timeline***.

Conclusion

Discuss as a class:

- Women fought for the right to vote for over 100 years; however, the movement was not marked by violence. Why do you think it remained largely peaceful?
- From researching and hearing other presentations, was the Suffrage Movement always unified in their goals and their methods? If not, what were some of the differences in opinion and/or tactics? If you had been a suffragist, which methods of protest would you have advocated?
- How were the women who fought for the right to vote activists?
- Do you think that the majority of Americans including women know about the century long struggle to give women the vote? If no, how should society keep that essential history alive?
- As a class, discuss what qualities these women exemplify as role models.

Optional Extension Activities: ERA

The ratification of the 19th Amendment was a major step for equality. But women also fought for the Equal Rights Amendment. Ask students to research the major issues that women wanted to change. As a class, list the issues and leaders of the movement. How long did the movement last?

After reading and discussing the entry, students will research the event and the key woman/women associated with it, using the worksheet to help record facts. Using a minimum of three cited sources, they will write an informative and accurate historical “story”, or overview, that provides background using the guidelines provided on the worksheet.

Depending on teacher preference, each group will create:

1. Timeline entry on poster board or butcher paper which will be aligned with their classmates to create a classroom ERA Timeline;
2. Create a power point timeline entry, incorporating at least one image that will be combined with their classmate’s entries to create a class ERA Power Point Timeline.

Curriculum Standards:

C3: D1.5.9-12. Determine the kinds of sources that will be helpful in answering compelling and supporting questions, taking into consideration multiple points of view represented in the sources, the types of sources available, and the potential uses of the sources

C3 D2.Civ.2.9-12. Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to various theories of democracy, changes in Americans’ participation over time, and alternative models from other countries, past and present

CS D2.His.16.6-8. Organize applicable evidence into a coherent argument about the past.

D4.2.6-8. Construct explanations using reasoning, correct sequence, examples, and details with relevant information and data, while acknowledging the strengths and weaknesses of the explanations.

NL-ENG.K-12.5COMMUNICATION STRATEGIES Students employ a wide range of strategies as they write and use different writing process elements appropriately to communicate with different audiences for a variety of purposes.

NL-ENG.K-U .7 EVALUATING DATA Students conduct research on issues and interests by generating ideas and questions, and by posing problems. They gather, evaluate, and synthesize data from a variety of sources (e.g., print and nonprint texts, artifacts, people) to communicate their discoveries in ways that D2.His.15.6-8. Evaluate the relative influence of various causes of events and developments in the past.

Common Core:

Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

- Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.



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The Road to Suffrage: Timeline of Activism Worksheet

Your group has been given two entries from the *Woman's Suffrage Timeline*, focusing on key events spanning 70 years of the women's suffrage movement. Your challenge is to create an informative and compelling biographical entry that expands the basic facts on the web site's timeline.

You will use the timeline entry as well as a **minimum** of three additional sources and one image. You must use at least one primary source. At least one cited source must come from the NWHM website. (<https://www.womenshistory.org/resources/timeline/womans-suffrage-timeline>).

1. What specific issue or event does your entry discuss?

What year did it happen?

Where did it happen?

Who organized it?

Who participated?

How did it impact the Suffrage Movement?

Did it gain national attention?

What do you think is the most important fact to know about this event and why do you think it is significant?

2. Who organized the event OR was the key person(s) associated with the entry?

What was the role of this woman or women in the Suffrage Movement?

Was she (they) well known? If so, why? How did she/they lead or impact the Suffrage Movement?

What is the most important fact to understand about this woman/women? Why?

3. In her own words. Complete your entry with a quote from each woman discussed.

How do you think her words reflect her beliefs?

More about Suffrage:

<http://www.womenshistory.org/>

<http://www.womenshistory.org/resources/timeline/womans-suffrage-timeline>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/pathways-to-equality/gRII8VFM>

<https://artsandculture.google.com/exhibit/dQLitXeig0YgLw>