



Influential Movements in the Struggle for Women's Suffrage

Grade Levels: 9-12

Number of class periods: 2 (About 55 minutes)

INTRODUCTION/LESSON OVERVIEW

This lesson will encourage students to use primary sources in conjunction with the video “The 19th Amendment: A Woman’s Right to Vote” and the timeline found on Annenberg Classroom to understand how various events contributed to the changing views and attitudes on women’s suffrage leading to the ratification of the 19th Amendment. Students will focus on the Abolitionist Movement, the Reconstruction Amendments, and World War I to explain how these events helped or hindered the women’s suffrage movement.

OBJECTIVES

Students will be able to infer how the struggle for the vote was a long and difficult process and how various other movements and events influenced the women’s suffrage movement by placing events in context.

Students will be able to analyze primary sources to identify the point of view, purpose, and audience of a source. They will also use primary sources to analyze historical arguments.

Students will be able to use historical thinking to analyze patterns and connections between historical events and developments.

Students will be able to compare primary sources to determine similarities between key ideas and leading figures in the women’s suffrage movement.

Students will be able to support a position by using and applying primary sources to determine which event had the greatest impact on the suffrage movement.

MATERIALS

Annenberg Classroom video: [“The 19th Amendment: A Woman’s Right to Vote”](#)

Timeline: <https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/resource/19th-amendment/>

Primary source handouts and worksheets

Annenberg Guide to the Constitution: <https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/constitution/>

ESSENTIAL QUESTION

Which event or movement had the greatest impact on the battle for a woman's right to vote?

PROCEDURE

DAY 1: Introduce the lesson and show the video "The 19th Amendment: A Woman's Right to Vote"

Explain to students that the women's suffrage movement was a decades-long struggle to win the right to vote. It was a result of the hard work of activists, both men and women, who faced many obstacles. Various movements and events played a critical role in changing American attitudes about whether women deserved the right to vote. Explain to students that they are going to focus on one of these events/movements to determine to what extent it affected the battle for women's right to vote. Students will examine the impact of the event/movement in a group and then discuss/debate which event/movement had the greatest impact as a class.

Grouping/ Video

Split the class into groups of three. In these groups, assign students one of the following events/movements: Abolitionist Movement, Reconstruction Amendments, or World War I. Once the students are in their groups, introduce the video and tell students to pay attention to the role of their event/movement. Show the video: "The 19th Amendment: A Woman's Right to Vote."

DAY 2: Primary Source Analysis/ Discussion

Hand out the primary source documents. Students will first analyze the documents of the event/movement assigned to them and answer the provided questions individually. When they are finished, they will then explain to the two other group members what they learned from reading the primary sources and group members will fill out the chart together. Students will then discuss the essential question in a small group, followed by a full class discussion.

Option 2: Debate

After the group discussion, students will debate the question "Which event or movement had the greatest impact on the battle for women's right to vote?"

Option 3: Exit ticket for homework

Have students write their opinion on the question "Which event or movement had the greatest impact on the battle for women's right to vote?"

9TH – 10TH GRADE COMMON CORE STANDARDS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6

Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.8

Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claim.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9

Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

11TH-12TH GRADE COMMON CORE STANDARDS.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

EXTENSION ACTIVITY: Relevance of the 19th Amendment Today

Assign students one of the following questions to research/debate.

Did the 19th Amendment achieve voting rights for all Americans?

1) Many states have enacted voter identification laws. What state barriers are in place for American citizens who cannot obtain picture identification? Research or debate whether you think these laws are unconstitutional.

2) Most states do not allow incarcerated citizens to vote. Research or debate whether you think these laws are unconstitutional.

Did the 19th Amendment achieve equal rights for women?

3) Research or debate this question using the recent push for the Equal Rights Amendment to be ratified.

Abolitionist Movement Primary Source Documents

1) "...this is the only organization on God's footstool where the humanity of woman is "recognized, and these are the only men who have ever echoed back her cries for justice and equality.... All time will not be long enough to pay the debt of gratitude we owe these noble men...who roused us to a sense of our own rights, to the dignity of our high calling."

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Address to the American Anti-Slavery Society, 1860

2) "I have no idea of submitting tamely to injustice inflicted either on me or the slave. I will oppose it with all the moral powers with which I am endowed. I am no advocate of passivity."

Lucretia Mott, Remarks delivered at the 24th annual meeting of the Pennsylvania Anti-Slavery Society, 1860

3) "Now a new and vast sphere of usefulness is opened to her [the American woman], and she is pressed by surrounding circumstances to come up to the help of the Lord against the giant sins which desolate our beloved country...Shall she rejoice in her home, her husband, her children, and forget her brethren and sisters in bondage...whose husbands and wives are torn from them by relentless tyrants, and whose children are snatched from their arms by their unfeeling task-masters, whenever interest, or convenience, tempts them to this sacrilegious act?...The page of history teems with women's wrongs, and it is wet with women's tears. For the sake of my degraded sex everywhere, and for the sake of my brethren, who suffer just in proportion as they place woman lower in the scale of creation than man...I entreat my sisters to arise...in all the dignity of immortal beings, and plant themselves, side by side, on the platform of human rights, with man to whom they were designed to be companions, equals and helpers in every good word and work."

Sarah Grimke, Letter 1838

4) "In respect to political rights, we hold woman to be justly entitled to all we claim for man. We go farther, and express our conviction that all political rights which it is expedient for man to exercise, it is equally so for women. All that distinguishes man as an intelligent and accountable being, is equally true of woman; and if that government is only just which governs by the free consent of the governed, there can be no reason in the world for denying to woman the exercise of the elective franchise, or a hand in making and administering the laws of the land. Our doctrine is, that Right is of no sex."

Frederick Douglass, Abolitionist. North Star Publication, published shortly after the Seneca Falls Convention, 1848

5) In 1851, Sojourner Truth attended the Ohio Women's Rights Convention in Akron, Ohio, where she gave her famous speech, "Ain't I a Woman," a slogan she adopted from an abolitionist images (below) with the caption "Am I Not a Woman and a Sister?"



"Well, children, where there is so much racket there must be something out of kilter. I think that 'twixt the negroes of the South and the women at the North, all talking about rights, the white men will be in a fix pretty soon. But what's all this here talking about? That man over there says that women need to be helped into carriages, and lifted over ditches, and to have the best place everywhere. Nobody ever helps me into carriages, or over mud-puddles, or gives me any best place! And ain't I a woman? Look at me! Look at my arm! I have ploughed and planted, and gathered into barns, and no man could head me! And ain't I a woman? I could work as much and eat as much as a man – when I could get it – and bear the lash as well! And ain't I a woman? I have borne thirteen children, and seen most all sold off to slavery, and when I cried out with my mother's grief, none but Jesus heard me! And ain't I a woman? Then they talk about this thing in the head; what's this they call it? [member of audience whispers, "intellect"] That's it, honey. What's that got to do with women's rights or negroes' rights? If my cup won't hold but a pint, and yours holds a quart, wouldn't you be mean not to let me have my little half measure full? Then that little man in black there, he says women can't have as much rights as men, 'cause Christ wasn't a woman! Where did your Christ come from? Where did your Christ come from? From God and a woman! Man had nothing to do with Him. If the first woman God ever made was strong enough to turn the world upside down all alone, these women together ought to be able to turn it back, and get it right side up again! And now they is asking to do it, the men better let them. Obligated to you for hearing me, and now old Sojourner ain't got nothing more to say."

Reconstruction Amendments Primary Sources

Text of Reconstruction Amendments

<https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/13th-amendment/>

<https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/14th-amendment/>

<https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/15th-amendment/>

1) “If that word ‘male’ be inserted, it will take us a century at least to get it out.” **Elizabeth Cady Stanton on the 14th Amendment**

2) “...to demand his enfranchisement on the broad principle of natural rights, was hedged about with difficulties, as the logical result of such action must be the enfranchisement of all ostracized classes; not only the white women of the entire country, but the slave women of the South ... the only way they could open the constitutional door just wide enough to let the black man pass in, was to introduce the word ‘male’ into the national Constitution.”

Elizabeth Cady Stanton, 1865

3) “I hope in time to be as bold as [British reformer John] Stuart Mill and add to that last clause ‘sex’!! But this hour belongs to the negro. As Abraham Lincoln said, ‘One War at a time’; so I say, One question at a time. This hour belongs to the negro.”

Wendell Phillips, Abolitionist, 1865

4) “This is a critical period for the Republican party and the Nation. It would be wise and magnanimous in you to hold your claims, though just and imperative I grant, in abeyance until the Negro is safe beyond peradventure, and your turn will come next.”

Horace Greeley, Editor of the New York Tribune, 1865

5) “The disfranchised all make the same demand, and the same logic and justice which secures suffrage to one class gives it to all. If our rulers have the justice to give the black man suffrage, woman should avail herself of that newborn virtue to secure her rights.”

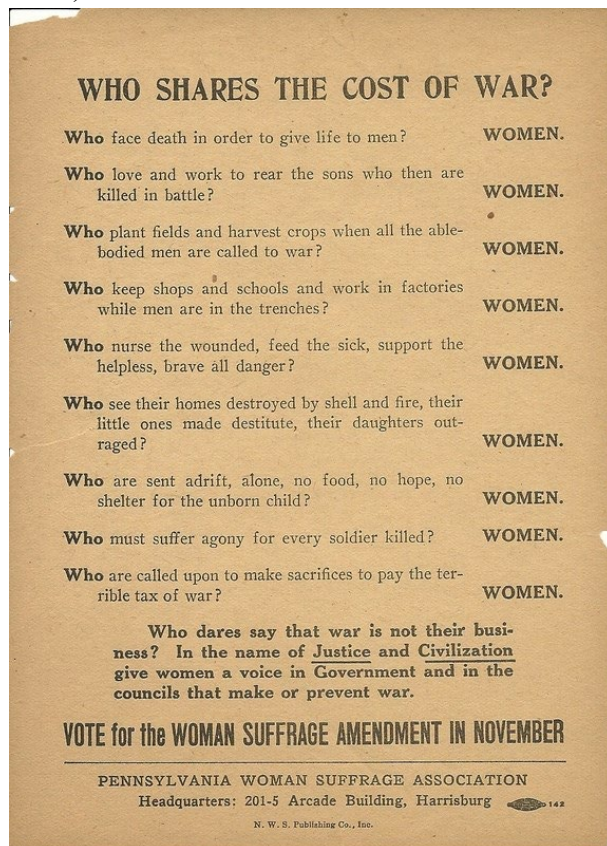
Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Letter to the Standard, 1865

6) “When you propose to elevate the lowest and most degraded classes of men to an even platform with white men – with the cultivated, educated, wealthy white men of the State – it is certainly time for you to begin to think at least whether it might not be proper to lift the wives, daughters, and mothers of your State to an even pedestal.”

Susan B. Anthony, Speech in St. Louis, 1865

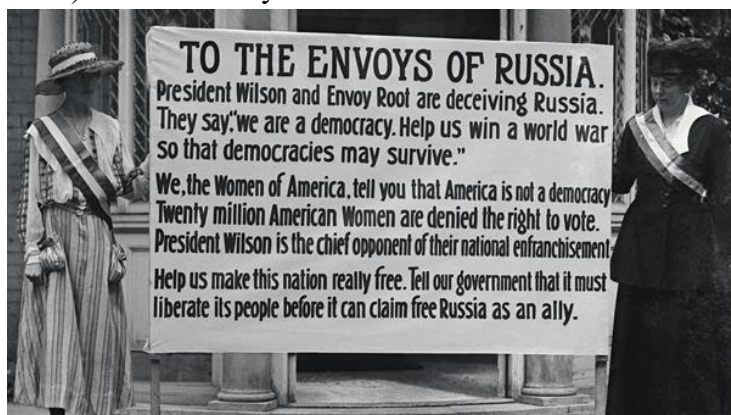
World War I Primary Source Documents

1) Who Shares the Cost of War?



The Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association, 1915

2) To the Envoys of Russia



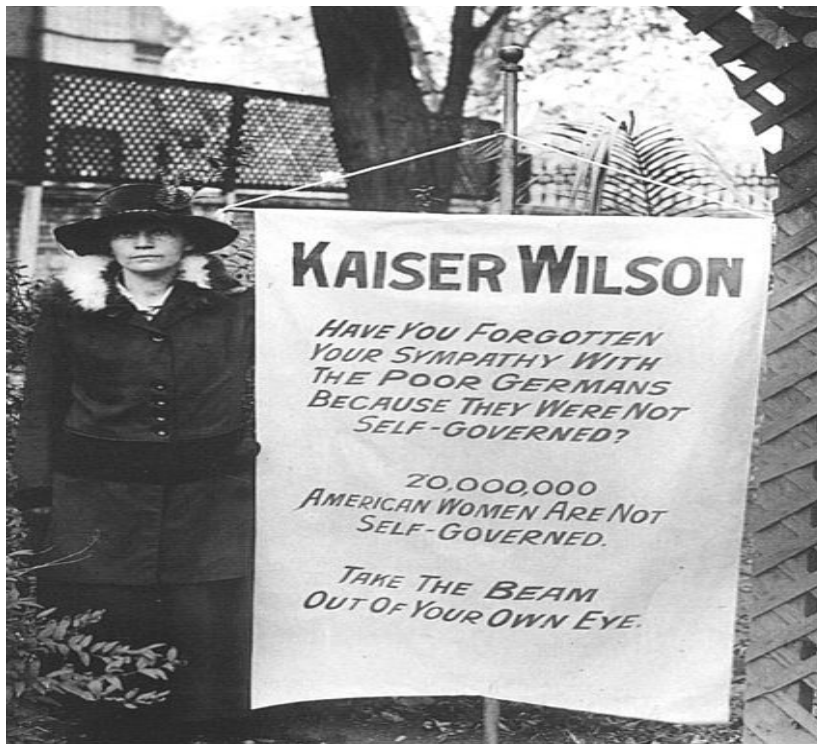
World War I protest sign, 1917

3) If You Are Good Enough for War You Are Good Enough to Vote



William C. Morris for The Brooklyn Magazine, published on Nov. 10, 1917

4) Kaiser Wilson



Protest outside the White House, 1917

5) “Every muscle, every brain must be mobilized if the national aim is to be achieved”

Harriot Stanton Blatch, 1918

6) “We have made partners of the women in this war; shall we admit them only to a partnership of suffering and sacrifice and toil and not to a partnership of privilege and right? This war could not have been fought, either by the other nations engaged or by America, if it had not been for the services of the women – services rendered in every sphere – not merely in the fields of effort in which we have been accustomed to see them work, but wherever men have worked and upon the very skirts and edges of the battle itself. We shall not only be distrusted but shall deserve to be distrusted if we do not enfranchise them with the fullest possible enfranchisement, as it is now certain that the other great free nations will enfranchise them.”

Woodrow Wilson, Address to the Senate, 1918

Name _____

The 19th Amendment: A Woman's Right to Vote

Using the primary sources, answer the following questions. Be prepared to explain the main ideas to your group members.

- 1) Identify the main sentiments expressed by the authors of the primary sources. What was their point of view as it related to women's suffrage?

- 2) What specific arguments and claims did the authors make to support or reject the passage of an amendment to grant women the right to vote?

- 3) What are similarities between the arguments or main ideas in each source?

- 4) After watching the video and examining the timeline, place your movement/event into historical context. What impact did your event have on the movement for women's suffrage? To what extent did it help or hinder the women's suffrage movement?
Timeline: <https://www.annenbergclassroom.org/resource/19th-amendment/>

Group Activity – Complete the chart in your group of three to prepare for class discussion. Use examples from the primary sources to answer each question.

Abolitionist Movement	Reconstruction Amendments	World War I
To what extent did the abolitionist movement help or hinder the battle for women's right to vote?	To what extent did the passage of the Reconstruction Amendments help or hinder the battle for women's right to vote?	To what extent did the United States involvement in World War I help or hinder the battle for women's right to vote?

Class discussion or debate: Which event or movement had the greatest impact on the battle for women's right to vote?