



85th Anniversary of Women's Suffrage Celebration & Exhibit Middle School Lesson Plans

Introductory activity:

As a class kickoff activity, have students begin class by writing down one law that they would enact if they could (just one sentence describing the law) on a post-it note. Have all students read their law aloud, and place the post-it note on a poster board labeled “ballot” at the front of the room. After all of the “laws” are posted on the “ballot,” call on only the girls in the class to remove their “law” from the “ballot.”

Ask the students if they noticed a pattern. Students will be quick to point out that only boys were allowed to keep their laws on the board. Ask the students why the girls had to remove their laws. Guide responses toward the theme of suffrage laws before 1920.

Inform them that they represent a town on election day, during a time when only men were allowed the right to vote.

Lead the class in a discussion about the great laws that were removed from the ballot, and the voices that were never allowed to be expressed, all because women were not allowed to vote.

Lesson:

Define the following terms on the board for student notes.

Suffrage: the right to vote; a vote or the act of voting

19th Amendment: a law that gave women the right to vote. It was added to the Constitution of the United States in the year 1920.

The exact law states: *The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex. Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.*

Inform the class that today they are going to learn about how women earned the right to vote, and about two women who helped pass the 19th amendment.

Read/excerpts from a book about women leaders like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton, or the 19th amendment, such as:

- Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony: Fighting Together for Women's Rights by Joanne Mattern – 2003. 24 pages, photography.
- Women's Right To Vote (Cornerstones of Freedom. Second Series) by Elaine Landau – 2005. 48 pages, photography.

Provide students with the Suffrage Timeline document. Discuss the timeline in class, paying close attention to the incredible length of time it took for women to earn the right to vote.

Lead the class in a critical thinking discussion based on the following question:

Why do you think it took so long for women to obtain the right to vote?

Do you think this was fair? Why or why not?

Based on student responses, lead the students toward points that allow them to recognize the rights and responsibilities associated with voting, and equality between men and women.

Student Activity:

Step One: Fact Scavenger Hunt: Practice Internet and library research by searching for facts on women's right to vote, the 19th amendment, and leaders like Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Have each student find 10 facts, including key dates, about the suffrage movement, and record them in their notes. Have each student print 5 symbolic pictures from the Internet of women during the suffrage movement, picketing, etc. You may wish to provide your students with several web sites to search to streamline the process.

Step Two: Timeline, project poster board: Working with a partner, the student pair should combine their research notes and pictures to create a visual, factual timeline of the women's suffrage movement. Teachers should develop their own perimeters for this assignment based on student ability, i.e. neatness, etc. After creating the requirements for the project, provide students with a rubric, such as the one provided in this lesson, or create your own using <http://rubistar.4teachers.org> as a guide.

Step Three: Presentations: Have each student pair present their timelines to the class to improve speaking skills, and information retention.

Suffrage Timeline

1776: Abigail Adams writes to her husband, John, asking him to “remember the ladies” while at work on the Declaration of Independence. The Declaration’s wording specifies that “all men are created equal.”

1837: Mary Lyon founds Mt. Holyoke College in Massachusetts. This would eventually become the first-four year college exclusively for women in the United States, and leads to the opening of several others over the next few years.

1848: The first Women’s rights convention is held in Seneca Falls, New York. Out of this event came the “Declaration of Sentiments,” which lists and summarizes the main goals of women fighting for equal suffrage.

1851: Sojourner Truth, a former slave, attends a women's rights convention in Akron, Ohio, where she delivers her famous “Ain’t I a woman?” speech before a captivated audience.

1866: Elizabeth Caddy Stanton and Susan B. Anthony form the American Equal Rights Association, an organization working toward universal suffrage for white and black women and men.

1868: Fourteenth Amendment ratified, extending to all citizens the protection against unjust state laws. This is the first time the Constitution defines “citizens” and “voters” as “male.”

1870: Fifteenth Amendment is ratified, giving black men the right to vote.

1872: Susan B. Anthony and fellow supporters are arrested and tried in Rochester, New York for attempting to vote in the presidential election.

1884: Belva Lockwood, the first woman to practice law before the Supreme Court, runs for president on the National Equal Rights Party ticket.

1890: The National Women’s Suffrage Association and the American Women’s Suffrage Association merge to become the National American Women’s Suffrage Association (NAWSA).

1895: Elizabeth Cady Stanton publishes the *Woman’s Bible*, which creates controversy within NAWSA.

1913: Borrowing tactics from suffrage groups from England, the National Women’s Party, headed by Alice Paul and Lucy Burns, participate in hunger strikes and picketing. They also organize a suffrage parade on the eve of Woodrow Wilson’s inauguration, resulting in a riot.

1920: After ratification from 36 states, the Nineteenth Amendment is adopted, giving women the right to vote.

1923: The National Women’s Party first proposes the Equal Rights Amendment to eliminate discrimination on the basis of gender. It has never been ratified.

Name _____

Date _____

Women's Suffrage Movement Timeline

GRADE	A	B	C	D
Graphics	All graphics are effective and balanced with text use.	All graphics are effective, but there appear to be too few or too many.	Some graphics are effective and their use is balanced with text use.	Several graphics are not effective.
Readability	The overall appearance of the timeline is pleasing and easy to read.	The overall appearance of the timeline is somewhat pleasing and easy to read.	The timeline is relatively readable.	The timeline is difficult to read.
Title	The timeline has a creative title that accurately describes the material and is easy to locate.	The timeline has an effective title that accurately describes the material and is easy to locate.	The timeline has a title that is easy to locate.	The title is missing or difficult to locate.
Dates	An accurate, complete date has been included for each event.	An accurate, complete date has been included for almost every event.	An accurate date has been included for almost every event.	Dates are inaccurate and/or missing for several events.
Learning of Content	The student can accurately describe 75% (or more) of the events on the timeline without referring to it and can quickly determine which of two events occurred first.	The student can accurately describe 50% of the events on the timeline without referring to it and can quickly determine which of two events occurred first.	The student can describe any event on the timeline if allowed to refer to it and can determine which of two events occurred first.	The student cannot use the timeline effectively to describe events nor to compare events.
Preparation	The student had notes about all the events and dates s/he wished to include on the timeline before beginning to design the timeline.	The student had notes about almost all the events and dates s/he wished to include on the timeline before beginning to design the timeline.	The student had notes about most (~75%) of the events and dates s/he wished to include on the timeline before beginning to design the timeline.	The student had not prepared adequate notes before beginning to design the timeline.
Time Use	Classroom time was used to work on the project. Conversations were not disruptive and focused on the work.	Classroom time was used to work on the project the majority of the time. Conversations were not disruptive and focused on the work.	Classroom time was used to work on the project the majority of the time, but conversations often were disruptive or did not focus on the work.	Student did not use classroom time to work on the project and/or was highly disruptive.
Resources	The timeline contained at least 8-10 events related to the topic being studied.	The timeline contained at least 6-7 events related to the topic being studied.	The timeline contained at least 5 events related to the topic being studied.	The timeline contained fewer than 5 events.