

TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Women's Suffrage: Examining Both Sides of the Issue

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Grade: - 8

Length of Class Period: One 84-minute Block

Inquiry: What were the main arguments for and against women's suffrage prior to ratification of the 19th Amendment?

Objectives:

- Students will use primary sources to compare and contrast positions on women's suffrage
- Students will be able to identify and explain the main arguments on the issue of women's suffrage

Materials: copies of Suffrage Vocabulary Terms and Discussion Questions (1 each/student), copies of Suffrage Background Information (1 class set), 6-8 sets of Suffrage Primary Source Materials Packet

Activities:

1. Explain to the students that we will be discussing the issue of women's suffrage. Ask for volunteers to explain "suffrage." Then distribute to Vocabulary Terms and Suffrage Background worksheets. Have students volunteer to read each term and definition, and then briefly look at the photos in the worksheet. Read Background Information worksheet as a class.
2. Have students get into clusters of 3-4. Distribute Discussion Questions to each student and one Primary Source Packet per cluster. Students read aloud the Anti-Suffrage leaflets. Give students 3-5 minutes to answer the discussion questions and complete the Anti-Suffrage section of the worksheet in their clusters, then go over as whole class. Repeat with the Suffrage leaflets and have students answer the questions and discuss as a whole class.
3. Students can stay in clusters, but have them number off 1 to 4. Students in Groups 1 and 3 are Anti-Suffragists, and students in Groups 2 and 4 are Suffragists. Have students write their group # in the top corner of their discussion question worksheet.
4. Explain their assignment. Each student has been assigned to a specific movement. Their task is to write a letter to the editor of the local newspaper defending your position within that movement (either Anti- or Pro-suffrage). Students must include a brief biography of themselves (1-2 sentences) including their gender, age, educational level, employment status, and where they live. Maximum length is 3 paragraphs typed. Spelling and grammar count! Briefly review main arguments as a class.
5. Give students up to 5 minutes in clusters to brainstorm ideas, then begin individual work for the remainder of class. Collect Background Information sheets and Primary Source Packets before students are dismissed.

Assessment:

Informal assessment: positive participation in class discussions and completion of worksheets.

Formal assessment: Successful completion of Letter To The Editor including accurate defense of assigned position, inclusion of biographical information, appropriate length, and Spell/Grammar checked.

Grading Scale: [+ Strong argument supported
[Conflicting argument
[- Vague argument/ Poor structure
0 No effort

Connecticut Framework Performance Standards:*#146 Historical Thinking*

-examine data to determine the adequacy and sufficiency of evidence, point of view, historical context, bias, distortion and propaganda, and to distinguish fact from opinion.

-develop written narratives and short interpretative essays, as well as other appropriate presentations from investigations of source materials.

#153 Content Standard- Applying History

-display empathy for people who have lived in the past