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UNIT TITLE:

# Women's Rights are Human Rights



**Developer:** Lynn Girven, Rochester City School District

**Park:** Women's Rights National Historical Park

**Grade Level:** Upper Elementary

**Number of Sessions in the Lesson Unit Plan:** Four 30-minute lessons

## Funding Acknowledgment

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## STAGE ONE:

# Identify Desired Results

## Enduring Understandings:

### Students will understand that...

U1: If rules are not fair, people will work for change.

## Essential Questions:

1. How has the right to vote increased throughout the history of the United States?
2. What transportation methods were available to use in 1848 for people to get to the Seneca Falls Convention?
3. Why did some people advocate for more rights and equality during the 19th century?
4. Have women's lives improved in the United States since winning the right to vote?

## Students will know...

- Women had no or limited social, civil, religious, or economic rights in the 1800s.
- Vocabulary and Terms:
  - *Abolition/Abolitionist*—Activists fighting against slavery.
  - *Declaration of Sentiments*—Document calling for increased women's rights, including the right for women to vote.
  - *Elizabeth Cady Stanton*—Suffragist. An author of the Declaration of Sentiments.
  - *Erie Canal*—Human made waterway connecting the Hudson River to Lake Erie.
  - *Seneca Falls Convention*—A meeting of supporters of women's rights in the United States, helped launch the women's rights movement.
  - *Suffragist*—Activists fighting for the right of women to vote in the United States
  - *Susan B. Anthony*—Suffragist.
  - *Voting*—Choosing leaders to make decisions for people.

## Skills:

- Geographic Reasoning
- Primary Source Analysis
- Compare and Contrast

## New York State Social Studies Standards:

**NYS Standard 4.1b** New York State can be represented using a political map that shows cities, capitals, and boundaries. Students will examine the location of the capital of New York State and the major cities of New York State in relation to their home community, using directionality, and latitude and longitude coordinates.

**NYS Standard 4.5b** Women have not always had the same rights as men in the United States and New York State. They sought to expand their rights and bring about change. Students will examine the rights denied to women during the 1800s. Students will investigate people who took action to bring about change, such as Amelia Bloomer, Sojourner Truth, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage, and Elizabeth Blackwell. Students will explore what happened at the convention for women in Seneca Falls.



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## STAGE TWO:

# Determine Acceptable Evidence

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### Performance task focused on transfer:

- **Goal:** Understand that progress towards equality takes time but happens.
- **Role:** Student
- **Audience:** Teacher, peers, or parents
- **Products:** Letter to Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, or another a suffragist comparing life they lived to women's lives today.

### Criteria to assess:

Letter format:

- Introduce themselves
- Cite 2 ways that life for women has changed since the 19th Amendment was ratified
- Use vocabulary terms
- Ask a question of the historical figure

### Other assessments:

- Direct teaching with comprehension questions about the travel routes in the 1848 (canal, train, stage-coach, by foot or animal).
- Direct teaching and completing a Graphic Organizer for the Declaration of Sentiments.
- Completing a Vocabulary Handout.



## LEARNING EXPERIENCE #1:

# Expansion of the Right to Vote



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## Lesson Duration:

30 minutes

*Official program woman suffrage procession.  
Washington, D. C.  
March 3, 1913*

*Library of Congress*

[www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.20801600/](http://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe.20801600/)

## Essential Question:

How has the right to vote increased throughout the history of the United States?

## Learning Target:

I can understand how the right to vote has increased throughout the history of the United States.

## Objective:

Understand the growth of the voting franchise to include more citizens and become more inclusive to all Americans.

## Background Information for teacher:

- History of the voting franchise throughout United States history
- Vocabulary

## Lesson Plan Materials:

- Index cards (created by teacher)
- Voting in the United States timeline



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## LEARNING EXPERIENCE #1: Expansion of the Right to Vote

### Preparation:

- Index cards—Teacher creates index cards using categories listed below or others appropriate for representation of the class. This is for the simulation on the increasing franchise in the United States.
  1. Men with property (1788)—10% of class
  2. Men without property (1856)—20% of class
  3. African American men (1870)—15% of class
  4. Women (white/black) (1920)—45% of class
  5. Chinese immigrants (1940)—5% of class
  6. Native Americans (1924 and in all states, 1962)—5% of class

*Percentages are provided to guide discussion of voting rights expansion over time and are not an exact reflection of demographic or census data in the United States in a historical period.*

- Review the Timeline of Voting Rights.

### Lesson Hook:

Teacher leads a discussion with students about qualifications for voting in the United States today.

- 18+ years old
- United States citizen
- Registered in your state

Why do we vote? To choose elected officials who will pass and enforce laws.

### Procedure:

Teacher explains that throughout United States history certain groups have been prevented from voting based on race, gender, immigration status, property ownership, etc.

**Historical Voting Simulation**—Teacher distributes index cards to students and provides directions for students to stand when their card is called. Teacher says the name of each category in chronological order that the group was granted the right to vote in the United States.

Teacher distributes the Timeline of Voting Rights and leads a discussion with students about their observations:

- a small percentage of population was allowed to vote when Constitution was ratified (white men with property).
- over half the population could not vote until 1920 (women).
- some groups did not have full voting rights until the 1960s (Native Americans and Voting Rights Act of 1965). The 13th Amendment in 1865 outlawed slavery, and the 15th Amendment in 1870 granted recently freed black men the right to vote, but they would struggle to do so in some parts of the country until the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Students discuss how voting rights have expanded and are able to identify different groups who fought for the right to vote in United States history.

### Assessment:

Students answer the question: How has the right to vote increased to include more Americans?  
Students can explain different groups who fought for the right to vote.

**Assessment Text:** Voting in the United States Timeline

**Support for Struggling Learners:** Reduce the number of dates discussed

**Enrichment Activities:** Why is voting important and why was it denied to women for so long?  
What other groups fought for their right to vote?

**Additional Resources:** [www.civiced.org/voting-lessons/voting-timeline](http://www.civiced.org/voting-lessons/voting-timeline)

**Related Lessons:** Lesson 2



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## LEARNING EXPERIENCE #2:

# Transportation Networks and the Seneca Falls Convention



## Lesson Duration:

30 minutes

Map of New York State, 1855

Library of Congress

[www.loc.gov/item/98688520/](http://www.loc.gov/item/98688520/)

## Essential Question:

What transportation methods were available to use in 1848 for people to get to the Seneca Falls Convention?

## Learning Target:

I can describe the transportation methods used to get to the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848.

## Objective:

Understand the transportation systems in New York State in 1848.

## Background Information for teacher:

- Review of New York State geography and 1800s transportation systems.

## Lesson Plan Materials:

- Transportation and Seneca Falls Convention handout with historical map of NYS



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## LEARNING EXPERIENCE #2:

### Transportation Networks and the Seneca Falls Convention

#### Preparation:

Review historical maps of New York State.

#### Lesson Hook:

Students are shown the feature map of NYS in 1855 and asked to answer, "what state is this?"

#### Procedure:

Students review the historical map of New York State and identify the location of Seneca Falls and cities of Rochester, Syracuse, Buffalo, and Albany. Teacher asks students to identify these locations in relation to where they live.

Teacher reviews advancements in transportation between 1800 and 1850. First steamboat voyage on Hudson River (1807), Erie Canal opens (1825), and railroads (1830s). Students review the historical map and identify the location of the Erie Canal, Cayuga-Seneca Canal, and Rochester-Auburn Railroad.

Teacher explains that several attendees of the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention traveled from Rochester, including abolitionist Frederick Douglass. Students answer questions on the NY map about traveling to Seneca Falls in 1848 and how transportation networks influenced the growth of upstate New York.

#### Assessment:

Completed map of NYS answering questions about cities and transportation routes.

**Assessment Text:** Map of New York handout

**Support for Struggling Learners:** Reduce number of cities to identify to Rochester, Syracuse and Seneca Falls on the maps.

**Enrichment Activities:** Why are the geography and transportation routes of NYS important to the Seneca Falls Convention? Review reform movements and transportation in Western New York during the 1800s (abolitionism, temperance, religious revival). Review additional transportation networks of canals and railroads, particularly those that served your school's community.

**Additional Resources:** [www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/abolition-womens-rights-and-temperance-movements.htm](http://www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/abolition-womens-rights-and-temperance-movements.htm)

**Related Lessons:** Lesson 3



## LEARNING EXPERIENCE #3:

# Seneca Falls Convention



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## Lesson Duration:

30 minutes

*Women's Rights Convention, Harper's Weekly, June 11, 1859*

*Library of Congress*

[www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3c35681/](http://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3c35681/)

## Essential Question:

Why did some people advocate for more rights and equality during the 19th century?

## Learning Target:

I can describe how the Seneca Fall Convention began the organized Women's Rights Movement.

## Objective:

Understand the history of the Seneca Falls Convention and how it took 72 years for an amendment to be passed permitting women the right to vote.

## Background Information for teacher:

- The women's suffrage movement was part of reform and human rights movements of the time.

## Lesson Plan Materials:

- Smart Board or computer and video screen
- Vocabulary handout



## LEARNING EXPERIENCE #3: Seneca Falls Convention



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### Preparation:

Watch video clips for familiarization.

### Lesson Hook:

Ask students what they do when they want to change something (meeting, writing down concerns, etc.)?

### Procedure:

Students discuss examples of ways to create change.

Students virtually visit the [Wesleyan Chapel](#) to see the site of the Seneca Falls Convention and watch a video of a Park Ranger explain the social issues of the day [First Women's Rights Convention](#): 1:30-6:12 (women exclusively) *In order to tie it to other social issues: start at the beginning with the Underground Railroad.* Students can also watch selections from the Park film [Dreams of Equality](#) for further examples of people fighting for change.

Students virtually visit the [First Wave Statues](#) to learn more about the Seneca Falls Convention organizers and discuss what they did to be changemakers. Watch the [Statue Talk](#) video with students and discuss who the Convention organizers were.

Teacher leads discussion with students about the reasons why and how the Seneca Falls Convention was organized.

Students complete a vocabulary worksheet.

### Assessment:

- Participation in discussion
- Vocabulary handout

### Assessment Text:

- [First Women's Rights Convention](#)
- [Dreams of Equality](#)
- [Statue Talk](#)

**Support for Struggling Learners:** Provide a guided note sheet for the selected videos.

**Enrichment Activities:** Explore the virtual tour of the [Wesleyan Chapel](#) and learn about its historic preservation and surviving features.

**Additional Resources:** [www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/the-first-womens-rights-convention.htm](http://www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/the-first-womens-rights-convention.htm)

**Related Lessons:** Lesson 4

## LEARNING EXPERIENCE #4:

# Letter to a Suffragist



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## Lesson Duration:

30 minutes

*Women's Liberation  
March, Washington D.C.,  
1970*

*Library of Congress*

[www.loc.gov/  
item/2003673992/](http://www.loc.gov/item/2003673992/)

## Essential Question:

Have women's lives improved in the United States since winning the right to vote?

## Learning Target:

I can summarize how life has changed for women since the 19th Amendment was ratified.

## Objective:

Compare and contrast women's lives before winning the right to vote to women's lives today in the United States.

## Background Information for teacher:

- Review the Declaration of Sentiments.

## Lesson Plan Materials:

- Smart Board or computer and video screen
- Declaration of Sentiments Graphic Organizer



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## LEARNING EXPERIENCE #4: Letter to a Suffragist

### Preparation:

Graphic organizer and paper/computer to write letters.

### Lesson Hook:

Students watch selections from the [reading of the Declaration of Sentiments](#)

### Procedure:

Students virtually visit the [Wesleyan Chapel](#) and listen to selections from the [reading of the Declaration of Sentiments](#) as a class. *Selected passages: 0:36-1:36, 2:43-3:20, 3:50-3:58, 5:45-5:55, and 7:08-8:28.* Together begin to compare the differences between women's lives in the 1800s and today.

Students complete a Graphic Organizer to compare and contrast life for women in the 1800s to 2022 using selected passages from the Declaration of Sentiments.

Scholars will write a letter to a suffragist explaining how life has changed for women using the Graphic Organizer and vocabulary of the unit. Teachers may provide a model for the letter.

### Assessment:

- Letter to suffragist explaining how life has improved for women since women got the right to vote. Use at least 3 vocabulary words.

### Assessment Text:

Model:

School address

Date

Dear \_\_\_\_\_,

Women have many more rights than they did in the 1800s. In the 1800s, women could not vote, had to obey their husbands, (insert additional examples here)

On the other hand, women today can vote...

**Support for Struggling Learners:** Sentence frames/starters

**Enrichment Activities:** Write a letter with more description about additional statements in the Declaration of Sentiments.

**Additional Resources:** [www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/declaration-of-sentiments.htm](http://www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/declaration-of-sentiments.htm)

**Related Lessons:** Lesson 3