

Activity 4: Analyzing a Photo of a Suffrage Parade



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Guiding Questions

- How can people influence the government?
- How can we see the ideals of the Declaration of Independence play out in other events throughout history?

National Standards

National Center for History in the Schools History Standards

- *Topic 3: The History of the US: Democratic Principles and Values and the People from Many Cultures Who Contributed to Its Cultural, Economic, and Political Heritage*
 - *Standard 4: How democratic values came to be, and how they have been exemplified by people, events, and symbols.*
 - *Standard 4B.* The student demonstrates an understanding of ordinary people who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.
 - *Standard 4C.* The student understands historic figures who have exemplified values and principles of American democracy.
 - *Standard 4D.* The student understands events that celebrate and exemplify fundamental values and principles of American democracy.

National Standards for Civics and Government

- *NSCG.K-4.2.A.1* Students should be able to explain the importance of the fundamental values and principles of American democracy.
- *NSCG.K-4.2.C.1* Students should be able to explain the importance of Americans sharing and supporting certain values, principles, and beliefs.

Common Core State Standards

- *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.1.1* Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
See also: *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.K.1*; *CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.2.1*
- *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1.3* Ask and answer questions about what a speaker says in order to gather additional information or clarify something that is not understood.
See also: *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.K.3*; *CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2.3*

College, Career, & Civic Life C3 Framework for Social Studies State Standards

- *D2.His.9.K-2.* Identify different kinds of historical sources.
- *D2.His.10.K-2.* Explain how historical sources can be used to study the past.
- *D2.His.12.K-2.* Generate questions about a particular historical source as it relates to a particular historical event or development.

Educating for American Democracy Roadmap

- *CDQ1.1B:* When/how do we speak up about something?
- *CDQ5.1B:* Why do people sometimes want to change the rules?

Historical Context

Excerpt from The 19th Amendment¹

The 19th Amendment guarantees American women the right to vote. Achieving this milestone required a lengthy and difficult struggle; victory took decades of agitation and action. Beginning in the mid-19th century, woman suffrage supporters lectured, wrote, marched, lobbied, and practiced civil disobedience to achieve what many Americans considered radical change.

Between 1878, when the amendment was first introduced in Congress, and 1920, when it was ratified, champions of voting rights for women worked tirelessly, but their strategies varied. Some tried to pass suffrage acts in each state—nine western states adopted woman suffrage legislation by 1912. Others challenged male-only voting laws in the courts. More public tactics included parades, silent vigils, and hunger strikes. Supporters were heckled, jailed, and sometimes physically abused.

By 1916, most of the major suffrage organizations united behind the goal of a constitutional amendment. When New York adopted woman suffrage in 1917, and President Wilson changed his position to support an amendment in 1918, the political balance began to shift.

On May 21, 1919, the House of Representatives passed the amendment, and two weeks later, the Senate followed. When Tennessee became the 36th state to ratify the amendment on August 18, 1920, the amendment was adopted. While decades of struggle to include African Americans and other minority women in the promise of voting rights remained, the face of the American electorate had changed forever.

¹Available online at <https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/featured-documents/amendment-19>

Educational Activity

Analyzing a Photo of a Suffrage Parade

In this activity, lower elementary school students will analyze a photograph of women marching in a suffrage parade in Washington, DC, on March 3, 1913. This is designed as a full class activity. Estimated time: 20 minutes.

A digital version of this activity is available on DocsTeach, the online tool for teaching with documents from the National Archives. The [teacher page](#) provides an overview of the activity and suggested teaching instructions. Students can access the [student page](#) on their devices or you can project or screen share the activity for the whole class.



Teaching Instructions

This activity can be used as an introduction to primary sources and photograph analysis, when learning about the women's suffrage movement, or while discussing the importance of the right to vote. For grades K-2. Approximate time needed is 20 minutes.

Introduce the activity and photograph to students as a full class. Share with students that this photograph is of a suffrage parade in Washington, DC that took place on March 3, 1913.

The word "suffrage" means the right to vote. In the United States, people vote to elect leaders on the local, state, and national level. Voting is an important way that people have a say in the government and the elected officials who represent them and help make the laws and rules for our country. In the early days of the United States, only property-owning white men could vote in most elections. At the time that this photograph was taken, women did not have the right to vote on a national level.

Men and women who worked to get women the right to vote were called "suffragists." Suffragists used many different methods to put pressure on the government to extend voting rights to women, including the right to peaceably assemble from the First Amendment of the Bill of Rights.

The suffrage parade in this photograph is an example of a peaceful protest protected by that right. Approximately 5,000 suffragists from around the country participated in this suffrage parade. National organizers of this parade, however, advised the state contingents to have Black women march at the end of the parade, because they feared white women wouldn't march alongside them. Several women of color, including investigative journalist and civil rights leader Ida B. Wells, stepped in with their state contingents despite the directive from the national leaders.

Ask students to consider this information as they look closely at the photograph and you lead them through the photograph analysis questions:

- Meet the document.
- Observe its parts.
- Try to make sense of it.
- Use it as historical evidence.

When students have answered all of the analysis questions, lead the class through a discussion of the questions under "When You're Done:"

1. What is one reason why it is important that all citizens who are 18 and older have the right to vote?
2. The people in this photograph participated in a suffrage parade, a form of peaceful protest, as a way to bring attention to their cause and try to change the laws of the United States. What is another way you could work to get a law changed if you see something you believe is unfair?

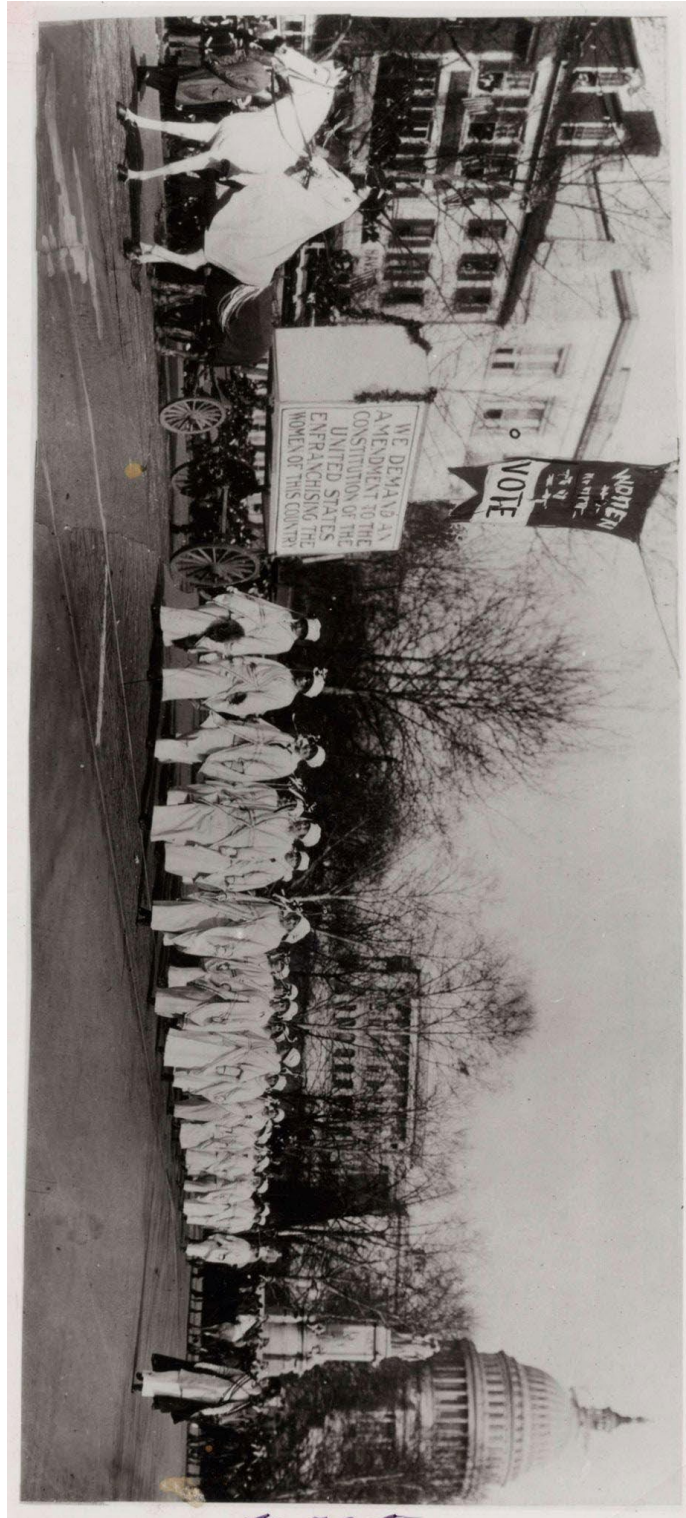
Brainstorm different answers to these questions as a full class.

Share with students that suffragists worked for decades to encourage the government to extend the right to vote to women. The 19th Amendment was ratified on August 19, 1920, granting women the right to vote on a national level. However, even with this achievement, women of color still faced racial and ethnic discrimination and barriers. For instance, some states found ways to discourage voting through methods such as poll taxes and literacy tests. People continued to work to make sure that all Americans had access to the same rights through additional legislation.

With this in mind, ask students to consider the ideals of the Declaration of Independence, and particularly the phrase “all men are created equal.” Ask students to define “equal,” and ask what they think the phrase means. Answers may include “everyone is treated the same,” or “everyone has the same rights.”

Lead a class discussion that helps the students reflect on how the meaning of this phrase may connect to the photograph that they just analyzed and the actions of suffragists in history.

Educational Activity Resources



Women Marching in Suffrage Parade in Washington, DC, 3/3/1913
<https://docsteach.org/documents/document/marching-suffrage-parade-dc>

Sixty-sixth Congress of the United States of America;

At the First Session,

Begun and held at the City of Washington on Monday, the nineteenth day of May,
one thousand nine hundred and nineteen.

JOINT RESOLUTION

Proposing an amendment to the Constitution extending the right of suffrage
to women.

*Resolved by the Senate and House of Representatives of the United States
of America in Congress assembled (two-thirds of each House concurring therein),
That the following article is proposed as an amendment to the Constitution,
which shall be valid to all intents and purposes as part of the Constitution when
ratified by the legislatures of three-fourths of the several States.*

"ARTICLE ————.

"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."

F. H. Gillett

Speaker of the House of Representatives.

Thos. R. Marshall

Vice President of the United States and

President of the Senate.

Supplemental Educational Resources

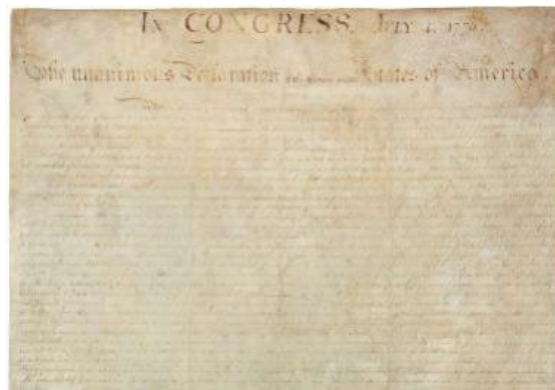
The following educational activities are designed to support student learning. These activities are not required. Feel free to facilitate only the activities that you think would be most helpful for your students.

1. Happy 250th Birthday, America! (Civics for All of US Distance Learning Program)

Students will learn about America's national holiday and birthday — Independence Day!

Students will explore artwork and primary sources about the American Revolution and the Founders and investigate copies of the Declaration of Independence from the National Archives.

Visit <https://civics.archives.gov/programs/happy-250th-birthday-america> for more details.



2. Make Your Voice Count: Learning About the First Amendment (Civics for All of US Distance Learning Program)

Students will explore the First Amendment in the Bill of Rights using primary historical sources to learn about the importance of rights and how to exercise their freedoms.

Visit civics.archives.gov/programs/make-your-voice-count-learning-about-the-first-amendment for more details.



3. Women's Rights Primary Sources and Teaching Activities

Use this DocsTeach popular topics page to find primary sources and document-based teaching activities related to women's rights and changing roles in American history.

Many of the documents, photographs, and other sources are also featured in the exhibits Rightfully Hers: American Women and the Vote, at the National Archives Museum in Washington, DC, and One Half of the People: Advancing Equality for Women, traveling the country.

Visit <https://docsteach.org/topics/women> for more details.

