

Voting in America

<https://www.loc.gov/item/2011648984/>

Overview/Prior Knowledge

During this lesson, students will study how voting rights have changed for citizens of America over the last 200 years. Students will create a timeline with the most important events on American suffrage. Students will culminate the activity by writing a narrative as a person who lived during the time without voting rights and who obtained them during their lifetime.

Prior to this lesson, students should know the current qualifications for voting in America. Students should also know the meaning of the word suffrage, the right to vote in political elections.

Objectives

- TSW analyze primary sources regarding suffrage in America.
- TSW create a timeline to illustrate at how voting rights in America have changed over time.
- TSW synthesize information gained from the primary sources in order to write a narrative fiction piece.

Time Required

This lesson will require four 40-minute lessons.

Recommended Grade Range

3rd – 7th



Subject/Sub-Subject

Social Studies/ Reading/ Writing

Standards

Social Studies

H.3.3- Trace the history of voting rights in America. 1. Define voting, suffrage, and franchise. 2. Illustrate the expansion of voting rights in America.

English Language Arts

RI.3.3 Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.

W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear events sequences.

Library of Congress - Teaching with Primary Sources Skills:

- Identify details when observing a primary source(s)
- Connect primary sources to self, family, and/or community
- Ask questions related to observations and the topic of a primary source
- Place primary source(s) into a timeline
- Identify points of view with primary sources
- Support inquiry by posing questions that are relevant to learning goals and require analysis of primary sources
- Model primary source analysis that includes observing, reflecting, and questioning
- Use primary sources that connect to the subject/topic under study
- Presents primary sources in a historically accurate context
- Provide for students of varying abilities, learning styles and interests to learn with primary sources
- Require students to demonstrate knowledge or skills gained from the analysis of primary sources

Highlighted Strategies:

- Headlines (MTV)

Credits

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Materials

- Primary Sources – See Resource Guide at the end of this document.

Procedures

Introduction

- (DAY 1) TW display Primary Source 1 and ask students what they think is happening in the picture. TW inform students that these are women who are voting for the first time. TW pose question, “When do you think this picture was take?” TW inform students it was taken in 1920, which is when women were given the right to vote nationally by the 19th Amendment. TW pose question, “When did voting start in America?” TW remind students that America was formed in 1776. TW discuss that the voting laws were created by each state and were based off of the British system which allowed voting at 21 years old. Most states also required voters to be white male land owners. TW pose question, “What are the voting laws today?” TW inform students that today any US Citizen age 18 or older can vote as long as they are registered. TW ask students to write a headline for the picture and explain why they chose this headline. SW share with their group. TW have a few students share with the class. To end today’s lesson, TW have students begin a timeline of American Voting Laws. Timeline will begin with 1776 with white male landowners age 21 or older and end with 2018 US Citizen 18 years or older, also making sure to include 1920 19th Amendment grants women the right to vote.

During

- (DAY 2) TW present Primary Source 2 and pose the question, “Why do you thing this image is important to American Voting?” TW inform students that in 1867 the 14th Amendment gave all men who were US Citizens and age 21 or older the right to vote. Essentially this amendment, in most states just gave the voting rights to white men even if they did not own land, although it was meant to allow ALL men. Some states erected barriers to prevent black men from voting, but in 1870, the 15th Amendment was passed that forced states to remove racial barriers from voting laws. TW have students write a headline for this image and explain why they chose that headline. SW share with their tables and TW have some students to share with the class. SW end the lesson with adding the two new years to the timeline with information.
- (DAY 3) CW finish the timeline with information about the Indian Citizenship Act giving Native Americans the right to vote in 1924; Civil Rights Act in 1964 giving all American Citizens age 21 or older regardless of sex, race, religion, or education the right to vote and the 24th Amendment eliminating poll taxes; 1971 the voting age was lowered to 18 with the 26th Amendment; and, 1975 literacy tests were permanently removed.
- TW pose the question, “What if you were not allowed to vote, such as a woman before 1920, or a man who didn’t own land before 1868, how would you feel not being able to vote? Now imagine you lived in a time where you were not allowed to vote but the laws were just changed to allow you to vote. Write a journal entry about the first day you got to vote and what it was like. Consider all the information we have learned thus far.”
- (DAY 4) SW complete their writing pieces and share with the class. SW submit writing piece for summative assessment.



Assessment

Formative: Class discussions, headlines and explanations, timeline

Summative: Students will complete a narrative realistic fiction piece writing from the point of view of a person who obtained their voting rights during one of the movements.

Differentiation

- Students who are above grade level will be encouraged to collaborate with other students to create a reader's theater piece from their original writing piece.
- Students who are below grade level will be allowed to make a list of how voting rights have changed in America.

Supplementary Materials

Teaching with Primary Sources Resource Guide

Title: Voting in America

Historical Background:

Voting rights have changed drastically throughout American History. These primary sources will serve as a glimpse into history for this lesson.

Primary Source 1:

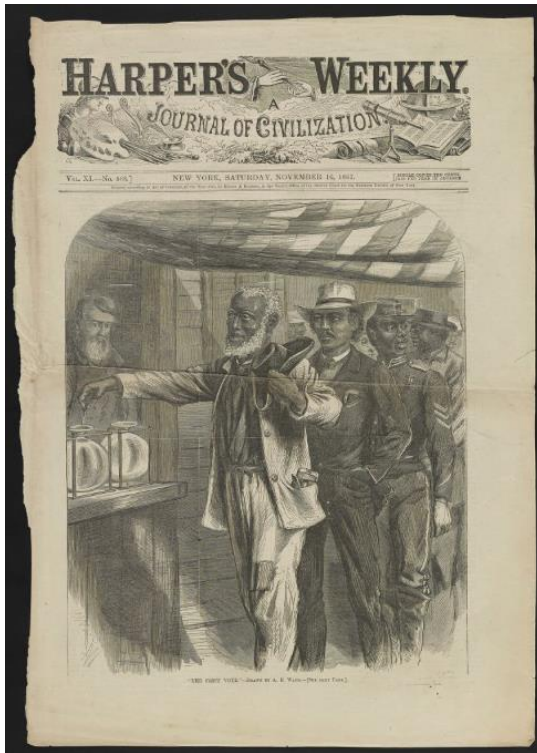


Title: Suffragettes Voting

Link: <https://www.loc.gov/resource/npsc.29566/>

Purpose: This picture will serve as the hook for the lesson.

Primary Source 2:



Title: The First Vote

Link: <https://www.loc.gov/item/2011648984/>

Purpose: This photograph will be used to introduce the 14th and 15th Amendments where African Americans were granted the right to vote.

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