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USING THE TEACHING GUIDE AND RESOURCE BOOK

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Lesson 4

Woman Suffrage

Chapter 5

Theme

In June 1919, Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment. Its ratification by the states in August of 1920 guaranteed women the right to vote and thus ended a long struggle for woman suffrage in the United States.

Overview

With the passage (1919) and ratification (1920) of the Nineteenth Amendment, all American women finally achieved the right to vote after a lengthy and difficult struggle. Victory took decades of agitation and protest: as Carrie Chapman Catt observed,

Young suffragists who helped forge the last links of that chain were not born when it began. Old suffragists who forged the first links were dead when it ended.

And in fact, even Susan B. Anthony, that most vigorous and dedicated of suffragists, died in 1906, never to see the passage of the national woman suffrage amendment in 1920, named in her honor.

The framers of the Constitution gave little, if any, thought to the voting rights of women although the issue already occupied the minds of many female citizens: Abigail Adams included a plea for woman suffrage in a letter to her husband John during the time when the Constitution was being drafted. Abigail Adams was only the first of a long line of

American women who unsuccessfully lobbied for the right to vote. But the real fight began in the mid-nineteenth century with the work of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Several generations of woman suffrage supporters lectured, wrote, marched, lobbied, and practiced civil disobedience to achieve what many Americans considered a radical change of the Constitution. And although few early supporters lived to see the final victory, the suffragists of the early 1900s carried on their fight.

Between 1878, when the constitutional amendment was first introduced in Congress, and August 18, 1920, when Congress finally ratified it, champions of voting rights for women worked tirelessly although the strategies for achieving their goal varied. In 1869, Stanton and Anthony formed the National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA), the first national organization devoted primarily to women's rights and dedicated to securing a constitutional amendment for national woman suffrage. A portion of the organization deserted later in the year to join Lucy Stone's more conservative American Woman Suffrage Association (AWSA), which pursued a strategy of passing suffrage acts in each state. These two organizations worked independently for the next thirty years, and both achieved very limited success. In 1890, the two groups rejoined under Stanton, dropped the women's rights issues and concentrated on woman suffrage through both a constitutional amendment and state campaigns for the next twenty-two years.

By granting women the vote, many western territories achieved the required number

of voters to gain statehood and thus came into the union as states with woman suffrage intact. By 1912, nine western states had adopted woman's suffrage legislation.

In addition to legislative efforts, other suffragists challenged male-only voting in the courts. As a test of the legality of the suffrage provision of the Fourteenth Amendment, Susan B. Anthony cast a vote in the 1872 presidential election in Rochester, New York. She was arrested, convicted (the judge had directed the jury to bring in a verdict of guilty before the trial began), and fined. Although Anthony refused to pay the fine, preferring to go to jail, the case was carried no further as anti-suffragists did not wish to make Anthony a martyr for her cause.

Reminiscent of Emily Pankhurst and the woman suffrage movement in England, militant suffragists in America used tactics such as parades, silent vigils, picketing, banners, and hunger strikes. Often supporters met with fierce resistance. Opponents heckled and sometimes physically abused the suffragists, many of whom were jailed.

By 1916, almost all of the major suffrage organizations had united behind the goal of a constitutional amendment. In 1917, during the First World War, suffragists marched in front of the White House to promote their cause. They were peaceful and respectful, but their audacity in bothering the president during wartime angered many. The women were pelted with food, their banners torn down and destroyed, and many were arrested. In terrible prison conditions, the women suffered indignities, such as bread-and-water diets, forced feeding with tubes, solitary confinement, or crowding into cells with prostitutes.

Finally in 1917, when the state of New York adopted woman suffrage, and in 1918, when President Woodrow Wilson changed his position to support an amendment, the

political balance began to shift in favor of the vote for women. In June 1919, Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment. When Tennessee became the thirty-sixth state to ratify the amendment on August 18, 1920, the amendment passed its final hurdle of obtaining the support of three-fourths of the states. Women went to the polls, and the face of the American electorate changed forever.

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The Lesson

Focus Activity – 5 minutes

1. Using the Transparency: *Votes for Women* and the anti-suffrage cartoon on page 32 of *War, Peace and All That Jazz*, ask the teams to **Think-Team-Share**:
 - Why do you think some Americans were against granting the vote to women?
 - Why do you think it took over seventy years of active protest for women to get to vote?
2. Using **Numbered Heads**, teams briefly share their responses with the class.

Teaching Activity – 5 minutes

1. Explain the simulation activity to the class.

The year is 1917. Your team is a civic group with a strong position (either pro or con) concerning the right of women to vote. You receive a letter inviting representatives from your civic group to meet with other groups to argue your position. Each member of your group will join a round table composed of members of other civic groups. Each person on the round table will have one minute to convince the others of his or her civic group's position.

Explain that since each of the members will be arguing their civic group's position to a different round table, the team must research and prepare a statement with strong arguments to support its viewpoint that each member can use.

To do this, the students read silently or **Partner Read** Chapter 5, "Mom, Did You Vote?" of *War, Peace and All That Jazz* to find support for their position. Remind students that it is their individual task to clearly state and strongly support their civic group's position and thus convince others to embrace their viewpoint.

Once your civic group has assembled your argument, be sure each member of your group is prepared to make that presentation to his or her round table at the conference.

Notes

Then each student makes a card to wear around his or her neck. On the card is your name, the name of the civic group you represent, and the slogan or position of your civic group.

Student Team Learning Activity – 25 minutes to prepare testimony and 20 minutes for testimony presentation

Stating a group position

1. Distribute the *Civic Group Identity Cards*, one card to each team. These state the name of the civic group. Be sure each team knows if it is for or against woman suffrage. Distribute a Student Sheet: *Our Position Statement* and a blank neck card with yarn to each civic group member.
2. **Reading for a Purpose:** The civic groups (teams) read Chapter 5, “Mom, Did You Vote?” of *War, Peace, and All That Jazz* to identify their respective positions and to assemble strong arguments to support their positions. Each civic group develops a slogan or position statement.

Each civic group member prepares for his or her role as spokesperson to the round table, practices his or her one-minute testimony, and creates a neck card to wear.

Note to the Teacher: The neck cards are different colors to indicate the specific round table each student joins.

3. **Circulate and Monitor:** Visit each team as the civic groups prepare their testimony. If necessary, assist the teams with accomplishing the task in an accurate, complete, and timely manner.
4. As soon as the civic groups are prepared (approximately 25 minutes), the representatives meet with their round tables. Each student in the civic group joins the other students whose neck cards are the same color. (All representatives with blue neck cards meet with the blue round table, those with red in another round table and so on.) There will be one student from each civic group in each round table. There should be four or five round tables in your classroom.
5. Welcome the civic group representatives to the conference, remind them that each person on the round table has one

War, Peace, and All That Jazz Resource Book

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POSITION STATEMENT

My name is _____, and I represent the

_____ Civic Group. I would like

to thank you for this opportunity to state our position on granting the right to vote to women.

We would like to encourage you to support/oppose _____

We support/oppose women suffrage because: _____

Thank you for your time and the opportunity to state our position.

Nineteenth Amendment



Passed by Congress
June 5, 1919
Ratified August 26, 1920

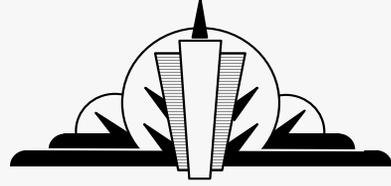
Section 1: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.

**War, Peace, and All That Jazz
Review I**



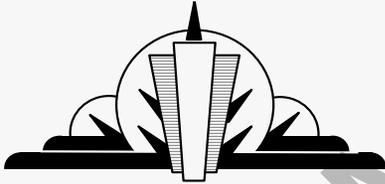
The Franchise at Last

**War, Peace, and All That Jazz
Review I**



The Franchise at Last

**War, Peace, and All That Jazz
Review I**



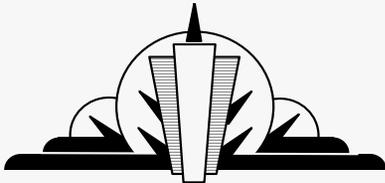
The Franchise at Last

**War, Peace, and All That Jazz
Review I**



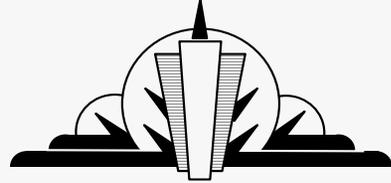
The Franchise at Last

**War, Peace, and All That Jazz
Review I**



The Franchise at Last

**War, Peace, and All That Jazz
Review I**



The Franchise at Last

25. Who were Alice Paul and Carrie Chapman Catt?

26. What was the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution?

27. Why did Alice Paul and other Americans picket the White House in 1917?

28. Why is the Nineteenth Amendment called the Susan B. Anthony Amendment?

29. Why were some people against woman suffrage?

30. What is suffrage?