

Lesson 2: Expanding Democracy Part I: The Pro-Suffrage Movement in Antebellum Massachusetts

Discipline: U.S. History I (grades 9-12)

Lesson Type: Reading comprehension and analysis of primary sources

Rationale: The readings provided in this lesson are vital to understanding the impact Massachusetts women had on the national women's suffrage movement of the 1840s and 1850s. Massachusetts women who were key figures in both the state-wide and national movement are quoted in the readings.

Instructional Objectives:

- 1) Students will be able to identify the key figures of the women's suffrage movement by completing the reading.
- 2) Students will be able to provide examples of the arguments supporting women's suffrage by discussing the reading as a class.

MA Curriculum Framework:

- USI.23: Analyze the rising levels of political participation and the expansion of suffrage in antebellum America (C, H).
- USI.33: Analyze the goals and effect of the antebellum women's suffrage movement. (H)

C3 Framework:

- D2.His.2.9-12: Analyze change and continuity in historical eras.
- D2.Civ.2.9-12. Analyze the role of citizens in the U.S. political system, with attention to various theories of democracy, changes in Americans' participation over time, and alternative models from other countries, past and present.
- D2.Civ.10.9-12. Analyze the impact and the appropriate roles of personal interests and perspectives on the application of civic virtues, democratic principles, constitutional rights, and human rights.

APUSH Curriculum Standards:

- 4.1.III.A: Americans formed new voluntary organizations that aimed to change individual behaviors and improve society through temperance and other reform efforts.
- 4.1.III.C: A woman's rights movement sought to create greater equality and opportunities for women, expressing its ideals at the Seneca Falls Convention.

Materials: Handouts 2B & 2C

Procedure:

Initiation (5-7 minutes): Have students answer the following Do Now question when class begins; What rights and privileges might women want in the mid-nineteenth century? Why? Allow 3-5 minutes for students to respond, then create a list of responses on the board.

Development (30 minutes): Ask students to recall the Seneca Falls Convention of 1848. Using that as an example, commence a verbal discussion of the following questions:

- 1) Define a convention.
- 2) Generally speaking, what are the goals of a convention?
- 3) What is needed to hold a convention? How should a convention be organized?
- 4) Who should attend a given convention?

When the discussion is complete, distribute excerpts from the 1850 Worcester Convention Proceedings on Handout 2B. Tell students that this convention was the first *national* convention of its kind, and it was held right in Worcester. Have students independently read the excerpts and answer the questions. Review the questions as a class, then, distribute excerpts from the 1851 national convention on Handout 2C, also held in Worcester. Students should read the handout and answer the questions.

Closing (5-7 minutes): Review the questions from Handout 2C.

Extension Activity: Distribute Handout 2D (can be used as an extension activity for other lessons, too). Answer to question – this was Lucy Stone’s address at the 1851 National Women’s Rights Convention.

Assessment Measures: Teachers can assess student learning through collecting the questions and/or class discussion of the questions.