

## LESSON PLAN:

### “I CAN’T VOTE, BUT MY VOICE CAN STILL BE HEARD!”

**Class:** Grade 7 Literacy

**Unit:** Nonfiction- Biographies

**Standards:** Commonwealth of Massachusetts Curriculum Frameworks

1. USI.33 Analyze the goals and effect of the antebellum women’s suffrage movement. (H)
  - A. the 1848 Seneca Falls convention
  - B. Susan B. Anthony
  - C. Elizabeth Cady Stanton
2. Grade Seven Concepts and Skills:
  4. Distinguish between primary and secondary sources and describe how each kind of source is used in interpreting history. (H)

**Topic:** The Women’s Suffrage Movement in Primary Documents and Biographies and Its Application to the Lives of Modern Seventh Grade Students.

#### Statement of Purpose:

This lesson plan is designed for Grade 7 Literacy, a skills-based class that seeks to improve the reading skills of students at Ayer Middle School. The course focuses primarily on literacy in the four content areas: Math, Science, Social Studies, and English. As part of the focus on English and Social Studies, the course focuses on a survey of various works of nonfiction, including biographies, textbooks, magazines, newspapers, and essays. This lesson plan is designed as an introduction to reading biographies, as well as understanding the difference between primary and secondary sources. The lesson will also allow students to apply historical events to their lives and make predictions based upon historical events.

#### Learning Objectives:

1. Reading comprehension of biographies
2. Compare and contrast biographical information
3. Understand external factors related to biographies
4. Understanding the difference between primary and secondary sources
5. Group collaboration
6. Writing and organizational skills

## **Schedule: Materials and Time**

### Overview:

This project will take four days of class time. The class activities will be a combination of independent reading, group work, lectures, and class discussions. After the lesson is finished, students will be required to write a paper. All of the materials that students will need are contained in the student packet, a sample of which is attached.

### Day One: Introduction (50-minute class)

1. Introduction to the lesson (25 minutes)  
Students will each be given a packet (see attached) and broken up into groups of 3-4 students. The teacher will then introduce the lesson to the students and will review the vocabulary words.
2. Introduction to Primary Sources (25 minutes)  
The teacher will introduce the difference between primary and secondary sources. Then, students will break up into their groups and will complete the chart in their packet (see attached)

### Day 2: Suffrage Movement (50 minutes)

1. Suffrage Movement Beginnings (50 minutes)  
The teacher will give a brief introduction of the women's suffrage movement. Then, students will read the primary source document by themselves, and then discuss it with their group, and answer the questions below the document. Then, the class will discuss the answers the groups came up with for the questions.

### Day 3: Biographies (50 minutes)

1. Biographies (50 minutes)  
Students will read the two short biographies of Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. They will then get into their groups and answer the questions related to the readings. After answering the questions, the class, as a whole, will discuss the readings.

### Day 4: Final Discussion/Project (50 minutes)

1. What Can I Do? Discussion (35 minutes)  
Then, in their individual groups, they will brainstorm ways they can be active in politics and fill out the corresponding chart.
2. Final Project Introduction (15 minutes)  
The teacher will then introduce the final project for the lesson and set a due date for the project.

## **Assessment**

1. Group Work:  
Each group of 3-4 students will complete and turn in a complete packet of worksheets. (See attached)
2. "What Can I do?" Essay:  
Based upon the readings and discussions, students will be required to write a five-paragraph essay on political involvement. While they are too young to vote,

seventh grade students can still be active in the political process. In this essay they will:

- a. Demonstrate an understanding of why political activism is important.
- b. Apply the lessons of the suffrage movement by discussing how the suffragists were active in politics.
- c. Discuss how, based on the lessons of the suffragists, they can be involved in the political process.

**Materials:**

Lesson packet (see below)

**References:**

**1. Declaration of Sentiments from the Seneca Falls Convention, 1948**

From: <http://www.suffragist.com/docs.htm>

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they were accustomed. However, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity, which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.

**2. Susan B. Anthony Biography**

From: <http://www.susanbanthonyhouse.org/biography.shtml>

**Biography of Susan B. Anthony**

Susan B. Anthony was born February 15, 1820 in Adams Massachusetts. She was brought up in a Quaker family with long activist traditions. Early in her life she developed a sense of justice.

She taught for five years, she fought for temperance, or an end to drinking alcohol. However, because she was a woman, she could not speak at the rallies.

Tim Dodd  
TAH- Women in American History  
Summer 2006- July 31-August 10  
Professor Susan Williams

Ignoring opposition and abuse, Anthony traveled, lectured and canvassed across the nation for the vote. She also campaigned for the abolition of slavery, women's rights to their own property and earnings, and women's labor organizations. In 1900, Anthony persuaded the University of Rochester to admit women. Throughout her life, Anthony fought for many things, including the abolition of slavery, education reform.

In 1856 Anthony became an agent for the American Anti-Slavery Society, arranging meetings, making speeches, putting up posters, and distributing leaflets. She encountered hostile mobs, armed threats, and things thrown at her.

In 1863, Anthony and Stanton organized a Women's National Loyal League to support and petition for the Thirteenth Amendment outlawing slavery. They went on to campaign for Black and women's full citizenship, including the right to vote, in the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments. They were bitterly disappointed and disillusioned when women were excluded. Anthony continued to campaign for equal rights for all American citizens, including ex- slaves, in her newspaper *The Revolution*, which she began publishing in Rochester in 1868.

In 1866 Anthony and Stanton founded the American Equal Rights Association and in 1868 they started publishing the newspaper *The Revolution* in Rochester, with the masthead "Men their rights, and nothing more; women, their rights, and nothing less," and the aim of establishing "justice for all."

In the 1870s, Anthony campaigned vigorously for women's suffrage on speaking tours in the West. Anthony, three of her sisters, and other women were arrested in Rochester in 1872 for voting. Anthony refused to pay her streetcar fare to the police station because she was "traveling under protest at the government's expense."

In 1877, she gathered petitions from 26 states with 10,000 signatures, but Congress laughed at them. She appeared before every congress from 1869 to 1906 to ask for passage of a suffrage amendment. Between 1881 and 1885 Anthony, Stanton and Matilda Joslin Gage collaborated on and published the *History of Woman Suffrage*.

Susan B. Anthony died in 1906 at her home on Madison Street in Rochester. All American adult women finally got the vote with the Nineteenth Amendment, also known as the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, in 1920.

### **3. Elizabeth Cady Stanton Biography**

**From:** <http://ecssba.rutgers.edu/studies/ecsbio.html>

Elizabeth Cady Stanton (1815-1902) was the nineteenth century's most prominent proponent of women's legal and social equality. In 1848, she and others organized the first national woman's rights convention in Seneca Falls, New York. She co-authored that meeting's Declaration of Sentiments; a document modeled on the Declaration of Independence, and introduced the most radical demand--for woman suffrage. Stanton's arguments for woman's rights began where the American Revolution left off.

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Born on 12 November 1815 in Johnstown, New York, Stanton was the daughter of Margaret Livingston and Daniel Cady, the town's most prominent citizens. She received her education at the Johnstown Academy and at Emma Willard's Troy Female Seminary.

Stanton met Susan B. Anthony in 1851, and they began to work together. As a single woman, Anthony was free to travel and earn her living from her reform work, providing Stanton with more active ways to educate and agitate for her reforms. Anthony, it turned out, was also more skillful than Stanton at organizing people to carry out their shared ideas.

After the Civil War, when Stanton felt free to travel, she became one of the best-known women in the United States. As president of the National Woman Suffrage Association, she was an outspoken social and political commentator, who debated the major political and legal questions facing the U.S. As a witty and popular lecturer touring the nation, she spoke on topics like maternity, the woman's crusade against liquor, child rearing, and divorce law, as well as constitutional questions and presidential campaigns. While she entertained her audiences, she challenged them to examine how inequality had distorted American society and consider how equality might be achieved.

By the 1880s Stanton had tired of travel and organizational leadership. Already sixty-five years old, she focused on her writing, producing one of her greatest legacies, three volumes of the *History of Woman Suffrage* (1881-85) with Anthony and Matilda Joslyn Gage. In this work, published several decades before women won the right to vote, the authors documented the individual and local activism that built and sustained a movement for woman suffrage.

Stanton died in October 1902 in an apartment in New York City that she shared with two of her grown children.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_ Class Period: \_\_\_\_\_

## “I Can’t Vote, But My Voice Can Still Be Heard!”

### INTRODUCTION:

In the United States, all citizens who are eighteen years or older are allowed to vote in elections. Because you are only 12 or 13, you are not allowed to vote. Does that mean that your opinions are not important, and that you cannot be involved in the political process? Definitely Not! In fact, before 1919, women in the United States were not allowed to vote! However, as you will learn, that did not stop them from being involved in the political process!

### IMPORTANT VOCABULARY:

In order to understand how women fought to gain the right to vote in the United States, you must first understand these vocabulary words:

1. Suffrage– The right or privilege of voting.
2. Susan B. Anthony– One of the main suffragists in the United States who helped give women the right to vote.
3. Elizabeth Cady Stanton– Friend of Stanton and other one of the major suffragists. She started fighting against slavery, but later became upset when black men got the right to vote, but women did not.
4. Seneca Falls– A village of west-central New York on the Seneca River east-southeast of Rochester. The first women's rights convention was held here in 1848
5. Suffragists– An advocate of the extension of political voting rights, especially to women
6. Biography– An account of a person's life written, composed, or produced by another:
7. Primary Source– A firsthand or eyewitness account of an event
8. Secondary Source– any document that describes an event, person, place, or thing,

## PRIMARY V. SECONDARY

Before starting this project, it is important for you to understand the difference between primary and secondary sources. Generally, a primary source is an account written by a person involved in an event, while a secondary source is written by someone who did not experience the event and relies on other people's accounts. Primary sources include things like the U. S. Constitution, Declaration of Independence, maps, pictures, and objects. Secondary sources are books, journal articles, and other writings about primary sources. With your groups, fill out the chart below with five examples each of types of primary and secondary sources, and three specific examples of each source.

PRIMARY SOURCES	SECONDARY SOURCES
Types of primary sources: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.	Types of secondary sources: 1. 2. 3. 4. 5.
Specific primary sources: 1. 2. 3.	Specific secondary sources: 1. 2. 3.

## HOW THE MOVEMENT STARTED: SENECA FALLS

To understand the suffrage movement, you must also understand the history of the movement. Most historians believe the movement began in 1848, when women met in upstate New York at what would be known as the Seneca Falls Convention. At this convention, the women wrote the Seneca Falls Declaration of Rights. To understand its purpose, first read the first two paragraphs of the declaration below. Then, with the members of your group, answer the questions that follow.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they were accustomed. However, when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity that constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.

From: <http://www.suffragist.com/docs.htm>

1. In the Declaration of Independence are the words “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” Why do you think the Declaration of Independence said, “All men are created equal” and not “all men and women are created equal?”

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2. Why would the women who wrote this document use words from the Declaration of Independence in their fight for the right of women to vote?

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3. Why did the women who wrote this document think the government of the U.S. needs to be fixed?

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4. Is this document a primary source or a secondary source? Explain your answer.

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## BIOGRAPHIES

Now, you will read the biographies of two women who were important in the suffragist movement, Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton. Then, with your groups, you will answer the questions that follow.

### Biography of Susan B. Anthony

Susan B. Anthony was born February 15, 1820 in Adams Massachusetts. She was brought up in a Quaker family with long activist traditions. Early in her life she developed a sense of justice.

She taught for five years, then fought for an end to drinking alcohol. However, because she was a woman, she could not speak at the rallies.

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In 1866 Anthony and Stanton founded the American Equal Rights Association and in 1868 they started publishing the newspaper *The Revolution* in Rochester, with the masthead "Men their rights, and nothing more; women, their rights, and nothing less," and the aim of establishing "justice for all."

In 1869 the suffrage movement split, with Anthony and Stanton's National Association continuing to campaign for a constitutional amendment, and the American Woman Suffrage Association adopting a strategy of getting the vote for women on a state-by-state basis. Wyoming became the first territory to give women the vote in 1869.

In the 1870s Anthony campaigned vigorously for women's suffrage on speaking tours in the West. Anthony, three of her sisters, and other women were arrested in Rochester in 1872 for voting. Anthony refused to pay her streetcar fare to the police station because she was "traveling under protest at the government's expense."

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commentator, who debated the major political and legal questions facing the U.S. As a witty and popular lecturer touring the nation, she spoke on topics like maternity, the woman's crusade against liquor, child rearing, and divorce law, as well as constitutional questions and presidential campaigns. While she entertained her audiences, she challenged them to examine how inequality had distorted American society and consider how equality might be achieved.

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#### BIOGRAPHY QUESTIONS

1. Is a biography a primary source or a secondary source? Explain.

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2. Besides trying to gain the right to vote for women, what other movements were Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton involved in?

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3. Why was writing an important way that Stanton and Anthony fought for the right of women to vote?

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4. How were Stanton and Anthony involved in the political process?  
List at least three ways.

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5. List 3 biographical facts about Stanton

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6. List 3 biographical facts about Anthony

## WHAT CAN I DO?

Like women before 1920, you do not have the right to vote in the United States. However, does that mean you cannot be involved in politics? With your group, create a list of eight different things you could do as a seventh grader to be involved in the political process

1.

2.

3.

4.

5.

6.

7.

8.

## FINAL PROJECT CHECKLIST

Your final project for this lesson will be to write an essay about what you, as someone who cannot vote, can do to be active in politics. Use this outline to help you complete your essay. The essay will be worth 100 points.

### STRUCTURE/CONTENT (50 points)

1. Introductory Paragraph (10 points)
2. 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph– Why it is important to be politically active (10 points)
3. 3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph– What lessons did you learn from the suffragists? (10 points)
4. 4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph– What can you do, as a nonvoter, to have your voice heard on issues important to you. (10 points)
5. Conclusion (10 Paragraphs)

### MECHANICS (30 points)

1. Proper grammar and spelling (20 points)
2. Double spaced and typed (5 points)
3. Correct heading (5 points)

### BIBLIOGRAPHY (20 points)

1. One primary source (10 points)
2. Two secondary sources (5 points each– 10 total)