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# WHAT IS NATIONAL HISTORY DAY®

National History Day (NHD) is a nonprofit organization that creates opportunities for teachers and students to engage in historical research. NHD is not a predetermined, by-the-book program but rather an innovative curriculum framework. Students learn history by selecting topics of interest and launching into year-long research projects. The mission of NHD is to improve the teaching and learning of history in middle and high school. The most visible vehicle is the NHD Contest.

When studying history through historical research, students and teachers practice critical inquiry, asking questions of significance, time, and place. History students become immersed in a detective story. Beginning in the fall, students choose a topic related to the annual theme and conduct extensive primary and secondary research. After analyzing and interpreting their sources and drawing conclusions about their topics' significance in history, students present their work in original papers, exhibits, performances, websites, or documentaries. These projects are entered into competitions in the spring at local, affiliate, and national levels, where professional historians and educators evaluate them. The program culminates at the national competition held each June at the University of Maryland at College Park.

Each year National History Day uses a theme to provide a lens through which students can examine history. The annual theme frames the research for both students and teachers. It is intentionally broad enough to allow students to select topics from any place (local, national, or world) and any period in history. Once students choose their topics, they investigate historical context, historical significance, and the topic's relationship to the theme by researching libraries, archives, and museums; through oral history interviews; and by visiting historic sites.

NHD benefits both teachers and students. For the student, NHD allows control of his or her learning. Students select topics that match their interests. NHD provides program expectations and guidelines for students, but the research journey is unique to each project. Throughout the year, students develop essential life skills by fostering intellectual curiosity. Through this process, students develop critical-thinking and problem-solving skills to manage and use information now and in the future.

The classroom teacher is a student's greatest ally in the research process. NHD supports teachers by providing instructional materials and hosting workshops at local, affiliate, and national levels. Many teachers find that incorporating the NHD model into their classroom curriculum encourages students to watch for examples of the theme and to identify connections in their study of history across time.



# EDITORS' NOTE

The National Endowment for the Humanities and National History Day created *Building a More Perfect Union* as part of the NEH's special initiative to advance civic education and the study of U.S. history and culture in preparation for the 250<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the signing of the Declaration of Independence. To learn more about this initiative, go to [neh.gov/250](http://neh.gov/250).

Looking ahead to 2026, we worked with scholars and teachers across the country to create two essays on the American Revolution and 15 lesson plans for middle school and high school social studies classrooms. These materials explore events, legislative accomplishments, and civic actions throughout U.S. history—from foreign policy to civil rights to debates surrounding citizenship—that collectively moved us toward a more perfect union. The primary source-rich lessons include compelling and guiding questions, inquiry-based activities, opportunities to consider multiple and competing perspectives, and supplementary materials available at EDSITEment, the NEH's website for K-12 humanities education. Each lesson also includes ideas for how to connect themes and concepts related to a more perfect union to other lesson topics presented in *Building a More Perfect Union* to support integration across curriculum.

All of the supporting materials (graphic organizers, rubrics, etc.) and primary source documents are available for free download on National History Day's website ([nhd.org/250](http://nhd.org/250)) and EDSITEment ([edsitement.neh.gov/teachers-guides/more-perfect-union-0](http://edsitement.neh.gov/teachers-guides/more-perfect-union-0)).

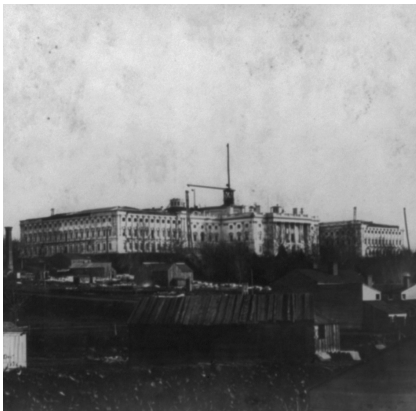


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*East front from grounds. Progressive views of dome, no. iii. Columns of peristyle in position.* Photograph. c. 1858. Library of Congress (2009631393). <https://www.loc.gov/item/2009631393/>.

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# “TOWARD A MORE PERFECT UNION”

**AUTHOR: Serena Zabin, Professor of History, Carleton College**

In 1763, colonists in North America proclaimed their pride in being part of the vast British Empire. Two decades later, many of those same colonists enthusiastically ratified a treaty that acknowledged their new nation. In those dizzying 20 years, institutions from slavery to diplomacy were broken and reformed as Great Britain tried to integrate its colonies further into its empire. In hindsight it is easy for us who look back to see patterns of protest, resistance, and violence culminating in the birth of a country. No one who lived through those years, however, could foretell that the result would be an independent nation clinging to the eastern edge of North America.

## PROTEST

When Great Britain vanquished France in 1763, it claimed huge swaths of Canada as part of its new empire. American Indian nations, which had not been invited to the treaty table, protested diplomatically and militarily. They forced the British to leave a significant military force in North America to manage these diplomatic relationships and conflicts between settlers and American Indian nations. At the same time, the British government began searching for new revenue sources to pay off the debt from the Seven Years' War (sometimes referred to in North America as the French and Indian War) and the expense of administering to its enlarged empire. The government decided the most effective way to pay off the debts meant closely regulating the laws and trade of its American colonies.

These new regulations annoyed some colonists more than others. For example, in 1763, the British government proclaimed that British colonists could not claim land west of the Appalachian Mountains. This Proclamation line attempted to reduce violence between colonists and the hundreds of Indigenous nations who lived in North America. When the British government argued that colonial settlement in the west was illegal, it frustrated trans-Appalachian speculators, such as George Washington, who wished to sell land legally to other European settlers. Nonetheless, colonial squatters simply took the land, in defiance of both the wealthy proprietors who claimed it and the British army that was supposed to enforce the ban.



1763 map of European claims to North America. Courtesy of the Lionel Pincus and Princess Firyal Map Division, The New York Public Library (483704). To access a digital image of this map, go to <https://digitalcollections.nypl.org/items/510d47db-c2e5-a3d9-e040-e00a18064a99>.

At the same time, the British government proposed several new taxes in an attempt to raise more money. The first bills affected only a few men directly, and they passed with little notice. The 1765 Stamp Act, however, generated the greatest protests, likely because it angered the best-connected and most politically articulate men, including printers and lawyers. Most of Great Britain's 26 American colonies, including the wealthiest Caribbean colonies such as Jamaica and Barbados, lodged angry protests against the act in colonial newspapers and in London. About half the colonies also saw riots that included the destruction of property and the burning of tax collectors' figures in effigy. In response to the protests, the British government retracted the tax but passed the 1766 Declaratory Act, which reminded the colonies that the British Parliament retained the power "to make laws and statutes...in all cases whatsoever."<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup> "Great Britain : Parliament - The Declaratory Act; March 18, 1766." Avalon Project, accessed August 15, 2020, [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/declaratory\\_act\\_1766.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/declaratory_act_1766.asp).

**W**HERE AS this Province labours under a heavy Debt, incurred in the Course of the late War; and the Inhabitants by this Means must be for some Time subject to very burthensome Taxes: And as our Trade has for some Years been on the decline and is now particularly under great Embarrassments, and burthened with heavy Impositions, our Medium very scarce, and the Balance of Trade greatly against this Country:

WE therefore the Subscribers, being sensible that it is absolutely necessary, in Order to extricate us out of these embarrassed and distressed Circumstances, to promote Industry, Oeconomy and Manufactures among ourselves, and by this Means prevent the unnecessary Importation of European Commodities, the excessive Use of which threatens the Country with Poverty and Ruin, DO promise and engage, to and with each other, that we will encourage the Use and Consumption of all Articles manufactured in any of the British American Colonies, and more especially in this Province; and that we will not, from and after the 31st of December next, purchase any of the following Articles, imported from Abroad.

Loaf Sugar, Cordage, Anchors, Coaches Chaises and Carriages of all Sorts, Horse Furniture, Men and Womens Hatts, Men and Womens Apparel ready-made, Household Furniture, Gloves, Men and Womens Shoes, Sole-Leather, Sheathing and Deck Nails, Gold and Silver and Thread Lace of all Sorts, Gold and Silver Buttons, Wrought Plate of all Sorts, Diamond Stone and Paste Ware, Snuff, Mustard, Clocks and Watches, Silversmiths and Jewellers Ware, Broad Cloths that cost above 10s. per Yard, Muffs Furrs and Tippets, and all Sorts of Millenary Ware, Starch, Women and Childrens Stays; Fire Engines, China Ware, Silk and Cotton Velvets, Gauze, Pewterers hollow Ware, Linseed Oyl, Glue, Lawns, Cambricks, Silks of all kinds for Garments, Malt Liquors and Cheese—And we further agree strictly to adhere to the late Regulation respecting Funerals, and will not use any Gloves but what are Manufactured here, nor procure any new Garments upon such an Occasion, but what is absolutely necessary.

Courtesy of Houghton Library, Harvard University (AB7. B6578.767w). To access a digital image, go to <https://nrs.harvard.edu/urn-3:FHCL.HOUGH:10873406>.

Notice that the agreement in the image emphasized a wish “to promote Industry, Oeconomy and Manufactures among ourselves,” rather than an overtly direct refusal to pay the Townshend Acts. More subtly, the document also pointed to the local taxes that Massachusetts residents have set on themselves to pay for their contribution to the Seven Years’ War.

Women owned many of Boston’s shops, and they sold food such as “loaf Sugar” and clothing including “all Sorts of Millenary Ware.” This sheet of signatures (one of eight) contains many women’s names, including Catharine Thompson, who signed with an “X,” and Hannah Peters, who may have been an African American woman.

The image shows a sheet of signatures from the Boston Tea Party agreement. The signatures are arranged in three columns. The names include:

- Column 1 (Left):** Hannah Peters, Mrs. Peters, Nathaniel, James, Mary, Joseph, James, James, Rebecca, Tho, Non, Tony, Jos, John, Jos, Jos.
- Column 2 (Middle):** New, Tom, Richard, Samuel, David, Mrs, Mrs, Joseph, Jane, Lydia, Elizabeth, Catharine, Rebecca, Elizabeth, Mrs, Mary, Mary.
- Column 3 (Right):** Jacob, Joseph, Thomas, John, John, Mary, Mrs, John, Jeremy, Philip, Edward, Martin, Harbottle, Nath, Elizabeth, Abigail, Mrs.

As a test of that power, the British Prime Minister Charles Townshend instituted a new tax on goods that the colonies could not produce at home, including tea, chocolate, and cloth. Colonists responded with boycotts. The wide public refusal to import or consume these goods turned ordinary items into political symbols that could be employed by all white colonists regardless of their political clout. Rich and poor white women played a central role in the boycotts, as they were responsible for so much household shopping. Consumer boycotts and the larger political implications of clothing and tea offered opportunities for male political leaders to co-opt women’s participation, but women also made explicit political statements of their own. In 1767, more than 600 Bostonians, including 53 women, pledged that they would not import the newly taxed goods.

These acts were not enacted to deny colonists their liberties, to burden them with taxes, to stifle their economy, or even simply to make them pay for their share of the empire (though that was certainly part of the goal). Rather, the acts worked to tie the colonies more closely to the mother country’s empire. Some British colonies were happy to enjoy the benefits of the empire. Most of the white colonists in the West Indies, for example, depended on British soldiers to enforce their regimes of racial slavery and were therefore willing to pay in exchange for military protection. Other colonists, however, especially on the mainland, preferred their autonomy and continued their protests.



In an attempt to enforce the Townshend duties in 1767 and 1768, the British government moved the Customs Board to Boston, which soon became the site of even more protests. After one particularly threatening riot, the Massachusetts governor, Francis Bernard, requested troops to help him keep order. From 1768 to 1772, a total of 2,000 soldiers, along with their wives and children, squeezed into the once-tiny peninsula of Boston. Soldiers and civilians became friendly and even married during those years, but their presence also emphasized to Bostonians how it felt to live in a more centrally organized empire.

Using the military as a police force was always a risky proposition, and few observers were surprised when a street scuffle ended in soldiers shooting five unarmed civilians in Boston's main square. Sons of Liberty, including Paul Revere, quickly dubbed the shooting "The Boston Massacre" and deployed it as a morality tale to colonists about the overweening power of the British government. The government, they argued, threatened colonists' liberties.

Hearing this argument, some enslaved colonists in Massachusetts began to make the case for their own liberty. In 1768, a woman in Lexington brought a successful suit against the man that she claimed illegally kept her enslaved. In 1772, the British case of *Somerset v. Stewart* led both white and Black colonists to believe—erroneously, as it turned out—that British courts had declared or would declare the practice of slavery illegal. Although the ruling was in fact very narrow, stating only that no one could be sold out of Britain into slavery, it nonetheless led white colonists to fear, and Black colonists to hope, that the British Empire meant to eliminate slavery as part of its new regulation of the American colonies.<sup>2</sup> In 1773, Felix Holbrook argued in a petition to the Massachusetts General Court that slavery itself should be abolished; other petitions followed regularly for another ten years, as enslaved Americans saw that they might be able to exploit the growing imperial crisis for their own goals.<sup>3</sup>

## RESISTANCE

Meanwhile, the dynamic between the British administration and white colonists continued to ratchet up the imperial conflict. A decision in 1773 to more closely oversee the governance of British colonies in India led to a new tax for tea in the American colonies. Although the new tax was balanced by a subsidy on tea imported by the government-supported East India Company, colonists warned that the Tea Act itself was another example of "Parliamentary despotism."<sup>4</sup>



This engraving by Paul Revere, showing a line of disciplined soldiers mowing down unarmed civilians, depicts the oppression of a people by the army of their own ruler. Courtesy of the Library of Congress (2008661777). To access a digital copy of this image, go to <https://www.loc.gov/item/2008661777/>.

Colonists again threatened boycotts of tea and insisted that they would ban British ships carrying the imported substance from entering their ports. Some importers in New York, Charleston, and Philadelphia agreed to send back their shipments, but not those in Boston. As a result, in December 1773, a small group of men threw the tea into Boston Harbor.

<sup>2</sup> Christopher Leslie Brown, "The Problems of Slavery," in *The Oxford Handbook of the American Revolution*, ed. Jane Kamensky and Edward G. Gray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 427–446, 435.

<sup>3</sup> Chernoh Sesay, "The Revolutionary Black Roots of Slavery's Abolition in Massachusetts," *The New England Quarterly* 87, no. 1 (2014): 99–131. For images of the originals, see <https://www.masshist.org/endofslavery/index.php?id=55>.

<sup>4</sup> Scaevola [pseudonym], *To the Commissioners Appointed by the East India Company, for the Sale of Tea, in America Gentlemen: Your Appointment, Which Is Notoriously Designed to Enforce the Act of 7th Gill for Raising a Revenue in America*, broadside, 1773, Library of Congress (rbpe1430340a). <https://www.loc.gov/item/rbpe1430340a>.

The British ministry reacted angrily to these protests and boycotts. The ministry passed another series of acts, referred to as the Intolerable or Coercive Acts, intended to punish Boston and force the colonists to pay for the destruction of the tea. The goal of isolating Massachusetts was unsuccessful. Instead, colonial legislators sent representatives in September 1774 to meet in Philadelphia as the First Continental Congress. Far from seeing themselves as Americans at that point, the representatives declared that they were entitled to the “rights, liberties, and immunities of free and natural-born subjects of England.”<sup>5</sup> As such, they insisted that British Parliament did not have the right to collect taxes without their representation in government. The Continental Congress authorized local associations to enforce more boycotts on British goods.

In an irate response, the British government urged the royal governors to act. In April 1775, the governor of Massachusetts sent British troops to look for military stores in the town of Concord; the troops encountered armed resistance both while there and in Lexington. In that same month, Lord Dunmore, the governor of Virginia, seized the military stores held in Williamsburg. When white Virginians protested, Dunmore invited enslaved Virginians to join him, promising freedom to anyone willing to bear arms for the British crown. Hundreds of Black women as well as men escaped to Dunmore’s warship. Seeing this, white colonists read Dunmore’s proclamation as an underhanded plot by the British crown to regulate slavery. These two events—bloodshed in New England and a declaration of freedom to enslaved Virginians—came together to shape the American Revolution.

When the Second Continental Congress opened in May 1775, the war had already begun, despite the absence of any agreement on either independence from Great Britain or confederation between the colonies. Even as the Congress quickly drafted a justification for taking up arms against British troops and appointed George Washington to act as general, it also sent the king what is now known as the Olive Branch Petition, asking for a “restoration” of “former harmony.”<sup>6</sup> Two days after King George III received the petition, he declared the colonies in rebellion. For a decade, colonists had feuded with British Parliament while declaring their loyalty to the king himself. George III’s rejection of the petition turned public opinion in the colonies against him, as did the publication of Thomas Paine’s *Common Sense* a few months later. As one Massachusetts politician said after reading the pamphlet, “Every sentiment has sunk into my well prepared heart.”<sup>7</sup>

Nonetheless, the decision to separate from Great Britain did not come easily. Although many local governments wrote their own declarations of independence, it was clear to the Second Continental Congress that doing so created a new set of problems: fierce conflicts between the colonies about their claims to American Indian nations’ lands west of the Appalachian Mountains, a weak negotiating position with other European powers, and especially the necessity of creating new state governments. Some colonies expressly told their delegates not to vote for independence precisely because it invalidated their colonial charters.



**British satirists mocked women’s participation in boycotts. In this image, a non-housebroken dog licks a baby left neglected under the table. Courtesy of the Library of Congress (96511606). To access a digital copy of this image, go to <https://www.loc.gov/item/96511606/>.**

<sup>5</sup> “Declaration and Resolves of the First Continental Congress, October 14, 1774,” accessed September 17, 2020, [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/resolves.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/resolves.asp).

<sup>6</sup> “Journals of the Continental Congress—Petition to the King: July 8, 1775,” Avalon Project, accessed August 15, 2020, [https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/contcong\\_07-08-75.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/contcong_07-08-75.asp).

<sup>7</sup> Joseph Hawley to Elbridge Gerry, Watertown, MA; February 18, 1776, reprinted in James Trecothick Austin, *The Life of Elbridge Gerry: To the Close of the American Revolution* (Boston: Wells and Lilly, 1828), 161.



A print of the Battle of Lexington, April 19, 1775. Courtesy of the Marian S. Carson Collection, Library of Congress (2015650276). To access a digital copy of this image, go to <https://www.loc.gov/item/2015650276/>.

The document that Thomas Jefferson drafted, and that the Continental Congress approved, consists of two very different parts. The stirring preamble, asserting the equality of all mankind, sits in an uncomfortable juxtaposition with the long list of specific indictments against King George III, several of which alluded to the racial conflicts of the previous decade. The document included a clear reference to Lord Dunmore's proclamation and gestures angrily toward British attempts to restrain colonial settlement in the west. To Thomas Jefferson's distress, his fiery denunciation of the slave trade was cut from the final version.<sup>8</sup>

## VIOLENCE

In the year between the bloodshed at Lexington and Concord (1775) and the Declaration of Independence (1776), white colonists eagerly signed up to fight, although usually for terms of only three to six months.

In New England, free and enslaved African American men also joined the Continental Army, hoping to win their freedom. Although George Washington hated the idea of any African Americans serving in the army, his desperate need for soldiers eventually compelled him to accept free and enslaved African American men as troops. In 1777, some states promised freedom to enslaved men who enlisted. In the American South, inspired by Lord Dunmore's proclamation, Black men—including some enslaved by George Washington himself—enlisted with the British army.<sup>9</sup>

<sup>8</sup> For Jefferson's draft, see "Jefferson's 'Original Rough Draught' of the Declaration of Independence," The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Princeton University, accessed August 15, 2020, <https://jeffersonpapers.princeton.edu/selected-documents/jefferson%E2%80%99s-%E2%80%99Original-rough-draught%E2%80%9D-declaration-independence>. For the final version, see "The Declaration of Independence as Adopted by Congress," The Papers of Thomas Jefferson, Princeton University, accessed August 15, 2020, <https://jeffersonpapers.princeton.edu/selected-documents/declaration-independence-adopted-congress>.

<sup>9</sup> Gary Nash, "The African Americans' Revolution," in *The Oxford Handbook of the American Revolution*, ed. Jane Kamensky and Edward G. Gray (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2012), 250–272.

Women joined the army as well. While few of them shot a gun, no campaign could have taken place without them. Colonial, British, and Hessian women provided material, social, and logistical support before, during, and after the Revolutionary War. Washington attempted to drive women away from the Boston military camps after the Battle of Bunker Hill in July 1775. He soon found, however, that he needed the women to help maintain the army.

His soldiers refused to wash clothes, insisting only women did that type of work, and his troops were then decimated by disease caused by body lice carried in dirty clothes. Following the example of the British army, the Continental army soon paid women to do laundry and prepare food.<sup>10</sup> After the war, a few white women even received pensions. While free Black women probably worked for the army like their white counterparts, Congress made no provision for enslaved women to gain their freedom through service to the newly formed nation.

As the war continued, the British army occupied various cities, partially to attract the support of those colonists who remained loyal to Great Britain. Urban occupation created another kind of battlefield, one that brought civilians into the conflict and often changed hearts and minds. Loyalists in New York were so disappointed by their treatment at the hands of British officials that many of them began to consider switching sides. Likewise, when the British occupied Charleston, South Carolina, they forced white men to give up their weapons, swear loyalty oaths, and remain confined on their property. By contrast, white women and bondspople, who previously had been under the control of those white men, discovered larger freedom to move about and even to leave home altogether.<sup>11</sup> Both men and women found themselves well rewarded by British authorities but ostracized when British troops withdrew. In places like New York's Westchester County, which was occupied repeatedly by both armies, most civilians (up to 80 percent, by some estimates) strove for neutrality and refused to join either side.<sup>12</sup>

Although the Revolutionary War was ostensibly fought between the British army and newly minted Americans, American Indians inevitably found themselves drawn into the conflict. Some nations, such as the Shawnee, tried to remain neutral, but most protected their homelands by riding the shifting diplomatic waves.<sup>13</sup> Washington, however, seized the opportunity to drag American Indian nations into the Revolutionary War when he ordered a scorched-earth campaign against the Iroquois/Haudenosaunee in 1779, an act that earned him the sobriquet "Town Destroyer."<sup>14</sup>

When the British surrendered at Yorktown in 1781, the story goes, they marched off the field to the tune of "The World Turned Upside Down." The tale is likely fictitious, but the sentiment that underpins it is not. The idea that an underfunded army triumphed over one of the greatest imperial fighting forces of the eighteenth century shocked many. The 20 years that preceded the surrender, however, formed an even more remarkable crucible of political theory, racial ideologies, and democratic practices, out of which was forged a new nation.

Four years after American and British diplomats signed the 1783 Peace of Paris, 55 men met in Philadelphia to frame a new national constitution. After long months of hammering out issues of governance, property, and slavery, the convention turned over the document to the Committee on Style. It was this group of men who crafted the constitution's preamble. While the delegates' draft of their preamble was unadorned and workmanlike—"We the People of the States of New-Hampshire, Massachusetts, Rhode-Island and Providence Plantations, Connecticut, New-York, New-Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland, Virginia, North-Carolina, South-Carolina, and Georgia, do ordain, declare and establish the following Constitution for the Government of Ourselves and our Posterity"—the Committee on Style offered a more soaring vision of the constitution's possibilities. The editing committee collapsed the individual states into a single "People" and asserted the goals of the new government, "We, the People of the United States, in order to form a more perfect union, establish justice..."<sup>15</sup>

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<sup>10</sup> Holly A. Mayer, *Belonging to the Army: Camp Followers and Community during the American Revolution* (Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 1996), 140-142.

<sup>11</sup> Lauren Duval, "Mastering Charleston: Property and Patriarchy in British-Occupied Charleston, 1780-82," *The William and Mary Quarterly* 75, no. 4 (November 1, 2018): 589-622.

<sup>12</sup> Sung Bok Kim, "The Limits of Politicization in the American Revolution: The Experience of Westchester County, New York," *The Journal of American History* 80, no. 3 (1993): 868-89. <https://doi.org/10.2307/2080407>.

<sup>13</sup> Kathleen DuVal, *Independence Lost: Lives on the Edge of the American Revolution* (New York: Random House, 2015).

<sup>14</sup> Colin G. Calloway, *The Indian World of George Washington: The First President, the First Americans, and the Birth of the Nation* (New York: Oxford University Press, 2018).

<sup>15</sup> William Treanor, "The Case of the Dishonest Scrivener: Gouverneur Morris and the Creation of the Federalist Constitution," *Georgetown Law Faculty Publications and Other Works*, January 1, 2019, <https://scholarship.law.georgetown.edu/facpub/2163>.

At the time, the Committee on Style meant only to emphasize that collapsing individual states into a federal government (“We, the People,”) led to “a more perfect union.” But over time, that well-wrought phrase has come to mean much more. Generations of Americans have wondered what it means to create a “more perfect” country, to “establish justice,” and to live up to other parts of the U.S. Constitution’s preamble. Just as the story of the preamble itself is rooted in a particular historical moment and yet transcends it, so the history of the American Revolution both limits and inspires the country’s subsequent history. The complex political theory that underpinned ideas of protest, community, and citizenship has fostered new visions of a road to a perfect nation. The racial ideologies that suffused the world of revolutionaries opened up questions of who could be an American, even when the answers to those questions were often rigid and narrow. Democratic practices helped create a creed of equality that at times inspired change and, at other times, served only to trumpet its own hypocrisy.

The lessons that follow are stories about people’s attempts to make the nation a more perfect union. Sometimes people understood explicitly that such perfection was their goal. Other times, they pulled on strands of U.S. history such as racial separation, gendered expectations, and suspicion of outsiders. Nor did Americans always realize exactly what they were doing at any given moment. But these ideas—these conflicts—are baked into our history, and show up again with some frequency. “A more perfect union” is at the end of a path that circles around and loops over itself. But no matter where we are on that road, our origins—heroic, shameful, and sometimes downright contradictory—are always with us.



Howard Chandler Christy's 1940 painting, *Scene at the Signing of the Constitution of the United States*, hangs in the East Stairway of the House Wing of the U.S. Capitol Building in Washington, D.C. To learn more about the painting, go to <https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/art/signing-constitution>.

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: After the American Revolution: Free African Americans in the North  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/after-american-revolution-free-african-americans-north>

Lesson Plan: “Common Sense”: The Rhetoric of Popular Democracy  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/common-sense-rhetoric-popular-democracy>

Lesson Plan: Native Americans and the American Revolution: Choosing Sides  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/native-americans-role-american-revolution-choosing-sides>

Lesson Plan: Voices of the American Revolution  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/voices-american-revolution>

Student Activity: American War for Independence: Interactive Map  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/student-activities/american-war-independence-interactive-map>

Humanities Article: “Love and the Revolution”  
<https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2013/septemberoctober/statement/love-and-the-revolution>

# THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION IN FOUR QUESTIONS: DIGGING DEEPER FOR UNFAMILIAR STORIES

AUTHOR: Adrienne G. Whaley, Director of Education and Community Engagement, Museum of the American Revolution

“ There is nothing more common than to confound the terms of the American revolution with those of the late American war. The American war is over: but this is far from being the case with the American revolution. On the contrary, nothing but the first act of the great drama is closed. It remains yet to establish and perfect our new forms of government; and to prepare the principles, morals, and manners of our citizens, for these forms of government, after they are established and brought to perfection.

Dr. Benjamin Rush  
Address to the People of the United States, January 1787<sup>1</sup>

What was the American Revolution? When, even, was the American Revolution? Perhaps these sound like simplistic questions when teachers and students dedicate so much time every year to the study of this foundational moment in United States history. Yet Dr. Benjamin Rush, a Philadelphia physician and a signer of the U.S. Declaration of Independence, invited Americans to ask these questions in 1787, while the war was still quite fresh in their minds. He also implicitly encouraged them to ask others as well, as they considered the years-long struggle they had just been through and what work needed to be done for the future of the nation.

The American Revolution is a huge topic—one that is too big for a single National History Day® (NHD) project. But it has many different avenues and stories that might speak to different students. The following questions, topics, and resources are meant to spark historical research or new questions.

## HOW DID PEOPLE BECOME REVOLUTIONARIES?

Before we can answer the question “How did people become Revolutionaries?,” we really must first ask, “Who were the people of the American Revolution?” British North America on the eve of the American Revolution was a richly diverse place. Approximately 2.5 million people lived in what would become the United States of America.

As we approach the 250th anniversary of the Declaration of Independence, the American Revolution offers students hundreds of potential topic ideas for National History Day projects. Consider some of the ideas and digital resources in this article to inspire student research.

The Revolutionary era was full of conflict and contradictions, soaring ideals, surprising successes, and deep disappointments. The more we can grapple with its complexities, the better equipped we will be to understand and actively participate in the United States in which we live today.

One way to begin is as the Museum of the American Revolution (MoAR) does, with four questions that serve as the organizing structures of our core galleries:

- > How did people become Revolutionaries?
- > How did the American Revolution survive its darkest hour?
- > How revolutionary was the war?
- > What kind of nation did the American Revolution create?

Taking a self-paced Virtual Museum Tour ([museumvirtualltour.org/](https://museumvirtualltour.org/)) of the Museum of the American Revolution will allow students to see how artifacts and documents can be analyzed to draw conclusions in response to these questions.

<sup>1</sup> *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution*, ed. John P. Kaminski, Gaspare J. Saladino, Richard Leffler, Charles H. Schoenleber, and Margaret A. Hogan (Charlottesville: University of Virginia Press, 2009).

Approximately one-tenth of the North American population were American Indians, people who had long called this land home, and who represented great diversity among themselves. From the Choctaw and the Cherokee nations in the American South and Southeast to the nations of the Iroquois Confederacy in upstate New York to those of the Wabanaki Confederacy in New England, the men, women, and children in these cultural groups spoke different languages, practiced different customs, and had varying relationships with the land, the spiritual world, each other, and the various peoples of European and African descent with whom they came into contact.<sup>2</sup>

Those Europeans came from the Netherlands and Denmark, German principalities, France, Spain, and especially the British Empire, including England, Ireland, Scotland, and Wales. Some were recent arrivals while others lived in North America for generations. These colonists engaged in trade networks that connected them to the Caribbean, Central and South America, Europe, Africa, and Asia, reaching east across the Atlantic Ocean and west across what they considered the frontier, to the Pacific Ocean and Asia's eastern shores. Juniata College owns one fascinating object that may be evidence of this trade: a small Muslim charm made of copper, which reads, in Arabic, "No God but Allah." Found at Fort Shirley in western Pennsylvania, it may have been carried by a European colonist or American Indian who had directly or indirectly traded with a member of the African or Asian Muslim community, or it may have been owned by a free or enslaved person of African descent—a number of whom were Muslim—who was at the fort on business or performing labor.<sup>3</sup>

People of African descent made up approximately one-fifth of the population of the colonies on the eve of the American Revolution. Most were enslaved, serving those who claimed to own them from the fishing and shipping communities of New England to the indigo, rice, and wheat plantations of the mid-Atlantic and American South. By the 1760s, some had lived in the colonies for generations, while others were recent arrivals. They were from cultural groups such as the Fon, Igbo, Hausa, Akan, and Mande, and brought a variety of skills, beliefs, and cultures with them. One way to learn more about their identities and roots, and their pathways to the European colonies to which they were forcibly taken, is to explore the many resources available at [slavevoyages.org](http://slavevoyages.org). Historic Hudson Valley's project, *People, Not Property* ([peoplenotproperty.hudsonvalley.org/](http://peoplenotproperty.hudsonvalley.org/)), explores what life was like for these men, women, and children as they worked to build communities despite the hardships of their enslavement. Sites like *The Geography of Slavery* ([www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/gos/](http://www2.vcdh.virginia.edu/gos/)), and *Slave Revolt in Jamaica, 1760-1761* ([revolt.axismaps.com/](http://revolt.axismaps.com/)) help to illustrate how enslaved people of African descent resisted their status as property, both in the mainland colonies and in the British Caribbean.



Philadelphia powder horn, c. 1770, Museum of the American Revolution (2003.00.0123). Link to an image of this artifact: <https://www.amrevmuseum.org/collection/philadelphia-powder-horn>.

If we are going to ask how people became Revolutionaries, we should remember that most American colonists were not, in fact, Revolutionaries. Many colonists felt that it was logical, safe, lucrative, or morally correct to remain loyal to King George III and the British Empire. After the French and Indian War, many colonists felt a strong affinity to the British Empire. They were proud to be subjects within it. Material culture, such as the Philadelphia powder horn seen above, bore both symbols of the empire and of specific colonies.

#### QUESTIONS TO INSPIRE NHD RESEARCH:

- > How did freedom change over time for women, indentured servants, or enslaved Africans?
- > How did various groups of people attempt to negotiate their place in colonial society?
- > How did American Indians interact with the French and other groups who moved about the Atlantic World?

<sup>2</sup> A map exploring a number of these nations is featured in the Museum of the American Revolution's core gallery and in the Virtual Museum. It can be found in the Oneida Nation Theatre.

<sup>3</sup> At the time of writing, this charm is on loan to the Museum of the American Revolution and can be found in the Declaration of Independence gallery, or in the Virtual Museum's *Becoming Revolutionaries* section, under the subsection *The Promise of Equality*: <https://museumvirtualltour.org/>.

American colonial tavern signs, ceramics, home goods, and other objects displayed the names, likenesses, and symbols of British monarchs and military leaders. Many examples of this can be seen in the *Rule Britannia!* gallery of the museum (through the Virtual Museum or in person) or in the Collections area of the website. When conflict arose, many colonists continued to feel this affinity, while others were swayed by other critical concerns.

In 1763, King George III established a boundary along the Appalachian Mountains beyond which European colonists were not to go. He hoped to maintain peace with American Indians who were frustrated by continued demands upon their land and the displacement of their families and communities. As conflict between the American colonists and representatives of the British Empire heated up in the mid-1760s and 1770s, both sides courted American Indians, seeking their soldiers, their knowledge of the land, and other skills and resources they could provide. Leaders such as Thayendanegea of the Mohawk Nation and Cunne Shote of the Cherokee Nation traveled to London to build relationships with and assess the trustworthiness of the king.<sup>4</sup> The growing colonial unrest forced them, and many others, to evaluate their options and decide what would best benefit their communities. Ultimately, the Oneida Nation and part of the Tuscarora Nation decided to fight alongside the American colonists. This put them at odds with their brothers and sisters in the Iroquois Confederacy, though those bonds have since been repaired. What has the American Revolution meant to them?

People of African descent likewise had to decide which side was most likely to serve their needs. For those who were enslaved, who could offer them freedom, and for those who were free, who offered the best possibility for fair and equal treatment? *Finding Freedom* ([www.amrevmuseum.org/interactives/finding-freedom/app](http://www.amrevmuseum.org/interactives/finding-freedom/app)) uses the stories of five people of African descent living in Virginia in 1781 to explore the difficult decisions that were necessary for these men and women to navigate the complexity of this time to what they hoped would be their benefit. Ultimately, 15,000 to 20,000 men of African descent chose to fight with the British to gain their freedom, approximately three times as many as had chosen to support the Revolutionaries.

Remembering that the British colonial world encompassed more than just the 13 colonies, one might also look at Canada, the Caribbean, and the Ohio territories and ask, why did they choose not to ally with the Revolutionaries? Students can begin to explore this in the *Season of Independence: The People Speak* digital resource, also on the MoAR website: [www.amrevmuseum.org/interactives/season-of-independence/app](http://www.amrevmuseum.org/interactives/season-of-independence/app).

<sup>4</sup> A portrait of Cunne Shote was painted during his trip, around 1762, and can be seen at the Gilcrease Museum in Tulsa, Oklahoma: <https://collections.gilcrease.org/object/01761015>.

<sup>5</sup> Images of the original Declaration of Independence, as well as a transcription, can be found online through the National Archives and Records Administration, at <https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/declaration>.

With all of this said, why then, did people choose to be Revolutionaries? Certainly, many of the causes are well-known: taxation without representation, the large presence of a standing army, perceived legislative overreach by British Parliament, and a sense of being abandoned by King George III. American colonists petitioned, boycotted, organized, and protested in a variety of ways, some well-known, some less so. For example, the Boston Tea Party is quite familiar to most Americans. But New Yorkers and Philadelphians turned ships carrying tea, away from their docks. Revolutionaries in Charleston, South Carolina, left a shipment of tea in a warehouse to rot rather than let it be sold. New Jerseyans burned a shipment of tea and an angry crowd in Annapolis, Maryland, forced merchants to burn their ship because it was carrying a load of tea. How did colonists across the colonies become Revolutionaries?

The king's role in "transporting large armies of foreign mercenaries to complete the works of death, desolation, and tyranny" was particularly galling for angry—and perhaps fearful—colonists.<sup>5</sup> By the drafting of the Declaration of Independence, King George III had contracts with the princes of regions in modern-day Germany, such as Hesse-Kassel, Brunswick, and Anspach-Bayreuth, to hire their subjects as soldiers.

#### QUESTIONS TO INSPIRE NHD RESEARCH:

- > How and why did individuals or groups become—or choose not to become—Revolutionaries? What reasons did the patriots give for challenging their reigning regime?
- > Why did Loyalists (or Tories) make the decision to stay loyal to king and country?
- > How and why did enslaved men and women, American Indian nations, and women become involved in the American Revolution? What did they hope to accomplish?





**Christopher Ludwick's Cookie Board, 1754–1801, Museum of the American Revolution. Access an image of the artifact at <https://www.amrevmuseum.org/collection/christopher-ludwicks-cookie-board>.**

As historians have often taken the Revolutionaries at their word, the perception of these soldiers as mercenaries has persisted for over a century, but new analysis suggests that these men had much less control over their circumstances and benefitted much less than one might assume a soldier of fortune would.<sup>6</sup> Interestingly, some even chose to desert their armies and blend into local German communities in the colonies, hoping life here would offer them a better chance at freedom. German immigrant Christopher Ludwick, a baker and confectioner who became Baker General of the Continental Army, was personally involved in recruiting them and even caring for German prisoners of war. What did the dream of freedom, liberty, and equality mean for them, and for Ludwick, as a more established immigrant?<sup>7</sup>

Choosing sides was a matter of logic and loyalty, but it was also a matter of emotion, and visual culture was an effective tool at swaying that. Revolutionaries, Loyalists, and the British used symbols and imagery to communicate powerful ideas about right versus wrong, belonging versus not belonging, strength versus vulnerability, and more.

<sup>6</sup> To learn more about Hessians in the American Revolution, see David Hackett Fischer, *Washington's Crossing* (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2004).

<sup>7</sup> Almost a century later, in his *Speech at Chicago* (July 10, 1858), Abraham Lincoln used the metaphor of an “electric cord” as connecting immigrants in his era to the ideals of the American Revolution. The speech is challenging in its understanding of race and attitudes toward African Americans, but that complexity is worth exploring. The speech has been published in the *Collected Works of Abraham Lincoln*, Volume 2, published by The Abraham Lincoln Association in 1953, and has been made available online through the University of Michigan at <https://quod.lib.umich.edu/l/lincoln/lincoln2/1:526?rgn=div1;view=fulltext>.

<sup>8</sup> This image can be found in the Collections section of the MoAR website, or in the American Liberties gallery. In the Virtual Museum, this area is referred to as *Propaganda on Both Sides* and contains a side-by-side examination of details of both propaganda pieces.

Many students are familiar with Paul Revere's engraving of Henry Pelham's image of the Boston Massacre and are aware that it is a form of political propaganda. The British created similar works, such as *A New Method of Macarony Making, as Practised at Boston*.<sup>8</sup> The Library of Congress has a large collection of British satirical prints from the Revolutionary Era ([loc.gov/collections/british-cartoon-prints/](https://www.loc.gov/collections/british-cartoon-prints/)), which are fun to explore.

During World War II, the U.S. government created a poster to encourage and inspire Americans on the homefront to serve their country. Alongside images of modern troops, it featured the phrase “Americans will always fight for liberty,” images of Continental Army soldiers, and the flag that is believed to have flown at George Washington's headquarters and to have traveled with him on the field. This poster can be seen online in the Museum's *Multimedia Timeline of the American Revolution*.



**Washington's Headquarters Flag, 1777–1783, Museum of the American Revolution. You can access an image of this artifact here: <https://www.amrevmuseum.org/collection/washingtons-headquarters-flag>.**

The Museum of the American Revolution's *Multimedia Timeline of the American Revolution* ([amrevmuseum.org/timeline/](https://www.amrevmuseum.org/timeline/)) includes a number of examples of objects with meaningful symbols of the Revolutionary era and war, as well as examples of how this history has been commemorated or celebrated over time.

## HOW DID THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION SURVIVE ITS DARKEST HOUR?

American colonists faced a variety of challenges over the course of the war, from not enough troops to troops that were not trained in a standardized fashion, constantly low supplies to disease and low morale. So, how were the 13 colonies (later, states) able to beat the British Empire? One answer worth exploring is the role of military intelligence, and of the people who gathered it: spies. Steer students to fascinating resources, such as *Spy Letters of the American Revolution*, housed at Clements Library at the University of Michigan ([clements.umich.edu/exhibit/spy-letters-of-the-american-revolution/](http://clements.umich.edu/exhibit/spy-letters-of-the-american-revolution/)). While many students know the names Nathan Hale and Benedict Arnold, a much larger network existed to help the U.S. Continental and British Armies gather intelligence and plot military strategy. Students might explore George Washington's famous spy letter, housed at the International Spy Museum ([spymuseum.org/exhibition-experiences/about-the-collection/collection-highlights/george-washington-spy-letter/](http://spymuseum.org/exhibition-experiences/about-the-collection/collection-highlights/george-washington-spy-letter/)) or check out their exhibit on how *Spying Launched a Nation*.<sup>9</sup>

Students might look to other nations involved in the American Revolution. While the British and the Americans take center stage, much was accomplished because of alliances made with other countries. For instance, help from allies such as the Oneida and part of the Tuscarora nation is important to explore as well, including their military role at the Battle of Oriskany and their role in sharing supplies during the Valley Forge encampment. Other students might investigate the role of the French government in supporting the Revolutionaries. Students can see French swords and firearms on the Museum's website, as well as commemorative materials from the Marquis de Lafayette's return to the United States in 1824.

### QUESTIONS TO INSPIRE NHD RESEARCH:

- > How have the Declaration of Independence, the Articles of Confederation, and the U.S. Constitution inspired other movements in history?
- > How did other countries emulate the American Revolution?
- > How did activists for civil rights and women's rights use the language of these documents to promote their cause?

<sup>9</sup> The International Spy Museum's SpyCast is a podcast that interviews ex-spies and espionage scholars on a variety of topics. Students might find the episode, "Spies, Patriots, and Traitors: American Intelligence in the Revolutionary War" interesting. Access the podcast at [spymuseum.org/multimedia/spycast/episode/author-debriefing-spies-patriots-and-traitors-american-intelligence-in-the-revolutionary-war/](http://spymuseum.org/multimedia/spycast/episode/author-debriefing-spies-patriots-and-traitors-american-intelligence-in-the-revolutionary-war/).

<sup>10</sup> Look both in the Collections area (<https://www.amrevmuseum.org/learn-and-explore/collection>) and in the *Multimedia Timeline of the American Revolution* ([www.amrevmuseum.org/timeline/](http://www.amrevmuseum.org/timeline/)).

<sup>11</sup> This practice, never an official policy of the Continental Army as a whole, was named for its promoter, Thomas Sumter, a brigadier general in the South Carolina militia. Beginning in 1781, he used the offer of pay in confiscated Loyalist property, including enslaved people, as a recruitment incentive to enlist new soldiers. Georgia practiced a similar policy. A useful brief explanation can be found in Matthew Spooner's essay, "The Problem of Order and the Transfer of Slave Property in the Revolutionary South," found in *The American Revolution Reborn*, edited by Patrick Spero and Michael Zuckerman. For a similar practice in Virginia, consult *The Politics of War: Race, Class, and Conflict in Revolutionary Virginia*, by Michael A. McDonnell.

But they can also see a pair of Spanish pistols of the type that were carried by Spanish officers in the Revolutionary War battles that took place in the Mississippi Valley and along the Gulf of Mexico toward the end of the war.<sup>10</sup>

## HOW REVOLUTIONARY WAS THE WAR? WHAT KIND OF NATION DID THE AMERICAN REVOLUTION CREATE?

The Revolutionary War accomplished something the colonists did not initially intend: American independence from Great Britain. But from the moment they set this in their sights, they knew they needed to begin laying the foundation for self-governance. While much focus is placed on the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and perhaps the Articles of Confederation, students should also look at the state constitutions that were created during the years of Revolution.

Pennsylvania's state constitution, for example, was considered quite radical, and perhaps the most democratic of them all, though it prohibited Jewish individuals and atheists from serving in public office. Massachusetts' constitutional ratification process served as a model for that of the federal Constitution years later. Many constitutions removed property ownership requirements for their voters, typically white males. New Jersey's constitution removed gender and racial limitations and for almost 31 years, women and free people of African descent who owned enough property were able to vote in the state. The Museum's online exhibit, *When Women Lost the Vote* ([amrevmuseum.org/exhibits](http://amrevmuseum.org/exhibits)), is an excellent source of information on this topic.

Treatment of people of African descent—and the rights they were afforded—are another way of exploring the revolutionary nature of the war and the era as a whole. On one hand, soldiers of African descent generally fought in integrated units within the Continental Army, but on the other, some enslaved people were actually given to white soldiers in South Carolina state regiments as payment for those soldiers' service, through a policy known as "Sumter's law."<sup>11</sup> Gradual abolition, by which children born after a certain date to enslaved mothers were freed in their 20s or 30s, began in the northern states during the war. However, the American North continued to invest in and use the products produced by the labor of enslaved people, and slavery flourished in the southern region after the war's end.

African American women like Sarah Louisa Forten, her mother, and sisters—the family members of a Revolutionary War privateer named James Forten—helped found the Philadelphia Female Anti-Slavery Society in 1833 to fight against the practice.

Websites like those of James Madison’s Montpelier ([montpelier.org/learn/tag/slavery/](http://montpelier.org/learn/tag/slavery/)), George Washington’s Mount Vernon ([mountvernon.org/george-washington/slavery/](http://mountvernon.org/george-washington/slavery/)), and Thomas Jefferson’s Monticello ([monticello.org/slavery/](http://monticello.org/slavery/)) are useful to explore the contradictions between slavery and freedom in the lives of the early nation’s prominent leaders and the experiences of those enslaved by them. Other sites, like the African Burial Ground ([nps.gov/afbg/index.htm](http://nps.gov/afbg/index.htm)), administered by the National Park Service, focus exclusively on the stories and experiences of people of African descent.

Exploring the pension applications of veterans of the Continental Army opens up additional paths of inquiry and can highlight both their experiences during the war and their circumstances in the early to mid-1800s as they sought financial assistance from often difficult situations. The National Archives and Records Administration holds the original applications, but they have been digitized and placed online by Ancestry.com and Fold3.com (libraries sometimes offer free access to these services). Many transcriptions of applications for veterans from the American South, however, as well as for many who were from elsewhere but fought in the southern region, can be found online for free at [revwarapps.org/](http://revwarapps.org/). How did these men, and sometimes, their widows, think about the war and what it had meant to and for them?

What did Loyalists, some of whom evacuated the United States at war’s end, but many of whom did not, believe the American Revolution meant to and for them? Some answers can be found in Loyalist claims for compensation from the British government. These, and other records, can be found in repositories such as Library and Archives Canada ([bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/loyalists/Pages/introduction.aspx](http://bac-lac.gc.ca/eng/discover/military-heritage/loyalists/Pages/introduction.aspx)), The Loyalist Collection of the University of New Brunswick ([loyalist.lib.unb.ca/](http://loyalist.lib.unb.ca/)), and the National Archives of the United Kingdom ([nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/american-revolution/](http://nationalarchives.gov.uk/help-with-your-research/research-guides/american-revolution/)).

The Revolutionary nature of the war can be explored through the way in which maps and cartography were used to project political and social understandings and ideals for a new nation. The American Philosophical Society’s exhibit, *Mapping a Nation* ([amphilsoc.org/museum/exhibitions/mapping-nation-shaping-early-american-republic-online-exhibition](http://amphilsoc.org/museum/exhibitions/mapping-nation-shaping-early-american-republic-online-exhibition)), is a useful starting point for this topic.

Finally, as students ask, “What kind of nation did the Revolution create?” they can choose to examine subsequent events in United States history through the lens of the goals and ideals of the American Revolution. This, of course, would bring them back to Benjamin Rush’s original examination of the American Revolution. If “nothing but the first act of the great drama is closed” and “[i]t remains yet to establish and perfect our new forms of government; and to prepare the principles, morals, and manners of our citizens, for these forms of government, after they are established and brought to perfection,” then has the Revolution yet ended? Or are we all actors in its ongoing story?<sup>12</sup>

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<sup>12</sup> *The Documentary History of the Ratification of the Constitution.*

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## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: Taking Up Arms and the Challenge of Slavery in the Revolutionary Era

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/taking-arms-and-challenge-slavery-revolutionary-era>

Media Resource: Picturing America: Paul Revere

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/picturing-america-paul-revere>

Media Resource: Coming of the American Revolution

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/general-resources/coming-american-revolution>

Media Resource: People Not Property: Stories of Slavery in the Colonial North

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/people-not-property-stories-slavery-colonial-north>

Humanities Feature: Celebrating Freedom

<https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2012/novemberdecember/feature/celebrating-freedom>

# A VOTER'S GUIDE TO POST-FRENCH AND INDIAN WAR POLICY

AUTHOR: Kyle Johnson / Seaman Middle School, Topeka, Kansas

## GUIDING QUESTION:

How did the French and Indian War influence colonial attitudes toward British rule?

## OVERVIEW

During the French and Indian War (1754–1763), England and France vied for control of North America. After early defeats, William Pitt, British Secretary of State, turned the tide of the war in England's favor, which ultimately led to victory. In the 1763 Treaty of Paris, France gave England all French territories in North America. However, Pitt's strategy left the British government with substantial debt. To recoup the losses from the French and Indian War and effectively govern their growing territory in North America, the British government taxed their colonies to pay for the debt, limited colonial expansion to appease indigenous groups, and quartered British soldiers in North America to protect the colonies. While the British saw these as necessary actions, their campaign angered many American colonists. By the 1760s, early rumblings of protest spread through the colonies. Soon, the British faced another war in North America—this time with its own colonists.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Explain the lasting impacts of the French and Indian War;
- > Analyze how events of the French and Indian War affected colonial attitudes toward British rule; and
- > Complete a mock voter registration form and justify one's position using primary source evidence.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

### CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > D2.His.12.6-8. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to identify further areas of inquiry and additional sources.
- > D3.1.6-8. Gather relevant information from multiple sources while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Address, New York General Assembly, Petition to the Royal Governor, Sir Henry Moore, December 15, 1766 (excerpt) *The History of the War in America, Between Great Britain and Her Colonies from Its Commencement to the End of the Year 1778* [https://www.google.com/books/edition/The\\_History\\_of\\_the\\_War\\_in\\_America\\_Betwee/MV9KAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0](https://www.google.com/books/edition/The_History_of_the_War_in_America_Betwee/MV9KAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0)

"Americanus" (Joseph Galloway), letter to *The New-York Gazette*, August 15, 1765 (excerpt)

Exchange Between Governor Thomas Hutchinson and the House of Representatives, January 6, 1773 (excerpt) Teaching American History <https://teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/exchange-between-governor-thomas-hutchinson-and-the-house-of-representatives/>

John Dickinson, Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania, 1767 (excerpt)

*Empire and Nation: Letters from a Farmer in Pennsylvania*  
[https://books.google.com/books/about/Empire\\_and\\_nation\\_Letters\\_from\\_a\\_farmer.html?id=64sGAQAAIAAJ](https://books.google.com/books/about/Empire_and_nation_Letters_from_a_farmer.html?id=64sGAQAAIAAJ)

Letter, George Washington to William Crawford, September 21, 1767 (excerpt)

George Washington Papers, Library of Congress  
[https://www.loc.gov/resource/mgw5.116\\_0373\\_0628/?sp=14](https://www.loc.gov/resource/mgw5.116_0373_0628/?sp=14)

Poem, Hannah Griffitts, "The Female Patriots"  
Poetry Nook

<https://www.poetrynook.com/poem/female-patriots>

Political Cartoon, Benjamin Franklin (attributed), *The Colonies Reduced - Its Companion*, 1767

Library of Congress (2004672618)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2004672618/>

The Quartering Act of 1765 (excerpt)

Digital History, University of Houston  
[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp\\_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=3959](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=3959)

Speech, Pontiac Calls for War, 1763 (excerpt)

*Collections of the Pioneer Society of the State of Michigan*  
<https://www.americanyawp.com/reader/colonial-society/pontiac-calls-for-war-1763/>

The Proclamation of 1763

Digital History, University of Houston  
[http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp\\_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=159](http://www.digitalhistory.uh.edu/disp_textbook.cfm?smtID=3&psid=159)

Soame Jenyns, *The Objections to the Taxation of our American Colonies by the Legislature of Great Britain*, 1765 (excerpt)

Monticello Digital Classroom  
<https://classroom.monticello.org/media-item/objections-to-taxation/>

## SECONDARY SOURCES

Video clip, *The French and Indian War Explained*, 2020 (3:22)  
HISTORY®

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9n-gsgqaUo0>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > Post-French and Indian War Voter's Guide
- > Voter's Guide Assessment

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Make one copy of the Post-French and Indian War Voter's Guide packet for each student.
- > Arrange the classroom for group work.
- > Organize students into groups of three or four students each.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE (30 MINUTES)

- > Distribute one Post-French and Indian War Voter's Guide packet to each student.
- > Project the political cartoon, *The Colonies Reduced*, and ask students to label the images they see in the cartoon.
- > Explain to students that this cartoon is attributed to Benjamin Franklin, who was in England arguing against the Stamp Act.
  - >> The Stamp Act, the first direct tax following the French and Indian War, was passed by the British Parliament in 1765. It required colonists to pay a tax on printed materials including newspapers, legal documents, and even playing cards. The tax helped recoup the financial debts incurred during the war.
  - >> The Latin phrase "*Date Obolum Bellisario*" means "Give a farthing to Belisarius," which references the Byzantine general, who won great victories for the Byzantine Empire but was reduced to extreme poverty later in life.
- > Lead a discussion about the political cartoon. Discussion questions:
  - >> *Why was it necessary for Great Britain to tax the colonies following the French and Indian War?*
  - >> *What about Franklin's image indicates his position regarding the Stamp Act? How does the reference to Belisarius connect to the colonists' position?*
  - >> *What other British policies implemented following the French and Indian War angered the colonists?*
- > Project the video clip, *The French and Indian War Explained* (3:22). Students will watch the video clip and answer the review questions listed in their Post-French and Indian War Voter's Guide.
- > Review answers after the video has concluded.
- > Ask what new questions do students have or what new ideas do students want to investigate further.

## CONNECTIONS

The struggle for American independence was far from certain, and it was far from the last time Americans were divided over political issues. This book features lessons about the debates over abolition, suffrage, women's rights, immigration, and civil rights. Debate is a key component of American democracy.

## ACTIVITY TWO (30 MINUTES)

- > Explain to students that when the presidential election approaches, all parties sit down and create platforms to explain their points of view on the major domestic and foreign policy issues. Often the two major parties have platforms in opposition to each other (one party supports an idea while the other party opposes the idea). However, voters do not always fall neatly into one category or another.
- > Students will complete a political quiz on British policy following the French and Indian War. Each policy statement will have a “Learn More” section that includes opinions in the form of primary source documents.
- > Explain that students should read the policy issues, consult the primary documents related to the issue, and then select the answer to the policy question and explain why they selected their answer in the “Explanation” section.
  - » **Teacher Tip:** This activity can be completed as a class or can be assigned to groups. If completing in groups, it may be jigsawed.
- > Review student responses as a class. Discussion questions:
  - » *What was the British rationale for enacting such policies following the French and Indian War?*
  - » *How did British policies following the French and Indian War eventually lead to unrest in the colonies, and ultimately the American Revolution?*
  - » *What questions do you have about the position of the British or the American colonists?*

## ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Assign the Voter’s Guide Assessment.

## STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > Pontiac’s Rebellion
- > The Quartering Act (1765) or the Declaratory Act (1766)
- > The Boston Tea Party
- > The Intolerable Acts (1774) or the Olive Branch Petition (1775)

To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:

[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: Colonial Broadside and the American Revolution

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/colonial-broadsides-and-american-revolution>

Lesson Plan: Empire and Identity in the American Colonies

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/empire-and-identity-american-colonies>

Humanities Feature: The History of the Stamp Act Shows How Indians Led to the American Revolution

<https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2015/julyaugust/feature/the-history-the-stamp-act-shows-how-indians-led-the-american-revo>

Media Resource: Coming of the American Revolution

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/general-resources/coming-american-revolution>

# QUELLING THE WHISKEY REBELLION: TAKING A STAND FOR OUR FUTURE

**AUTHOR:** Josh Elders / Peters Township Middle School, McMurray, Pennsylvania

## GUIDING QUESTION:

To what extent was the U.S. government's handling of the Whiskey Rebellion justified?

## OVERVIEW

Using letters, historical drawings, and presidential proclamations, students will determine the process by which the federal government ended the Whiskey Rebellion. After reviewing a drawing of the *Famous whiskey insurrection in Pennsylvania*, students will read excerpts of letters and proclamations from President George Washington, Secretary of the Treasury Alexander Hamilton, and Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. Students will discuss which course of action recommended by the letters best suited the national government and its goal to create a stronger union in perpetuity.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Assess the motivations for the Whiskey Rebellion; and
- > Develop and defend an argument about the federal government's handling of the Whiskey Rebellion.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.8.1 Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.8.2 Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > D2.His.9.9-12. Analyze the relationship between historical sources and the secondary interpretations made from them.
- > D2.His.15.6-8. Evaluate the relative influence of various causes of events and developments in the past.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Albert Gallatin, Petition Against Excise, 1792 (excerpt)  
Henry James, Editor, *The Writings of Albert Gallatin*, Volume 1  
HathiTrust Digital Library  
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uc2.ark:/13960/t0bv79v03&view=lup&seq=22>

Letter, Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, September 1, 1792  
George Washington Papers, Library of Congress (MSS 44693: Reel 032)  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/mgw2.032/>

Letter, Alexander Hamilton to George Washington, September 11, 1792  
George Washington Papers, Library of Congress (MSS 44693: Reel 102)  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/mgw437655/>

Letter, George Washington to Alexander Hamilton, September 7, 1792  
George Washington Papers, Library of Congress (MSS 44693: Reel 032)  
<https://www.loc.gov/resource/mgw2.032/?sp=319>

Letter, George Washington to Thomas Jefferson, September 15, 1792  
Founders Online, National Archives and Records Administration  
<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-11-02-0055>

Letter, Thomas Jefferson to George Washinton, September 9, 1792 (excerpt)  
Thomas Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress (Reel: 016)  
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mtj.mtjbib006451>

Letter, Thomas Jefferson to George Washintgon, September 18, 1792  
Thomas Jefferson Papers, Library of Congress (Reel: 016)  
<http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mtj.mtjbib006465>

Print, *Famous whiskey insurrection in Pennsylvania*, 1794  
Library of Congress (2002697745)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002697745/>

Proclamation, George Washington, September 15, 1792  
The Papers of George Washington, National Archives and Records Administration  
<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Washington/05-11-02-0058>

Proclamation, George Washington, September 25, 1794  
The Avalon Project, Yale University  
[https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th\\_century/gwproc10.asp](https://avalon.law.yale.edu/18th_century/gwproc10.asp)

Second Congress, "An Act for raising a farther sum of money for the protection of the frontiers, and for other purposes therein mentioned," Session 1, Chapter 27, May 2, 1792  
Library of Congress  
<https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/2nd-congress/session-1/c2s1ch27.pdf>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > Whiskey Rebellion Background Information
- > Jefferson and Hamilton Comparison Chart
- > Government Action Packet A
- > Government Action Packet B

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Organize students into groups of four.
- > Make copies of Government Action Packet A for half the students and Government Action Packet B for the other half.
- > Print one copy of the Whiskey Rebellion Background Information sheet for teacher use.
- > Project the Jefferson and Hamilton Comparison Chart and the *Famous whiskey insurrection in Pennsylvania* print in the front of the room.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE (30 MINUTES)

- > Project the *Famous whiskey insurrection in Pennsylvania* print. Ask students to examine the print in quadrants to observe all the details and share what they see with their group members. Ask students to generate a list of questions they have about the image.
- > Read the Whiskey Rebellion Background Information and project the Jefferson and Hamilton Comparison Chart. Review the major points with students.
- > Return to analyze the print:
  - » *What groups are depicted in the print? What clues help you identify them? What are they doing in the print? Describe their actions.*
  - » *Can you see any words or text in the print? What does the text say? Why is it important?*
  - » *What do we know about the events surrounding the Whiskey Rebellion? Given what we know about the United States, why might a tax on liquor have been upsetting to Pennsylvanians?*
  - » *Who has the power to intervene when tensions escalate in political and economic matters in the United States?*
- > Explain that the Whiskey Rebellion was the first challenge to the new United States government after the ratification of the U.S. Constitution. The U.S. Constitution replaced the much weaker Articles of Confederation.
- > Ask the students to select whether they support Hamilton or Jefferson's political philosophy. Require them to support their point of view with historical evidence.
- > Discuss the questions generated by the students while reviewing the print and other materials.

## CONNECTIONS

Federalism—the division of power between the federal and state governments—is a key theme of American history. This book contains several lessons that consider this dynamic as it applies to land ownership rights for minority groups, school desegregation, and the federal amendment process. This struggle has been a key factor in establishing a more perfect union.



## ACTIVITY TWO (30 MINUTES)

- > Remind students that both Jefferson and Hamilton served in President George Washington's cabinet. Explain that these issues came to light as the administration looked for ways to pay off the assumed state Revolutionary War debts when Congress passed an excise tax on distilled spirits (alcohol, like whiskey, which was made from grain).
- > Organize students into groups of four students each. Distribute Government Action Packet A to half of the groups and Government Action Packet B to the other half.
- > Direct students to analyze the six documents in their packet and complete the chart on the cover.
- > Encourage groups to re-examine questions they developed in activity one. Which ones have been answered?
- > Encourage groups to apply their new knowledge and research open questions.

## ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Conduct a class discussion asking the students to answer the guiding question: *To what extent was the federal government's handling of the Whiskey Rebellion justified?*
- > Conduct a class discussion focusing the guiding question while asking the students to argue for the opposite action they would have supported at the time.
- > Write a response to one of the letters in the Government Action Packet from the perspective of another Founding Father, a Pennsylvania farmer, or an American from another state at the time.

## STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > *The Federalist Papers*
- > The Washington Papers
- > Washington's Farewell Address/Two-Party System
- > The Supremacy Clause of the U.S. Constitution

To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: Federalists and Democratic-Republicans: The Platforms They Never Had

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/lesson-3-first-american-party-system-federalists-and-democratic-republicans-platforms>

Lesson Plan: The Federalist Debates: Balancing Power Between State and Federal Governments

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/federalist-debates-balancing-power-between-state-and-federal-governments>

Lesson Plan: The First American Party System: A Documentary Timeline of Important Events (1787-1800)

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/lesson-2-first-american-party-system-documentary-timeline-important-events-1787-1800>

Lesson Plan: Washington and the Whiskey Rebellion

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/washington-and-whiskey-rebellion>

# THE MONROE DOCTRINE: DEBATING AMERICA'S DEFENSE OF INDEPENDENCE ABROAD

AUTHOR: Katherine Corrado / Woodgrove High School, Purcellville, Virginia

## GUIDING QUESTION:

How has U.S. involvement in foreign affairs shaped a “more perfect union?”

## OVERVIEW

After analyzing secondary and primary sources, students will determine how the Monroe Doctrine reflects projected American identity abroad. By participating in a debate, students will examine a variety of perspectives and support an argument.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Describe the arguments for and against U.S. involvement in foreign conflicts;
- > Analyze the debates surrounding the Monroe Doctrine; and
- > Evaluate the short- and long-term effects of the Monroe Doctrine on American identity and its contribution toward building a more perfect union.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9 Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > D2.His.1.6-8. Analyze connections among events and developments in broader historical contexts.
- > D2.His.8.9-12. Analyze how current interpretations of the past are limited by the extent to which available historical sources represent perspectives of people at the time.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Caesar Augustus Rodney, Letter from Caesar Augustus Rodney to President James Monroe, 1824 (excerpt)  
Stanislaus Murray Hamilton, Editor, *The writings of James Monroe...*  
HathiTrust Digital Library  
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=uiug.30112005125403&view=1up&seq=456>

Francisco José de Paula Santander y Omaña, Mensaje del Vicepresidente de Columbia Encargado del Gobierno, Al Congreso de 1824. Conciudadanos del Senado y de la cámara de representantes, 27 de abril de 1824  
*Gazeta de Columbia* (excerpt)  
Banco de la República, Biblioteca Virtual Columbia  
<http://babel.banrepcultural.org/cdm/ref/collection/pi7054coll26/id/411>

Francisco José de Paula Santander y Omaña, *Message of the Vice President of Columbia, charged with the Government, on the Opening of Congress*, April 6, 1824  
British Foreign and State Papers, Volume 12, 1846 (excerpt)  
HathiTrust Digital Library  
<https://babel.hathitrust.org/cgi/pt?id=mdp.39015035798514&view=1up&seq=836>

Map, Henry S. Tanner, *South America and West Indies*, 1823  
David Rumsey Map Collection, Stanford University (2589019)  
<https://www.davidrumsey.com/luna/servlet/s/bh8029>

Monroe Doctrine, 1823 (excerpt)  
National Archives and Records Administration (Record Group 46)  
<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=23#>

Political Cartoon, *Keep Off! The Monroe Doctrine Must be Respected*, 1896  
Library of Congress (2002697703)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2002697703/>

Theodore Roosevelt, Address of President Roosevelt at Chicago, Illinois, April 2, 1903 (excerpt)  
Theodore Roosevelt Center at Dickinson State University  
<https://www.theodorerooseveltcenter.org/Research/Digital-Library/Record.aspx?libID=o289667>

Thomas Jefferson, Letter from Thomas Jefferson to James Monroe, October 24, 1823 (excerpt)  
National Archives and Records Administration  
<https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Jefferson/98-01-02-3827>

Simón Bolívar, Address at the Congress of Angostura, 1819 (excerpt)  
Brown University Library  
<https://library.brown.edu/create/modernlatinamerica/chapters/chapter-2-the-colonial-foundations/primary-documents-with-accompanying-discussion-questions/document-3-simon-bolivar-address-at-the-congress-of-angostura-1819/>

Simón Bolívar, Address at the Congress of Angostura, 1819 (original translation, excerpt)  
Università di Bologna, Dipartimento di Storia Culture Civiltà  
[https://storicamente.org/sites/default/images/articles/media/1880/Bolivar\\_Discorso\\_de\\_Angostura.pdf](https://storicamente.org/sites/default/images/articles/media/1880/Bolivar_Discorso_de_Angostura.pdf)

Simón Bolívar, Carta de Jamaica, 1815 (excerpt)  
Colección Unidad Nuestraamericana  
<https://albaciudad.org/wp-content/uploads/2015/09/08072015-Carta-de-Jamaica-WEB.pdf>

Simón Bolívar, Letter from Jamaica, 1815 (excerpt)  
Brown University Library  
<https://library.brown.edu/create/modernlatinamerica/chapters/chapter-2-the-colonial-foundations/primary-documents-with-accompanying-discussion-questions/document-2-simon-bolivar-letter-from-jamaica-september-6-1815/>

Simón Bolívar, Letter from Simón Bolívar to Daniel Florencio O'Leary, 1824 (excerpt)  
Reprinted in *Memorias de General O'Leary*, New York Public Library  
<https://archive.org/details/memoriasdelgene01vilagoog/page/n500/mode/2up>

## SECONDARY SOURCE

"The Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny"  
Stanford University Press  
[http://www.americanyawp.com/text/12-manifest-destiny/#VI\\_The\\_Monroe\\_Doctrine\\_and\\_Manifest\\_Destiny](http://www.americanyawp.com/text/12-manifest-destiny/#VI_The_Monroe_Doctrine_and_Manifest_Destiny)

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > Student Activity Worksheet
- > Student Reflection

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Read the secondary source, "The Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny," for teacher background.
- > Make one copy of the Student Activity Worksheet for each student.
- > Project the map, *South America and West Indies*.
- > Gather two sticky notes of different colors and create a color code on the board with one color labeled "must switch" and the other "may switch."
- > Consider how students will vote after the debate activity. Have slips of paper ready or an online poll populated.

## CONNECTIONS

The concept of a more perfect union is not limited to domestic affairs. The United States' role in world affairs became even more crucial as the U.S. emerged as a more active player on the world stage in the late nineteenth-century and early twentieth centuries. To explore this idea further, review the lesson on the impact of the Cold War on immigration patterns.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE (20 MINUTES)

- > Project the map *South America and West Indies*.
  - » Help students identify Haiti, Cuba, and Bolivia on the map.
  - » Ask students to identify the territories held by Spain.
  - » **Teacher Tip:** This map was produced in 1823 and some of the names might not align with the names of places we use today, i.e., the Caribbean is more often referred to as the West Indies, etc.
- > Assign students to read the article, “The Monroe Doctrine and Manifest Destiny.” Lead a discussion about the Monroe Doctrine.
  - » *What is the Monroe Doctrine?*
  - » *When was the doctrine created?*
  - » *Who was involved in the creating the Monroe Doctrine?*
  - » *What does the Monroe Doctrine do?*
  - » *Why was the creation of this doctrine necessary for the protection of liberty and freedom?*
- > Project the political cartoon, *Keep Off! The Monroe Doctrine Must be Respected*, on the board for analysis. Possible guiding prompts:
  - » *Describe the clothing of the people on either side of the divide.*
  - » *What individual countries are labeled in this cartoon?*
  - » *What are individuals holding in the image?*
  - » *What adjectives would you use to describe the divide? What does this say about the author’s opinion of the Monroe Doctrine?*
  - » *How are the countries standing behind Uncle Sam depicted? Would they have agreed with this depiction? Why or why not?*
  - » *What benefits might these countries have by standing in the shadow of the U.S.? What are the negative consequences of standing in the shadow?*
  - » *Does the artist depict the Monroe Doctrine as something that made the United States a better country, or “a more perfect union?” Do you agree or disagree with the artist?*

### ACTIVITY TWO (20 MINUTES)

- > Organize the room into two equal groups for a class debate. Break down the larger group into smaller groups of three to four students each. Assign half of the groups in support of and half in opposition to U.S. involvement in foreign conflicts.
- > Assign students to analyze the Monroe Doctrine quotations to find support for their position.
  - » **Teacher Tip:** Some of the materials are quoted in the original Spanish. This will give some English language learners an opportunity to take on a leadership role. Keep in mind these are the original translations from the 1800s. They might not align completely with modern-day Spanish or specific regional dialects.
- > Explain to the class that for this activity all students will be individual members of Congress, some who support the Monroe Doctrine, and others who oppose it. Allow groups time to discuss why they might support or oppose the doctrine. What questions might they ask from this perspective?
- > Ask the teams of students to form two statements defending or critiquing U.S. involvement in foreign conflicts. One will be used as an opening argument and the other to form a rebuttal. As students develop their arguments, prompt student thinking with questions like:
  - » *How much will this doctrine cost?*
  - » *Where will the government find the money for this?*
  - » *How will citizens feel about the sacrifice of American lives?*
  - » *What does America stand for?*
  - » *Would America exist without the help of other countries, such as France?*
  - » *What circumstances would warrant U.S. intervention in another country?*
- > Allow each side two minutes for an opening argument. Ask students, *Based on the arguments presented thus far, was the United States forming “a more perfect union”?*
  - » **Teacher Tip:** Teachers could opt for one larger debate or choose to run two or three smaller debates simultaneously.
- > Drop sticky notes of two different colors colors on both sides of the room.
  - » One color represents students who must now switch sides to the other team. Tell these students, *Your constituents have changed their minds about the Monroe Doctrine and you now must switch sides to be reelected. This is not optional.*
  - » The other color sticky note provides students with the opportunity to switch to the other side of the argument if they choose. Tell students, *Your constituents are expressing mixed and unclear thoughts on the Monroe Doctrine and they are trusting in your leadership. You may switch sides if you like.*

- > Explain to students that this symbolizes that political positions often change over time, but some people experience the freedom to change their mind publicly while others must maintain loyalty to a political party or public image.
- > Lead two more rounds of the debate in which one team will state an argument and the other will have a chance to issue a rebuttal.
- > Lead students to a vote on whether the United States should pass the Monroe Doctrine. Teachers may consider having students use devices to provide a live poll or voting on slips of paper to be passed in and counted. Teachers may select one of the following voting options:
  - » An anonymous vote: this would provide an opportunity to explain the importance of the Australian ballot.
  - » A roll-call vote: this would provide an opportunity to explain the importance of the public voting process used by the U.S. Congress.

#### ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Provide students with a choice between a visual or written interpretation of the assessment prompt below. Students can complete the reflection on the Student Activity Sheet.
  - » Summarize the Monroe Doctrine including its advantages and disadvantages.
  - » Consider the themes discussed in the sources from this lesson and the debate. How has the U.S. involvement in foreign affairs shaped its identity?
  - » Have these involvements created a “more perfect union”? Support your opinion with evidence from the primary sources and the debate.

### STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > Latin American Revolutions
- > The Haitian Revolution (1791–1804)
- > Mexican–American War (1846–1848)
- > Spanish–American War (1898)
- > Colonization of African nations
- > Cuban–American Relations and the Platt Amendment of 1901
- > Philippine–American War (1899–1902)

To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: The Origins of “Wilsonianism”

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/lesson-1-origins-wilsonianism>

Closer Readings Commentary: 50 Core Documents That Tell America’s Story

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/closer-readings/50-core-documents-tell-americas-story>

Curriculum: The Monroe Doctrine: Origin and Early American Foreign Policy

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/curricula/monroe-doctrine-origin-and-early-american-foreign-policy>

Student Activity: The Spanish–American War

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/student-activities/spanish-american-war-webquest>

# A MORE PERFECT UNION: WOMEN AND THE ABOLITION MOVEMENT

AUTHOR: Erik M. Peterson / Santiago Elementary School, Santa Ana, California

## GUIDING QUESTION:

How was women's involvement in the Abolitionist Movement an important step toward their political agency?

## OVERVIEW

By analyzing primary and secondary sources from the Era of Reform (1820–1865) and Reconstruction (1863–1877), students will determine how women created a more perfect union by participating in the Abolitionist Movement, which pushed for the end of slavery. Also, students will examine the changing role and development of agency for women during this time period.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Understand the intersection of various movements during the Era of Reform;
- > Evaluate the roles and significance of women's participation in the Abolitionist Movement; and
- > Determine the extent to which women empowered themselves and others through social and political reform.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.8.1.B Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > 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.12.9-12 Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Amendment XIV, U.S. Constitution, July 9, 1868 (excerpt)  
National Archives and Records Administration  
<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=43>

Catharine E. Beecher, *Essay on Slavery and Abolitionism*, 1837 (excerpt)  
Department of English, University of Virginia  
<http://utc.iath.virginia.edu/abolitn/abesceba2t.html>

Letter, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony, "To The Women of the Republic," January 25, 1864 (excerpt)  
National Archives and Records Administration (306400)  
<https://prologue.blogs.archives.gov/stanton/>

Newspaper Article, "The Slave-Women of America," October 6, 1870 (excerpt)  
*The Revolution*  
[https://archive.org/stream/revolution-1870-10-06/1870-10-06\\_djvu.txt](https://archive.org/stream/revolution-1870-10-06/1870-10-06_djvu.txt)

Petition for Universal Suffrage, January 29, 1866  
National Archives and Records Administration  
<https://www.archives.gov/legislative/features/suffrage>

Speech, Frederick Douglass, *We Welcome the Fifteenth Amendment*, May 12–13, 1869 (excerpt)

*The Speeches of Frederick Douglass: A Critical Edition*, 2018  
Speech, Lucretia Mott, *Discourse on Women*, December 17, 1849 (excerpt)  
Archives of Women's Political Communication, Iowa State University  
<https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2017/03/21/discourse-on-women-dec-17-1849/>

Speech, Sojourner Truth, *Address to the First Annual Meeting of the American Equal Rights Association*, May 9, 1867 (excerpt)  
Archives of Women's Political Communication, Iowa State University  
<https://awpc.cattcenter.iastate.edu/2017/03/21/address-to-the-first-annual-meeting-of-the-american-equal-rights-association-may-9-1867/>

## SECONDARY SOURCES

"Abolition, Women's Rights, and Temperance Movements,"  
September 20, 2016  
National Park Service  
<https://www.nps.gov/wori/learn/historyculture/abolition-womens-rights-and-temperance-movements.htm>

"Landmark Legislation: Thirteenth, Fourteenth, & Fifteenth Amendments"  
United States Senate  
[www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/CivilWarAmendments.htm](http://www.senate.gov/artandhistory/history/common/generic/CivilWarAmendments.htm)

"Timeline of the Abolitionist Movement," 2012  
The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > Nineteenth-Century Reform Movement Timelines
- > Abolitionist Starter Research Packet
- > Student Performance Task Options

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Write or project the guiding question for students to view and discuss to ensure students understand what they will be working to address.
- > Organize students into groups of three or four students each.
- > Make one set of Nineteenth-Century Reform Movement Timelines for each group of three or four students.
- > Make one copy of the Abolitionist Starter Research Packet and Student Performance Task Options for each student.

## CONNECTIONS

Women have been active participants in American democracy long before they could vote. A legacy of a more perfect union is the concept of participatory democracy. This book features lessons about women's roles in Abolition and Temperance Movements, the Civil Rights Movement, the Women's Rights Movement, and the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP).

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE: INTRODUCTION (15 MINUTES)

- > Display the guiding question for students: How was women's involvement in the Abolitionist Movement an important step toward their political agency?
  - » Address key academic vocabulary, such as coverture, abolition, and reform.
  - » Ask students:
    - » *What role did women have in nineteenth-century society?*
    - » *In what ways were they given agency over their own lives?*
    - » *In what ways did women participate in the public forum? Have they always participated in these ways throughout history?*
    - » *How did women resist or challenge the status quo to engage in political and public discussion? Who opposed the agency women exercised against the status quo?*
- > Explain that women were not allowed to control their own property, did not have the same custody rights as men, and did not possess rights to their earnings and inheritance. Also, explain that husbands could be physically abusive, and women had no legal redress.
  - » Explain to students that women were some of the most involved people in the Abolitionist Movement. Sojourner Truth, Lucretia Mott, Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Harriet Forten Purvis, Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Mary Ann Shadd Cary, Elizabeth Freeman, and many other women actively worked to end slavery and obtain suffrage for formerly enslaved people. However, some of these women and other abolitionists did not agree on whether or not women should obtain the right to vote at the same time as formerly enslaved African American men.

### ACTIVITY TWO: BUILDING CONTEXT AND DEVELOPING COMPELLING QUESTIONS (30 MINUTES)

- > Organize students into groups of three or four students each.
- > Display the names of three nineteenth-century reform movements: the Temperance Movement, the Abolitionist Movement, and the Woman's Suffrage Movement. Ask students, *What do you already know or think about these three movements? What do you want to learn?*
- > Distribute one set of Nineteenth-Century Reform Movement Timelines to each group.
  - » Set the expectation that each group will share a response through a spokesperson.
  - » Ask students to identify the similarities and differences that they see between the three movements. Solicit responses from each group.
  - » Summarize the main points the groups have shared.
  - » Ask students, *Is anyone's perspective missing from these timelines? If so, why do you think their voice is missing?*

- > Ask each group, *What do you want to know about the role of women in these movements?*
- » Students will develop compelling questions in response to this prompt.
- » Remind students that their questions should relate to the role and position of women, their participation in the various movements, and their successes and failures in empowering themselves and others.
- > Solicit responses from students.

### ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Distribute the Student Performance Task Options and review with students. Allow students to select one of the formats to present their conclusions.
- » Distribute the Abolitionist Starter Research Packet for students to use to begin their research, but provide additional resources (books, laptops, etc.) to assist students in gaining additional information.
- » **Teacher Tip:** Recommend Sojourner Truth, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, or Susan B. Anthony for students who need more support. Encourage students who need to be challenged to choose the Grimké sisters, Mary G. Harris (Mother Jones), Frances Ellen Watkins Harper, Sarah Parker Remond, or Ellen Craft, who are not included in the Abolitionist Starter Research Packet.
- > Ask students to write a paragraph or textbook feature that discusses the role of women in the Abolitionist Movement.

## STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > National Association of Colored Women's Clubs
- > Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony on the Fifteenth Amendment (1869)
- > National Woman Suffrage Association (NWSA)
- > National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA)
- > The debate over the Fifteenth Amendment
- > The 1964 Civil Rights Act
- > The 1965 Voting Rights Act

**To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:**

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

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### RELATED RESOURCES

BackStory: How Reconstruction Transformed the Constitution

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/backstory-how-reconstruction-transformed-constitution>

Chronicling and Mapping the Women's Suffrage Movement

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/chronicling-and-mapping-womens-suffrage-movement>

The Forgotten Suffragists

<https://www.neh.gov/article/forgotten-suffragists>

Harriet Tubman and the Underground Railroad

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/harriet-tubman-and-underground-railroad>

BackStory: Legislation Impossible - The Civil Rights Act of 1964

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/backstory-legislation-impossible-civil-rights-act-1964>



# AFRICAN AMERICAN SUFFRAGISTS AND THE NINETEENTH AMENDMENT

AUTHOR: Jeffrey Allen Hinton / Advanced Technologies Academy, Las Vegas, Nevada

## GUIDING QUESTION:

To what extent did African Americans advance the woman's suffrage movement?

## OVERVIEW

In this lesson, students will examine primary sources to learn about the way that race was debated in the woman's suffrage movement. Students will explore the contributions of and debates surrounding African Americans in the quest for woman's suffrage.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Identify several African American suffragists;
- > Explore the challenges faced by African Americans pushing for woman's suffrage in the early twentieth century; and
- > Evaluate the role of women of color and white women in the advancement of woman's suffrage.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > D2.His.2.9-12. Analyze change and continuity in historical eras.
- > D2.His.12.9-12. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.
- > D2.His.16.9-12. Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Mary B. Talbert, "Women and Colored Women," *The Crisis*, August 1915 (excerpt)  
University of Illinois Urbana-Champaign  
<https://archive.org/details/crisis910dubo/page/n55/mode/2up?q=august+1915>

Mary Church Terrell, *The Progress of Colored Women*, Address to the National American Women's Suffrage Association, Washington, D.C., February 18, 1898, (excerpt)  
Library of Congress (90898298)  
<https://loc.gov/item/90898298>

Speech, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, *Given at the National Woman's Suffrage Convention*, January 19, 1869 (excerpt)  
Susan Brownell Anthony, Matilda Joslyn Gage, Ida Husted Harper, *History of Woman Suffrage: 1861-1876*, 1881  
[https://www.google.com/books/edition/History\\_of\\_Woman\\_Suffrage\\_1861\\_1876/DINKAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0](https://www.google.com/books/edition/History_of_Woman_Suffrage_1861_1876/DINKAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=0)

Speech, Frederick Douglass, *We Welcome the Fifteenth Amendment*, May 12-13, 1869 (excerpt)  
*The Speeches of Frederick Douglass: A Critical Edition*, 2018

Speech, Julia Anna Cooper, *Woman's Cause is One and Universal*, May 18, 1893 (excerpt)  
Black Past  
<https://www.blackpast.org/african-american-history/1893-anna-julia-cooper-womens-cause-one-and-universal/>

Speech, Sojourner Truth, *Address to the First Annual Meeting of the American Equal Right Association*, May 9, 1867 (excerpt)  
Library of Congress (ca10003542)  
<https://www.loc.gov/resource/rbnawsa.n3542/?sp=22>

"Votes For Women," *The Crisis*, September 1912 (excerpt)  
Brown University  
<https://library.brown.edu/pdfs/1305565999281253.pdf>

## SECONDARY SOURCES

"15th Amendment, Right to Vote Not Denied by Race"  
National Constitution Center  
<https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/amendment/amendment-xv>

Online Exhibit, *More To the Movement*  
Library of Congress  
<https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/women-fight-for-the-vote/about-this-exhibition/more-to-the-movement/?st=gallery>

Online Exhibit, *Parading for Progress*  
National Women's History Museum  
<https://www.womenshistory.org/exhibits/parading-progress>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > Voices of the Woman's Suffrage Movement Graphic Organizer
- > Voices of the Woman's Suffrage Movement Primary Source Packet

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Make one copy of the Voices of the Woman's Suffrage Movement Primary Source Packet for each group of three or four students.
- > Make one copy of the Voices of the Woman's Suffrage Movement Graphic Organizer for each student.
- > Organize students into groups of three to four students each.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE (30 MINUTES)

- > Project the following quote for the class: "Finally, votes for women mean votes for black women. There are in the United States three and a third million adult women of Negro descent. Except in the rural South, these women have larger economic opportunity [*sic*] than their husbands and brothers and are rapidly becoming better educated. One has only to remember the recent biennial convention of colored women's clubs with its 400 delegates to realize how the women are moving quietly but forcibly toward the intellectual leadership of the race." *The Crisis*, 1912.

> Lead a discussion:

- > *What is the main idea of this editorial? What is The Crisis? What happened in 1912 that would have inspired this editorial? Why does the author believe that African American women have earned the right to vote?*
- > Point out that by 1912, African American men had received the right to vote with the passage of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870. Despite the constitutional amendment, however, many Black men were prohibited from voting by local and state governments that instituted literacy tests, grandfather clauses, and poll taxes. American women did not get the right to vote until 1920. While Black women could legally vote under the Nineteenth Amendment, many of them were not able to exercise their right to vote due to various restrictions enforced by Jim Crow laws.
- > [Project the Fifteenth Amendment](#) for the students to read. Ask students to explore the contradictions that existed between passage of the Fifteenth Amendment and the need for a Nineteenth Amendment.
- > Present students the online exhibits, *Parading For Progress* from the National Museum of Women's History and *More To the Movement* from the Library of Congress. Students can view in small groups or individually. Ask students:
  - > *What did you learn about the suffrage movement that you did not know before? Did it make you reevaluate what you thought about woman's suffrage?*
  - > *Where do you see instances of race causing divisions or tensions? How did they shape the movement?*
  - > *Where do other women of color fit into this discussion? Did Asian American women seek to challenge voting restrictions? What about women living in U.S. territories, such as Puerto Rico and the Philippines? Did all women have the same experiences or did women of color face more challenges?*
  - > *Did white women have the same experiences as women of color? Did they address or ignore racial disparities? Why did this happen?*
  - > *Devise at least two questions you still have concerning the suffrage movement.*

## CONNECTIONS

The struggle for suffrage was marked by leaders often failing to understand or appreciate the needs of women of color. Across time, opinions have differed within the movement for women's rights. This book contains lessons that highlight the connections between the Abolitionist and Temperance Movements to the suffrage movement, as well as the role of women in the Civil Rights Movement.

- > Organize students into groups of three to four students each.
- > Explain to students that they are going to analyze primary source documents to learn more about the arguments for and against African American women’s suffrage.
- > Distribute one copy of the Voices of the Woman’s Suffrage Movement Primary Source Packet to each group.
- > Distribute one copy of the Voices of the Woman’s Suffrage Movement Graphic Organizer to each student.
- > Direct students to complete the graphic organizer using the primary source document excerpts provided.
- > Lead a whole-class discussion to debrief students about what they learned through their analysis of the primary source documents. Some possible questions include:
  - » *Why did some white suffragists oppose the Fifteenth Amendment?*
  - » *What do the documents suggest about the challenges of implementing social change?*
  - » *What lingering or new questions do you have after reviewing the primary sources?*
- > Students can create an informational poster, website, podcast, or other digital media in which they answer the lesson’s guiding question. Students should consider the following:
  - » *Who is your target audience?*
  - » *What is the thesis of your project? What are you trying to persuade people to believe?*
  - » *What challenges are present in the movement?*
  - » *How do you propose to fix those challenges?*

**STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT**

- > Ida B. Wells and the Alpha Suffrage Club
- > 1913 Woman’s Suffrage Parade
- > American Equal Rights Association
- > The National Association of Colored Women (NACW)
- > Asian American women and the suffrage movement
- > Woman’s suffrage in the U.S. territories

**ASSESSMENT OPTIONS**

- > Students can write a speech to explain the challenges faced by African American women seeking the right to vote in the early twentieth century. The speech should integrate primary source material from the time (from the primary source packet or other credible sources) and can be delivered in a written or oral format.
- > Students can pose and research the issue of woman’s suffrage as it pertained to a group of American women.

**To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:**

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

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RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: Chronicling and Mapping the Women’s Suffrage Movement  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/chronicling-and-mapping-womens-suffrage-movement>

Lesson Plan: Who Were the Foremothers of the Women’s Suffrage and Equality Movements?  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/who-were-foremothers-womens-suffrage-and-equality-movements>

Closer Readings Commentary: The Declaration of Sentiments by the Seneca Falls Conference (1848)  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/closer-readings/declaration-sentiments-seneca-falls-conference-1848>

*Humanities*: “How Black Suffragists Fought for the Right to Vote and a Modicum of Respect”  
<https://www.neh.gov/article/how-black-suffragists-fought-right-vote-and-modicum-respect>

# CHALLENGING SCHOOL SEGREGATION: THE FIGHT OF CHINESE AMERICANS

AUTHOR: Amie Dryer / Calvert High School, Prince Frederick, Maryland

## GUIDING QUESTION:

How did Chinese Americans challenge the doctrine of separate but equal schools in California and Mississippi?

## OVERVIEW

Using an inquiry design model, students will work through a series of supporting questions and formative performance tasks with featured primary and secondary sources. Students will complete a processing assignment that asks them to write or speak about Chinese Americans fighting segregation.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Interpret the Equal Protection Clause of the Fourteenth Amendment and its implications on citizens;
- > Evaluate primary and secondary sources surrounding Chinese Americans living in the United States in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries; and
- > Assess two Chinese American school desegregation cases, *Tape v. Hurley* (1885) and *Gong Lum v. Rice* (1927).

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > D3.1.9-12. Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.
- > D4.1.9-12. Construct arguments using precise and knowledgeable claims, with evidence from multiple sources, while acknowledging counterclaims and evidentiary weaknesses.
- > D4.3.9-12. Present adaptations of arguments and explanations that feature evocative ideas and perspectives on issues and topics to reach a range of audiences and venues outside the classroom using print and oral technologies (e.g., posters, essays, letters, debates, speeches, reports, and maps) and digital technologies (e.g., Internet, social media, and digital documentary).

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Amendment XIV, U.S. Constitution, July 9, 1868  
National Archives and Records Administration  
<https://www.ourdocuments.gov/doc.php?flash=false&doc=43>

California Assembly Bill 268, March 12, 1885 (excerpt)  
California State Assembly Archives  
<https://clerk.assembly.ca.gov/sites/clerk.assembly.ca.gov/files/archive/Statutes/1885/1885.pdf#page=151>

Chief Justice William Howard Taft, *Gong Lum v. Rice*, 1927 (excerpts)  
Library of Congress (usrep275078)  
<http://cdn.loc.gov/service/ll/usrep/usrep275/usrep275078/usrep275078.pdf>

Newspaper Article, "The Chinese School Problem," *Daily Alta California*, March 5, 1885 (excerpt)  
California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California Riverside  
<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/cgi-bin/cdnc?a=d&d=DAC18850305.2.21&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-----1>

Newspaper Article, M. Tape, "Chinese Mother's Letter," *Daily Alta California*, April 16, 1885 (excerpt)  
California Digital Newspaper Collection, University of California Riverside  
<https://cdnc.ucr.edu/?a=d&d=DAC18850416.2.3&e=-----en--20--1--txt-txIN-----1>

Photograph, *Chinese school students in Indianola, Sunflower County, Mississippi*, 1938  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History (Box 12, folder 8, item 1)  
<http://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/images/191.jpg>

Photograph, Mary Ethel Dismukes, *Students of the only all-Chinese School in Bolivar County, Mississippi*, March 29, 1938  
Mississippi Department of Archives and History (Box 24, folder 11, item 12)  
<http://www.mshistorynow.mdah.ms.gov/images/190.jpg>

Representative William Higby (California), *The Congressional Globe*, U.S. House of Representatives, 39<sup>th</sup> Congress, 1866 (excerpt)  
Library of Congress

Transcript, Interview of Edward Pang by Jerry Young, May 18, 1977 (excerpt)  
Washington County Oral History Project, Mississippi Department of Archives and History (OH 1979.1.119)  
[http://da.mdah.ms.gov/vault/projects/OHtranscripts/AU411\\_099288.pdf](http://da.mdah.ms.gov/vault/projects/OHtranscripts/AU411_099288.pdf)

Transcript, Interview of James Chow by Jerry Young, February 24, 1977 (excerpt)  
Washington County Oral History Project, Mississippi Department of Archives and History (OH 1979.1.032)  
[http://da.mdah.ms.gov/vault/projects/OHtranscripts/AU331\\_099212.pdf](http://da.mdah.ms.gov/vault/projects/OHtranscripts/AU331_099212.pdf)

Transcript, Interview of Joe Ting by Jerry Young, February 16, 1977 (excerpt)  
Washington County Oral History Project, Mississippi Department of Archives and History (OH 1979.1.150)  
[http://da.mdah.ms.gov/vault/projects/OHtranscripts/AU441\\_099318.pdf](http://da.mdah.ms.gov/vault/projects/OHtranscripts/AU441_099318.pdf)

## CONNECTIONS

The quest for equality for all and due process of the law are part of the effort to create a more perfect union. To consider this theme through history, see lessons in the book that focus on civil rights for Native Americans, land ownership rights for Japanese Americans, suffrage, abolition, and civil rights.

## SECONDARY SOURCES

Joyce Kuo, "Excluded, Segregated, and Forgotten: A Historical View of the Discrimination of Chinese Americans in Public Schools," 1998 (excerpt)  
*Asian American Law Journal*, Volume 5, Issue 1  
<https://lawcat.berkeley.edu/record/1116262>

Sarah Begley, "How a Chinese Family's 1927 Lawsuit Set a Precedent for School Segregation," October 18, 2016 (excerpt)  
*Time*  
<https://time.com/4533476/lum-v-rice-water-tossing-boulders/>

Sarah Pruitt, "The 8-Year-Old Chinese-American Girl Who Helped Desegregate Schools—in 1885," May 13, 2019 (excerpts)  
HISTORY®  
<https://www.history.com/news/chinese-american-segregation-san-francisco-mamie-tape-case>

Video Clip, *Golden Spike and the History of Chinese Railroad Workers*, 2019 (9:21)  
PBS Video  
<https://www.pbs.org/video/golden-spike-ya02ga/>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > Student Activity Packet
- > Product Assignment Choice

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Project the Fourteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution.
- > Organize students into groups of four or five students each.
- > Make one copy of the Student Activity Packet and Product Assignment Choice for each group of four to five students.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE (15 MINUTES)

- > Lead a class discussion on citizenship. Questions can include:
  - » *What rights should you have as a citizen of any nation?*
  - » *According to the Constitution, what rights do citizens of the United States possess?*
  - » *Why might citizens' rights change?*
  - » *Why is citizenship important or not important?*
  - » *What responsibilities should people fulfill to become a citizen or maintain their citizenship?*
  - » *What situations or circumstances would make you NOT want to be a citizen of a nation?*
- > Project the Fourteenth Amendment and remind students how the United States Constitution defines citizenship.
- > Conduct a brief class discussion on the equal rights section of the Fourteenth Amendment.
- > Remind students that *Plessy v. Ferguson* (1896) impacted this definition of citizenship with its ruling that "separate but equal" facilities were constitutional.

## ACTIVITY TWO (45 MINUTES)

- > Review the role of the Chinese workers who helped to build the American railroads. If desired, show the clip, *Golden Spike and the History of Chinese Railroad Workers* (9:21).
- > Organize students into groups and distribute one Student Activity Packet to each group.
- > Direct students to complete the three inquiry-based tasks using the primary sources in the packet. Encourage students to divide the documents and share what they learned.
- > Monitor students for comprehension, asking them to compare and contrast the experiences of Chinese Americans in California and those in Mississippi.

## ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Students can complete the Product Assignment Choice to demonstrate their learning. Remind students whichever format they select, they need to remember that these are the stories of real people, and their experiences should be described and analyzed in a respectful manner.
- > Students can research other school desegregation cases involving Native Alaskans in Ketchikan, Alaska (1929).
- > Students can explore desegregation cases in their local communities.

## STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > *Yick Wo v. Hopkins* (1886)
- > *U.S. v. Wong Kim Ark* (1898)
- > School desegregation in Ketchikan, Alaska (1929)
- > *Afriyom v. Rusk* (1967)
- > Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)
- > *Brown v. Board of Education* (1954) or *Brown v. Board of Education II* (1955)

To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:

[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: JFK, LBJ, and the Fight for Equal Opportunity in the 1960s

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/jfk-lbj-and-fight-equal-opportunity-1960s>

Humanities Article: “The Chinese Exclusion Act Raised the Price of Becoming an American”

<https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2015/januaryfebruary/feature/the-chinese-exclusion-act-raised-the-price-becoming-american>

Humanities Feature: “Massive Resistance in a Small Town”

<https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2013/septemberoctober/feature/massive-resistance-in-small-town>

Media Resource: BackStory: To Be a Citizen? The History of Becoming American

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/backstory-be-citizen-history-becoming-american>

Media Resource: Thurgood Marshall Before the Court

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/general-resources/thurgood-marshall-court-0>

# THE SEATTLE GENERAL STRIKE OF 1919: LABOR UNIONS UNITING FOR CHANGE

AUTHOR: Kristin Rentschler / Columbia City High School, Columbia City, Indiana

## GUIDING QUESTION:

How did American labor unions work to create a more perfect union for workers?

## OVERVIEW

This lesson is intended to help students examine the history of labor unions and their efforts to support and protect workers. The lesson begins with an introduction of the labor movement in the early twentieth century. Using primary and secondary sources from the Seattle General Strike of 1919, students will learn about the causes of the strike and how people joined together to fight for their convictions. Students will also investigate why the strike eventually collapsed and how much change actually occurred. They will then compare and contrast this strike to another labor conflict.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Understand a brief history of the labor movement and the historical situation of 1919;
- > Explain the causes of the Seattle General Strike and its outcomes;
- > Determine the long-term impacts of the strike; and
- > Compare this event with another labor conflict to explore patterns of continuity and change over time.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > D2.His.4.9-12. Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- > D3.1.9-12. Gather relevant information from multiple sources representing a wide range of views while using the origin, authority, structure, context, and corroborative value of the sources to guide the selection.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

"A Letter From the Mayor," *The Seattle Star*, February 11, 1919  
Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress  
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87093407/1919-02-11/ed-1/seq-1/>

Letter, Local No. 82 of the United Association of Plumbers and Steam Fitters letter to Tacoma Central Labor Council expressing their position on the general strike, February 3, 1919  
Pacific Northwest Historical Documents Collection, University of Washington  
<https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/pioneerlife/id/9137/rec/43>

Letter, Local No. 568 of the International Brotherhood of Boiler Makers and Iron Ship Builders letter to Tacoma Central Labor Council expressing their position on the general strike, February 4, 1919  
Pacific Northwest Historical Documents Collection, University of Washington  
<https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/pioneerlife/id/9143/rec/42>

Photograph, *Seattle General Strike deputies receiving weapons*, February 6, 1919  
Museum of History and Industry  
<https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/imlsmohai/id/5493/rec/9>

Photograph, *Shipyard workers at Skinner and Eddy shipyard at Pier 36*, 1919  
Civil Rights & Labor History Consortium, University of Washington  
[http://depts.washington.edu/labpics/zenPhoto/1919\\_strike/General-Strike-photos/Skinner+and+Eddy+shipyard+workers+1919\\_UWDigital.jpg](http://depts.washington.edu/labpics/zenPhoto/1919_strike/General-Strike-photos/Skinner+and+Eddy+shipyard+workers+1919_UWDigital.jpg)

Political Cartoon, "Not in a Thousand Years," *The [Seattle] Post-Intelligencer*, February 6, 1919  
Museum of History and Industry  
<https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/imlsmohai/id/14697/rec/11>

Political Cartoon, "Our Flag Is Still There," *The [Seattle] Post-Intelligencer*, February 11, 1919  
Museum of History and Industry  
<https://digitalcollections.lib.washington.edu/digital/collection/imlsmohai/id/14707/rec/1>

Poster, James Montgomery Flagg, *Together We Win*, c.1910–1920  
Library of Congress (90712758)  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/90712758/>

"Radicals Lose Vote to Seize All Industry," *The Seattle Star*, February 6, 1919  
Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress  
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87093407/1919-02-06/ed-1/seq-1/>

"Seattle Gets Back to Normal," *The Seattle Daily Times*, February 11, 1919  
Seattle General Strike Project, University of Washington  
[https://depts.washington.edu/labhist/strike/images/news/Times/TIMES\\_19190211\\_P1.jpg](https://depts.washington.edu/labhist/strike/images/news/Times/TIMES_19190211_P1.jpg)

"Sixty Thousand to Respond to Call," *Seattle Union Record*, February 3, 1919  
Seattle General Strike Project, University of Washington  
<http://depts.washington.edu/labhist2/SURfeb/SUR%202-19-3%20full.pdf>

"Under Which Flag?," *The Seattle Star*, February 5, 1919  
Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress  
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn87093407/1919-02-05/ed-1/seq-1/>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > Seattle General Strike Historical Context and Timeline
- > Seattle General Strike (Sets One to Seven)
- > Comparing Labor Movements Assessment

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Organize students into groups of three or four students each.
- > Make (or share electronically) one copy of the Seattle General Strike Primary Source Packet and Comparing Labor Movements Assessment for each group of three to four students.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT (15 MINUTES)

- > Ask students about the purpose of a labor union and why employers may oppose the formation of labor unions.
- > Project the Seattle General Strike Historical Context and Timeline and review with students. Review previous conflicts between labor and management they studied up to this point. Responses could include the Haymarket Affair (1886), Great Southwest Railroad Strike (1886), Homestead Strike (1892), New Orleans General Strike (1892), or the Pullman Strike (1894).
- > Project the poster, *Together We Win*. Analyze the poster, asking students to explain the message, purpose, and audience.
- > Explain that students will analyze the February 1919 Seattle General Strike to answer the question, *How did American labor unions work to create a more perfect union for workers?*

### ACTIVITY TWO: SEATTLE GENERAL STRIKE STATIONS (30 MINUTES)

- > Organize students into groups and distribute a Seattle General Strike Primary Source Packet to each group.
- > Direct students to analyze the sources and discuss the questions posted below each source before moving on to the next set.
- > Lead a discussion to synthesize the sources. Discussion questions:
  - >> *How did the Seattle General Strike demonstrate democracy in action?*
  - >> *Were the unions seen as a positive or negative force in this situation? Explain your position.*
  - >> *After reviewing this case study, what questions do you have about the role of labor unions in U.S. history?*

## CONNECTIONS

The history of labor is a key part of the American story. Studying the labor movement involves an examination of issues of race, class, and gender, and stretches across political, social, and economic spheres.



### ACTIVITY THREE: COMPARING LABOR MOVEMENTS (45 MINUTES)

- > Distribute the Comparing Labor Movements Assessment to student groups.
- > Allow students to select a different strike in U.S. history to compare and contrast to the Seattle General Strike of 1919. Possible topics from U.S. history include:
  - » Haymarket Affair (1886)
  - » Great Southwest Railroad Strike (1886)
  - » Homestead Strike (1892)
  - » New Orleans General Strike (1892)
  - » Pullman Strike (1894)
  - » Paterson Silk Strike (1913)
  - » Steel Strike (1919)
  - » Railroad Shop Workers Strike (1922)
  - » Textile Workers Strike (1934)
  - » Union of Electrical, Radio, and Machinist Workers' Strike (1946)
  - » Steel Strike (1959)
  - » Memphis Sanitation Workers Strike (1968)
  - » U.S. Postal Strike (1970)

### ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Assign the Comparing Labor Movements Assessment for completion.
- > Allow students to present their strikes and classify the effectiveness of each strike.
- > Develop a list of methods labor unions have employed to enact change. Evaluate the list and identify which two methods you think were the most effective.

- > Drawing from their research into other labor conflicts across U.S. history, engage students in a Socratic seminar to answer the questions:
  - » *How did American labor unions work to improve conditions for workers?*
  - » *Why were labor unions opposed?*
  - » *How did these conflicts help create a more perfect union for workers?*

### STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > Theodore Roosevelt and the Pennsylvania Anthracite Coal Miners Strike (1902)
- > The National Labor Relations Act of 1935 (Wagner Act)
- > Steel Strike in Gary, Indiana (1919)
- > Cesar Chavez and the United Farm Workers (1962)

**To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:**

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: The Industrial Age in America: Sweatshops, Steel Mills, and Factories

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/industrial-age-america-sweatshops-steel-mills-and-factories>

Closer Readings Commentary: National History Day Resources: Conflict and Compromise in History

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/closer-readings/national-history-day-resources-conflict-and-compromise-history>

Humanities Article: "Railroad Melee"

<https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2011/novemberdecember/curio/railroad-melee>

Media Resource: BackStory: Blasts from the Past: A History of Dynamite in the United States

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/backstory-blasts-past-history-dynamite-united-states>

Media Resource: BackStory: Women at Work

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/backstory-women-work>

# THE NAACP'S MISSION TO FORGE A MORE PERFECT UNION

AUTHOR: Marian Cronin-Connolly / St. Peter's School, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania

## GUIDING QUESTION:

How has the NAACP's mission helped the United States to forge "a more perfect union?"

## OVERVIEW

Students will analyze a collection of National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) primary sources to complete a graphic organizer. Students will research one of the NAACP's missions to evaluate the degree to which it has been fulfilled.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Discuss the motivations for creating the NAACP;
- > Determine the NAACP's mission and effectiveness through analysis and interpretation of primary sources; and
- > Evaluate how the NAACP has pushed to make the United States "a more perfect union" for all Americans.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.9 Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > D2.His.2.6-8. Classify series of historical events and developments as examples of change and/or continuity.
- > D2.His.3.6-8. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to analyze why they, and the developments they shaped, are seen as historically significant.
- > D2.His.12.9-12. Use questions generated about multiple historical sources to pursue further inquiry and investigate additional sources.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

*The Crisis*, Volume 4, Number 6, October 1912 (excerpt)  
Brown University Library  
<https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:520823/PDF/>

Interactive Constitution, Preamble  
National Constitution Center  
<https://constitutioncenter.org/interactive-constitution/preamble>

"The Negro Silent Parade," *The Crisis*, Volume 14, Number 5, September 1917 (excerpt)  
Brown University Library  
<https://repository.library.brown.edu/studio/item/bdr:510785/PDF/>

Newspaper Article, "Revival Of 'Birth Of A Nation' Hit by NAACP," March 30, 1940  
*The Phoenix Index* [Phoenix, Arizona]  
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn96060866/1940-03-30/ed-1/seq-6/>

Pamphlet, *The Civil Rights Act of 1964. What's in it: Leadership Conference on Civil Rights, 1964* (excerpt)  
NAACP Collection, Library of Congress (na0125)  
<https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/naACP/the-civil-rights-era.html>

Platform of the National Negro Committee, 1909  
NAACP Records, Library of Congress (na0024)  
[www.loc.gov/exhibits/naacp/founding-and-early-years.html](https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/naacp/founding-and-early-years.html)

Photograph, Marion Post Wolcott, *Negro schoolhouses near Summerville, South Carolina*, December 1938  
Library of Congress (2017799753)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2017799753/>

Photograph, Underwood & Underwood, *Silent Protest parade in New York [City] against the East St. Louis riots*, 1917  
Library of Congress (95517074)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/95517074/>

Poster, *At the Ballot Box, everybody is equal, register and vote*, c.1970-1980  
Gary Yanker Collection, Library of Congress (2016648751)  
<https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2016648751/>

Telegram, Roy Wilkins to Attorney General Herbert Brownell, February 7, 1956  
NAACP Records, Library of Congress  
<https://www.loc.gov/exhibits/brown/images/br0121s.jpg>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > NAACP Primary Source Placards
- > NAACP Mission Graphic Organizer

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Make one copy of the NAACP Mission Graphic Organizer for each student.
- > Set up the NAACP Primary Source Placards around the classroom to encourage movement.
- > Pre-set projections for Activity One.

## CONNECTIONS

The NAACP is one of many interest groups that has fought for the rights of its members and organized to push for social change. Other lessons in this book include primary sources related to groups, including the Japanese American Citizen League (JACL), American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD), and the American Equal Rights Association, among others.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE (20 MINUTES)

- > Begin by asking students to respond to the following question: *What does it mean to be your “best self” and how or why has your best self changed over time?*
  - > Give students five minutes to respond in writing and ask them to share with a classmate. Call on a few students to share the highlights from their response.
- > Project the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution and read as a class. You can use the [National Constitution Center’s Interactive Constitution](#) or a copy from a textbook or other source.
- > Ask students to compare the meanings of: “to form a MORE perfect Union” versus “to form a PERFECT Union.” Discussion questions:
  - > *How does the word “more” impact the meaning of this phrase?*
  - > *What ideas about government and people does this question reflect?*
  - > *What historical evidence can you provide regarding how the U.S. has or has not progressed toward becoming more perfect?*
  - > *In what ways do we continue to build a more perfect union?*
- > Introduce the NAACP. Ask students if they know what the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People is and list any background information given. Next, provide students with some basic background on the organization. Talking points can include:
  - > The NAACP is an African American civil rights organization in the United States, formed in 1909.
  - > The NAACP helped African Americans gain rights, such as access to voting, education, and desegregation.
  - > The mission of the NAACP is “to ensure the political, educational, social, and economic equality of rights of all persons and to eliminate racial hatred and racial discrimination.”

### ACTIVITY TWO (45 MINUTES)

- > Organize students into groups of three and distribute one copy of the NAACP Mission Graphic Organizer to each student. Clarify what is meant by the terms political, educational, social, and economic as needed.
- > Direct students to circulate around the room and take notes using their NAACP Mission Graphic Organizer. Students should determine how the NAACP has fulfilled their mission. Note that some sources may show actions that fulfill more than one part of the NAACP mission and can be used as evidence for more than one.
- > Remind students to write the placard letter and notes about the sources.

- > Stop students after about ten minutes (two or three sources into the activity.) Ask students:
  - » *What are key issues and points of view addressed in the sources?*
  - » *What evidence do you have from the sources to show how the NAACP worked to enact its mission?*
  - » *What questions about the NAACP and the U.S. at the time do these sources raise?*
- > Stop students again when they are about 60 percent complete. Ask students, *In what ways do the sources demonstrate the NAACP's push to make America a "more perfect union"?*
- > Allow students time to circulate through the remaining placards.

### ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Assign students to select one of the NAACP mission focus areas. Research its history and legacies today.
- > Students can pursue a lingering question from the class discussion.

## STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > The Niagara Movement and the NAACP
- > W.E.B. Du Bois' *The Crisis*
- > NAACP's protest of *The Birth of a Nation*
- > The Grandfather Clause
- > Anti-lynching legislation
- > The Women of the NAACP
- > Thurgood Marshall: NAACP and the U.S. Courts

**To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:**

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: *Birth of a Nation*, the NAACP, and Civil Rights

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/birth-nation-naacp-and-balancing-rights>

Curriculum: NAACP'S Anti-Lynching Campaigns: The Quest for Social Justice in the Interwar Years

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/curricula/naacps-anti-lynching-campaigns-quest-social-justice-interwar-years>

Media Resource: BackStory: Shattering the Glass Ceiling

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/backstory-shattering-glass-ceiling>

Media Resource: W.E.B. Du Bois Papers

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/web-du-bois-papers>

Student Activity: African-Americans & CCC

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/student-activities/african-americans-ccc>

# THE INDIAN CITIZENSHIP ACT AND THE MEANING OF AMERICAN CITIZENSHIP

AUTHOR: Westley Green / Gautier High School, Gautier, Mississippi

## GUIDING QUESTION:

How have American Indians and the U.S. government debated the meaning of American citizenship?

## OVERVIEW

Using primary and secondary source analysis, students will examine the viewpoints from the U.S. government and American Indian nations over American citizenship as it relates to the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Analyze different perspectives of citizenship for American Indians;
- > Examine the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 to determine the conditions in which citizenship was granted to American Indians;
- > Analyze primary and secondary sources related to the perspectives of the Indian Citizenship Act; and
- > Evaluate how American Indians have been included in or excluded from discussions surrounding American citizenship.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.3 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

### CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > 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.
- > D2.His.4.9-12. Analyze complex and interacting factors that influenced the perspectives of people during different historical eras.
- > D2.His.5.9-12. Analyze how historical contexts shaped and continue to shape people's perspectives.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Arthur C. Parker, "The Editor's Viewpoint: The Road to Competent Citizenship," *The Quarterly Journal for the Society of American Indians*, July–September, 1914 (excerpt)  
New York Public Library  
[https://www.google.com/books/edition/\\_/\\_/WMARAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1](https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/_/WMARAAAAYAAJ?hl=en&gbpv=1)

Indian Citizenship Act 1924 (Snyder Act), June 2, 1924  
National Archives and Records Administration  
<https://www.archives.gov/files/historical-docs/doc-content/images/indian-citizenship-act-1924.pdf>

Letter from the Onondaga Nation to President Calvin Coolidge, December 30, 1924  
Onondaga Nation  
<https://www.onodaganation.org/news/2018/the-citizenship-act-of-1924/>

Photograph, Harris and Ewing, [*Calvin Coolidge and Native American group at White House, Washington, D.C.*], 1925  
Library of Congress (2016894067)  
<https://www.loc.gov/item/2016894067/>

## SECONDARY SOURCE

Paul C. Rosier, *Serving Their Country: American Indian Politics and Patriotism in the Twentieth Century*, 2010 (excerpt)  
[https://www.google.com/books/edition/\\_/\\_/s9X7MWwmOSIC?hl=en&gbpv=1](https://www.google.com/books/edition/_/_/s9X7MWwmOSIC?hl=en&gbpv=1)

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- › Student Activity Packet
- › Perspectives Table

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- › Organize students into groups of four or five students each.
- › Make one copy of the Student Activity Packet for each student.
- › Make one copy of the Perspectives Table for each group.
- › Write on the board (or project) the question: *What does it mean to be a citizen of the United States?* before students come to class.
- › Gather enough dictionaries for each group.
- › List words from the Student Activity Packet that you may need to discuss with your students.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE (15 MINUTES)

- › Lead a discussion based on the question on the board. Expand the discussion with the following questions:
  - › *What are some of the privileges or rights that come with citizenship?*
  - › *What are some of the responsibilities that come with citizenship?*
    - › **Teacher Tip:** Make sure that students understand the significance of government representation, human rights, civil rights, and voting rights.
  - › *Are you automatically a citizen of the United States just because you were born in the United States? Has this always been the case?*
  - › *Were American Indians considered citizens of the United States? Do you think American Indians wanted to be citizens of the United States? Why would American Indians not want to be citizens of the United States?*

### ACTIVITY TWO (75 MINUTES)

- › Arrange students into groups of four or five students each. Distribute one Student Activity Packet to each student and one Perspectives Table to each group.
- › Direct each group member to read and analyze one of the five sources in the Student Activity Packet.
  - › **Teacher Tip:** Remind students to underline or circle words they do not know and look them up to clarify as they read their documents. Keep a dictionary on hand for students to use.
- › Encourage each member of the group to discuss the content of their source. Synthesize the perspectives as a group in the Perspectives Table.
- › Bring the students together for a classroom discussion about the following questions:
  - › *What do the documents reveal about those who supported and opposed citizenship for American Indians?*
  - › *Why do you think the U.S. government wanted citizenship for the American Indians?*
  - › *Why do you think the author of the article in The Quarterly Journal of the Society of American Indians wanted citizenship?*
    - › Make sure students understand that some American Indians wanted the right to vote, access to an education, and the ability to compete economically. Other more conservative American Indians were hesitant to accept this citizenship, fearful of the impact on their sovereign nations.
  - › *Why do you think that the Onondaga and others did not want American Indians to have citizenship?*
    - › Help students understand that they want to keep control over their lands, affairs, and sovereignty.
- › Allow students time to research some of the questions posed in their group discussion to complete the assessment.

## CONNECTIONS

There are two lessons in this book that explore ways Native Americans have been involved in the quest to create a more perfect union. Based around the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968, both use changes in the law to explore the various perspectives of people at two key moments in history.

## ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Have students write a brief article, letter, or speech explaining citizenship and what it means to different groups in relation to American Indians. Students should give a brief explanation of all perspectives or you may have them do this in a persuasive style to try and get one perspective across.
- > Have students use Flipgrid, or other recording technology, to record a persuasive speech from the perspective of one of the groups involved. They should argue whether or not they agree with the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924, using historical evidence.
- > Students can pursue the questions they developed around American Indian citizenship as it relates to an issue: voting, land ownership, employment, education, or some other topic.

## STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > Wilma Mankiller
- > Survival Schools
- > Trail of Broken Treaties (1972)
- > Floyd Red Crow Westerman
- > Anna Mae Aquash

**To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:**

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Closer Readings Commentary: What Does it Mean to Be American?

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/closer-readings/what-does-it-mean-be-american>

*Humanities* Blog: Exploring the Great Plains Indian Wars and Military Forts in Kansas

<https://www.neh.gov/divisions/fedstate/in-the-field/exploring-the-great-plains-indian-wars-and-military-forts-in-kansas>

*Humanities* Statement: A Nation of Treaties

<https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2011/novemberdecember/statement/nation-treaties>

Teacher's Guide: American Indian History and Heritage

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/teachers-guides/american-indian-history-and-heritage>

# EXCLUSION OR INCLUSION? THE JAPANESE STRUGGLE TO OWN LAND IN CALIFORNIA

AUTHOR: Robbie See / William Mendenhall Middle School, Livermore, California

## GUIDING QUESTION:

As Japanese immigrants struggled to own farmland in California, who was most influential in building an inclusive society: the state, the nation, or the people themselves?

## OVERVIEW

Using the legal decisions from *Oyama et al., v. California* and *Sei Fujii v. State*, students will examine the relative influence of the U.S. Constitution, state law, and citizens' actions as Japanese immigrants struggled to secure equal status as landowners in California.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Describe the impact of national immigration restrictions and California's Alien Land Law (1913);
- > Evaluate the importance of the Fourteenth Amendment as a guarantor of equal rights; and
- > Assess the role state governments, the federal government, and people play in ensuring rights.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3 Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > D2.Civ.4.9-12. Explain how the U.S. Constitution establishes a system of government that has powers, responsibilities, and limits that have changed over time and that are still contested.
- > D2.Civ.12.9-12. Analyze how people use and challenge local, state, national, and international laws to address a variety of public issues.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

An Act to Amend the Naturalization Laws and to punish Crimes against the same, and for other Purposes, 1870 (excerpt)  
Library of Congress  
<https://www.loc.gov/law/help/statutes-at-large/41st-congress/session-2/c41s2ch254.pdf>

Alien Land Laws in California (1913 & 1920)  
Immigration and Ethnic History Society, University of Texas at Austin, History Department  
<https://immigrationhistory.org/item/alien-land-laws-in-california-1913-1920/>

Amendment XIV, U.S. Constitution, 1868  
National Archives and Records Administration  
<https://www.archives.gov/founding-docs/amendments-11-27>

Decision, *Oyama et al., v. California*, 1948  
Supreme Court of the United States  
[https://scholar.google.com/scholar\\_case?case=15171183144489494599&q=Oyama+v.+Calif-ornia&hl=en&as\\_sdt=2006](https://scholar.google.com/scholar_case?case=15171183144489494599&q=Oyama+v.+Calif-ornia&hl=en&as_sdt=2006)



Decision, *Sei Fujii v. State of California*, April 17, 1952 (excerpt)  
Supreme Court of California  
[https://scholar.google.com/scholar\\_case?case=5469716869035421465&q=sei+fujii+v.+state+of+california+full+text+of+opinion&hl=en&as\\_sdt=2006](https://scholar.google.com/scholar_case?case=5469716869035421465&q=sei+fujii+v.+state+of+california+full+text+of+opinion&hl=en&as_sdt=2006)

Immigration Act, 1790 (excerpt)  
National Archives and Records Administration (7452136)  
<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/7452136>

“Japanese Appeal to the Los Angeles Churches,”  
*San Francisco Call*, April 29, 1913 (excerpt)  
Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress  
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85066387/1913-04-29/ed-1/seq-3/>

Photograph, *Japanese farmworkers and children with the crop in Lomita*, 1924  
Gardena City Clerk’s Office, Los Angeles County Library  
<https://lacountylibrary.org/gardena-local-history/>

Roland S. Morris, *The Gentleman’s Agreement*, 1907  
U.S. Department of State  
<https://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1921v02/d306>

“We Want No Japanese Guardian Angel,” *San Francisco Call*,  
June 23, 1909 (excerpt)  
Chronicling America: Historic American Newspapers, Library of Congress  
<https://chroniclingamerica.loc.gov/lccn/sn85066387/1909-06-23/ed-1/seq-6/>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- › Historical Context
- › The Oyama Family’s Story
- › The Oyama Family’s Story Answer Key
- › Primary Source Analysis
- › Primary Source Analysis Answer Key

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- › Make one copy of the Primary Source Analysis for each student.
- › Print one copy of the Primary Source Analysis Answer Key for teacher use.
- › Organize students into groups of three students each.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE: ESTABLISHING CONTEXT (15 MINUTES)

- › Project the photograph, *Japanese farmworkers and children with the crop in Lomita*. Read the Historical Context as a class. Ask how federal and state governments might affect an individual’s ability to own land and integrate more fully into society.
- › Distribute *The Oyama Family’s Story*.
- › Assign roles: one student in each group watches for the impact of the state, one for the nation, and one for the people. Instruct students to read the story together and enter events on the chart.
- › Ask the focus question, *As Japanese immigrants struggled to own farmland in California, who was most influential in building an inclusive society: the state, the nation, or the people themselves?* Opinions will vary. Ask why they chose a specific group.

## CONNECTIONS

This book features several lessons tied to the concepts of citizenship. The United States has evolved its understanding of citizenship and the rights that accompany it since the founding era. Consider posing these questions. What rights do citizens have? What responsibilities? Who can become or who is barred from becoming a citizen at a given point in U.S. history?

## ACTIVITY TWO: PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS (30 MINUTES)

- > Pass out the Primary Source Analysis.
- > Read the first excerpt (Fourteenth Amendment) aloud and model inferential thinking to answer the question.
- > Instruct students to complete the Primary Source Analysis in a group:
  - » Student A looks for examples of national power.
  - » Student B looks for state power.
  - » Student C looks for the power of the people.
  - » When reading, students should change readers at paragraph breaks. The student to the right of the reader suggests an answer to the question and the third student digs deeper before all write the answer in their packets. Rotate through the assignment.
- > Discuss the guiding question as a whole class before students answer the guiding question individually on the final page.

## ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Students can respond to the guiding question in a written paragraph. Students can respond to the question independently or in groups based on teacher discretion.
- > Students can create a political cartoon depicting the power of the state government, federal government, or people in this case.

## STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > The Japanese Question, San Francisco Schools (1906)
- > Alien Land Acts of 1913
- > Mike Masaoka and the Japanese American Citizens League
- > *Ex parte Endo* (1944)

To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: Japanese American Internment Camps During WWII

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/japanese-american-internment-camps-during-wwii>

Lesson Plan: Pearl S. Buck: "On Discovering America"

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/pearl-s-buck-discovering-america>

Closer Readings Commentary: Connecting the Past and Present with the Immigrant Stories Project

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/closer-readings/connecting-past-and-present-immigrant-stories-project>

Closer Readings Commentary: Everything Your Students Need to Know About Immigration History

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/closer-readings/everything-your-students-need-know-about-immigration-history>

Juan Felipe Herrera, Student Activity: "Every Day We Get More Illegal"

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/student-activities/every-day-we-get-more-illegal-juan-felipe-herrera>

# YOU'RE INVITED! A DINNER PARTY WITH HEROINES OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT

AUTHOR: Emily Lewellen / Brown County High School, Nashville, Indiana

## GUIDING QUESTION:

How did women contribute to the Civil Rights Movement in the United States?

## OVERVIEW

Students will conduct independent research to investigate the actions and experiences of women in the Civil Rights Movement. Using both primary and secondary sources, students will determine what roles women had in the Civil Rights Movement and how their actions contributed to the creation of a more perfect union.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Describe the roles women had in the Civil Rights Movement;
- > Research primary sources to make connections to major events and people within the Civil Rights Movement; and
- > Determine some of the ways women helped create a more perfect union in the United States.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > D2.His.3.9-12. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.
- > D2.His.11.9-12. Critique the usefulness of historical sources for a specific historical inquiry based on their maker, date, place of origin, intended audience, and purpose.
- > D2.His.16.9-12. Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCE

Janie Culbreth Rambeau, Getting Arrested, February 2017  
SNCC Digital Gateway  
<https://snccdigital.org/our-voices/strong-people/part-1/>

### SECONDARY SOURCES

Civil Rights History Project  
National Museum of African American History and Culture  
<https://nmaahc.si.edu/explore/initiatives/oralhistory/civil-rights-history-project>

Exhibition, Women in the Civil Rights Movement  
Library of Congress  
<https://www.loc.gov/collections/civil-rights-history-project/articles-and-essays/women-in-the-civil-rights-movement/>

Smithsonian Learning Lab  
<https://learninglab.si.edu/search>

SNCC Digital Gateway  
<https://snccdigital.org/>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > Special Guest Appearance Handout
- > Differentiation Guide
- > Heroine Investigation
- > Scrapbook Contribution
- > Dinner Party Guestbook

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Make one copy of the Heroine Investigation and Scrapbook Contribution handouts for each student (or distribute electronically).
- > Make copies of the Dinner Party Guestbook so that each member of a group has at least two copies.
- > Familiarize yourself with the [SNCC Digital Gateway website](#), the Library of Congress' [Women in the Civil Rights Movement digital exhibit](#), and the Smithsonian's National Museum of African American History and Culture's [Civil Rights History Project](#). These resources host a plethora of information regarding women during the Civil Rights Movement.
- > Review the Differentiation Guide for your reference.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE (15 MINUTES)

- > Ask students: *The preamble to the U.S. Constitution includes the phrase, "in order to form a more perfect union." What does this mean to you? What moments in history have we discussed that demonstrate people trying to "form a more perfect union?"*
- > Discuss student answers. Read the Special Guest Appearance Handout. Do not tell students who made this statement. Instead, have them envision the person who said this.
- > Ask students the following questions:
  - » *How does this statement connect to what we have already learned about the Civil Rights Movement?*
  - » *How does this statement demonstrate someone working toward building a more perfect union?*
  - » *What did you notice about the person making this statement? How does this person communicate his or her ideas?*
  - » *How old do you think this person is? Why do you think that?*
- > Reveal to students that the person who made this statement was Janie Culbreth Rambeau, an active member of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC).
- > Let students know that today they will investigate other women who were active in the Civil Rights Movement to understand their contributions to the creation of a more perfect union.

### ACTIVITY TWO (45 MINUTES)

- > Assign each student a heroine from the Civil Rights Movement (see the Differentiation Guide for options to research).
- > Distribute a Heroine Investigation handout to each student. Encourage students to use the recommended sources as solid starting points for research.
- > Distribute the Scrapbook Contribution page after students complete their research. Direct students to find at least one primary source connected to their heroine. After choosing a primary source, students will create a scrapbook page dedicated to their heroine to share at the dinner party.
  - » The source does not have to be created by the heroine, or one in which she is even pictured. It can be representative of an event that she participated in or helped to orchestrate.
  - » Students can be creative with this page. They can complete it on paper or digitally.

### ACTIVITY THREE (45 MINUTES)

- > Create groups of at least four students who represent different heroines from the Civil Rights Movement. Together these students will attend a dinner party where they will share their heroine's experiences with each other.
- > Distribute the Dinner Party Guestbook handout. While others in their group share, students will record the experiences they hear on the handout. When presenting, students should use their selected primary source to highlight their heroine's experience.

## CONNECTIONS

Movements are led by people. Throughout U.S. history, groups of people have gathered to organize and advance (or restrict) political, social, and economic change. Organization is a powerful form of civic action. This resource features lessons on people who organized for abolition, suffrage, American Indian rights, and labor rights.

- > Discussion questions:
  - » *In which events or movements was your heroine involved? Explain her involvement and accomplishments.*
  - » *Does this woman deserve to be known as a heroine? Why or why not?*
  - » *Explain your primary source. Why did you select this particular source and how does it connect to your heroine?*
  - » *Share a quote by or about your heroine. Why did you select this particular quote? What does the quote reveal about her commitment to civil rights?*
- > Instruct students to combine their individual scrapbook pages together. Together, students will create one final page that they feel encompasses the women highlighted on the pages within. This page should tell the story of the women collectively and can include pictures, words, and symbols.
- > Instruct students to use their completed Dinner Party Guestbook to write a one-page reflection of the role of women in the Civil Rights Movement and how their actions contributed to creating a more perfect union.

#### ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Collect the Heroine Investigation handout.
- > Collect the final scrapbook and assess each student on their individual scrapbook pages and their collective page.

### STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > Ella Baker and the creation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee
- > Gloria Arellanes and the Brown Berets
- > Martha Cotera and the Chicano Civil Rights Movement
- > Diane Nash and the Nashville Student Movement
- > Septima Clark and the Highlander Folk School

To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

## EDSITEment!

RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: The Freedom Riders and the Popular Music of the Civil Rights Movement  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/freedom-riders-and-popular-music-civil-rights-movement>

Lesson Plan: Places and People of the Civil Rights Movement  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/ordinary-people-ordinary-places-civil-rights-movement>

Closer Readings Commentary: Grassroots Perspectives in the Civil Rights Movement: Focus on Women  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/closer-readings/grassroots-perspectives-civil-rights-movement-focus-women>

Humanities Blog: “Tune in Tuesdays: The Struggle for Civil Rights in Mississippi”  
<https://www.neh.gov/divisions/preservation/featured-project/tune-in-tuesdays-the-struggle-civil-rights-in-mississippi>

Media Resource: BackStory: Legislation Impossible – The Civil Rights Act of 1964  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/backstory-legislation-impossible-civil-rights-act-1964>

# THE 1968 INDIAN CIVIL RIGHTS ACT: FROM TERMINATION TO SELF-DETERMINATION

**AUTHOR:** Chris Stewart / North Lakes Academy Charter School, Forest Lake, Minnesota

## **GUIDING QUESTION:**

How did the rights of American Indians change between the passage of the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968?

## **OVERVIEW**

The lesson will explore the concepts of individual rights and tribal sovereignty through a selection of primary resources from the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 through the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968. The mid-twentieth-century federal policies of termination and self-determination are also explored, as are civil rights movements led by American Indian leaders.

## **OBJECTIVES**

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Interpret the meaning of tribal sovereignty and dual citizenship;
- > Apply the concepts of termination and self-determination in the context of U.S. federal policy toward American Indians.
- > Evaluate the effectiveness of the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968; and
- > Compare and contrast the acts of protest and advocacy of the civil rights protests of the 1960s and 1970s with modern movements led by American Indians.

## **STANDARDS CONNECTIONS**

### **CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE**

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

### **CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK**

- > D2.Civ.1.9-12. Distinguish the powers and responsibilities of local, state, tribal, national, and international civic and political institutions.
- > D2.Civ.5.9-12. Evaluate citizens' and institutions' effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level.
- > D2.His.3.9-12. Use questions generated about individuals and groups to assess how the significance of their actions changes over time and is shaped by the historical context.
- > D2.His.16.9-12. Integrate evidence from multiple relevant historical sources and interpretations into a reasoned argument about the past.

## **DOCUMENTS USED**

### **PRIMARY SOURCES**

An Act of April 11, 1968, Public Law 90-284, 82 STAT 73, to Prescribe Penalties for Certain Acts of Violence or Intimidation, and for Other Purposes (Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968), April 11, 1968 National Archives and Records Administration (12199297) <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/12199297>

Act of June 2, 1924, Public Law 68-175, 43 STAT 253, to Authorize the Secretary of the Interior to Issue Certificates of Citizenship to Indians (Indian Citizenship Act of 1924), June 2, 1924 National Archives and Records Administration (299828) <https://catalog.archives.gov/id/299828>

House Concurrent Resolution 108, August 1, 1953 (excerpt)  
U.S. Government Publishing Office  
<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-67/pdf/STATUTE-67-PgB132-2.pdf>

News Footage, National Congress of American Indians (NCAI)  
1969 Annual Meeting and Mount Rushmore Occupation (6:39)  
NBC News, CBS News  
<https://youtu.be/3Wd1uLgV7mc>

Political Cartoon, Thomas Nast, "Move On!" Has the Native American no rights..., *Harper's Weekly*, April 22, 1871  
Library of Congress (2001696066)  
<https://www.loc.gov/resource/cph.3b25032/>

Public Law 280, April 15, 1953 (excerpt)  
U.S. Government Publishing Office  
<https://www.govinfo.gov/content/pkg/STATUTE-67/pdf/STATUTE-67-Pg588.pdf>

Radio News Report, Minnesota Public Radio, "A news story about life on the Pine Ridge Reservation during the occupation of Wounded Knee," September 1973  
Minnesota Digital Library, Digital Public Library of America  
<https://dp.la/primary-source-sets/the-wounded-knee-massacre/sources/756>

Richard Nixon, Special Message to the Congress on Indian Affairs, 1970 (excerpt)  
American Presidency Project, University of California, Santa Barbara  
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/special-message-the-congress-indian-affairs>

Speech, Lyndon B. Johnson, *The Forgotten American*, March 6, 1968  
American Presidency Project, University of California, Santa Barbara  
<https://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/documents/special-message-the-congress-the-problems-the-american-indian-the-forgotten-american>

Television Interview with Richard Oakes at Alcatraz, November 10, 1969 (10:06)  
KRON-TV Archive, San Francisco State University  
<https://diva.sfsu.edu/collections/sfbatv/bundles/209390>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > Primary Source Packet
- > American Indian Protest Movements Assessment

## CONNECTIONS

This resource presents several lessons that explore the concept of majority rule with protection for minority rights. This includes lessons on the concept of citizenship for American Indians, Japanese Americans, and Chinese Americans.

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Preview the primary resources provided to determine if students need vocabulary learning aids.
- > Make one copy of the Primary Source Packet for each student (or provide electronically).

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE (30 MINUTES)

- > Start by asking students, *How have the rights of American Indians been treated differently than other groups in American history?*
- > Project "Move on!..." political cartoon for the class.
- > Analyze the political cartoon in quadrants, asking students to break down what they observe. Discussion questions:
  - » *Who is depicted in the cartoon? How are they drawn?*
  - » *Does the cartoon include any words or phrases? What messages do they reveal to the viewer?*
  - » *What is the setting of the cartoon?*
  - » *What is the place of American Indians in American society? Are they citizens? Do they have certain rights and privileges or do they lack them? Are they being denied certain rights in the political cartoon? Which ones?*
- > Discuss as a class how this relates to the wider history of American Indians in the United States.
  - » **Teacher Tip:** Students can discuss specific events, such as the Indian Removal Act, Dawes Act of 1877, Trail of Tears, forced assimilation, American Indian boarding schools, reservations, and various court cases. Teachers should also engage students in the discussion of general themes, including land ownership and voting. This will give students points of comparison when analyzing twentieth-century laws.

### ACTIVITY TWO (30 MINUTES)

- > Ask students to consider the question, *Is there a difference between the individual rights of American Indians and the rights of tribal governments?*, as they work through the primary sources.
- > Organize students into pairs and distribute a copy of the Primary Source Packet.
- > Complete Part One to analyze the differences between the Indian Citizenship Act of 1924 and the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968.
  - » Review the definitions of dual citizenship and tribal sovereignty when complete.
- > Move on to Part Two. Circulate and prompt students to consider the themes of individual rights versus group rights, dual citizenship, and tribal sovereignty.
  - » Halfway through time on the task, solicit working definitions for individual rights versus group rights, dual citizenship, and tribal sovereignty.
- > Move on to Part Three. Circulate and prompt students to consider the role of the federal government in questions of citizenship, rights, and tribal sovereignty.

- > When students have completed individual tasks, discuss their findings by asking:
  - » *What are individual rights? What are group rights? How do the documents define them? Give examples.*
  - » *What is dual citizenship? How is it defined in the documents? Give examples.*
  - » *According to the documents, what is tribal sovereignty? How is it defined?*
  - » *What is the difference between the policies of termination and self-determination?*
  - » *What else was happening in the 1940s, 1950s, and 1960s that may have caused this change in the approach toward American Indians?*
- > Return to the starter question, *Is there a difference between the individual rights of American Indians and the rights of tribal governments?*

## STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > Appeal for personhood in *Standing Bear v. Crook* (1879)
- > Red Power Movement, American Indian Movement (AIM), and National Indian Youth Council
- > The occupation of Alcatraz Island (1969–1971)
- > The occupation of Mount Rushmore (1970)
- > Trail of Broken Treaties Caravan protest (1972)
- > The occupation of Wounded Knee (1973)

### ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Distribute the American Indian Protest Movements Assessment to help students analyze reactions by activists after the Indian Civil Rights Act of 1968. Review each of the three acts of protest outlined in the media clips. If needed, jigsaw the three examples. Ask students:
  - » *Why would the protest method of occupation have symbolic significance for American Indians? Do you think this would be an effective method?*
  - » *Based on these protests, did the 1968 Indian Civil Rights Act meet the demands of American Indians?*
- > Allow students time to research these protests to compare and contrast to other civil rights movements, such as the Chicano movement, the Women’s Rights Movement, and the Black Civil Rights Movement of the 1960s and 1970s.

To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:

[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: Not “Indians,” Many Tribes: Native American Diversity  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/not-indians-many-tribes-native-american-diversity>

Humanities Article: “American Originals”  
<https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2012/mayjune/curio/american-originals>

Media Resource: BackStory: Darkness over the Plain: The Bison in American History  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/backstory-darkness-over-plain-bison-american-history>

Media Resource: Picturing America: Black Hawk & Catlin  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/picturing-america-black-hawk-catlin>

Teacher’s Guide: American Indian History and Heritage  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/teachers-guides/american-indian-history-and-heritage>



# RISING TIDES OF U.S. IMMIGRATION DURING THE COLD WAR

**AUTHOR:** Sharon Gillette / Asia American International Academy, New Taipei City, Taiwan

## **GUIDING QUESTION:**

How did Cold War foreign policies shape immigration to the U.S. during the twentieth century?

## **OVERVIEW**

America is a nation built on and perfected by immigrants. Between 1945 and 2000, more than 3,000,000 refugees sought asylum in America. At first, the majority of refugees came from war-torn Africa, Asia, and Europe. But as the Cold War progressed and the United States sought to contain the spread of communism, large numbers of refugees made their way from Asia, Latin America, and the Middle East. Students will analyze a set of primary and secondary sources to determine how Cold War foreign policies shifted the demographics of the immigrant population.

## **OBJECTIVES**

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Describe how immigration changed from 1945 to 2000;
- > Evaluate the role of U.S. foreign policy in changing the demographics of immigration; and
- > Investigate a trend in U.S. immigration during the Cold War connecting historical events to immigration patterns.

## **STANDARDS CONNECTIONS**

### **CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE**

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.3 Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.9-10.7 Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.

### **CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK**

- > D2.His.1.9-12. Evaluate how historical events and developments were shaped by unique circumstances of time and place as well as broader historical contexts.
- > D2.His.2.9-12. Analyze change and continuity in historical eras.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### SECONDARY SOURCES

The Cold War Timeline (1945–1991) Infographic  
VFW Southern Conference  
<https://vfwsouthernconference.org/the-cold-war-timeline-infographic/>

U.S. Immigration Trends  
Migration Policy Institute  
<https://www.migrationpolicy.org/programs/data-hub/us-immigration-trends#source>

### TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- > Rising Tides of U.S. Immigration during the Cold War handout

### ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- > Make one copy of the Rising Tides of U.S. Immigration during the Cold War handout for each student.
- > Organize students into pairs.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE: ANALYZING IMMIGRATION PATTERNS (45 MINUTES)

- > Organize students into pairs and distribute one copy of the Rising Tides of U.S. Immigration during the Cold War handout to each student.
- > Read the Background Information as a group. Direct students to design questions to investigate the Cold War based on the reading.
- > Facilitate a class discussion on patterns of immigration in U.S. history before 1945. Responses could include references to the Alien & Sedition Acts (1790), Chinese Exclusion Act (1882), Immigration Act of 1921, National Origins Acts of 1924, quota system, nativism, Red Scare, etc.
  - » *Who was at an advantage to immigrate to the U.S. before World War II? Who was at a disadvantage? Why?*
  - » *How could World War II impact these patterns?*
  - » *After World War II, what was the purpose of the policy of containment? How might that impact immigration?*
  - » *To what extent did the U.S. policy of containment affect immigration?*
- > Project a copy of the The Cold War Timeline (1945–1991) Infographic for students to view.
  - » *How did these events impact immigration patterns to the United States?*
- > Assign each pair of students to a nation listed in the Rising Tides of U.S. Immigration handout.
  - » Direct students to research immigration to the U.S. during the Cold War. Students will complete the Cold War Quick Search Organizer, build an Immigration Bar Chart, and explain to the class key events both in the United States and in the home nation driving these immigration patterns.
  - » **Teacher Tip:** The nations with an asterisk (\*) can be assigned to pairs of students who need an additional challenge.

## CONNECTIONS

A large portion of the American population is comprised of or descended from immigrants. Waves of immigration have influenced the nation politically, socially, and economically. This book features lessons on the influence of Japanese Americans and land ownership rights, as well as Chinese Americans and their contributions toward challenging “separate but equal” education policies.

## ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Students can present their findings to the class through written, oral, or electronic formats.
- > Lead a synthesis discussion with students:
  - » *What factors pulled immigrants to the United States during the Cold War?*
  - » *What factors pushed immigrants to the United States during the Cold War?*
  - » *How did the Cold War impact the composition of the American people? What are the economic, social, and political impacts of these changes?*
  - » *How did Cold War foreign policies shape immigration to the U.S. during the twentieth century?*

## STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > Chinese Exclusion Act (1882)
- > Immigration and Nationality Act (1965)
- > Operación Pedro Pan/Operation Peter Pan (1960–1962)
- > Vietnam “Boat People”

**To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:**

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

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## EDSITEment!

RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: Civil Rights and the Cold War

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/civil-rights-and-cold-war>

Lesson Plan: The Cuban Missile Crisis, 1962: The Missiles of October

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/cuban-missile-crisis-1962-missiles-october>

Lesson Plan: The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution and Escalation of the Vietnam War

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/gulf-tonkin-resolution-and-escalation-vietnam-war>

Lesson Plan: The Korean War (1950–1953)

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/korean-war-1950-1953>

Curriculum: The Origins of the Cold War, 1945–1949

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/curricula/origins-cold-war-1945-1949>

# THE EQUAL RIGHTS AMENDMENT: DEBATING A MORE PERFECT UNION

AUTHOR: Deanna McDaniel / Genoa Middle School, Westerville, Ohio

## GUIDING QUESTION:

To what extent has the debate over the Equal Rights Amendment contributed to a more perfect union?

## OVERVIEW

Using primary sources, students will consider why different groups of women have held opposing views of their place within the formation of a more perfect union. They will consider the opposing viewpoints and commonalities of the National Organization for Women (NOW) and the Eagle Forum before evaluating how debates regarding women and women's rights factor into building a more perfect union.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Identify the tenets of the National Organization for Women and the Eagle Forum;
- > Compare and contrast those tenets to understand their differences and commonalities;
- > Create an audio, visual, or multimedia tool to recruit members to join one of these organizations (or propose a third option); and
- > Evaluate how these two organizations contributed ideas to a more perfect union.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) to address a question or solve a problem.
- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8 Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > 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.5.9-12. Evaluate citizens' and institutions' effectiveness in addressing social and political problems at the local, state, tribal, national, and/or international level.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Audio File, Radio Station KUOM, "Gloria Steinem Says...Part 1," November 10, 1980 (excerpts)  
University of Minnesota Archives Audio Collection  
<https://umedia.lib.umn.edu/item/p16022coll171:2525>

Audio File, Radio Station KUOM, "Gloria Steinem Says...Part 2," November 17, 1980 (excerpts)  
University of Minnesota Archives Audio Collection  
<https://umedia.lib.umn.edu/item/p16022coll171:2654>

Audio File, Radio Station KUOM, "Phyllis Schlafly Says...," October 29, 1979 (excerpts)  
University of Minnesota Archives Audio Collection  
<https://umedia.lib.umn.edu/item/p16022coll171:2408>

Eagle Forum, "Eagle Forum Brochure," 2018  
<https://eagleforum.org/wp-content/uploads/2018/03/Brochure2018.pdf>

"Joint Resolution of March 22, 1972, 86 STAT 1523, Proposing an Amendment to the Constitution of the United States Relative to Equal Rights for Men and Women," March 22, 1972  
National Archives and Records Administration (7455549)  
<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/7455549>

National Organization for Women, “Statement of Purpose,” 1966  
<http://now.org/about/history/statement-of-purpose>

New England Public Radio, “Women’s Forum; Debate between Martha Griffiths and Phyllis Schlafly on the E.R.A.,” July 10, 1974 (excerpts)  
American Archive of Public Broadcasting, WGBH, and the Library of Congress  
<http://americanarchive.org/catalog/cpb-aacip-305-1615dx01>

## SECONDARY SOURCES

“Equal Rights Amendment”  
National Archives and Records Administration  
<https://www.archives.gov/women/era>

Laine Kaplan-Levenson, “The Women Who Fought For and Against the ERA: Part I,” April 20, 2017  
WWNO New Orleans  
<https://www.wwno.org/post/women-who-fought-and-against-era-part-i>

“The Long Road to Equality: What Women Won from the ERA Ratification Effort”  
Library of Congress  
<https://guides.loc.gov/american-women-essays/era-ratification-effort>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- › Exploring Women’s Voices of the Left and Right
- › Exploring Women’s Voices Quotation Set
- › Quotation Set Answer Key
- › Recruitment Plan Handout

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- › Organize students into groups of two or three students each.
- › Make one copy of Exploring Women’s Voices of the Left and Right, Quotation Set, and Recruitment Plan Handout for each student.
- › Print several copies of the Exploring Women’s Voices Quotation Set Answer Key to circulate among the groups when complete.

## CONNECTIONS

American women have been involved in social, political, and economic movements since the American Revolution, and played key roles in the temperance, abolition, and suffrage movements. However, movements are often more nuanced than students originally believe. Lessons in this book help show women’s roles in these movements and the various ways they helped to build a more perfect union.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE (15 MINUTES)

- › Arrange students into groups.
- › Review with students the two major groups of the women’s movement, the National Organization of Women (NOW) and the Eagle Forum. Introduce Gloria Steinem and Phyllis Schlafly as the leaders of the movement.
- › Distribute one copy of the Women’s Voices of the Left and Right handout and review as a class.
- › Explain that students need to apply what they know about each side of the movement to make an educated guess, supported by a reason, as to who they think made the statement. Circulate and help students create specific reasons to support their predictions. Ask students to create a list of questions that this activity generates in their minds based on the sources they analyze.
- › Circulate the Quotation Set Answer Key for students to review and correct their answers. Ask students to generate additional questions based on their assumptions about the debate.

### ACTIVITY TWO (45 MINUTES)

- › Reorganize groups to maximize student discussion. Explain that both of these organizations (NOW and Eagle Forum) are active in the debates over women’s rights today.
- › Distribute Recruitment Plan Handout. Direct students to use the resources to develop an audio, visual, or multimedia tool to entice modern-day Americans to join the cause for women’s rights.
- › Allow students time to present the media components they developed.
- › Lead a group synthesis discussion. Discussion questions:
  - › *What are the primary issues that divided the two groups? Why did they disagree?*
  - › *How are both organizations active in political movements today?*
  - › *The ERA did not receive the necessary 38 state ratifications to make it an amendment to the U.S. Constitution. While it did not become an amendment, 21 states have versions of the ERA embedded in their state constitutions.<sup>1</sup> The ERA continues to be introduced into each session of Congress. Should states ratify the ERA today?*
  - › *To what extent did those involved in the debate over women’s rights and the ERA contribute to the formation of a more perfect union?*

<sup>1</sup> On January 15, 2020, Virginia’s General Assembly ratified the ERA, making it the thirty-eighth state to approve the ERA. However, its decision came too late. It is unclear if Virginia’s approval will revive the ERA.

- » *Are these two leaders representative of all American women? How are more moderate ideas reflected in the debate?*
- » *What questions did you generate in this activity? How might you go about answering those questions?*

#### ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Students can present the recruitment tools to the class and engage in a class critique. Students can present rebuttals from one group to the other.
- > Students can research additional voices in the debate over the ERA and engage in a class discussion from a variety of perspectives.
- > Students can compare and contrast the two organization's platforms.

### STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > Alice Paul and the Equal Rights Amendment (1923)
- > Women's Liberation
- > Third-wave feminism
- > Women in the Civil Rights Movement, Chicano Movement, and Red Power Movement
- > Title IX
- > Women on the front lines of combat

**To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:**

**[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)**

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Lesson Plan: Building Suburbia: Highways and Housing in Postwar America

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/building-suburbia-highways-and-housing-postwar-america>

Lesson Plan: Women's Equality: Changing Attitudes and Beliefs

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plans/womens-equality-changing-attitudes-and-beliefs>

Humanities Statement: Super Role Model

<https://www.neh.gov/humanities/2013/julyaugust/statement/super-role-model>

Media Resource: BackStory: Shattering the Glass Ceiling

<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/backstory-shattering-glass-ceiling>

# THE AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT: TAKING ACTION FOR ACCESS

AUTHOR: Suzan Turner / Nashua-Plainfield High School, Nashua, Iowa

## GUIDING QUESTION:

How did the Americans with Disabilities Act lead to a more perfect union?

## OVERVIEW

By analyzing various primary and secondary sources, students will determine how citizen activism among the disabled community led to passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA) in 1990. After reviewing ADA provisions that improved access to public facilities and the workplace, students will identify continued areas of need for people with disabilities and develop public service announcements that promote personal responsibility for maintaining accessibility.

## OBJECTIVES

At the conclusion of this activity, students will be able to

- > Identify examples of public accommodations included in the ADA;
- > Explain how citizen activism led to improved accessibility for people with disabilities; and
- > Evaluate the status of accommodations in their school and propose informed action, modeling the process to impact change at the local level.

## STANDARDS CONNECTIONS

### CONNECTIONS TO COMMON CORE

- > CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.6-8.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

## CONNECTIONS TO C3 FRAMEWORK

- > D2.Civ.2.6-8. Explain specific roles played by citizens (such as voters, jurors, taxpayers, members of the armed forces, petitioners, protesters, and office-holders).
- > D2.Civ.14.6-8. Compare historical and contemporary means of changing societies, and promoting the common good.
- > D2.His.14.6-8. Explain multiple causes and effects of events and developments in the past.
- > D4.8.6-8. Apply a range of deliberative and democratic procedures to make decisions and take action in their classrooms and schools, and in out-of-school civic contexts.

## DOCUMENTS USED

### PRIMARY SOURCES

Speech, Senator Tom Harkin, July 13, 1990 (excerpts at 1:04:21–1:09:40 and 1:11:52–1:12:28)  
Congressional Chronicle, C-SPAN  
<https://www.c-span.org/congress/?chamber=senate&date=1990-07-13>

Video, “U.S. Capitol Crawl: Wheels of Justice Action,” March 12, 1990 (4:44–7:25)

Texas Disability History Collection, University of Texas at Arlington Libraries  
<https://library.uta.edu/txdisabilityhistory/video/20084926>

## SECONDARY SOURCES

“Americans with Disabilities Act Justice Department Coordination and Review Section, Sections II and III” Office for Civil Rights, U.S. Department of Education <https://www2.ed.gov/about/offices/list/ocr/docs/hq9805.html>

“Disability & Employment: A Timeline: Commemorating 30 Years of the Americans with Disabilities Act,” 2015 U.S. Department of Labor <https://www.dol.gov/featured/ada/timeline/alternative#>

## TEACHER-CREATED MATERIALS

- › ADA Advocacy Analysis and Action Organizer
- › Taking Action to Ensure Access Assessment

## ACTIVITY PREPARATION

- › Make one copy of the ADA Advocacy Analysis and Action Organizer for each student.
- › Set up classroom technology and/or share links for all videos and electronic resources with students.
- › Test and review all online resources before class.

## PROCEDURE

### ACTIVITY ONE: HISTORICAL CONTEXT (15 MINUTES)

- › Introduce the lesson on the Americans with Disabilities Act using the secondary sources for context. Talking points can include:
  - › Citizen activism played a role in the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act.
  - › The ADA has many commonalities with other civil rights movements, and reveals the critical role played by citizens in making our nation a more perfect union for people of all backgrounds and abilities.
- › Distribute the ADA Advocacy Analysis and Action Organizer and a physical copy or electronic link to the “Disability & Employment: A Timeline: Commemorating 30 Years of the Americans with Disabilities Act.”
- › Tell students to read through the timeline and answer the questions listed in the first section of the graphic organizer regarding trends and historical methods for dealing with and addressing people with disabilities.
  - › **Teacher Tip:** This task could be completed for homework in advance of the lesson.

### ACTIVITY TWO: ACTION TO ADA ANALYSIS (40 MINUTES)

- › Review the “Disability & Employment: A Timeline: Commemorating 30 Years of the Americans with Disabilities Act” and their answers to the questions in the graphic organizer. Discussion questions:
  - › *What movement concerning rights for people with disabilities did you notice in the timeline?*
  - › *In what ways was the movement concerning rights for people with disabilities similar to other civil rights movements? In what ways was it different?*
  - › *How does the ADA help ensure full and equal protection under the law?*
  - › *What are some examples of actions that led to positive change for people with disabilities? Who engaged in those actions?*
  - › *What role did interest groups play in this movement? What role did individuals with disabilities (and their advocates) play in this movement?*
- › Explain: Watch the video clips of events that contributed to passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act and read the guidance document for ADA implementation. Record your answers to the prompts listed in the second section of your graphic organizer.
  - › Play the video clip, “U.S. Capitol Crawl: Wheels of Justice Action” (4:44–7:25) and allow students time to record their responses.
  - › Play the video clip of Senator Harkin’s speech. Cue the speech to 1:04:21–1:09:40 and 1:11:52–1:12:28. Allow students to record responses to the questions in the graphic organizer.
  - › Read, “Americans with Disabilities Act Justice Department Coordination and Review Section, Sections II and III” and respond to the prompt in the graphic organizer.

## CONNECTIONS

This lesson is an example of the concept of majority rule with protection for minority rights. While not every American will need accommodations, it is crucial that those be provided to the people who need them. An outgrowth of the civil rights movement of the twentieth century, the movement used tactics and strategies to push for rights in the public setting. Advocates who sought to build a more perfect union have built a society that is increasingly inclusive of different people.



- > Lead a whole class discussion. Questions can include:
  - » *What role did citizen activism play in the passage of the ADA? What are some examples?*
  - » *What are some examples of physical accommodations we see in our school and community today that resulted from the Americans with Disabilities Act? (handicapped parking spots, automated entrance doors, motorized carts in stores, handicapped seating on public transportation, ramp entrances to buildings, elevators, cutaway seating options in gyms, theaters, and auditoriums, accessible sinks and bathroom stalls, widened door ways)*
  - » *How do these accommodations sometimes fall short in assuring full access to opportunities for people with disabilities? (broken, used by people without disabilities, add-ons to buildings that have other inaccessible features)*

### ASSESSMENT OPTIONS

- > Using the Taking Action To Ensure Access Assessment, students can:
  - » Create a public service announcement to increase public awareness for an accommodation from the ADA present in their school.
  - » Create a board brief for the school board regarding the need to improve an accommodation from the ADA present in their school.

## STUDENTS INTERESTED IN THIS TOPIC MIGHT BE INTERESTED IN RESEARCHING THE FOLLOWING FOR AN NHD PROJECT

- > Berkeley Center for Independent Living
- > ADAPT—Free Our People!
- > Senator Tom Harkin
- > Justin Dart, Jr. and the American Association of People with Disabilities (AAPD)
- > The Individuals with Disabilities in Education Act (IDEA)
- > Eunice Kennedy Shriver and the Special Olympics

To access a PDF containing all of the sources and materials to complete this lesson plan, go to:

[WWW.NHD.ORG/250](http://WWW.NHD.ORG/250)

## EDSITEment!

### RELATED RESOURCES

Blog Post: “50 States of Preservation: The Museum of disABILITY History in Buffalo, New York”  
<https://www.neh.gov/divisions/preservation/featured-project/50-states-preservation-the-museum-disability-history-in-buffalo-new-york>

Media Resource: Helen Keller Archive Collection  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/media-resources/helen-keller-archival-collection>

Project: Digitization of the Helen Keller Archival Collection at the American Federation of the Blind  
<https://www.neh.gov/project/digitization-helen-keller-archival-collection>

Student Activity: Veterans Speak: War, Trauma, and the Humanities  
<https://edsitement.neh.gov/student-activities/veterans-speak-war-trauma-and-humanities>



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