

MODULE B: A LATINA TAKING A STAND IN CALIFORNIA

Overview

In the early twentieth century, women across the country expanded and intensified their efforts to achieve equal suffrage across the United States. In California, Maria Guadalupe Evangelina de Lopez (1881–1977) became a leading voice in the California Equal Suffrage Movement. She was a bilingual educator and translator in Los Angeles and also taught at UCLA. Her story stands out as unique among the better known nationally coordinated efforts for women’s suffrage.

In this lesson, students will examine the actions of Maria Guadalupe Evangelina de Lopez in taking a stand to secure the right to vote for women. The students will analyze political action flyers and a newspaper article to address the following questions:

- What actions were taken by this individual to secure the right to vote in California?
- How could these actions in California impact voting rights across the United States?

Materials

- Women’s Suffrage Flyers with the Keyword/Summary/Restatement activity sheet
 - *Dese a la Mujer de California El Derecho de Votar*, Political Equality League, Los Angeles, California, 1911, Women’s Suffrage and Equal Rights Collection, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, Claremont, California, ccdl.claremont.edu/digital/collection/p15831coll5/id/439.
 - *Votes for Women! The Woman’s Reason*, Woman Suffrage Party of the City of New York, New York, ca. 1915, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC08963, gilderlehrman.org/collection/glc08963.
- Newspaper Article with Keyword/Summary/Restatement activity sheet:
 - Maria Guadalupe Evangelina de Lopez, “Equal Suffrage of the Most Vital Moment,” *Los Angeles Herald*, August 20, 1911, California Digital Newspaper Collection, UC Riverside, Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, cdnc.ucr.edu/.

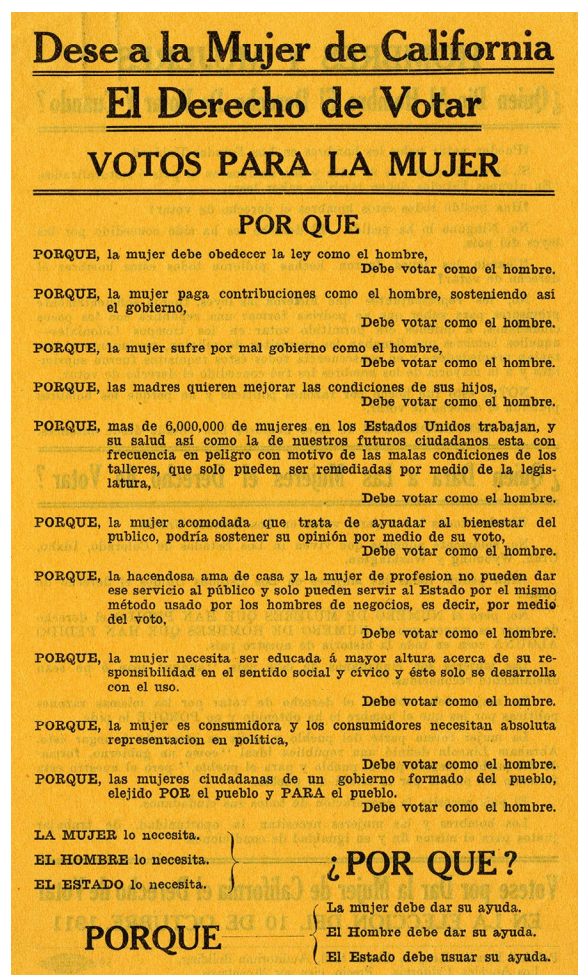
Procedure

1. **Lesson Preparation (5 minutes):** Remind students of the essential questions.
2. **Lesson Activity (Two Class Periods):**
 - a. Distribute the “Women’s Suffrage Flyers from the Los Angeles Political Equality League (1911) and the Woman Suffrage Association of the City of New York (ca. 1915)” with the Keyword/Summary/Restatement activity sheet. The flyer from Los Angeles is printed in Spanish. Describe the process for completing the activity. If the students have not yet completed the Keyword/Summary/Restatement activity for a different module, see the instructions in the Lesson 2 Overview on page 7. This flyer is about 291 words in length, with many repeated words. The students should select 7–9 keywords from the text.
 - b. Distribute the excerpt from Maria Guadalupe Evangelina de Lopez’s newspaper article “Equal Suffrage of Most Vital Moment” printed in the *Los Angeles Herald* on August 20, 1911, with the Keyword/Summary/Restatement activity sheet. The students will select 8–10 keywords from this text.
3. **Discussion (5-10 minutes):**
 - a. Engage the class in a brief discussion of the actions taken by Lopez to secure the right to vote in California. Be sure to emphasize and identify the stand she took and the challenges she faced in her efforts to secure the right to vote.
 - b. As a culminating topic for discussion, have students revisit the essential questions and make predictions about how the actions taken by Lopez in California could have impacted voting rights across the United States, citing key evidence from the documents to support their claims.

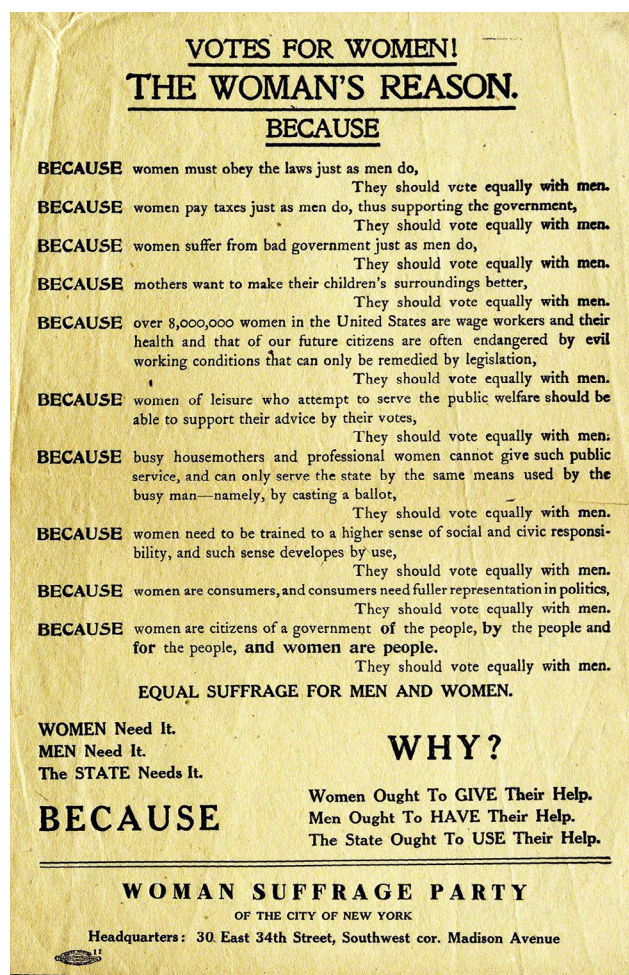
Women’s Suffrage Flyers from the Los Angeles Political Equality League (1911) and the Woman Suffrage Party of the City of New York (ca. 1915)

DIRECTIONS

1. Underline, circle, or highlight 5–7 keywords in the flyer. Do not select “connector” words (are, is, the, and, so, etc.).
2. Use the keywords you select to write a sentence that summarizes the meaning of the flyers.
3. Restate the summary sentence—but this time in your own words.



Political Equality League, Los Angeles, California, 1911, Women’s Suffrage and Equal Rights Collection, Ella Strong Denison Library, Scripps College, Claremont, California.



Woman Suffrage Party of the City of New York, New York, ca. 1915, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC08963, gilderlehrman.org/collection/glc08963.

Women's Suffrage Flyers from the Los Angeles Political Equality League (1911) and the Woman Suffrage Party of the City of New York (ca. 1915)

Keywords (5–7)

Keyword Summary Sentence

Restate the Summary Sentence in Your Own Words

QUESTION FOR DISCUSSION

What inferences can you make about the national reach of the women's suffrage movement based on the existence of these two flyers?

Newspaper Article on “Equal Suffrage” by Maria Guadalupe Evangelina de Lopez (1911)

DIRECTIONS

1. *Underline, circle, or highlight 8–10 keywords in this article by Maria Guadalupe Evangelina de Lopez. Do not select “connector” words (are, is, the, and, so, etc.).*
2. *Use the keywords you select to write a sentence that summarizes the meaning of the article.*
3. *Restate the summary sentence—but this time in your own words.*

“Equal Suffrage”

At this very moment throughout the entire state of California . . . the air is thoroughly permeated with . . . a most vital and stupendous question; vital because it concerns every live and free human being in our midst; stupendous because it involves half of our state, a powerful unit—that question is equal suffrage. . . .

It is just today that the other half, after generations of silent submission, has awakened with the one hope to gain permission to participate in the performance of a duty which is the true essence of that spirit for which our forefathers fought and bled—the spirit of America—a democracy. But can we as Californians and Americans live up to the aspirations and ambitions of Abraham Lincoln if a group of our people is deprived, by reason of discrimination of sex, of the right to cast the ballot?

Who constitute that isolated group? It is needless to say “women,” and let us ask, “What is it that has made woman come to the full realization that without the ballot she is failing to perform her greatest duty as a member of American society? [?]” . . .

What is a man? A man is a person. What is a person? A person is a human being—a person has a soul. Is woman a human being? Yes, woman is a human being. Has woman a soul? Yes, woman has a soul. Then since woman is a human being and has a soul she is a person—man is a person. Therefore man and woman both being persons are equal. Man and woman constitute the people. Can we have a democracy without man? No, because they are a very essential part of a democracy. Can we have a democracy without woman? No, because they are persons and are the remainder that complete that great institution, the people, hence the democracy. . . .

Grant the above and still ask one question further: Can woman show judgment and discretion in matters concerning the state[?] . . . Surely there is only one conclusion—it is that woman in doing her sacred duty through the ballot, thus aiding in the welfare of society, will fulfill her mission as a true feminine woman.

Source: Maria Guadalupe Evangelina de Lopez, “Equal Suffrage of the Most Vital Moment,” *Los Angeles Herald*, August 20, 1911, California Digital Newspaper Collection, UC Riverside, Center for Bibliographical Studies and Research, cdnc.ucr.edu/.

Newspaper Article on “Equal Suffrage” by Maria Guadalupe Evangelina de Lopez (1911)

Keywords (8–10)

Keyword Summary Sentence

Restate the Summary Sentence in Your Own Words

LESSON SUMMARY:

Use your responses to questions about the two documents to answer the lesson questions.

1. What actions were taken by Maria Guadalupe Evangelina de Lopez to secure the right to vote in California?
2. How could these actions in California have impacted voting rights across the United States?