



## THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVOLUTION OF VOTING RIGHTS IN US HISTORY

Grades 7–8

# THE DEVELOPMENT AND EVOLUTION OF VOTING RIGHTS IN US HISTORY

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by John McNamara and Ron Nash

### Unit Overview

This unit is one of the Gilder Lehrman Institute’s Teaching Civics through History (TCTH) resources, designed to align with the Common Core State Standards. These units were developed to provide students with foundational knowledge of the historical roots of current civic and social issues facing their communities and the nation while building their literacy, research, and critical thinking skills. By connecting the past with current events, this unit will 1) enable students to understand that history is made up of individual actions, 2) empower students to develop their civic voices and encourage them to take civic action, and 3) help students recognize their ability to influence history in their communities and nationwide.

Voting is the fundamental right of American citizens, for it is the guardian of every other right in American society. However, the right to vote was not conceived of as an “inalienable” attribute of citizenship by the nation’s founders; it was often viewed as a privilege restricted to groups of Americans with specific economic, gender, racial, or social characteristics and qualifications. The framers of the US Constitution left the right to determine suffrage

eligibility to the states, not the federal government. The history of voting rights has not been a smooth, uninterrupted train of progress toward universal suffrage. Suffrage has expanded and contracted throughout our nation’s history, with periods of exclusion and inclusion for segments of the American people.

Over one to two weeks, students will learn and practice literacy skills that will help them develop knowledgeable and well-reasoned points of view on the history of voting rights in the United States. They will read and assess primary and secondary sources, analyze articles written from different perspectives, and develop a civic engagement project that integrates what they have learned.

Students will demonstrate their comprehension through their oral and written assessment of the primary sources and responses to the essential questions, and how they choose, plan, and implement the civic engagement project.

**CLASS TIME REQUIRED:** 1–2 weeks based on the time available; the student project may require additional time outside of class.

**GRADE LEVEL:** 7–8



Cover image: “The Georgetown Elections – The Negro at the Ballot Box” (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01733.09)

## Unit Objectives

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Students will be able to

- Understand a scholarly essay that outlines the complexity of voting rights history
- Analyze primary source documents using close-reading strategies
- Draw logical inferences and summarize the essential message of a source
- Summarize the significant points in a source
- Compare and contrast the proposals made by different writers
- Develop a viewpoint, present it, and write a response based on textual and visual evidence
- Collaborate effectively with classmates in small groups
- Distinguish between facts and opinions and identify their proper use in visual and written source materials
- Develop, execute, and evaluate a civic action project

## Essential Questions

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- To what extent should voting be viewed as an “inalienable” right, a privilege, or a duty for Americans?
- To what extent has the United States been a nation “of the people, by the people, and for the people” throughout its history?

## Common Core State Standards

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**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.1:** Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.4:** Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.8:** Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.6-8.9:** Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.1:** Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.6:** Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.8:** Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.WHST.6-8.9:** Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.W.8.7:** Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

**CCSS.ELA-Literacy.SL.8.1:** Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly.

## LESSON 1

### Overview

In this unit, Lesson 1 focuses on voting rights in the United States from the late eighteenth century to the late nineteenth century with an emphasis on African American suffrage during Reconstruction and the Jim Crow era. Lesson 2 focuses on women’s suffrage and the impact of the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s on African American suffrage in the twentieth century and recent times.

In Lesson 1, students will read a secondary source—an essay written by historian Allan Lichtman—that provides perspective on the history of voting rights from the framing of the US Constitution in 1787 to the Jim Crow era of the late nineteenth century. They will also read and engage with an array of primary sources that drill down into the issues presented in the essay. They will demonstrate their comprehension through class discussion, close reading of texts, analysis of visual materials, and completed activity sheets.

### Historical Background

See in the students’ handouts, p. 13: “A History of Voting Rights in the United States, Part 1: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” by Allan Lichtman, Distinguished Professor of History, American University

### Essential Questions

- To what extent should voting be viewed as an “inalienable” right, a privilege, or a duty for Americans?
- To what extent has the United States been a nation “of the people, by the people, and for the people” throughout its history?

### Materials

- Optional: Historical Background 1: “A History of Voting Rights in the United States, Part 1: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” by Allan Lichtman, Distinguished Professor of History, American University
- Optional: Document Analysis: “A History of Voting Rights, Part 1”
- Documents with activity sheets: You may use all the document sets or a selection of them.
  - Set 1: The Founders’ Views on Democracy and Suffrage
    - (a) Excerpts from a Letter by John Adams to James Sullivan, May 26, 1776, *Founders Online*, National Archives, [founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-04-02-0091](https://founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-04-02-0091). [Original source: *The Adams Papers*, Papers of John Adams, vol. 4, *February–August 1776*, ed. Robert J. Taylor. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 1979, pp. 208–213.] Also see Philip B. Kurland and Ralph Lerner, ed., *The Founders’ Constitution* (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 1987), 1:394–396.
    - (b) Excerpt from Alexander Hamilton’s “Speech in the Constitutional Convention on a Plan of Government,” June 18, 1787. Version recorded in the notes by Judge Robert Yates in *Alexander Hamilton: Writings*, Joanne B. Freeman, ed. (New York: Library of America, 2001), p. 164.
    - (c) Excerpts from a Letter by Thomas Jefferson to Samuel Kercheval, “Reform of the Virginia Convention,” July 12, 1816, in *Thomas Jefferson: Writings*, Merrill D. Peterson, ed. (New York: Library of America, 1984), pp. 1398, 1400.
  - Set 2: Excerpts from the US Constitution on Elections and Voting, 1787
    - (a) US Constitution, Article 1, Section 4.
    - (b) US Constitution, Article 4, Section 4.
    - (c) US Constitution, Article 6.
  - Set 3: Chronology of Property Requirements and Race Exclusions for Suffrage: 1790–1855
    - (a) “Chronology of Property Requirements for Suffrage, 1790–1855” adapted from Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), Table A.3.
    - (b) “Chronology of Race Exclusions, 1790–1855” adapted from Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), Table A.5.

- Set 4: Excerpt from Robert Purvis’s *Appeal of Forty Thousand Citizens, Threatened with Disfranchisement to the People of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Mayhew and Gunn, 1838), p. 15, in *Preserving American Freedom: The Evolution of American Liberty in Fifty Documents*, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, digitalhistory.hsp.org.
- Set 5: Election Paintings by George Caleb Bingham
  - (a) George Caleb Bingham, *Stump Speaking* (1856), engraved by Gautier (Chicago: Goupil & Co., 1856), The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC04075.
  - (b) George Caleb Bingham, *The County Election*, engraved by John Sartain (New York: Goupil & Co., 1854), The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC04074.
- Set 6: The Fourteenth Amendment (1868) and the Fifteenth Amendment (1870)
  - (a) US Constitution, The Fourteenth Amendment, Sections 1 and 2, 1868.
  - (b) US Constitution, The Fifteenth Amendment, Sections 1 and 2, 1870.
- Set 7: Illustrating the Impact of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments on African Americans’ Voting Rights
  - (a) “The First Vote” by A. R. Waud, *Harper’s Weekly*, November 16, 1867, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01733.09, p. 721.
  - (b) “The Georgetown Election—The Negro at the Ballot Box” by Thomas Nast, *Harper’s Weekly*, March 16, 1867, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01733.09, p. 172.
  - (c) “Portraits of African American Members of Reconstruction Congresses,” Wellstood and Co., NY, n.d., The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC09400.447.
- Set 8: Illustrating the Impact of the End of Reconstruction and the Beginning of the Jim Crow Era on African Americans’ Voting Rights
  - (a) “This Is a White Man’s Government,” by Thomas Nast, *Harper’s Weekly*, September 5, 1868, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01733.01, p. 568.
  - (b) “Is This a Republican Form of Government?” by Thomas Nast, *Harper’s Weekly*, September 2, 1876, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.
  - (c) “The Union as It Was” by Thomas Nast, *Harper’s Weekly*, October 24, 1874, Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division.
  - (d) Poll Tax Receipt, Birmingham, Alabama, April 9, 1896, National Museum of American History.

## Procedure

1. Display the Essential Question(s) for the class as the framework for the lesson. You may choose to focus on one specific question.
  - To what extent should voting be viewed as an “inalienable” right, a privilege, or a duty for Americans?
  - To what extent has the United States been a nation “of the people, by the people, and for the people” throughout its history?
2. Optional: Depending on the time available and the experience of your students, you may choose to discuss the historical background with your class rather than assign the reading and the activity sheet.
3. If you choose to have the students read the historical background, distribute Allan Lichtman’s essay, “A History of Voting Rights in the United States, Part 1: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries,” and the accompanying activity sheet with important phrase selection and critical thinking questions. You may assign it as homework before starting the lesson, and the students can complete the activity sheet to prepare for the class discussion or complete it in class.
 

Before the students work on the activity sheet, you may also choose to “share read” the essay in class. This is done by having the students follow along silently while you begin to read aloud, modeling prosody, inflection, and punctuation. Then ask the class to join in with the reading after a few sentences while you continue to read aloud, still serving as the model for the class. This technique will support struggling readers as well as English language learners (ELL).
4. Depending on the students’ experience with examining texts, you may choose to complete the Document Analysis as a whole-class activity or model the selection and analysis of the first phrase and, when the class is ready, the answer to the first question. For the rest of the activity sheet, you may choose to have the students work individually, as partners, or in small groups of three or four.

5. After giving the students enough time to complete the activity, reconvene the class and discuss different responses and interpretations.
6. The students will then explore excerpts from primary sources and other resources to understand the founders' views of suffrage and the expansion of voting rights through Reconstruction. There are eight sets of documents and activity sheets, each focusing on a different time period, document type, or issue. Once the students complete each reading and accompanying activity, reconvene the class to facilitate a discussion.

You may choose to include all the document sets in the lesson or a selection of them, or divide them up among different students or student groups, allowing time for students to share out the documents they worked on.

**Set 1: The Founders' Views on Democracy and Suffrage and Set 2: The US Constitution on Elections and Voting, 1787:**

- Distribute Set 1 and Set 2 of the primary source documents with the accompanying Document Analysis activity sheets.
- The students will read and, if working collaboratively, discuss the provided texts and complete the activity sheets as they learn about the viewpoints of John Adams, Alexander Hamilton, and Thomas Jefferson on American citizens' voting rights and about how elections and voting rights were incorporated into the US Constitution.
- Once the students have had time to complete their activity sheets, facilitate student discussion on these topics.

**Set 3: Chronology of Property Requirements and Race Exclusions for Suffrage: 1790–1855:** Follow the same three steps for this document set—distribute the documents and accompanying activity sheet(s), give students time to examine the material and complete the activities, and reconvene the class to facilitate a discussion about what they have learned from the materials and their consideration of the critical thinking questions. Upon completion of this document set, the students will share their responses to the questions as well as assess why the number and percentage of states with property requirements for voting decreased but the number and percentage of states with race exclusions increased.

**Set 4: Excerpts from Robert Purvis's *Appeal of Forty Thousand Citizens*:** The excerpt from this pamphlet focuses on the reactions of African Americans to the amended Pennsylvania State Constitution (1838), which restricted voting rights to “white freemen.” After the class reads the text and completes the activity sheet, facilitate student discussion on African Americans' voting rights, using both the table of race-related exclusions from Set 3 and the *Appeal of Forty Thousand Citizens*.

**Set 5: Election Paintings by George Caleb Bingham:** Display the images in a format large enough for the whole class to see, if possible, and distribute two copies of the Details, Description, and Decision activity sheet along with the images. Student discussion should focus on which groups of people are included in and which are excluded from these paintings and what conclusions they can draw about American democracy and voting rights in the mid nineteenth century. You may choose to use the Questions for Discussion activity sheet.

**Set 6: The Fourteenth Amendment and the Fifteenth Amendment and Set 7: Illustrating the Impact of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments on African Americans' Voting Rights:** Facilitate a class discussion on the historical and modern impact of these amendments on the lives of American citizens as well as the expansion of African American suffrage.

**Set 8: Illustrating the Impact of the End of Reconstruction and the Beginning of the Jim Crow Era on African Americans' Voting Rights:** Facilitate a class discussion on the impact of the end of Reconstruction and the beginning of the Jim Crow era on African Americans and their voting rights.

7. Lesson Closure and Summary Activity: Students will develop a position, based on the historical evidence from the textual and visual documents, on one of the essential questions for this lesson.
  - To what extent should voting be viewed as an “inalienable” right, a privilege, or a duty for Americans?
  - To what extent has the United States been a nation “of the people, by the people, and for the people” throughout its history?

They will express their viewpoint, orally or in writing, using the evidence presented in class to elucidate and support their arguments.

## LESSON 2

### Overview

In Lesson 2, students will read a secondary source—an essay written by historian Allan Lichtman—that provides perspective on the history of voting in the twentieth century, particularly women’s suffrage and the civil rights movement, concluding with an examination of voting rights since the election of 2000. They will also read and engage with an array of primary sources that drill down into the issues presented in the essay. They will demonstrate their comprehension through class discussion, close reading of texts, analysis of visual materials, and completed activity sheets.

### Materials

- Optional: Historical Background 2: “A History of Voting Rights in the United States, Part 2: The Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries,” by Allan Lichtman, Distinguished Professor of History, American University
- Optional: Document Analysis: “A History of Voting Rights, Part 2”
- Document Sets with Activity Sheets: You may use all the document sets or a selection of them.
  - Set 1: The Election of US Senators and the Seventeenth Amendment
    - (a) Joseph Keppler, “The Bosses of the Senate,” *Puck*, January 23, 1889. (Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division) and “The Cartoon in Context.”



“The Bosses of the Senate” by Joseph Keppler, *Puck*, January 23, 1889. (Library of Congress)

### Historical Background

See in the students’ handouts, p. 47: “A History of Voting Rights in the United States, Part 2: The Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries,” by Allan Lichtman, Distinguished Professor of History, American University

### Essential Questions

- To what extent should voting be viewed as an “inalienable” right, a privilege, or a duty for Americans?
- To what extent has the United States been a nation “of the people, by the people, and for the people” throughout its history?

- (b) The Seventeenth Amendment, US Constitution, 1913, *Interactive Constitution*, National Constitution Center, [constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org).
- Set 2: The Women’s Rights Convention and the “Declaration of Sentiments,” 1848.
  - (a) Notice of *The First Convention Ever Called to Discuss the Civil and Political Rights of Women, Seneca Falls, NY, July 19, 20, 1848*, Library of Congress Rare Books and Manuscripts Division.
  - (b) First page of “Declaration of Sentiments” in *The First Convention Ever Called to Discuss the Civil and Political Rights of Women, Seneca Falls, NY, July 19, 20, 1848*, 1848, Library of Congress Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, [cdn.loc.gov/master/rbc/rbcmil/scrp4006702/010.jpg](http://cdn.loc.gov/master/rbc/rbcmil/scrp4006702/010.jpg).
  - (c) Excerpts from the “Declaration of Sentiments” in *The First Convention Ever Called to Discuss the Civil and Political Rights of Women, Seneca Falls, NY, July 19, 20, 1848*, 1848, pp. 2–4, Library of Congress Rare Books and Manuscripts Division.
- Set 3: Persuading Voters on the Question of Women’s Suffrage
  - (a) Women’ Roles and Responsibilities in the Home: “Women in the Home” broadside, Woman Suffrage Party of the City of New York, ca. 1915, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC08964.

- (b) Women’s Roles and Responsibilities in World War I: “Who Shares the Cost of War?” broadside, Pennsylvania Woman Suffrage Association, Harrisburg, PA, ca. 1915, The Collection of Ann Lewis and Mike Sponder, lewissuffragecollection.omeka.net
  - (c) Extension of Women’s Suffrage in the United States by 1919: “The Map Proves It” broadside, n.p., original ca. 1914, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC09773.
  - (d) The Progress of Women’s Suffrage at Home and Abroad: “Women Have Full Suffrage in . . .” handbill, Oregon Chapter of the College Equal Suffrage League, 1912, The Oregon Historical Society, Mss 1534, digitalcollections.ohs.org
  - (e) Opposition to Women’s Suffrage: “Vote Against Woman Suffrage” postcard, Georgia Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, Macon, GA, ca. 1915 (HR64A-F20.4); Records of the US House of Representatives, Record Group 233; National Archives, Washington DC.
- Set 4: The Fight for Civil Rights in the 1960s
    - (a) The Civil Rights March in Washington, DC: The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, Washington, DC, August 28, 1963, US Information Agency, Record Group 306, National Archives, catalog.archives.gov/id/542045.
    - (b) Excerpts from the Civil Rights Act of 1964, “One Hundred Milestone Documents,” *Our Documents*, National Archives, ourdocuments.gov.
  - Set 5: The Fight for Voting Rights in the 1960s
    - (a) March from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, 1965: Protesters marching from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, March 21, 1965, crossing the Edmund Pettus Bridge, AP photograph, The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC09734.19.
    - (b) Excerpts from the Voting Rights Act of 1965, “One Hundred Milestone Documents,” *Our Documents*, National Archives, ourdocuments.gov.
- Additional Documents
    - Supreme Court Decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* Concerning the Constitutionality of the Voting Rights Act of 1965
    - Expansion of Voting Rights in the Twentieth Century

## Procedure

1. Display one or more of the essential questions for the class as the framework for the lesson.
  - To what extent should voting be viewed as an “inalienable” right, a privilege, or a duty for Americans?
  - To what extent has the United States been a nation “of the people, by the people, and for the people” throughout its history?
2. Either discuss the historical background with the class or give it to them to read.
3. Optional: Distribute Part 2 of Allan Lichtman’s essay, “A History of Voting Rights in the United States, Part 2: The Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries,” and the accompanying activity sheet with important phrase selection and critical thinking questions. You may assign it as homework before starting the lesson, and the students can complete the activity sheet at home to prepare for the class discussion or complete it in class.
4. Depending on the students’ experience with examining texts, you may choose to complete the Document Analysis as a whole-class activity or model the selection and analysis of the first phrase and, when the class is ready, the answer to the first question. For the rest of the activity sheet, you may choose to have the students work individually, as partners, or in small groups of three or four.
5. After giving the students enough time to complete the activity, reconvene the class and discuss different responses and interpretations.
6. The students will then explore excerpts from primary sources and other resources to understand the fight for voting rights for women and African Americans in the twentieth century. There are five sets of documents and activity sheets, each focusing on a different time period, document type, or issue. Once the students complete the readings and the accompanying activity, reconvene the class to facilitate a discussion.

Before the students work on the activity sheet, you may choose to share read the essay in class as described in Lesson 1.



You may choose to include all the document sets in the lesson or a selection of them, or divide them up among different students or student groups, allowing time for students to share out the documents they worked on.

**Set 1: The Election of US Senators and the**

**Seventeenth Amendment:** After the students have examined the cartoon and the amendment and completed the activity, facilitate student discussion on the impact of the Seventeenth Amendment on the expansion of voting rights for the American people. Ask the students to consider to what extent this amendment made government more democratic and more representative in reflecting the will of the people.

**Set 2: The Women’s Rights Convention and the**

**“Declaration of Sentiments,” 1848:** Facilitate student discussion on the economic, political, and social status of women in mid-nineteenth-century America as well as a comparison of the text of the Declaration of Independence (1776) and the Declaration of Sentiments (1848). Additional discussion question: How did the Women’s Rights Convention of 1848 establish a foundation for the women’s suffrage movement in the early twentieth century?

**Set 3: Persuading Voters on the Question of Women’s**

**Suffrage:** This set consists of broadsides and other pieces of propaganda designed to influence Americans to vote for or against enfranchising women. Facilitate a discussion stemming from the questions on the activity sheets of the development of the women’s rights movement and women’s suffrage movement of the early twentieth century as well as the reasons given to support and reject women’s suffrage.

**Set 4: The Fight for Civil Rights in the 1960s and Set 5: The Fight for Voting Rights in the 1960s:**

In these two sets, the photograph depicts an event that led to the passage of a new law advancing civil and voting rights. In the first case, the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom in 1963 was a precursor to the Civil Rights Act of 1964; in the second, the march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, in 1965 led to the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 activity calls on students to identify key words, write a summary using those key words, and rewrite the summary in their own words:

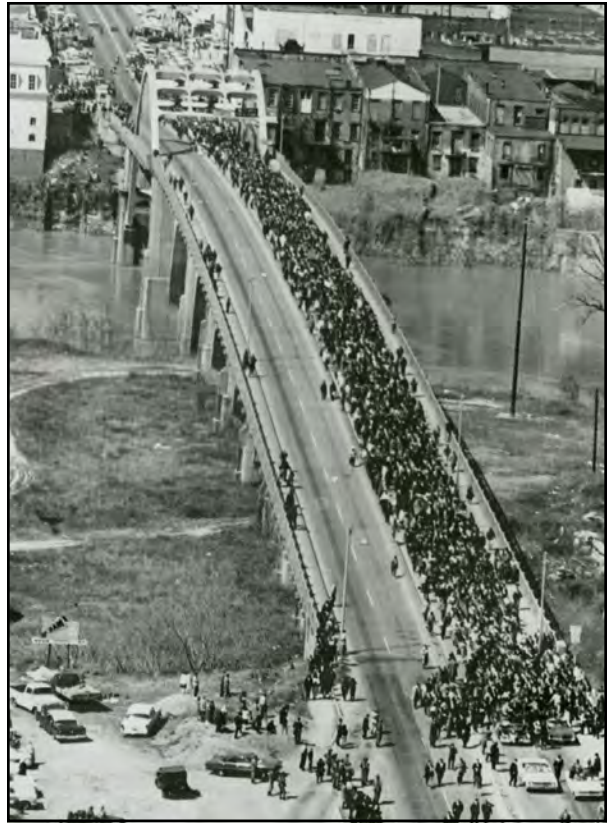
- a. Hand out Summary Organizer 1 and display it in a format large enough for the whole class to see. Share read the text with the students as described in Lesson 1.
- b. The whole class will be going through the text-analysis process together.
- c. Explain that the objective is to select key words from the text and then use those words to create a summary sentence that demonstrates an understanding of the first section of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
- d. Guidelines for Selecting Key Words: Key words are especially important contributors to understanding the text. Without them the selection would not make sense. These words are usually nouns or verbs. Tell the students not to pick “connector” words (*are, is, the, and, so, etc.*). The number of key words depends on the length of the original selection. This selection is 126 words long, so you can pick seven to eight key words. Since the students must know the meaning of the words they choose, you will have opportunities to teach students how to use context clues, word analysis, and dictionary skills to discover word meanings.
- e. Students will now select seven to eight words from the text that they believe are key words and write them in their organizer.
- f. Survey the class to find out what they selected as key words. You can ask for a show of hands to determine the most popular choices. Using this vote and some discussion the class should decide on seven to eight words with your guidance. For example, the class may choose the following words: *prerequisite, deny, right, race, guarantee, 15th Amendment* (two words can be allowed when they convey a single idea; just do not let whole phrases get by), *appointment, and commission*. Now, no matter which words the students had previously selected, have them write the words agreed upon by the class or chosen by you in their organizer.
- g. You will use these key words to write one or two sentences that summarize this section of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This should be a whole-class discussion-and-negotiation process. For example, *“You cannot use any prerequisite to deny a right guaranteed by the 15th Amendment because of race. If you do try that, a commission will be appointed.”* You might find that the students decide they do not need some of the key words to make the summary even more streamlined. This is part of the negotiation process. Copy the final negotiated sentence(s) into the organizer.
- h. The class will now restate the summary sentence(s) in their own words. They do not have to use the key words. For example, *“Any attempt to take away a right because of race will not be allowed by a commission.”* Again, this is a class discussion-and-negotiation process.

- i. Repeat the process with Summary Organizer 2 with the second selection from the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The text is 245 words long, so the students can choose up to ten key words.

Optional: The second activity sheet looks at both the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965. After the students complete the activity, lead a discussion exploring how the Civil Rights Act of 1964 strengthened African Americans' citizenship rights and opportunities for economic, educational, political, and social equality and how the Voting Rights Act of 1965 strengthened the voting rights of African Americans.

In addition, you may choose to distribute the United States Supreme Court decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* (2013) concerning the constitutionality of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

7. Summary Activities: Display the table, "Expansion of Voting Rights in the Twentieth Century," which highlights how recent (twentieth century) constitutional amendments (Seventeenth, Nineteenth, Twenty-third, Twenty-fourth, and Twenty-sixth Amendments) have expanded voting rights in the United States as well as advanced the nation's democratic ideals. The students will view, discuss, and assess the amendments and then write responses to the Critical Thinking Questions (Questions 2 and 3 are the Essential Questions).
8. As a final activity, you may ask the students to develop a position, based on the historical evidence from the textual and visual documents in Lessons 1 and 2, on one of the Essential Questions and express their viewpoints, orally or in writing, citing evidence from the primary sources.



Marchers cross the Edmund Pettus Bridge out of Selma, Alabama, to the state capital, Montgomery, March 21, 1965. AP Photo. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC09734.19)

## LESSONS 3 AND 4

### Overview

In these two lessons, equipped with the foundational knowledge from the first two lessons, students will read, analyze, and assess current news articles on voting rights issues facing American society today. They will learn how to use the AllSides widget on the TCTH webpage. AllSides.com is a website that identifies articles written from right, center, and left viewpoints on the political spectrum. The students will engage in group discussions that emphasize civil discourse and distinguishing facts from opinions.

### Materials

- Articles from AllSides.com on the TCTH website, [gilderlehrman.org/tcth](http://gilderlehrman.org/tcth)
- Analyzing a News Article activity sheet
- Optional: Teacher’s Resource: Civil Discourse Guidelines. The guidelines provided here are adapted from “Managing Difficult Classroom Discussions,” Center for Innovative Teaching and Learning, Indiana University Bloomington, [citl.indiana.edu/teaching-resources](http://citl.indiana.edu/teaching-resources).

### Procedure

1. Introduce the scope and purpose of the next two days. A demonstration of the AllSides material will allow students to comfortably begin to research materials that reflect right, center, and left on the political spectrum.
2. Students will then explore (either in groups or individually) some of the articles concerning voting rights issues.
3. You may assign three articles from AllSides representing different points on the political spectrum (right, center, left) or allow students to select their own three articles.
4. Students will read the three articles and complete the Analyzing a News Article activity sheet for each article.
5. Facilitate a class discussion among the students about their responses to the questions in the activity sheet. To help maintain civil discourse throughout the discussion, you may ask the students to develop guidelines to follow as they discuss potentially divisive issues that affect them and their families or communities. We have provided examples of such guidelines on the Teacher’s Resource in the handouts. Student input is important, and helping them create the rules for civil discourse themselves will give them greater commitment to follow those rules.
6. As a summary activity, students will develop an oral or written response to the following question: “How do the important issues presented in the voting rights articles reflect, refute, or compare with the historical development of voting rights in the United States?” Make sure that the students cite evidence from the articles and use their historical knowledge to support their viewpoints.

## LESSON 5

### Overview

The final component of the Voting Rights unit is the design, development, and evaluation of a student civic engagement project. The projects will be supported by the historical background presented in Lessons 1 and 2; the ability to discuss, analyze, and assess articles on current issues; and the students' interest in issues that affect their communities. They will choose engagement activities, formulate action steps for implementation, and present on the effectiveness of their projects.

### Materials

- Civic Engagement Project Proposal activity sheet

### Procedure

1. Based on the knowledge and understanding of the historical roots of current civic and social issues facing their communities and the nation; their literacy, research, and critical thinking skills; and their experience discussing, analyzing, and assessing present-day articles written from different perspectives, the students will design and develop civics-outreach activity projects on topics of their choice with action steps for implementation.
2. The students may work collaboratively or independently to plan, implement, and present civic engagement projects that relate to voting rights and popular participation in the democratic process in modern American society. The students will work collaboratively with you to develop a list of projects related to voting rights that have an impact in the school or community. For example,
  - Increasing student participation in voter registration drives
  - Poll-watching and assistance at election sites
  - Lowering the voting age to sixteen
  - Establishing a more equitable redrawing of election district boundaries to counter gerrymandering
  - Expanding voter accessibility
  - Permitting online voting
3. Distribute the Project Proposal activity sheet to each student or student group. The student or group will complete the Project Proposal and submit it to you for evaluation and approval. You may return it to them with suggestions and request revisions before signing off.
4. Guidelines for student civic action projects:
  - Identify issues related to voting rights and the democratic process that are important to the students' lives and community.
  - Select an issue to address.
  - Research the chosen issue and discuss what specific actions could improve the situation.
  - Plan an action that could effect change keeping in mind what the specific goal is, who or what body has power to make the change, and how that person or body can be approached, developing action steps to accomplish the goal.
  - Carry out the action (write letters, convene meetings with community members or officials, create flyers/exhibitions/websites, etc.) depending on the specific goals of the project.
  - Assess the effort when it is completed in order to understand their successes, challenges, and ways to continue learning in the future.
5. Based on the time available and your students' experience, establish a schedule of due dates for implementation and presentation of the projects. Discuss what the challenges were and how the students addressed those challenges; how successful their civic engagement projects were; what they could do to be more effective in the future.

## Historical Background 1

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### A History of Voting Rights in the United States, Part 1: The Eighteenth and Nineteenth Centuries

by Allan Lichtman, Distinguished Professor of History, American University

The greatest oversight made by America's Founding Framers was to omit the right to vote from both the original Constitution and the Bill of Rights. Instead, they left voting rights to the individual states, which periodically led to controversies and conflicts among the states and their relationship to the national government. As a result, many Americans have fought and even died for access to the ballot from the earliest days of the Republic to the present. Over the past two centuries advances for White men who did not own property, African Americans, women, and young adults have been tempered by setbacks and defeats.

Despite the revolutionary rallying cry of "no taxation without representation," delegates to the Constitutional Convention of 1787 spent only about one percent of their time addressing the right to vote. These men considered suffrage to be not a universal right, but a privilege restricted to persons with the independence and capacity to vote wisely and knowledgeably. The prevailing wisdom of the time looked down on people without property as dependents, lacking a will of their own, and susceptible to corruption by the wealthy on whom their livelihoods rested. They left the Constitution silent on qualifications for voting, allowing states to continue to impose property or taxation requisites for the franchise.

During the first half of the nineteenth century, the new ideology of a "white man's republic" prompted a readjustment of voting qualifications. The states largely dropped economic qualifications but maintained the exclusion of non-Whites and women, fearing that their participation would destabilize the existing social order in the United States.

After the Civil War, during Reconstruction in the late 1860s, pro-civil rights Republicans in Congress sought to establish voting rights for freed slaves. However, they missed an opportunity to guarantee a positive right to vote in the Constitution, to include voting rights for women, and to prevent disenfranchisement through poll taxes and literacy requirements. Instead, the Fifteenth Amendment was negatively framed to prohibit the states from abridging the right to vote on grounds of "race, color or previous condition of servitude."

White supremacists who took over southern governments after Reconstruction circumvented the Fifteenth Amendment primarily through literacy tests, White-only primaries, and poll taxes.

## Document Analysis: “A History of Voting Rights, Part 1”

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### IMPORTANT PHRASES

Which phrases or sentences related to voting rights in the United States are the most informative or important in this scholarly essay? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase  
informative or  
important?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase  
informative or  
important?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase  
informative or  
important?

### CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

Cite evidence from the text in your answers.

1. Why does Professor Allan Lichtman say that the issue of the right to vote was the “greatest oversight” of the framers of the US Constitution?

2. According to Professor Allan Lichtman, what opportunity did Congress miss during Reconstruction?

## 1. The Founders' Views on Democracy and Suffrage

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### (a) Excerpts from a Letter by John Adams to James Sullivan, May 26, 1776

“The only moral Foundation of Government is the Consent of the People. . . . But let us first Suppose, that the whole Community of every Age, Rank, Sex, and Condition, has a Right to vote. . . . But why exclude Women? You will Say, because their Delicacy renders them unfit for Practice and Experience, in the great Business of Life, and the hardy Enterprises of War, as well as the arduous Cares of State. Besides, their attention is so much engaged with the necessary Nurture of their Children, that Nature has made them fittest for domestic Cares. . . . True. . . . Is it not equally true, that Men in general in every Society, who are wholly destitute of Property, are also too little acquainted

with public Affairs to form a Right Judgment, and too dependent upon other Men to have a Will of their own? . . . They talk and vote as they are directed by Some Man of Property, who has attached their Minds to his Interest. . . .

There will be no End of it. New Claims will arise. Women will demand a Vote. Lads from 12 to 21 will think their Rights not enough attended to, and every Man, who has not a Farthing, will demand an equal Voice with any other in all Acts of State. It tends to confound and destroy all Distinctions, and prostrate all Ranks, to one common Level.”

Source: *Founders Online*, National Archives, founders.archives.gov/documents/Adams/06-04-02-0091.

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### (b) Excerpt from Alexander Hamilton’s “Speech in the Constitutional Convention on a Plan of Government,” June 18, 1787

“. . . All communities divide themselves into the few and the many. The first are the rich and the well-born, the other the mass of the people. The voice of the people has been said to be the voice of God; and however generally this maxim has been quoted and believed, it is not true in fact. The people are turbulent and changing; they seldom judge or determine right. Give therefore to the first class a distinct permanent share in the government. They will check the unsteadiness of the second, and as they cannot receive any

advantage by a change, they therefore will ever maintain good government. Can a democratic assembly, who annually revolve in the mass of the people, be supposed steadily to pursue the public good? Nothing but a permanent body can check the imprudence of democracy. Their turbulent and uncontrolling disposition requires checks. . . .”

Source: *Alexander Hamilton: Writings*, Joanne B. Freeman, ed. (New York: Library of America, 2001), p. 164.

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### (c) Excerpts from a Letter by Thomas Jefferson to Samuel Kercheval, “Reform of the Virginia Convention,” July 12, 1816

“The true foundation of republican government is the equal right of every citizen. . . . I am not among those who fear the people. They, and not the rich, are our dependence for continued freedom. . . .”

Source: *Thomas Jefferson: Writings*, Merrill D. Peterson, ed. (New York: Library of America, 1984), pp. 1398, 1400.



## 1. Document Analysis: “The Founders’ Views on Democracy and Suffrage”

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### IMPORTANT PHRASES

Which phrases or sentences regarding the founders’ views on suffrage are the most important or powerful in these excerpts? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?



## 2. Excerpts from the US Constitution on Elections and Voting, 1787

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### (a) Article 1, Section 4

“The Times, Places and Manner of holding Elections for Senators and Representatives, shall be prescribed in each State by the Legislature thereof; but the Congress may at any time by Law make or alter such Regulations, except as to the Places of chusing Senators.”

### (b) Article 4, Section 4

“The United States shall guarantee to every State in this Union a Republican Form of Government, and shall protect each of them against Invasion; and . . . against domestic Violence.”

### (c) Article 6

“This Constitution, and the Laws of the United States which shall be made in Pursuance thereof; . . . shall be the supreme Law of the Land; . . . The Senators and Representatives before mentioned, and the Members of the several State Legislatures, and all executive and judicial Officers, both of the United States and of the several States, shall be bound by Oath or Affirmation, to support this Constitution; but no religious Test shall ever be required as a Qualification to any Office or public Trust under the United States.”

## 2. Document Analysis: The US Constitution, 1787

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### IMPORTANT PHRASES

Which phrases or sentences in these articles from the US Constitution are the most important or powerful? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase  
important or  
powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase  
important or  
powerful?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase  
important or  
powerful?

NAME

DATE

PERIOD

### CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

Cite evidence from the text in your answers.

1. According to the Constitution, which level of government, federal or state, was primarily empowered to establish eligibility and qualifications for voting in elections?

2. Based on these articles from the Constitution, what guarantees does the Constitution provide?

### 3. Chronology of Property Requirements and Race Exclusions for Suffrage: 1790–1855

#### (a) Chronology of Property Requirements for Suffrage, 1790–1855

Year	Number of States in the Union	Number of States with Property Requirements
1790	13	10
1800	16	10
1810	17	9
1820	23	9
1830	24	8
1840	26	7
1850	31	4
1855	31	3*

\*In 1855, the three states with property requirements were Rhode Island, New York, and South Carolina; however, Rhode Island exempted native-born citizens, New York's requirement only applied to African Americans, and South Carolina offered a residency alternative requirement.

Source: Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), Table A.3 (adapted).

#### (b) Chronology of Race Exclusions, 1790–1855

Year	Number of States in the Union	Number of States with Race Exclusions
1790	13	3
1800	16	5
1810	17	8
1820	23	14
1830	24	15*
1840	26	20
1850	31	25
1855	31	25

\*New York is not counted as a state with a race exclusion, although a significant property qualification for “men of color,” adopted in 1821, was discriminatory toward African Americans.

Source: Alexander Keyssar, *The Right to Vote: The Contested History of Democracy in the United States* (New York: Basic Books, 2000), Table A.5 (adapted).

### 3. Document Analysis: Property Requirements for Suffrage

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#### CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

Respond to the following questions based on the data in the “Property Requirements for Suffrage” table.

1. Based on the data in the table, how did the number of states in the Union and the number of states with property requirements for voting change between 1790 and 1855?
2. What percentage of states had property requirements in 1790? What percentage of states had property requirements in 1855?
3. What can you conclude about the extent of voting rights in the United States during this period (from the ratification of the US Constitution to the eve of the Civil War) and how voting rights changed during this period?

### 3. Document Analysis: Race Exclusions for Suffrage

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#### CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

Respond to the following questions based on the data in the “Race Exclusions for Suffrage” table.

1. Based on the data presented in the table, how did the number of states in the Union and the number of states with race exclusions for voting change between 1790 and 1855?
2. What percentage of states had race exclusions for voting in 1790? What percentage of states had race exclusions in 1855?
3. What can you conclude about the extent of African Americans’ voting rights in the United States during this period (from the ratification of the Constitution to the eve of the Civil War) and how voting rights changed during this period?



#### 4. Excerpts from Robert Purvis's *Appeal of Forty Thousand Citizens, Threatened with Disfranchisement to the People of Pennsylvania, 1838*

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“ . . . Are we to be disfranchised, lest the purity of the *white* blood should be sullied by an intermixture with ours? It seems to us that our white brethren might well enough reserve their fear, till we seek such alliance with them. We ask no social favors. We would not willingly darken the doors of those to whom the complexion and features, which our Maker has given us, are disagreeable. The territories of the commonwealth are sufficiently ample to afford us a home without doing violence to the delicate nerves of our white brethren, for centuries to come. Besides, we are not intruders here, nor were our ancestors. . . . We dare not give full vent to the indignation we feel on this point, but we will not attempt wholly to conceal it. We ask a voice in the disposition of those public resources which we ourselves have helped to earn; we claim a right to

be heard, according to our numbers, in regard to all those great public measures which involve our lives and fortunes, as well as those of our fellow citizens; we assert our right to vote at the polls as a shield against that strange species of benevolence which seeks legislative aid to banish us—and we are told that our white fellow citizens cannot submit to an *intermixture of the races!* . . . Why should not the same principle hold good between neighbor and neighbor, which is deemed necessary, as a fundamental principle, in the Constitution itself?”

Source: Robert Purvis, *Appeal of Forty Thousand Citizens, Threatened with Disfranchisement to the People of Pennsylvania* (Philadelphia: Mayhew and Gunn, 1838), p. 15, in *Preserving American Freedom: The Evolution of American Liberty in Fifty Documents*, Historical Society of Pennsylvania, [digitalhistory.hsp.org](http://digitalhistory.hsp.org).

## 4. Document Analysis: *Appeal of Forty Thousand Citizens*

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### IMPORTANT PHRASES

Which phrases or sentences regarding equality and suffrage rights for African Americans in this text are the most important or powerful? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase  
important or  
powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase  
important or  
powerful?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase  
important or  
powerful?

### CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

Cite evidence from the text in your answers.

1. How did the African American community in Philadelphia react when the amended Pennsylvania State Constitution in 1838 restricted voting rights to “white freemen”?

2. Why did African American political activist Robert Purvis believe that African Americans were entitled to the right to vote in Pennsylvania?

## 5. Election Paintings by George Caleb Bingham (1811–1879)

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(a) *Stump Speaking* (1856)



The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC04075

(b) *The County Election* (1854)



The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC04074

## 5. Questions for Discussion

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*Stump Speaking* and *The County Election* illustrate the extent of antebellum American democracy. The spread of universal suffrage for adult White males and the mobilization of popular politics through party organizations were important hallmarks of the turbulent age.

In *Stump Speaking*:

Which groups of people are included and which are excluded?

Why do you think that the excluded groups have been omitted from this painting?

In *The County Election*:

Which groups of people are included and which are excluded?

Why do you think that the excluded groups have been omitted from this painting?

NAME

DATE

PERIOD

## 5. Details, Description, and Decision

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Title:

### PEOPLE

**Descriptive Details About:**

Identify the person/people in this image.

### OBJECTS

**Descriptive Details About:**

Identify the object(s) in this image.

Descriptive Summary Sentence:

Descriptive Summary Sentence:

### ACTION/ACTIVITY

**Descriptive Details About:**

Identify the action/activity in this image.

### OVERALL ASSESSMENT

**Decision:**

What have I learned from this painting about voting rights in the United States during the mid-nineteenth century?

Descriptive Summary Sentence:

NAME

DATE

PERIOD

## 5. Details, Description, and Decision

---

Title:

### PEOPLE

**Descriptive Details About:**

Identify the person/people in this image.

### OBJECTS

**Descriptive Details About:**

Identify the object(s) in this image.

Descriptive Summary Sentence:

Descriptive Summary Sentence:

### ACTION/ACTIVITY

**Descriptive Details About:**

Identify the action/activity in this image.

### OVERALL ASSESSMENT

**Decision:**

What have I learned from this painting about voting rights in the United States during the mid-nineteenth century?

Descriptive Summary Sentence:



## 6. The Fourteenth Amendment (1868) and the Fifteenth Amendment (1870)

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### (a) The Fourteenth Amendment, 1868

*[Note: The underlining has been added for emphasis and is not in the original document.]*

SECTION 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws.

SECTION 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State,

excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State.

### (b) The Fifteenth Amendment, 1870

SECTION 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.

SECTION 2. The Congress shall have power to enforce this article by appropriate legislation.

## 6. Document Analysis: The Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments

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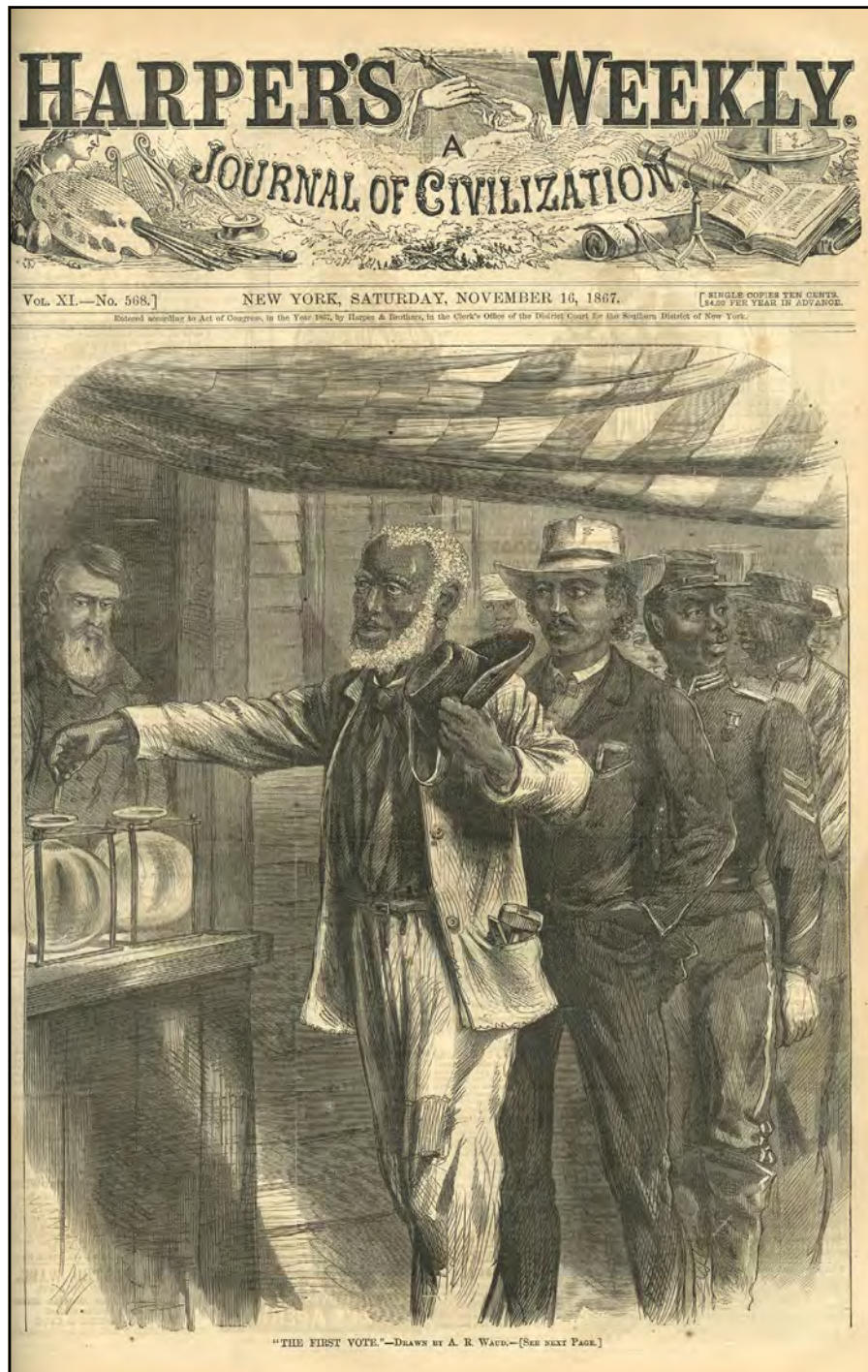
### CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

Base your answers on the two amendments.

1. How does the Fourteenth Amendment define American citizenship and citizenship rights that cannot be infringed upon by the states?
2. How does the Fourteenth Amendment define eligibility for voting in federal and state elections?
3. How does the Fifteenth Amendment define eligibility for voting in federal and state elections?
4. To what extent did the Fifteenth Amendment make the ideal of universal suffrage real for the American people?
5. How did the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments change or limit the power of the states to set requirements for voting?

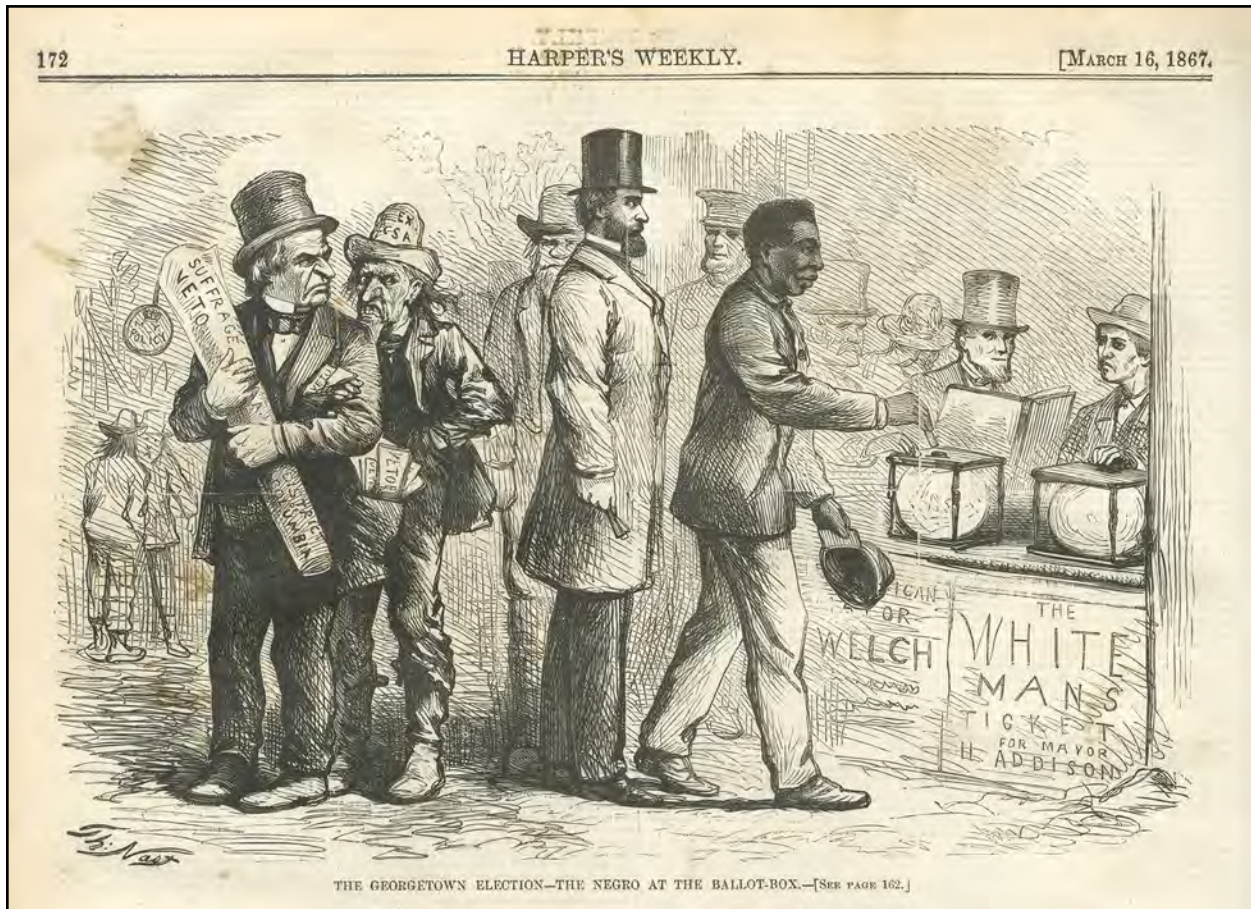
## 7. Illustrating the Impact of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments on African Americans' Voting Rights

(a) "The First Vote," 1867



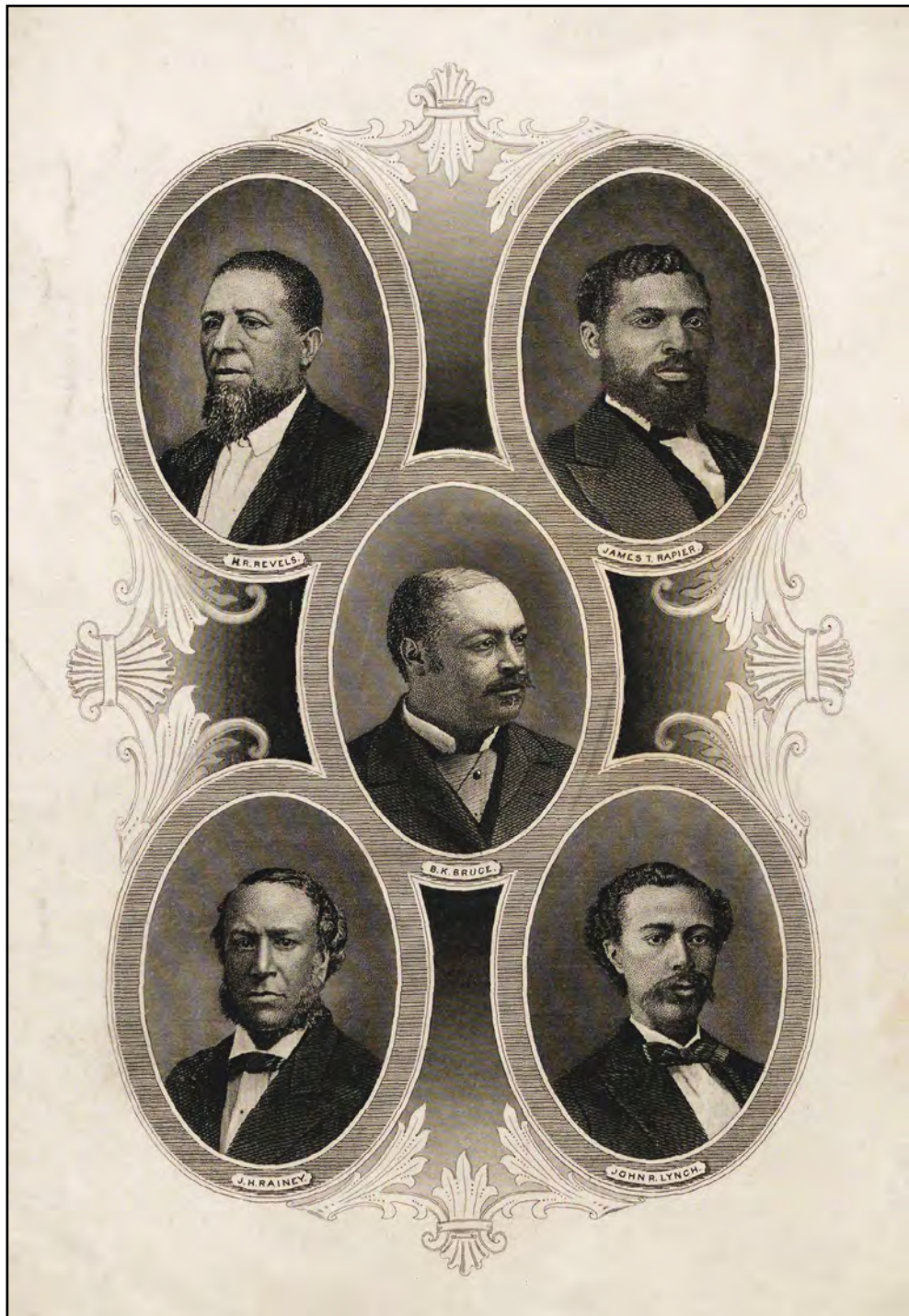
The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01733.09

(b) "The Georgetown Elections – The Negro at the Ballot Box"



The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01733.09

(c) African American Members of the Reconstruction Congresses



Hiram R. Revels of Mississippi, James T. Rapier of Alabama, Blanche K. Bruce of Mississippi, Joseph H. Rainey of South Carolina, and John R. Lynch of Mississippi, ca. 1880s. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC09400.447)

## 7. Document Analysis: Illustrating the Impact of the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments on African Americans' Voting Rights

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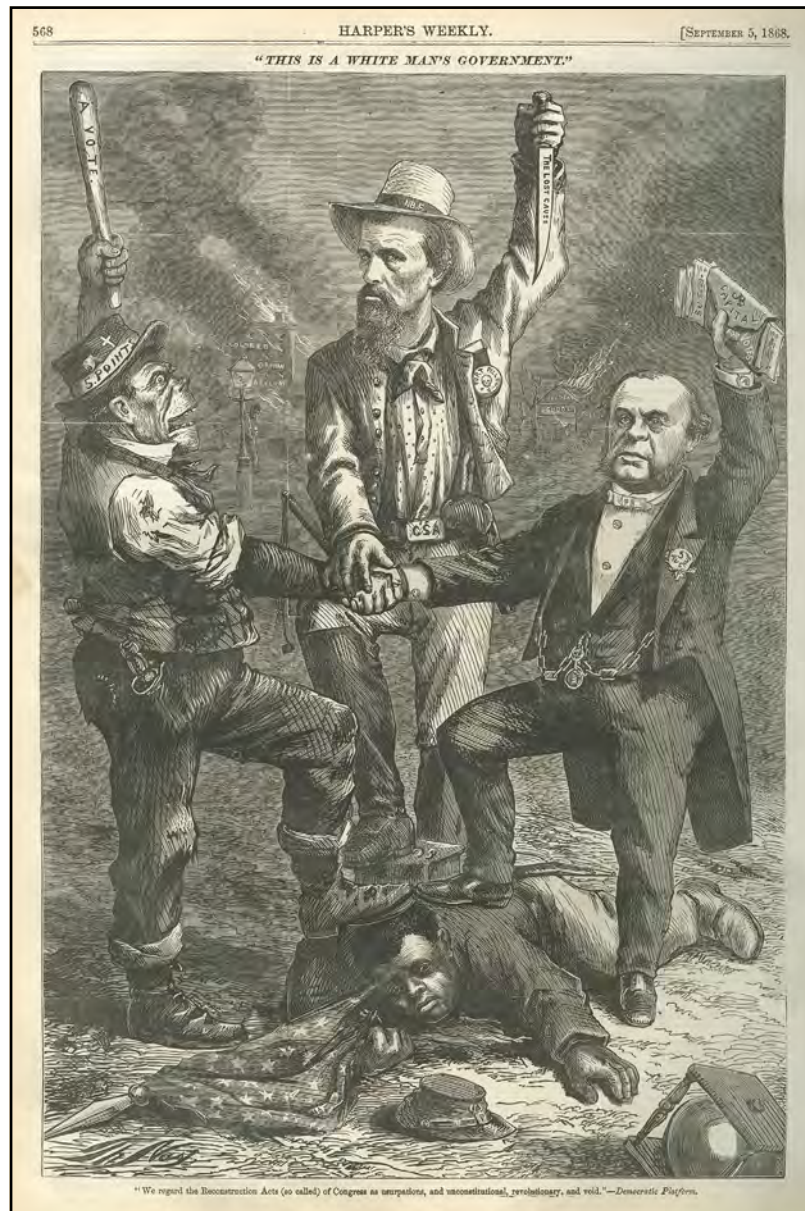
### CRITICAL THINKING QUESTION

Approximately 2,000 African Americans served in local, state, and national government during Reconstruction. Nearly 700 served in state legislatures, and sixteen were elected to Congress, including two (Blanche Bruce and Hiram Revels) to the US Senate.

Based on these three illustrations, what impact did the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments have on African Americans' voting rights?

## 8. Illustrating the Impact of the End of Reconstruction and the Beginning of the Jim Crow Era on African Americans' Voting Rights

### (a) "This Is a White Man's Government"

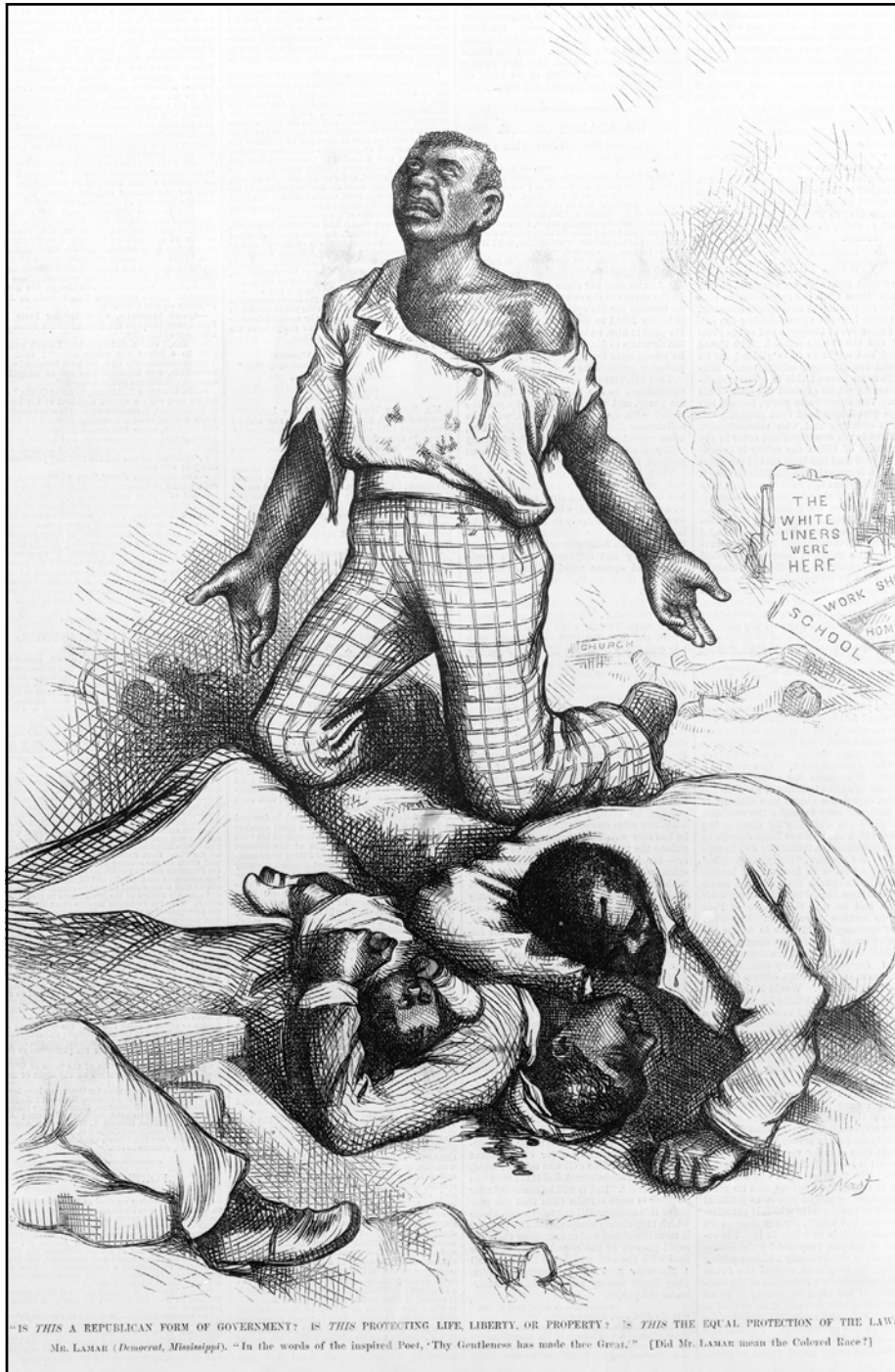


The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC01733.01

**Caption:** “We regard the Reconstruction Acts (so called) of Congress as usurpations, and unconstitutional, revolutionary, and void.’ —Democratic Platform.”

Stereotypes of three characters stand with a foot on a Black soldier: an Irish immigrant, a Confederate, and an industrialist. In the background, a “colored orphan asylum” and a “southern school” are in flames; African American children have been lynched near the burning buildings.

(b) "Is This a Republican Form of Government?"



Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

**Caption: “Is *this* a republican form of government? Is *this* protecting life, liberty, or property? Is *this* the equal protection of the laws? Mr. Lamar (Democrat, Mississippi): ‘In the words of the inspired Poet, “Thy Gentleness has made thee Great.” [Did Mr. Lamar mean the Colored Race?]”**

In the background signs read, “The White Liners were here,” “School,” “Church,” “Work Shop,” and “Homes.”



(c) "The Union as It Was"



The Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division

(d) Poll Tax Receipt, Birmingham, Alabama, April 9, 1896

No. **S38** Birmingham, Ala. *4/9* 189*6*

Received of *J. M. Kirklin* (Col.) (White.)

the sum of *Two 25/100* Dollars  
in full of amount of Poll Tax for the year 1895.

Poll Tax,	<i>1</i>	<i>50</i>
Assessor's Fee,		<i>50</i>
Collector's Fee,		<i>50</i>
		<hr/>

*A. Spruice* P. T. C.

National Museum of American History

## 8. Analyzing a Political Cartoon

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Cartoon #

Give the cartoon your own original title:

What is the significance of the central figure(s) and object(s) in this cartoon?

What action is taking place in the cartoon?

What mood or tone is created by the cartoon? What in the image is creating that mood or tone?

Briefly explain the artist's message to the viewer.

## 8. Analyzing a Political Cartoon

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Cartoon #

Give the cartoon your own original title:

What is the significance of the central figure(s) and object(s) in this cartoon?

What action is taking place in the cartoon?

What mood or tone is created by the cartoon? What in the image is creating that mood or tone?

Briefly explain the artist's message to the viewer.

## 8. Analyzing a Political Cartoon

---

Cartoon #

Give the cartoon your own original title:

What is the significance of the central figure(s) and object(s) in this cartoon?

What action is taking place in the cartoon?

What mood or tone is created by the cartoon? What in the image is creating that mood or tone?

Briefly explain the artist's message to the viewer.

NAME

DATE

PERIOD

**CRITICAL THINKING QUESTION**

Based on these four documents, how did the end of Reconstruction and the beginning of the Jim Crow era impact African Americans' voting rights?

## Historical Background 2

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### A History of Voting Rights in the United States, Part 2: The Twentieth and Twenty-first Centuries

by Allan Lichtman, Distinguished Professor of History, American University

The ideals that contributed to passage of the Fifteenth Amendment never extended to women, whose struggle for the vote stalled during the late nineteenth century. The movement revived during the Progressive Era and World War I with about three-quarters of the states enfranchising women. The final successful push for women's voting resulted in the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920.

The struggle for voting rights later in the twentieth century, which focused on excluded racial minorities, was part of the larger movement for civil rights that gained momentum after the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955, led by Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr. The struggle was fought in three arenas: on the streets, in the courtroom, and in Congress. After achieving in 1964 the Twenty-fourth Amendment, which abolished the poll tax for federal elections, and the Civil Rights Act, the movement turned to voting rights using the well-tested civil disobedience methods that provoked overreaction from southern law enforcement. The voting rights march that led to police violence on the Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, in March 1965 was the pivotal event triggering passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Among other provisions, the act authorized the courts nationwide to suspend the use of any discriminatory test or device used by a jurisdiction as a prerequisite for voting and to appoint federal election examiners and monitors to register voters and ensure the fair conduct of elections. The enforcement of the act had the immediate effect of dramatically increasing Black registration and turnout in the South. Within two years after its passage, the percentage of registered Black people in the Deep South states of Alabama, Georgia, Louisiana, and Mississippi more than doubled from 21.1 percent in 1964 to 48.5 percent.

The enactment and enforcement of the Voting Rights Act did not end the struggle for the vote in America. Since the contested election of 2000, America has been engaged in what legal scholar Richard L. Hasen calls the “new voting wars.” Who has the right to vote in America and who benefits from exclusionary practices? Since 2000, some seventeen states have adopted voter photo identification laws. Numerous other states have cut early voting, tightened registration requirements, and shut down polling places.

In 2013, in *Shelby County v. Holder*, the US Supreme Court struck down the Voting Rights Act's preclearance provision. The Court held that the “pervasive,” “flagrant,” “widespread,” and “rampant” discrimination that Congress sought to correct in 1965 no longer existed in the twenty-first century. Yet, by neglecting new forms of voter suppression, the Court unleashed a renewed push to erode voting rights.

Most notable was legislation that North Carolina adopted just weeks after the *Shelby* decision that bundled together a strict voter photo ID law, cutbacks in early voting, and elimination of three practices: 1) the opportunity to register during early voting, 2) the pre-registration of sixteen- and seventeen-year-olds, and 3) the partial counting of ballots cast in the incorrect precinct. In 2016, the Fourth Circuit Court of Appeals struck down the law, ruling that it had both the effect and the intent of discriminating against African Americans.

In addition, gerrymandering of electoral districts by political bodies deprives many Americans of a meaningful vote for legislative offices. The gerrymandering of legislative districts to favor one party over another at every level of government kills political competition and the incentive to vote. It lets candidates choose their voters, rather than voters choose their candidates.

The real problem with American elections is abysmally low turnout that ranks America near the bottom of peer democracies. Several states have adopted laws that empower voters to register on Election Day or provide government-assisted registration. Oregon, for example, pioneered legislation that would automatically register persons who applied for a new or renewed driver's license. The law resulted in a substantial expansion of registered voters and actual voters in 2016.

Many contemporary political commentators believe that voter reform will not emanate from politicians but rather through a concerted grassroots movement to prompt Congress to enact additional voting rights legislation. “When too many Americans don't vote or participate, some see apathy and despair,” said the late Wisconsin senator Paul Wellstone. “I see disappointment and even outrage. And I believe that out of this frustration can come hope and action.”

## Document Analysis: “A History of Voting Rights, Part 2”

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### IMPORTANT PHRASES

Which phrases or sentences related to voting rights in the United States are the most informative or important in this scholarly essay? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase  
informative or  
important?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase  
informative or  
important?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase  
informative or  
important?



**CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS**

Cite evidence from the text in your answers.

1. Briefly explain how the Voting Rights Act of 1965 strengthened African Americans' right to vote.

2. Briefly explain what Professor Allan Lichtman believes are the greatest threats to voting in the twenty-first century.

## 1: The Election of US Senators and the Seventeenth Amendment

### (a) "The Bosses of the Senate," 1889



Library of Congress

### The Cartoon in Context

This popular cartoon from 1889 depicts corporate interests—from steel, oil, sugar, and coal to paper bags and salt—as giant money bags looming over the tiny US senators below the motto “This is the Senate of the Monopolists by the Monopolists and for the Monopolists!” A door to the Senate gallery, the “people’s entrance,” is bolted and barred.

With the ratification of the Seventeenth Amendment (May 31, 1913), US senators were elected by the people rather than state legislatures.

### (b) Excerpt from the Seventeenth Amendment, 1913

“The Senate of the United States shall be composed of two Senators from each State, elected by the people thereof, for six years; and each Senator shall have one vote. . . .”

Source: *Interactive Constitution*, National Constitution Center, [constitutioncenter.org](http://constitutioncenter.org)

## 1: Analyzing a Cartoon

---

Cartoon #

Give the cartoon your own original title:

What is the significance of the central figure(s) and object(s) in this cartoon?

What action is taking place in the cartoon?

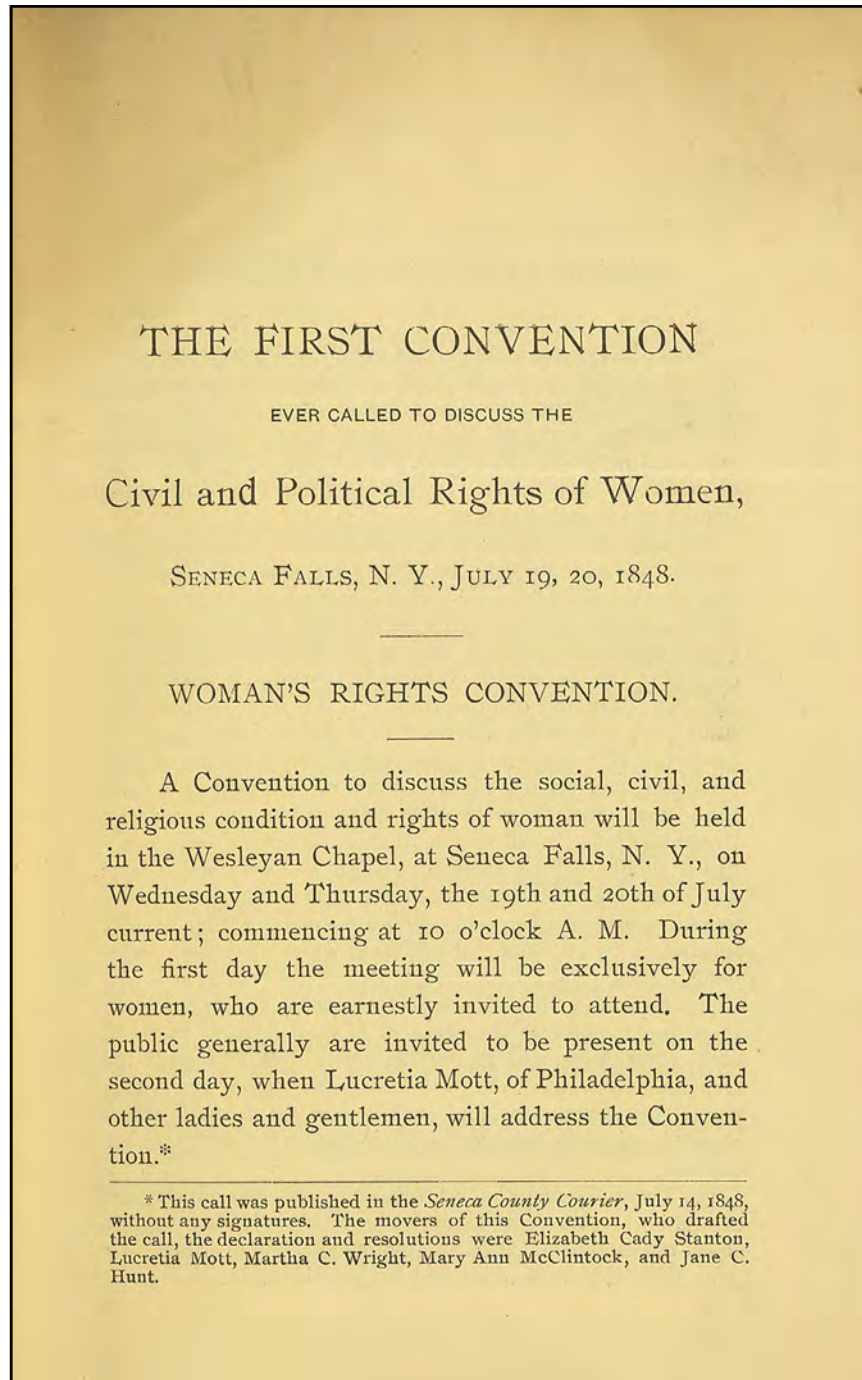
What mood or tone is created by the cartoon? What in the image is creating that mood or tone?

Briefly explain the artist's message to the viewer.

## 2: The Women's Rights Convention and the "Declaration of Sentiments," 1848

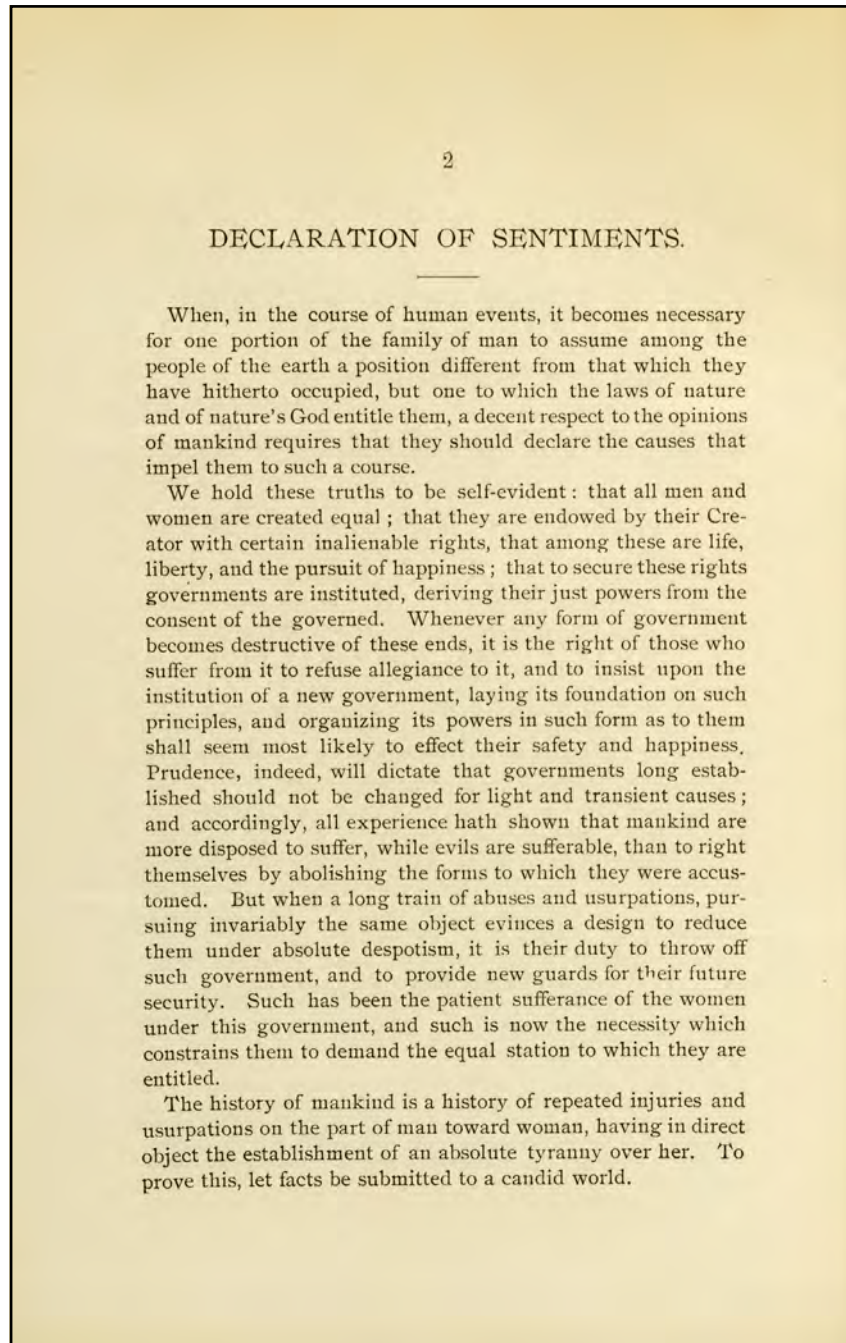
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### (a) Notice of "The First Convention"



Library of Congress Rare Books and Manuscripts Division

(b) First page of the "Declaration of Sentiments"



Library of Congress Rare Books and Manuscripts Division

The Women's Rights Convention (1848) in Seneca Falls, New York, adopted a "Declaration of Sentiments" on women's rights, which linked rights stated in the Declaration of Independence with the rights of women and made the first public demand for women's right to vote.

(c) Excerpts from the “Declaration of Sentiments” (July 1848)

“We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal . . . with certain inalienable rights. . . .

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men—both natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead. . . .

He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration. . . .

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education—all colleges being closed against her. . . .

He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation,—in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.”

Source: *The First Convention Ever Called to Discuss the Civil and Political Rights of Women, Seneca Falls, NY, July 19, 20, 1848*, pp. 2-4, (n.p., 1848), Library of Congress Rare Books and Manuscripts Division, [loc.gov/resource/rbcmil.scrp4006801/](https://loc.gov/resource/rbcmil.scrp4006801/)

## 2: Document Analysis: “Declaration of Sentiments”

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### IMPORTANT PHRASES

Which phrases or sentences in these excerpts from the “Declaration of Sentiments” are the most important or powerful? Choose three and give the reason for your choice.

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

Phrase 3:

Why is this phrase important or powerful?

### CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

Cite evidence from the text in your answers.

1. What civil, economic, and social inequalities did women experience in mid-nineteenth-century America?

2. Why was the “Declaration of Sentiments” written in the style of the Declaration of Independence?



### 3: Persuading Voters on the Question of Women's Suffrage

(a) Women's Roles and Responsibilities in the Home

**WOMEN IN THE HOME**

We are forever being told that the place for women is in the HOME. Well, so be it. But what do we expect of her in the home? Merely to stay in the home is not enough. She is a failure unless she does certain things for the home. She must make the home minister, as far as her means allow, to the health and welfare, moral as well as physical, of her family, and especially of her children. She, more than anyone else, is held responsible for what they become.

SHE is responsible for the cleanliness of her house.  
SHE is responsible for the wholesomeness of the food.  
SHE is responsible for the children's health.  
SHE, above all, is responsible for their morals, for their sense of truth, of honesty and decency, for what they turn out to be.

**How Far Can the Mother Control These Things?**

She can clean her own rooms, BUT if the neighbors are allowed to live in filth, she cannot keep her rooms from being filled with bad air and smells, or from being infested with vermin.

She can cook her food well, BUT if dealers are permitted to sell poor food, unclean milk or stale eggs, she cannot make the food wholesome for her children.

She can care for her own plumbing and the refuse of her own home, BUT if the plumbing in the rest of the house is unsanitary, if garbage accumulates and the halls and stairs are left dirty, she cannot protect her children from the sickness and infection that these conditions bring.

She can take every care to avoid fire, BUT if the house has been badly built, if the fire-escapes are insufficient or not fire-proof, she cannot guard her children from the horrors of being maimed or killed by fire.

She can open her windows to give her children the air that we are told is so necessary, BUT if the air is laden with infection, with tuberculosis and other contagious diseases, she cannot protect her children from this danger.

She can send her children out for air and exercise, BUT if the conditions that surround them on the streets are immoral and degrading, she cannot protect them from these dangers.

ALONE, she CANNOT make these things right. WHO or WHAT can?  
THE CITY can do it—the CITY GOVERNMENT that is elected BY THE PEOPLE, to take care of the interest of THE PEOPLE.

And who decides what the city government shall do?  
FIRST, the officials of that government; and,  
SECOND, those who elect them.

DO THE WOMEN ELECT THEM? NO, the men do. So it is the MEN and NOT THE WOMEN that are really responsible for the


UNCLEAN HOUSES	BAD PLUMBING
UNWHOLESOME FOOD	DANGER OF FIRE
RISK OF TUBERCULOSIS AND OTHER DISEASES	
IMMORAL INFLUENCES OF THE STREET.	

In fact, MEN are responsible for the conditions under which the children live, but we hold WOMEN responsible for the results of those conditions. If we hold women responsible for the results, must we not, in simple justice, let them have something to say as to what these conditions shall be? There is one simple way of doing this. Give them the same means that men have. LET THEM VOTE.

Women are, by nature and training, housekeepers. Let them have a hand in the city's housekeeping, even if they introduce an occasional house-cleaning.

**WOMAN SUFFRAGE PARTY**  
OF THE CITY OF NEW YORK

Headquarters: 30 East 34th Street, Southwest cor. Madison Avenue



The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC08964

(b) Women's Roles and Responsibilities in World War I

**WHO SHARES THE COST OF WAR?**

**Who** face death in order to give life to men? **WOMEN.**

**Who** love and work to rear the sons who then are killed in battle? **WOMEN.**

**Who** plant fields and harvest crops when all the able-bodied men are called to war? **WOMEN.**

**Who** keep shops and schools and work in factories while men are in the trenches? **WOMEN.**

**Who** nurse the wounded, feed the sick, support the helpless, brave all danger? **WOMEN.**

**Who** see their homes destroyed by shell and fire, their little ones made destitute, their daughters outraged? **WOMEN.**

**Who** are sent adrift, alone, no food, no hope, no shelter for the unborn child? **WOMEN.**


**Who** must suffer agony for every soldier killed? **WOMEN.**

**Who** are called upon to make sacrifices to pay the terrible tax of war? **WOMEN.**

**Who dares say that war is not their business? In the name of Justice and Civilization give women a voice in Government and in the councils that make or prevent war.**

**VOTE for the WOMAN SUFFRAGE AMENDMENT IN NOVEMBER**

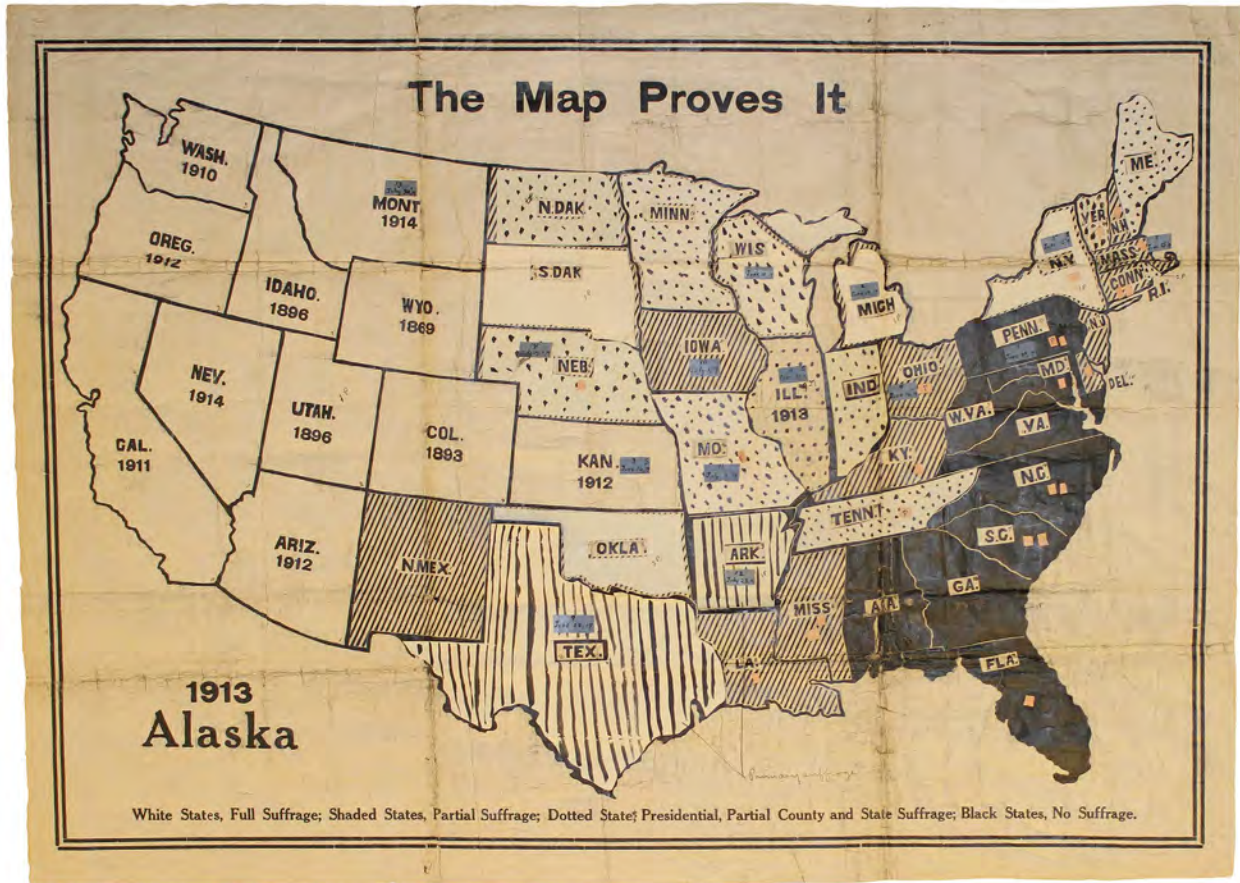
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PENNSYLVANIA WOMAN SUFFRAGE ASSOCIATION  
Headquarters: 201-5 Arcade Building, Harrisburg  142

N. W. S. Publishing Co., Inc.

The Collection of Ann Lewis and Mike Sponder

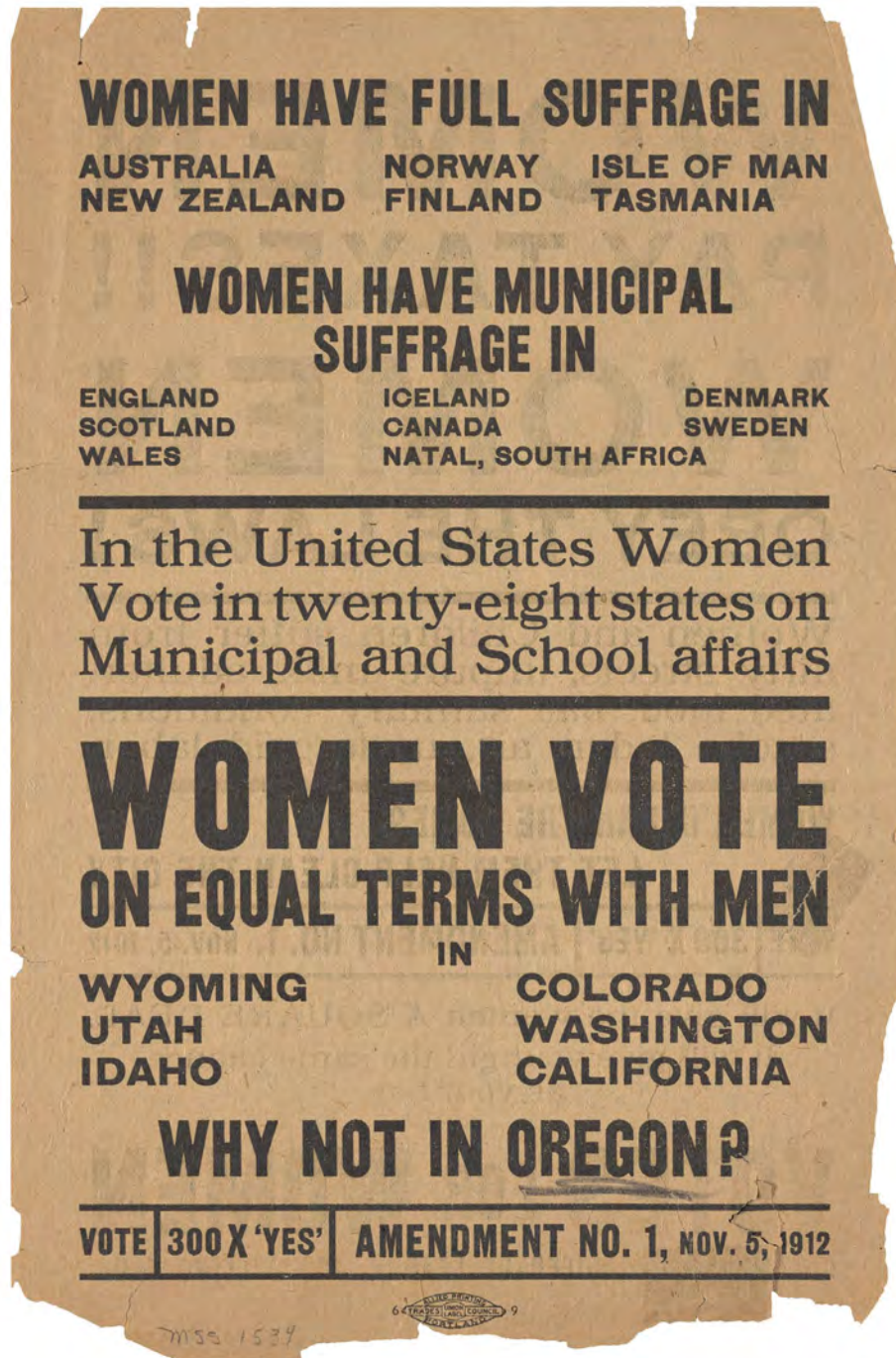
(c) Extension of Women's Suffrage in the United States by 1919



The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC09773

This map was originally printed in 1914 to show where women had full suffrage (states printed in white with no markings), partial suffrage (all other patterns), and no suffrage (states shown in black). The original owner of the map then updated the map by hand as different states passed suffrage legislation—like Texas and North Dakota. We do not know the meaning of all the hand-drawn additions.

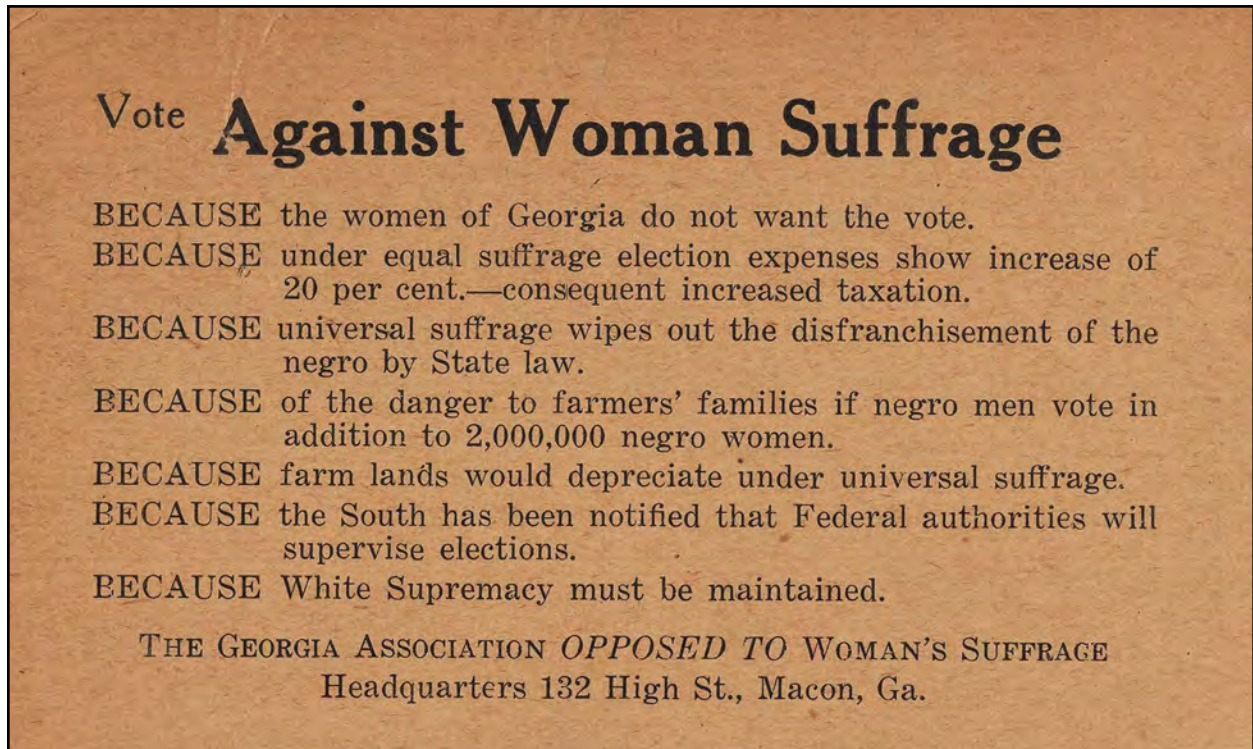
(d) The Progress of Women's Suffrage at Home and Abroad



Oregon Historical Society, Mss 1534

The Oregon chapter of the College Equal Suffrage League produced this handbill as part of a successful 1912 state campaign to give women the right to vote.

(e) Opposition to Women's Suffrage



National Archives

As the women's suffrage movement grew in the early twentieth century, varying motives of people in different regions of the country fueled an organized anti-suffrage movement. Some feared women's collective political power as a voting bloc. This broadside from Georgia outlines several reasons to reject women's suffrage, including "Because White Supremacy must be maintained."



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4. Based on the women's suffrage handbill from Oregon, why should the United States, as a leading democratic nation, grant women full voting rights in all elections?

5. Based on the postcard printed by the Georgia Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, why did some groups of Americans oppose women's suffrage?

## 4: The Fight for Civil Rights in the 1960s

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(a) The Civil Rights March in Washington, DC, August 28, 1963



National Archives

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and other civil rights leaders organized a huge demonstration in Washington, DC, on August 28, 1963, to support civil and economic rights legislation. More than 250,000 people participated. In front of the Lincoln Memorial, Dr. King delivered his historic “I Have a Dream” Speech.



**(b) Excerpts from the Civil Rights Act of 1964**

To enforce the constitutional right to vote, to confer jurisdiction upon the district courts of the United States to provide injunctive relief against discrimination in public accommodations, to authorize the Attorney General to institute suits to protect constitutional rights in public facilities and public education, to extend the Commission on Civil Rights, to prevent discrimination in federally assisted programs, to establish a Commission on Equal Employment Opportunity, and for other purposes. . . .

**Title I: Voting Rights**

No person acting under color of law shall . . . (b) deny the right of any individual to vote in any Federal election because of an error or omission on any record or paper relating to any application, registration, or other act requisite to voting. . . . [or] employ any literacy test as a qualification for voting in any Federal election. . . .

**Title II: Injunctive Relief Against Discrimination in Places of Public Accommodation**

Sec. 201. (a) All persons shall be entitled to the full and equal enjoyment of the goods, services, facilities, privileges, advantages, and accommodations of any place of public accommodation . . . without discrimination or segregation on the ground of race, color, religion, or national origin. (b) Each of the following establishments which serves the public is a place of public accommodation within the meaning of this title if its operations affect commerce or if discrimination or segregation by it is supported by State action: (1) any inn, hotel, or other establishment which provides lodging to transient guests. . . ; (2) any restaurant, cafeteria, lunchroom, lunch counter, soda fountain, or other facility engaged in selling food for consumption on the premises. . . ; (3) any motion picture house, theater, concert hall, sports arena stadium, or other place of exhibition or entertainment.

**Title III: Desegregation of Public Facilities**

Sec. 301. (a) Whenever the Attorney General receives a complaint in writing signed by an individual to the effect that he is being deprived of or threatened with the loss of his race, color, religion, or national origin, by being denied equal utilization of any public facility. . . . the Attorney General is authorized to institute . . . a civil action in any appropriate district court of the United States against such parties and for such relief as may be appropriate. . . .

**Title IV: Desegregation of Public Education**

Sec 401. Definitions: ‘Desegregation’ means the assignment of students to public schools and within such schools without regard to their race, color, religion, or national origin, but ‘desegregation’ shall not mean the assignment of students to public schools in order to overcome racial imbalance.

**Title V: Commission on Civil Rights**

Sec. 104. (a) The commission shall investigate allegations in writing . . . that certain citizens of the United States are being deprived of their right to vote and have that vote counted by reason of their color, race, religion, or national origin. . . . (f) The Commission may hold such hearings . . . [and] issue subpoenas. . . requiring such persons to appear before the Commission . . . to produce relevant evidence . . . and give testimony touching the matter under investigation; and any failure to obey such order of the court may be punished by said court as a contempt thereof.

**Title VI: Nondiscrimination in Federally Assisted Programs**

Sec. 601. No person in the United States shall, on the ground of race, color, or national origin, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be subjected to discrimination under any program or activity receiving Federal government assistance.

**Title VII: Equal Employment Opportunity**

Sec. 703. (a) It shall be an unlawful employment practice for an employer — (1) to fail or refuse to hire or to discharge any individual, or otherwise to discriminate against any individual with respect to his compensation, terms, conditions, or privileges of employment, because of such individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin; or (2) to limit, segregate, or classify his employees in any way which would deprive or tend to deprive an individual of employment opportunities, or otherwise adversely affect his status as an employee, because of such individual’s race, color, religion, sex, or national origin.

Source: *Our Documents*, National Archives, ourdocuments.gov

## 5: The Fight for Voting Rights in the 1960s

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### (a) March from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama, March 1965



March 21, 1965. AP Photo. (The Gilder Lehrman Institute of American History, GLC0973419)

In January 1965, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. launched a voting rights campaign in Selma, Alabama, where only 355 out of 15,000 African Americans had been permitted to register to vote. On March 7, at the Edmund Pettus Bridge, peaceful marchers attempting to walk to the state capital of Montgomery encountered a blockade of state and local police who ordered the marchers to disperse. When they refused, the police attacked the crowd with clubs and tear gas. Television coverage of this event, known as “Bloody Sunday,” triggered national outrage. Two weeks later, the marchers set out again, crossing the Pettus Bridge, and reached Montgomery.

“Bloody Sunday” and other violent incidents spurred President Lyndon Johnson and Congress to pass the Voting Rights Act of 1965. This legislation prohibited using literacy tests to prevent African Americans from voting. Moreover, the law authorized the US government to identify places in the South where only a small percentage of African Americans had registered to vote by 1964. It empowered the Attorney General to have the Civil Rights Commission assign federal registrars to go to these places to assist African Americans with voter registration.

**(b) Excerpts from the Voting Rights Act of 1965**

Sec. 2. No voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color. . . .

Sec. 3. (a) Whenever the Attorney General institutes a proceeding under any statute to enforce the guarantees of the Fifteenth Amendment in any State or political subdivision the courts shall authorize the appointment of Federal examiners by the United States Civil Service Commission . . . to serve for such period of time and for such political subdivisions as the court shall determine is appropriate to enforce the guarantees of the Fifteenth Amendment. . . .

Sec. 4. (a) To assure that the right of citizens of the United States to vote is not denied or abridged on account of race or color, no citizen shall be denied the right to vote in any Federal, State, or local election because of his failure to comply with any test or device in any State. . . .

Sec. 4. (c) The phrase “test or device” shall mean any requirement that a person as a prerequisite for voting or registration for voting (1) demonstrate the ability to read, write, understand, or interpret any matter, (2) demonstrate any educational achievement or his knowledge on any particular subject, (3) possess good moral character, or (4) prove his qualifications by the voucher of . . . any other class.

Sec. 4 (d) No state or political subdivision shall be . . . engaged in the use of tests or devices for the purpose or with the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color.

Sec. 5 Whenever a State or political subdivision with respect to . . . the prohibitions set forth in Section 4 (a) . . . shall enact or seek to administer any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting . . . , such State or subdivision may institute an action in the United States District Court and . . . until the court enters such judgment no person shall be denied the right to vote.

Source: “One Hundred Milestone Documents,” *Our Documents*, National Archives

## Summary Organizer 1: Excerpts from the Voting Rights Act of 1965

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### Original Text

Sec. 2. No voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure shall be imposed or applied by any State or political subdivision to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color. . . .

Sec. 3. (a) Whenever the Attorney General institutes a proceeding under any statute to enforce the guarantees of the Fifteenth Amendment in any State or political subdivision the courts shall authorize the appointment of Federal examiners by the United States Civil Service Commission . . . to serve for such period of time and for such political subdivisions as the court shall determine is appropriate to enforce the guarantees of the Fifteenth Amendment. . . .

### Key Words

### Summary

### In Your Own Words

## Summary Organizer 2: Excerpts from the Voting Rights Act of 1965

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### Original Text

Sec. 4. (a) To assure that the right of citizens of the United States to vote is not denied or abridged on account of race or color, no citizen shall be denied the right to vote in any Federal, State, or local election because of his failure to comply with any test or device in any State. . . .

Sec. 4. (c) The phrase “test or device” shall mean any requirement that a person as a prerequisite for voting or registration for voting (1) demonstrate the ability to read, write, understand, or interpret any matter, (2) demonstrate any educational achievement or his knowledge on any particular subject, (3) possess good moral character, or (4) prove his qualifications by the voucher of . . . any other class.

Sec. 4 (d) No state or political subdivision shall be . . . engaged in the use of tests or devices for the purpose or with the effect of denying or abridging the right to vote on account of race or color.

Sec. 5 Whenever a State or political subdivision with respect to . . . the prohibitions set forth in Section 4 (a) . . . shall enact or seek to administer any voting qualification or prerequisite to voting . . . , such State or subdivision may institute an action in the United States District Court and . . . until the court enters such judgment no person shall be denied the right to vote.

Key Words

Summary

In Your Own Words

## **4 and 5: Document Analysis: The Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965**

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### **IMPORTANT PHRASES**

Which phrases or sentences in the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965 are the most important or powerful? Choose two phrases from each document and give the reasons for your choices.

#### **Civil Rights Act of 1964**

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase  
important or  
powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase  
important or  
powerful?

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**Voting Rights Act of 1965**

Phrase 1:

Why is this phrase  
important or  
powerful?

Phrase 2:

Why is this phrase  
important or  
powerful?

**CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS**

Cite evidence from the text in your answers.

1. How did the Civil Rights Act of 1964 strengthen African Americans' citizenship rights and opportunities for economic, educational, political, and social equality?

2. How did the Voting Rights Act of 1965 strengthen the voting rights of African Americans?



## Supreme Court Decision in *Shelby County v. Holder* Concerning the Constitutionality of the Voting Rights Act of 1965, 2013

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**Issue:** Does the renewal of Section 5 of the Voting Rights Act of 1965 under the constraints of Section 4(b) exceed Congress's authority under the Fourteenth and Fifteenth Amendments, and therefore violate the Tenth Amendment and Article Four of the Constitution?

**Conclusion:** Yes, Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act is unconstitutional. Chief Justice John G. Roberts delivered the opinion of the 5-4 majority. The Court held that Section 4 of the Voting Rights Act imposes current burdens that are no longer responsive to the current conditions in the voting districts in question. Although the constraints

this section places on specific states made sense in the 1960s and 1970s, they no longer do and now represent an unconstitutional violation of the power to regulate elections that the Constitution reserves for the states. The Court also held that the formula for determining whether changes to a state's voting procedure should be federally reviewed is now outdated and does not reflect the changes that have occurred in the last 50 years in narrowing the voting turnout gap in the states in question.

Source: "*Shelby County v. Holder*," Oyez, [oyez.org/cases/2012/12-96](https://www.oyez.org/cases/2012/12-96).

## Expansion of Voting Rights in the Twentieth Century

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Constitutional Amendments	
Seventeenth Amendment (May 31, 1913)	US senators are elected by the people.
Nineteenth Amendment (August 26, 1920)	Women have the right to vote in all elections.
Twenty-third Amendment (March 29, 1961)	Residents of Washington, DC, can vote in presidential elections and choose three electors.
Twenty-fourth Amendment (January 23, 1964)	Poll taxes are forbidden in all federal elections.
Twenty-sixth Amendment (June 30, 1971)	The voting age is lowered from 21 to 18 years of age.

### CRITICAL THINKING QUESTIONS

1. Based on the table, how have the amendments added to the US Constitution in the twentieth century expanded voting rights in the United States?

2. To what extent should voting be viewed as an “inalienable” right, a privilege, or a duty for Americans?

3. To what extent has the United States been a nation “of the people, by the people, and for the people” throughout its history?

5. Essential Question: To what extent have governments (federal, state, local) in the United States represented and reflected the will of the people throughout the nation’s history?

NAME

DATE

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## Analyzing a News Article

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Source (*name of newspaper/magazine/website*):

Date published:

Article title:

1. What did you already know about the topic?

2. Basic information presented:

Who?

What?

When?

Where?

NAME

DATE

PERIOD

Why?

How?

3. Does your article have a right/center/left point of view? What evidence leads you to that conclusion?

4. What audience was this article written for? What evidence supports your conclusion?

5. Reliability of Sources

a. Is there an author's name?

If so, who is the author:

b. What source or sources does the author quote or refer to in the article? Do you think these sources are reliable? Why or why not? What evidence supports your conclusion?

6. Personal Reaction: What do you think of this article? (Include two points made in the text to support your answer.)

NAME

DATE

PERIOD

## Analyzing a News Article

---

Source (*name of newspaper/magazine/website*):

Date published:

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1. What did you already know about the topic?

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6. Personal Reaction: What do you think of this article? (Include two points made in the text to support your answer.)

NAME

DATE

PERIOD

## Analyzing a News Article

---

Source (*name of newspaper/magazine/website*):

Date published:

Article title:

1. What did you already know about the topic?

2. Basic information presented:

Who?

What?

When?

Where?



NAME

DATE

PERIOD

Why?

How?

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5. Reliability of Sources

a. Is there an author's name?

If so, who is the author:

b. What source or sources does the author quote or refer to in the article? Do you think these sources are reliable? Why or why not? What evidence supports your conclusion?

6. Personal Reaction: What do you think of this article? (Include two points made in the text to support your answer.)

## Civil Discourse Guidelines

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Listen respectfully without interrupting.

Allow everyone the opportunity to speak.

Criticize ideas, not individuals or groups.

Avoid inflammatory language, including name-calling.

Ask questions when you don't understand; don't assume you know others' thinking or motivations.

Don't expect any individuals to speak on behalf of their gender, ethnic group, class, status, etc. (or the gender, ethnicity, class, status we perceive them to be a part of).

Base your arguments on evidence, not assumptions.

NAME

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## Civic Engagement Project Proposal

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Project Title:

Project  
Participant(s):

Project Goal

Action Steps

### TEACHER'S COMMENTS

Questions  
to Consider

Revisions Needed

Approved: