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# Is Democracy Available To All Members Of American Society?



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## Supporting Questions

1. What arguments exist that support that equal opportunity through democracy is available to U.S. citizens?
2. What claims are made that the democratic system in the U.S. is broken and leaves certain people marginalized?
3. What are problems that have hindered the U.S. democratic system?

## NORTHERN MICHIGAN INQUIRY HUB

### High School Inquiry

Is Democracy Available To All Members Of American Society?	
<b>Michigan Content Expectations:</b>	6.3.2 Analyze the social, political, economic, and cultural changes that occurred during the Progressive Era 6.3.4 Causes and Consequences of Progressive Reform: Women’s Suffrage Analyze the successes and failures of efforts to expand women’s rights, including the work of important leaders (e.g. Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton) and the eventual ratification of the 19th Amendment
<b>Staging the Compelling Question:</b>	Complete an individual opinionnaire, then discuss results in groups. Try to win students to your side by mature and respectful debate. Finally, share to the class which statement(s) on the opinionnaire were most controversial, and why.

Supporting Question 1
<b>What arguments exist that support that equal opportunity through democracy is available to U.S. citizens?</b>
Formative Performance Task
Define democracy, make a claim, and support the claim with argumental evidence.
Featured Sources
NewsEla Article Resolution Letter to Edwin Webb Crash Course #31

Supporting Question 2
<b>What claims are made that the democratic system in the U.S. is broken and leaves certain people marginalized?</b>
Formative Performance Task
Define democracy, then create a thought map with visuals and dates that depicts how women are included or excluded from our democratic system. Your thought map must have an original title.
Featured Sources
Telegram Senator Borah’s Letter Glass Ceiling Video Why We Have Too Few Women Leaders

Supporting Question 3
<b>What are problems that have hindered the U.S. democratic system?</b>
Formative Performance Task
Define democracy, then create a t-diagram with a title that displays the cause (event, idea, person/people, etc.) on one side and the effects (positive or negative) on the other side. Your t-diagram must have a title, and each side must be labeled (e.g. Causes/Effects).
Featured Sources
Statement on Women’s Rights “Women’s Right to Suffrage” The Equal Rights Amendment that Almost Was

<b>Summative Performance Task</b>	Argument: Democracy may or not be equally available to all U.S. citizens, specifically with regard to women. This study stems from the Progressive Era, but has far-reaching effects that apply to today’s society.
	Extension: Have students write on small sticky notes, then post on giant sticky notes. One will be titled, “Reforms the U.S. has Made,” and the other will be titled, “Ways the U.S. Can Still Improve.”
<b>Taking Informed Action</b>	Write a letter to a well-known social activist asking provoking questions about feminism and women’s rights, or write to a politician explaining your stance on this issue, including how we can make more progress regarding women’s rights. No matter who the letter is addressed to, the goal should be to further understanding and explain your stance and ideas for inspiring change.



## Overview

Students are analyzing the causes and consequences of Progressive Reform, specifically in relation to the struggle for Women's Suffrage. Students will evaluate successes and failures of the suffrage movement, noting valuable information from activists during this time (Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton).

## Staging the Compelling Question

Students will participate actively in an opinionnaire, which will help them personally engage in the topic of women's rights and progressive reform.

## Supporting Question 1 Overview

The first supporting question is, "What arguments exist that support that equal opportunity through democracy is available to all members of American society?" Students will consider and question how (and if) equal opportunity is made available to all in our democratic society. They will explore documents that support and approve women's suffrage, then watch a video that depicts the major accomplishments that women have made since the era of progressive reform. Finally, students will define democracy, then make a claim about this issue and provide evidence from the sources to support their claim.

## Supporting Question 2 Overview

The second question is, "What claims are made that the democratic system in the U.S. is broken and leaves women--or other populations--marginalized?" Students will consider and question how certain people groups are marginalized in society and are still struggling to achieve equal rights in the U.S. democratic system. They will explore sources, such as an article and a TED talk that explain the glass ceiling. Students will also analyze primary source documents from the Progressive Era in opposition to women's suffrage and women's rights. Finally, students will complete a thought map that depicts significant points, visuals, and dates that depict the difficulties faced by women, despite the U.S. democratic system.

## Supporting Question 3 Overview

Question number three is, "What are problems that have hindered the U.S. democratic system?" Students are required to analyze a balance between two extremes. They will evaluate speed bumps that women have faced along the way and see how societal problems affect democracy in the U.S. Students will read a speech from Susan B. Anthony, a primary source document from a southern woman's perspective during the suffrage movement, and an article about how the Equal Rights Amendment initially failed to pass. Finally, students will display their understanding in the creation of a t-diagram that displays the causes (ideas, events, people, etc.) and effects of what has taken place in our history with regard to women's rights.

## Summative Performance Task Overview

Students note information about progress that has been made for women's rights, but they will also brainstorm and evaluate ideas for how progress can still be made. The purpose of this task is to challenge students to identify progress, but also evaluate problems and potential resolutions.

Students might explain that women achieved suffrage, that the equal rights amendment eventually passed, that views have changed and social roles have progressed. However, they might also note information about societal stereotypes, gender or cultural roles, and the difficulties faced by certain people groups to reach their highest potential and/or wages in the workplace.

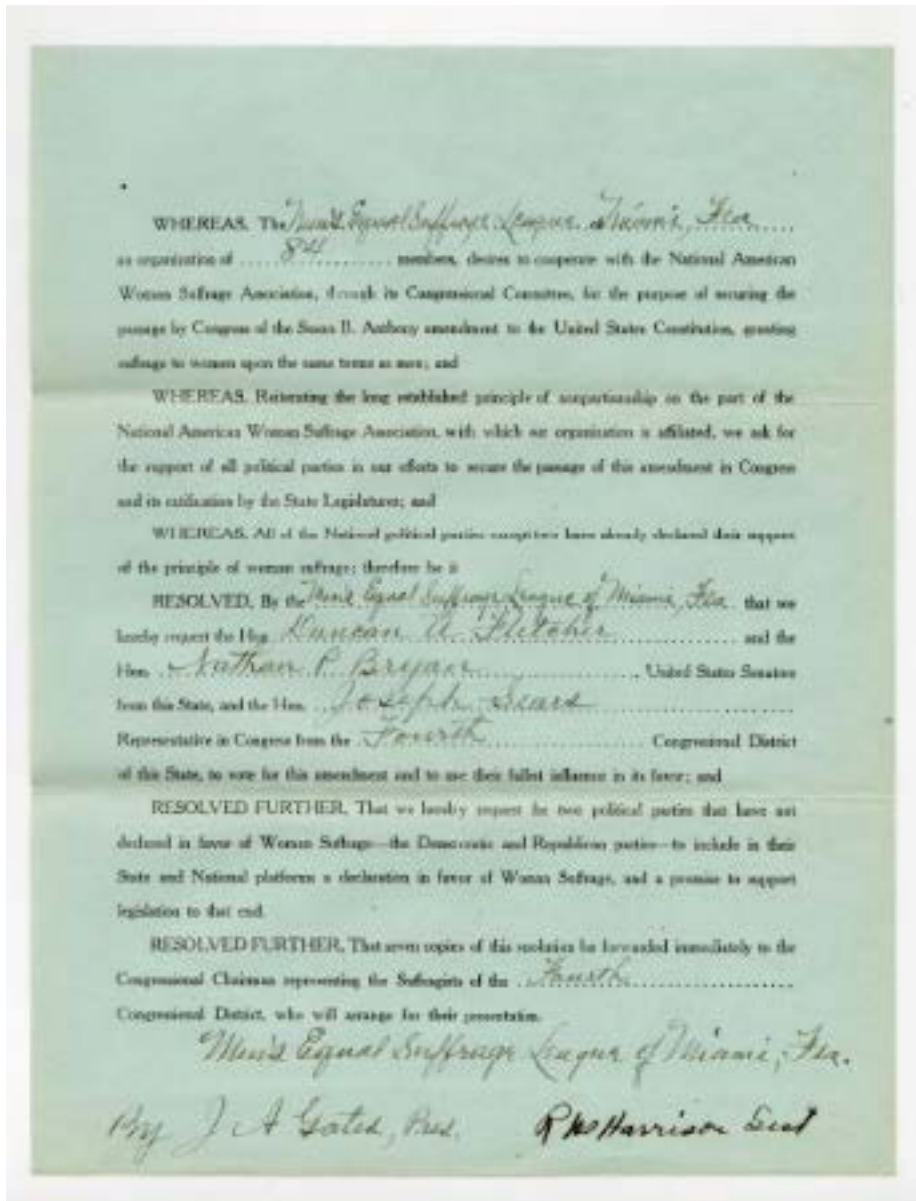
Students also have the opportunity to apply their knowledge by taking informed action. Students are to take a stance on the progress of women's rights and generate ideas for how progress can still be made in the realm of women's rights. The students have a choice to write a letter to a prominent social activist or politician regarding this important topic.

## Supporting Question 1 - Featured Source A

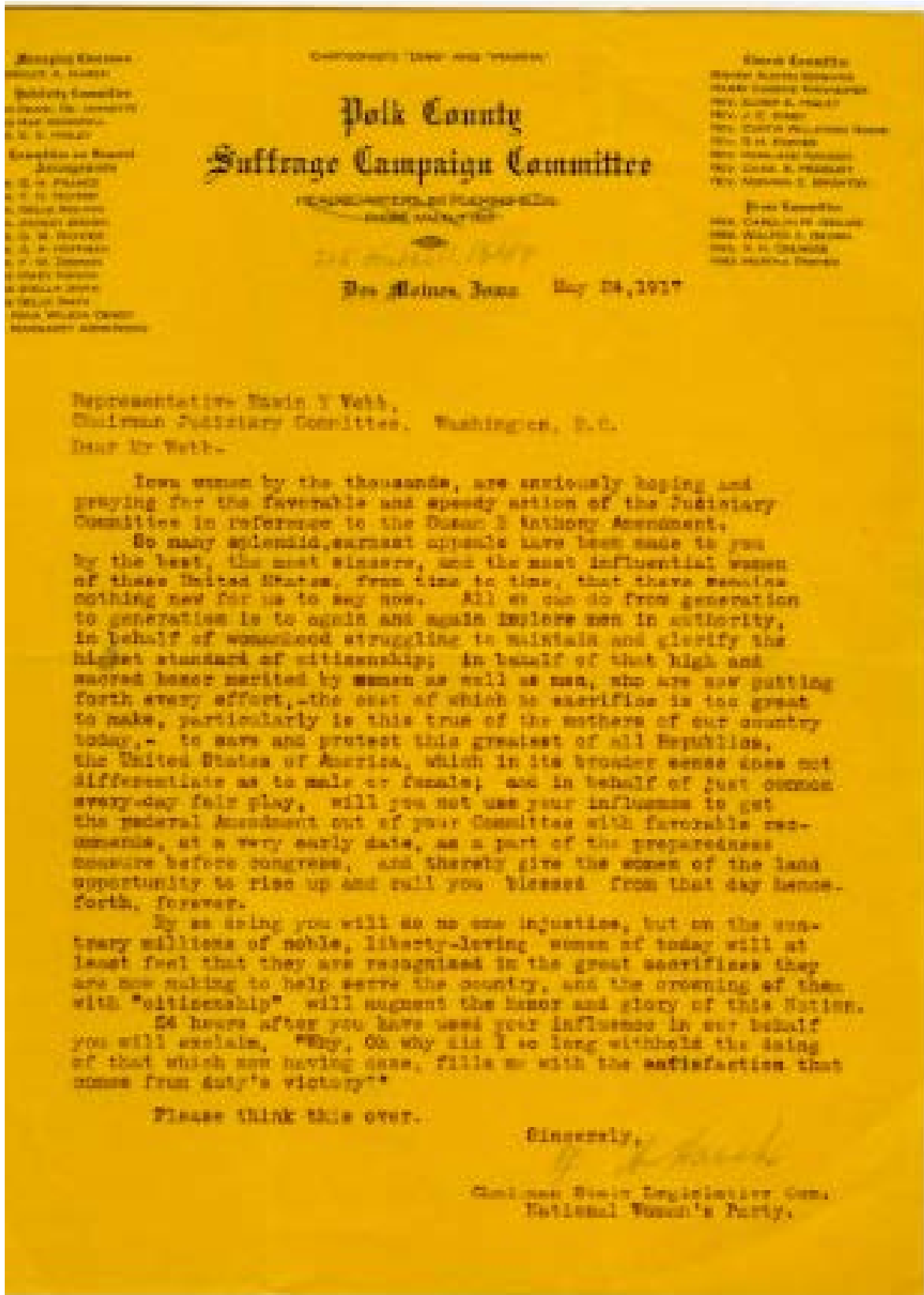
Available online with free subscription: <https://newsela.com/read/midterms-women-run/id/47076/>

## Supporting Question 1 - Featured Source B

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/74884442>



Supporting Question 1 - Featured Source C



## Supporting Question 1 - Featured Source D



Supporting Question 2 - Featured Source A

Form 1201

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Day Message	
Day Letter	DL
Night Message	NM
Night Letter	NL

If none of these three symbols appears after the check (number of words) this is a day message. Otherwise its character is indicated by the symbol appearing after the check.

# WESTERN UNION TELEGRAM



NEWCOMB CARLTON, PRESIDENT  
GEORGE W. E. ATKINS, VICE-PRESIDENT      BELVIDERE BROOKS, VICE-PRESIDENT

CLASS OF SERVICE	SYMBOL
Day Message	
Day Letter	DL
Night Message	NM
Night Letter	NL

If none of these three symbols appears after the check (number of words) this is a day message. Otherwise its character is indicated by the symbol appearing after the check.

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JAN 13 1916

MINNEAPOLIS MINN' 12

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1887

U S SENATE WASHINGTON DC

WE EARNESTLY URGE YOU TO VOTE AGAINST THE FEDERAL AMENDMENT GRATING  
SUFFRAGE TO WOMEN UNTIL NOW THE STATES HAVE RESERVED TO THEMSELVES  
THE RIGHT TO DETERMINE THE QUALIFICATIONS FOR SUFFRAGE AND NO GOOD  
REASON HAS BEEN GIVEN FOR DEPARTURE THEREFROM

MRS C T JAFFRAY

MRS W S DWINNELL MRS C M RANSON.

170a

## Supporting Question 2 - Featured Source B

Excerpt from "Senator William Borah's Letter"

<https://catalog.archives.gov/id/74884301>

What was this white woman's problem in the negro belt?

Go ask the farmer's wife as she sat in her home in fear and trembling. The very vine and fig tree in her yard, Bible emblems of peace, tranquility, domestic serenity—were but the crouching places of the lustful negro awaiting to pounce upon his helpless victim. Had our own women individual freedom? Dare they travel the public highways without escort? If so, at their peril. Were they not prisoners in reality in their own homes for years upon years? When the family physician called for what did he treat her? Was it not to restore her nervous system impaired by that indefinable feeling of dread—that sense of terrorism superinduced by the conditions which surrounded her? Who would bring back to the farmer's wife, without police protection, those health-destroying conditions? Are there any who would so imperil her again? Yes. Unfortunately, yes. All these who insist on the Susan B. Anthony Amendment, giving the ballot to 3,000,000 negro women of the South, which will also revitalize the fifteenth amendment, and necessarily bring the negroes back into politics, creating negro night meetings again on the plantations, are agencies that will again imperil the farmer's wife.

Will not the Georgia Legislature protect the white women of the South?



## Supporting Question 2 - Featured Source C



## Supporting Question 2 - Featured Source D



Supporting Question 3 - Featured Source A

W. Women Opposed to Woman Suffrage  
 would appreciate your standing by us and  
 opposing the Anthony Amendment.

## Woman's Rights



HERE is one point on which the suffragists and anti-suffragists can agree,—that is, being free American citizens and intelligent human beings, we are entitled to equal *rights* with men. We have a *right* to put on men's clothing; we have a *right* to ask men in marriage; we have a *right* to become soldiers and fight on the field for our country; we have a *right* to work in coal mines, or in constructive building. We have a *right* to enter the political field and demand a place in our congressional halls. We have a *right* to aspire even to be elected President of the United States.

For are we not as intelligent as men, and entitled to *equal rights* with them? But being *women* and not men, we, the large majority of the women of our country, claim the *right* to keep our own identity and the *right* not to have a political life thrust upon us.

### Supporting Question 3 - Featured Source A

Famous Speeches: Susan B. Anthony's "Women's Rights to the Suffrage"  
<https://newsela.com/read/speeches-anthony-suffrage/id/15304/>

### Supporting Question 3 - Featured Source B

"The Equal Rights Amendment That Almost Was"  
<https://newsela.com/read/lib-ushistory-equal-rights-amendment/id/27823/>