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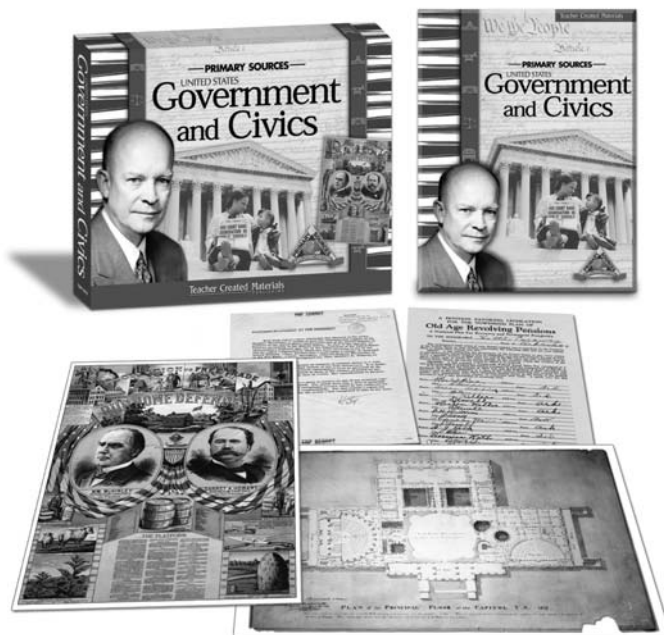
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# Exploring History through Primary Sources

## United States Government and Civics



**Author**

*Kathleen Vest, M.A.Ed.*

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# Table of Contents

**How to Use This Product** . . . . . 3

**Introduction to Primary Sources** . . . . . 5

**Using Primary Sources** . . . . . 15

## **Photographs**

*The Amendment Process* . . . . . 15–16

The Long Road to Women’s Suffrage . . . 15

*Supreme Court Powers* . . . . . 17–18

*Brown v. Board of Education* . . . . . 17

*Civic Responsibility* . . . . . 19–20

What You Can Do for Your Country . . . . 19

*Role of the Free Press* . . . . . 21–22

The Fourth Estate . . . . . 21

*A Bill Becomes a Law* . . . . . 23–24

Civil Rights Act of 1964 . . . . . 23

*Federal Health Agencies* . . . . . 25–26

Protecting Citizens’ Health . . . . . 25

*Executive Departments* . . . . . 27–28

Roles of Executive Departments . . . . . 27

*President as World Leader* . . . . . 29–30

President Serves as Chief of State . . . . . 29

## **Primary Sources**

*Trial by Jury* . . . . . 31–34

The United States v. Capone . . . . . 31

Famous Trial Presentation . . . . . 33

Al Capone Verdict . . . . . 34

*The Petition Process* . . . . . 35–38

Paving the Way for Social Security . . . . 35

Townsend Plan Petition . . . . . 37

Petition for the Townsend Plan . . . . . 38

*The Election Process* . . . . . 39–42

Electing the President . . . . . 39

Campaign Poster . . . . . 41

McKinley Campaign Poster . . . . . 42

*Presidential Powers* . . . . . 43–46

Commander in Chief of the

Armed Forces . . . . . 43

Standing the Heat . . . . . 45

Text of the Proposed Statement and the

Proposed Order . . . . . 46

*State and Federal Partnerships* . . . . . 47–50

Interstate Highway Act . . . . . 47

Funding for Highways . . . . . 49

Text of Eisenhower’s Statement

to Congress . . . . . 50

*Setting a National Goal* . . . . . 51–54

The Space Race . . . . . 51

Kennedy and Khrushchev . . . . . 53

Text of the Telegrams . . . . . 54

*The Role of Lobbyists* . . . . . 55–58

Lobbyists in a Democracy . . . . . 55

Call for Lobbying Reform . . . . . 57

Excerpts of the Reform Bills . . . . . 58

*Our Nation’s Capitol* . . . . . 59–62

Home of a Republic . . . . . 59

Capitol Blueprint . . . . . 61

United States Capitol . . . . . 62

## **Document Based Assessments** . . . . . 63

Two Presidents Meet Their Generals . . . . 63

Middle East Peace Talks . . . . . 64

Two Views of the Press . . . . . 65

The Twenty-Sixth Amendment . . . . . 66

The Pardon of President Nixon . . . . . 67

Nuclear Test Ban Treaty . . . . . 68

Senate Committee Hearings Agenda . . . . 69

Patent Application . . . . . 70

The Great Seal . . . . . 71

Twenty-Second Amendment . . . . . 72

Rallying Citizens to Support the Cause . . . 73

Elvis Presley to President Nixon . . . . . 74

## **Appendix** . . . . . 75

About Your CD-ROM . . . . . 75

Suggested Young-Adult Literature

and Websites . . . . . 77

Document-Based Assessment

Rubric Example . . . . . 78

Answer Key . . . . . 79

# The Long Road to Women's Suffrage

## Standard/Objective

- Identify and describe the influence of perception, attitudes, values, and belief on personal identity. (NCSS)
- Students will write and perform short skits demonstrating their understanding of the various opinions in 1912 about the women's suffrage movement.

## Materials

Copies of both sides of *The Amendment Process: Women's Suffrage March* photo card; Copies of the *Women's Suffrage Skit Starters* available on the CD (filename: suffrage.pdf)

## Discussion Questions

- What do you think the women are talking about during this parade?
- Why did some of these women bring their children?
- Why are they all dressed in white and wearing hats?
- Do you think that mostly women or men are standing on the sidelines? Why?

## Using the Primary Source

Pass out copies of the photo card. Have students work with partners to analyze the photo and answer the discussion questions listed above. Have students read the historical background information on the card and answer the knowledge question on the card. Then, students can share their opinions with the class.

Next, read the historical background information aloud (page 16) to the students and discuss the information as needed. Ask students if this information gives them more insight into the photo. Would they add any other observations? Assign any activities from the back of the card that seem appropriate for your group.

Have students form groups of three people to produce short skits. Give them copies of the *Women's Suffrage Skit Starters* (filename: suffrage.pdf). Once they have prepared the skits, have each group perform for the rest of the class.

## Extension Idea

- The Twenty-Sixth Amendment gave 18-year-olds the right to vote. Have students conduct surveys to find out how many 18-year-old students in your school or school district have registered to vote.

# The Long Road to Women's Suffrage *(cont.)*

## Historical Background Information

When the United States Constitution was written over 200 years ago, it guaranteed the right of citizens to vote for those who would represent them in Congress. However, those voting rights were rather vague. The Constitution stated that each state could determine who was qualified to vote in the state, both for state representatives and United States representatives. Many of the founders pushed for a state's right to decide who could vote.

However, the Constitution can be amended. This means that voting qualifications can be changed. The amendment process requires a two-thirds vote in both the House and the Senate. Next, the amendment must get the president's signature. Finally, the amendment must receive approval from three-fourths of the states.

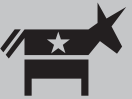
The thinking in the 1700s and 1800s was that women should not be involved with governmental problems and should spend their time running their homes. So, states granted the right to vote to white men ages 21 and older. New Jersey was the exception. That state allowed women the right to vote in state elections until 1807.

The road to voting equality for women was a long, winding trail blazed by many brave women. Slowly, women broke the barrier to gain more equality in education. This led to a stronger push for the right to vote. Women began to organize and protest. Some joined the National Women's Party, established in 1912. This group organized delegations to talk to government leaders. They organized parades in nearly every state and held a national demonstration in Washington, D.C., on May 9, 1914. To guarantee their right to vote in all elections, women wanted a suffrage amendment added to the United States Constitution.

Women faced being arrested when they showed up to vote in local elections. Sometimes women were arrested and sentenced to jail for marching with picket signs. On August 14, 1917, women picketers were attacked by an angry mob and the police stood by and watched the assault.

Finally, on January 9, 1918, President Woodrow Wilson publicly declared his support for a federal women's suffrage amendment. The next day, the House of Representatives passed the women's suffrage amendment by a two-thirds majority. On October 1, the amendment lost by two votes in the Senate. President Wilson then rallied to the cause and urged passage of the amendment during his annual address to Congress on December 2, 1918.

Protests and demonstrations continued. On February 10, 1919, the Senate again defeated the amendment—by one vote this time. More demonstrations and arrests followed. On May 21, the House once again passed the amendment. Finally, on June 4, the Senate passed the suffrage amendment. Thus began a campaign to obtain ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment by 36 states—the required three-fourths majority at that time. On August 26, 1920, the required number of states had ratified, and the Nineteenth Amendment was added to the Constitution.





AMERICAN PRESS

# The Amendment Process

## Women's Suffrage March

### Historical Background Information

The women in this photo are participating in a suffrage parade in New York City on May 6, 1912. They were marching to promote their right to vote. This was eight years before an amendment giving them this right was passed. Women who marched in protests faced criticism, jeers, and sometimes arrest. Some women faced opposition from their husbands, while others were fortunate to have supportive spouses.



### Analyzing History

#### Knowledge

Describe the women and children in this picture. What are their expressions? How are they dressed? How are they interacting?

#### Comprehension

Look up information about one of these voting amendments: 14, 15, 24, or 26. Explain how that amendment improved the voting rights of one group of people.

#### Application

Pretend that you are a reporter in 1919. Write an interview with a senator who voted against or for the Women's Suffrage Amendment. Write four pertinent interview questions and the answers the senator might have given.

#### Analysis

Find a more recent picture of a protest from the Internet or newspaper. Analyze the reasons for that march. Is the protest about a legislative, judicial, or executive issue?

#### Synthesis

African American males were given the right to vote in 1870. Harriet Tubman and Sojourner Truth had fought for freedom, yet they were still unable to vote. Write one page on how African America women joined the early women's suffrage movement.

#### Evaluation

Australia requires its citizens to vote. If they do not, they pay a fine. Create a chart showing the pros and cons of developing such a policy in the United States.

### Historical Writing

#### Fiction

Pretend you are one of the women in the photo. Write a diary entry explaining your feelings and experiences during this parade.

#### Nonfiction

Find the date that your state ratified the Nineteenth Amendment. Write your opinion about the length of time it took your state to ratify this important amendment.

### History Challenge

Write a brief biography of one famous suffragette. What obstacles did she face?

Name \_\_\_\_\_

# Rallying Citizens to Support the Cause



Source: The Woods Publishing Group



Source: The National Archives

**Directions:** Choose one of these posters. Describe how that poster represents a call for civic action or responsibility. Describe in detail what is being promoted. Tell how those citizens following the call would need to respond.

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