

Where
the past
is present

DETROIT HISTORICAL SOCIETY

EDUCATOR LESSON PLAN

DETROIT: WOMANS SUFFRAGE



Women at convention for
voting rights.
c. 1909

Courtesy of the Burton
Historical Collection,
Detroit Public Library

INTRODUCTION

Votes for Women!

Many Michigan Women played a vital role in determining the course of 20th century voting rights. Through analysis of Michigan's suffrage movement, students in grades eight to twelfth will understand the National and Regional Suffrage Movements and the successful passing of the 19th amendment.

LEARNING OBJECTIVE

Students will:

- Understand the need for an amendment for the Constitution for voting rights
- Understand the difference between the National Suffrage Movement and regional movements created on a state by state basis.
- Learn about the various suffragettes from Michigan and their role in advocating for women's suffrage.

Learning Standards

USHG ERA 4

Expansion and Reform
(1792—1861)

Reform Movements

8 – U4.3.3 Analyze the antebellum women's rights (and suffrage) movement by discussing the goals of its leaders and comparing primary source documents from this era to the Declaration of Independence.

USHG ERA 6

THE DEVELOPMENT OF AN
INDUSTRIAL, URBAN, AND
GLOBAL UNITED STATES
(1870-1930)

6.3.4 Women's Suffrage –
Analyze the successes and failures of efforts to expand women's rights, including the work of important leaders and the eventual ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment.

Civics

C4.2 Extensions of Civil Rights
and Civil Liberties

C – 4.2.2 Explain how significant historical events, including but not limited to the suffrage movements and the civil rights movements, resulted in changes to the interpretation of and Amendments to the U.S. Constitution.

The Detroit Historical Society would like to thank Heather Rivard for her generous support of this program.

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MATERIALS USED

- Reading: "Timeline of Michigan Suffrage Movement"
https://www.michigan.gov/libraryofmichigan/0,9327,7-381-88854_89996-518343--,00.html
- Reading: "Women's Suffrage"
<https://bit.ly/2yp7xnd>
- Primary Source: "Suffragist Letter"
<https://bit.ly/2TunPCM>
- Map: #VisitASuffragist in Michigan
<https://bit.ly/3bUMUx1>

LESSON SEQUENCE

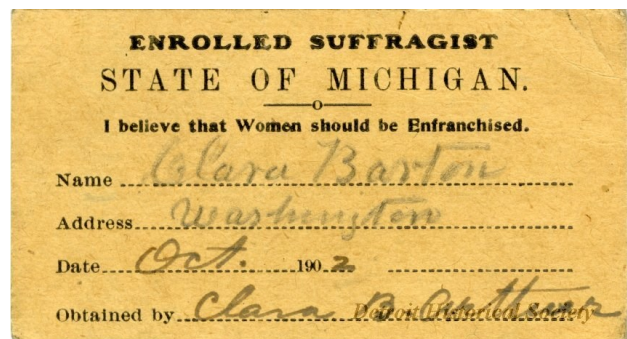
Opening the Activity

1. Have the students read "Women's Suffrage." Discuss how the decades long movement transpired on a national level. What notable women lead the fight for the rights of women? List them on the whiteboard. Discuss the timeframe in which this was taking place.
2. Have students read "Timeline of Women Suffrage", discuss how the Suffrage movement evolved in Michigan. What notable individuals led this fight in Michigan? List them on the whiteboard. Discuss how long it took for Michigan to allow women to vote.
3. Compare the lists: How are they similar? How are they different? Why?

Developing the Activity

1. As individuals or in small groups, have students visit the #VisitASuffragist google map.
2. Have students pick a suffragist they would like to further research further.
3. The students spend the next week or two researching their suffragist using books, the internet, libraries, museums and archives in order to answer these questions:
 - Who are they?
 - When did they join the movement?
 - What was their role or contribution to the Suffrage Movement?
 - Did they alive to see the 19th amendment ratified?

Note: Students are encouraged to find photographs, letters, posters and other primary sources related to their suffragist.



Membership card affirming that Clara Barton is an "Enrolled Suffragist" in Michigan. C. 1902

Courtesy of the Detroit Historical Society

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Concluding the Activity

1. Have students present oral reports of their findings in a 5 to 8 slide PowerPoint or Prezi.
2. As a class, draw final conclusions about the importance of the 19th amendment.
 - Do students find that is fair and all encompassing? Why or why not?

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

- Take a virtual tour of the #VisitASuffragist map in Michigan. Perhaps students can endeavor to visit with family and friends.
- Review the attached glossary and terms about the suffragist movement. Discuss with students the terminology used then versus terminology used today when discussing equal pay and women's rights.

For more primary sources be sure to check out the collections of the Detroit Historical Society at www.detroithistorical.org/collections

Interested in visiting our museums?
Call 313.833.1801 to book your trip.



Michigan Governor Albert Sleeper and Suffragettes, c. 1910

Courtesy of the Burton Historical Collection, Detroit Public Library



Postcard depicting a woman dressed in a polka dot dress with official ballot and caption "I love my husband, but—oh you vote". c. 1909

Courtesy of the collection of the Detroit Historical Society

GLOSSARY: WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

A short guide to key words used by, and about, the movement for women's suffrage

Anti-Suffrage League	Founded by Mary Humphrey Ward in 1908 to campaign against women being granted the vote.
arson	The act of deliberately setting fire to property with a view to causing extensive damage.
biased	Influenced or prejudiced against someone or something.
Cat and Mouse Act	A colloquial name for the <i>Prisoner's Temporary Discharge of Ill Health Act</i> which permitted suffragettes on hunger strike to be released but re-arrested once well again to complete their sentences.
constitutional	A peaceful, legal way of campaigning, often using recognized 'political' methods such as petitions.
enfranchisement	To be granted the vote or the state of having the vote.
Equal Franchise Act	In 1928, the Equal Franchise Act was passed, granting women aged 21 and over the vote.
manifesto	A public declaration or proclamation, stating the aims and methods of a campaign group.
militant	Aggressive and violent behavior in pursuit of a political cause, favoring extreme or confrontational campaign methods.
NUWSS	The National Union of Women's Suffrage Societies (NUWSS) was formed in 1897 and brought together many smaller suffrage organizations. The NUWSS's method was non-confrontational and constitutional.
pacifist	An individual who disagrees with war on principle.
petition	A formal written request or application, especially one signed by many people, to a particular individual or group, for example, a government.
positive discrimination	Discrimination in favor of individuals belonging to a group considered to be disadvantaged or underprivileged.
suffrage	The right to vote in political elections.
suffragette	A campaigner for women's suffrage willing to undertake militant action or to break the law.
suffragist	A campaigner for women's suffrage who believes in constitutional methods of campaigning.