

WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE MOVEMENT

Introduction

In 1866, the American Equal Rights Association was formed to fight for a person's right to vote regardless of his or her gender or race. Several years later, this association split into the National Woman Suffrage Association and the American Woman Suffrage Association, only to join together again several years later as the National American Women's Suffrage Association. The splitting and merging of these suffrage associations shows that suffragists and social reformers held a variety of opinions and they did not always agree. In this lesson, students will learn about the suffragists through an original announcement for the 1874 National Woman Suffrage Association Conference.

Standards

NY STATE STANDARD 1: HISTORY OF THE UNITED STATES AND NEW YORK

Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.

COMMON CORE: CC6-8RH/SS2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

AASL STANDARDS FOR THE 21ST CENTURY LEARNER: 2.1.1

Continue an inquiry-based research process by applying critical thinking skills (analysis, synthesis, evaluation, organization) to information and knowledge in order to construct new understandings, draw conclusions, and create new knowledge.

Learning Objectives

Using primary sources related to the women's suffrage movement, students will:

- » Learn about primary sources, what they are and how to interpret them in order to help understand the past.
- » Expand their knowledge about the suffrage movement and women's rights.
- » Create a letter in support of women's suffrage using arguments from the primary source document and the student's independent research on a suffragist.



Grades: 7-10 Materials

- » Primary Source Document: National Woman Suffrage Convention Announcement.

Assessment

Assessment should be based on a written letter, which demonstrates the student's ability to:

- » Decipher a primary source document.
- » Summarize the main arguments made in the primary source document.
- » Creatively write a letter in the voice of one of the suffragists listed on the primary source document.

Students will pick a name from the list of expected participants on the primary source document. The students will research this person and then write an imaginary letter from that person which makes an argument in support of women's right to vote.

Getting Started

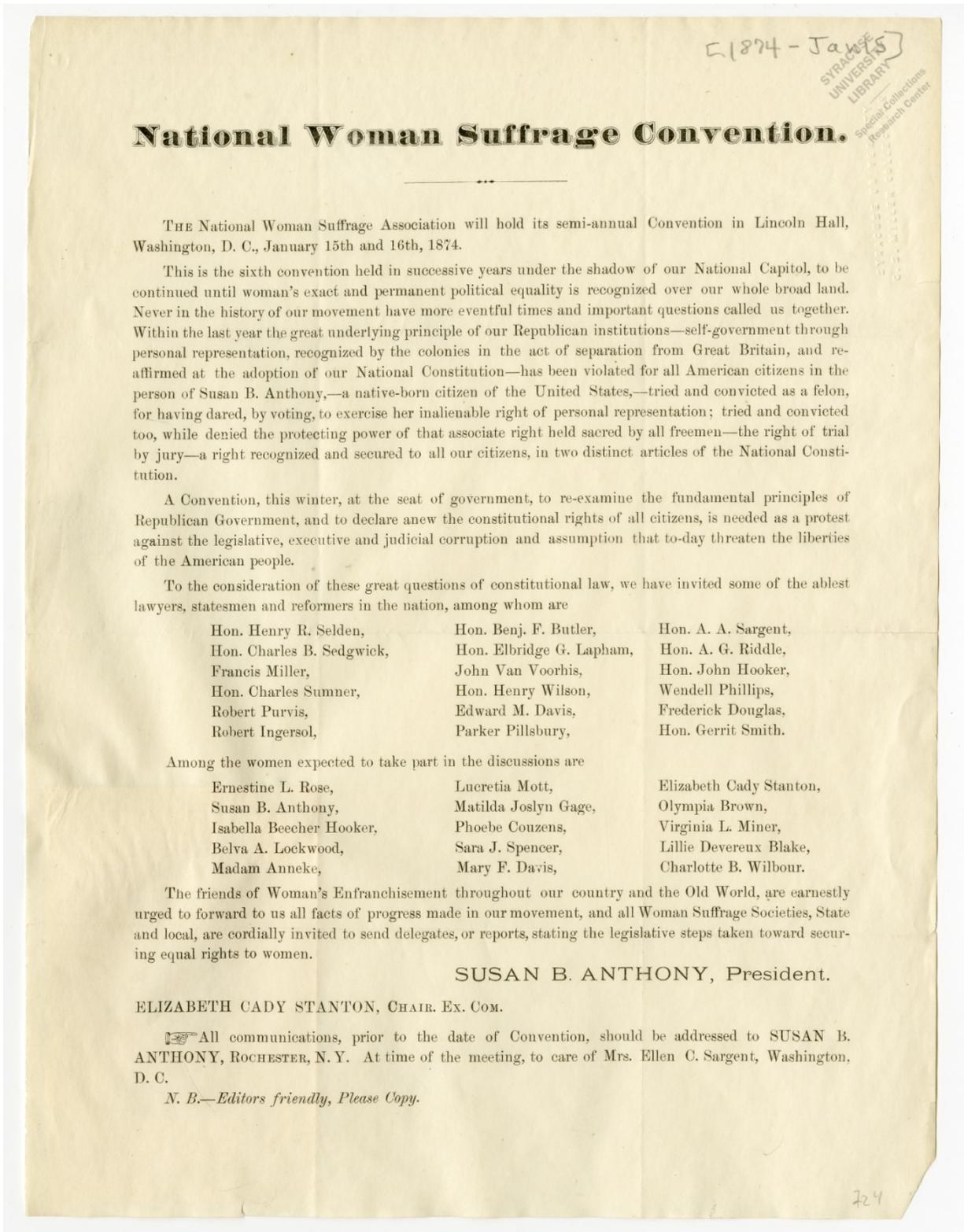
- » Explain that primary sources are original documents that tell us about the historical moments in which they were created. Ask the following questions: How can you tell that you are looking, touching, or listening to a primary source? What is a secondary source? Explain that secondary sources are interpretations of primary sources.
- » Introduce the skill of the lesson. In this lesson students will read an original announcement for the 1874 National Woman Suffrage Association Conference in Washington, DC. Explain the suffrage movement to the students and introduce key figures, such as Susan B. Anthony (See Teacher's Notes). Explain that not only women were in support of women's right to vote. The suffragists argued for women's right to vote from several different angles: social, economic, legal, and political.

Direct Instruction

1. Have the students read the primary source document individually.
2. As a class, summarize the main arguments made in the document. Have the students contextualize this document within the history of the suffrage movement. Make a timeline on the board that indicates the important events to the suffrage movement (such as the passing of the fourteenth amendment, and the arrest of Susan B. Anthony). Indicate where this document would be on the timeline.
3. Point out the two lists of names on the document. The first is a list of important men who are reformers. The second is a list of women who are expected to attend the convention. Discuss as a class why both men and women would be in support of women's right to vote. Ask the students: Do you think both the men and women used the same arguments to support suffrage? What arguments might they make? Why?
4. For homework, ask each student to select a name from these two lists. The student will then do research about that person. Who was he or she? What was his or her profession? Where was he or she from? How old was this person at the time of this document? Then ask the student to imagine that this person has an emergency at home and can't come to the National Woman Suffrage Conference, so they wrote a letter in support of women's right to vote that they want to have read at the conference in their absence. Remind the students that they should use the arguments from the primary source document as well as other arguments they have learned about in class in their letter.

REFLECTION AND SHARING

1. Have the students read their letters to the class and describe the person who they selected and researched.
2. Ask the students to reflect on the issue of voting today. Who is allowed to vote in the United States? Who is not allowed to vote? (Examples include: former felons; illegal residents; persons under 18). What kinds of arguments are made for and against the voting rights of these people?



National Woman Suffrage Convention.

THE National Woman Suffrage Association will hold its semi-annual Convention in Lincoln Hall, Washington, D. C., January 15th and 16th, 1874.

This is the sixth convention held in successive years under the shadow of our National Capitol, to be continued until woman's exact and permanent political equality is recognized over our whole broad land. Never in the history of our movement have more eventful times and important questions called us together. Within the last year the great underlying principle of our Republican institutions—self-government through personal representation, recognized by the colonies in the act of separation from Great Britain, and re-affirmed at the adoption of our National Constitution—has been violated for all American citizens in the person of Susan B. Anthony,—a native-born citizen of the United States,—tried and convicted as a felon, for having dared, by voting, to exercise her inalienable right of personal representation; tried and convicted too, while denied the protecting power of that associate right held sacred by all freemen—the right of trial by jury—a right recognized and secured to all our citizens, in two distinct articles of the National Constitution.

A Convention, this winter, at the seat of government, to re-examine the fundamental principles of Republican Government, and to declare anew the constitutional rights of all citizens, is needed as a protest against the legislative, executive and judicial corruption and assumption that to-day threaten the liberties of the American people.

To the consideration of these great questions of constitutional law, we have invited some of the ablest lawyers, statesmen and reformers in the nation, among whom are

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| Hon. Henry R. Selden, | Hon. Benj. F. Butler, | Hon. A. A. Sargent, |
| Hon. Charles B. Sedgwick, | Hon. Elbridge G. Lapham, | Hon. A. G. Riddle, |
| Francis Miller, | John Van Voorhis, | Hon. John Hooker, |
| Hon. Charles Sumner, | Hon. Henry Wilson, | Wendell Phillips, |
| Robert Purvis, | Edward M. Davis, | Frederick Douglas, |
| Robert Ingersol, | Parker Pillsbury, | Hon. Gerrit Smith. |

Among the women expected to take part in the discussions are

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| Ernestine L. Rose, | Lueretia Mott, | Elizabeth Cady Stanton, |
| Susan B. Anthony, | Matilda Joslyn Gage, | Olympia Brown, |
| Isabella Beecher Hooker, | Phoebe Couzens, | Virginia L. Miner, |
| Belva A. Lockwood, | Sara J. Spencer, | Lillie Devereux Blake, |
| Madam Anneke, | Mary F. Davis, | Charlotte B. Wilbour. |

The friends of Woman's Enfranchisement throughout our country and the Old World, are earnestly urged to forward to us all facts of progress made in our movement, and all Woman Suffrage Societies, State and local, are cordially invited to send delegates, or reports, stating the legislative steps taken toward securing equal rights to women.

SUSAN B. ANTHONY, President.

ELIZABETH CADY STANTON, CHAIR. EX. COM.

All communications, prior to the date of Convention, should be addressed to SUSAN B. ANTHONY, ROCHESTER, N. Y. At time of the meeting, to care of Mrs. Ellen C. Sargent, Washington, D. C.

N. B.—Editors friendly, Please Copy.

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National Woman Suffrage Association Broadside, January 15, 1874. Gerrit Smith Broadside Collection, Special Collections Research Center, Syracuse University Libraries.