

Women's Suffrage Packet

Source: The Declaration of Sentiments, Seneca Falls Conference, 1848 (Modified)

Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott, two American activists in the movement to abolish slavery organized the first conference to address Women's rights and issues in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. The Declaration of the Seneca Falls Convention was signed by sixty-eight women and thirty-two men.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness. . . . Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance (loyalty) to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government. . . . The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations (taking away power) on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her.

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

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

He becomes, in marriage, for all intents and purposes, her master--the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer punishment. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of religion, medicine, or law, she is not known.

He has given to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral delinquencies (crimes) which exclude women from society are not only tolerated, but deemed of insignificant in man.

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, --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.

Historical Context	
Intended Audience	
Purpose	
Point of View	



1. Explain the meaning of the image above.

Document A: Excerpt from Molly Elliot Seawell, an anti-suffragist from Virginia who published the anti-suffrage book, *The Ladies' Battle*, in 1911.

It has often been pointed out that women should not pass laws on matters of war and peace, since no woman can do military duty. But this point applies to other issues, too. No woman can have any practical knowledge of shipping and navigation, of the work of trainmen on railways, of mining, or of many other subjects of the highest importance. Their legislation, therefore, would not be intelligent, and the laws they devised to help sailors, trainmen, miners, etc., might be highly offensive to the very people they tried to help. If sailors and miners refused to obey the laws, who would have to enforce them? The men!

The entire execution of the law would be in the hands of men, backed up by irresponsible voters (women) who could not lift a finger to catch or punish a criminal. And if all the dangers and difficulties of executing the law lay upon men, what right have women to make the law?

Also, there seems to be a close relationship between suffrage and divorce. Political differences in families, between brothers, for example, who vote on differing sides, do not promote harmony. How much more inharmonious must be political differences between a husband and

wife, each of whom has a vote which may be used as a weapon against the other? What is likely to be the state of that family when the husband votes one ticket, and the wife votes another?

Document B: Article from an anti-suffrage newspaper, *The Woman's Protest Against Woman's Suffrage*, published in New York by the National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage, in October 1912.

The Suffragists' ideal is a kitchen-less house. The Suffragist keeps writing and speaking about pots and pans, and denounces housekeeping as degrading. The Suffragists teach women to revolt against the daily task of tending child and house, and we sadly see the results in the nation's poor health and lowered physique. It is the Suffragist theory that women's sphere in life should be the same as the man's. Is it not clear how this hideous feminism is sapping our vitality as a nation? Is it too much to say that it lies at the root of half the sickness and disease in our country?

There are many wealthy women who support Suffragism, and who do a very dangerous thing in preaching to working women that housework is degrading. As long as a working woman keeps her home clean and well tended, she enjoys the high regard of her neighbors. Yet, now the more weak-minded have been influenced by the Suffragists' snobbish preaching. Such feminism is destroying our national character and warping the natural impulses and beliefs that make a woman's life such a beautiful work of art.

Document C: Representative John A. Moon of Tennessee, speech in House of Representatives, January 10, 1918, on the issue of the woman suffrage amendment

It has been insisted that the real purpose of this amendment is to deprive the Southern States of representation in part in Congress....

In those Southern States where the colored population outnumbers the white, to double the number of ignorant voters by giving the colored woman the right to vote would produce a condition that would be absolutely intolerable. We owe something to the wishes and the sentiments of the people of our sister States struggling to maintain law and order and white supremacy....

We are engaged now in a great foreign war. It is not the proper time to change the whole electoral system... Patriotism, in my judgment, forbids the injection of this issue into national politics at this time.

Document	Date & Author	According to this document, why did anti-suffragists oppose woman suffrage?	Provide evidence from the document that supports these reasons.
Document A			
Document B			
Document C			

Women's Suffrage Writing Prompts

You will be writing an essay on Women's Suffrage. You will be writing from different perspectives in each paragraph. You will be writing four separate paragraphs about women's suffrage. Each paragraph must be 7-10 sentences. Each paragraph will have different key points/topics that you need to address.

1. Paragraph 1: Women's Suffrage Movement.
 - a. Synopsis
 - b. Key Leaders
 - c. Long-Term Impact (Besides Voting)
2. Paragraph 2: Write the case for Women's Suffrage
 - a. Treat it as you were Susan B. Anthony and are presenting your case to the leaders of the government. Make sure your case is compelling and impactful enough to win them over.
 - i. Some reasons people were for women's suffrage:
 1. Women in other countries had the right to vote
 2. Women are citizens of the country also
 3. Pioneer women in the west helped build and work the farms too
 4. More women were working outside of the home
3. Paragraph 3: Anti-Suffrage Perspective
 - a. You are Peter Griffin, a person during the Progressive Era who is opposed to women's suffrage. You are presenting your case to the leaders of the government. Make sure your case is compelling and impactful enough to win them over.
 - i. Some reasons people were against women's suffrage:
 1. People believed men should make the decisions on public issues
 2. Suffrage would lead to women making "impossible demands" (asking to become a police officer, sailor, serve on a jury, be elected to office)
 3. It would destroy traditional family life
 4. It would give black women the right to vote (which southern states disliked)
4. Paragraph 4: Susan B. Anthony Biography
 - a. You are writing a biography of Susan B. Anthony. Your biography will specifically focus on her life as an activist for women's rights.