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| THE RIGHT TO VOTE | | | | Student/Class Goal Lack of knowledge about the history of their voting rights may be one reason students do not exercise their right to vote. | |
| Outcome (lesson objective) Provide a forum for learners to read and discuss several ways people have been prevented from voting. | | | | Time Frame 45-60 minutes | |
| Standard Read with Understanding | | | | NRS EFL 3-5 | |
| Purpose | Benchmarks | Word Knowledge | Benchmarks | Comprehension | Benchmarks |
| Purpose for reading | 3.1, 4.1, 5.1 | Decoding skills | 3.3, 4.3, 5.3 | Strategy use | 3.11, 4.11 |
| Select text | | Word parts | | Text structural elements | |
| | | Context clues | | Genres | |
| | | Reference materials | | Literary analysis | |
| | | Word relationships | | Drawing conclusions | 3.15, 4.15, 5.15 |
| | | Content vocabulary | 3.8, 4.8 | Making connections | 3.16, 4.16, 5.16 |
| | | Figurative language | | | |
| | | Fluency | | | |
| Materials What If You Couldn't Vote Handout Right to Vote Resource Packet 15, 19, & 26 th Amendments The Right to Vote Discussion Guide The Right to Vote Learning Objects | | | | | |
| Learner Prior Knowledge After studying how our government works during a previous lesson, begin with a general discussion of what a democracy is and how it is different from other types of governments. What does it mean to vote? Who rules in a democracy? Be prepared to define terms such as: constitution, amendment, voting privileges, poll tax, ratified, literacy tests, incarcerated, etc. Gauge learner's level of understanding and interest by providing possible resources for further study. | | | | | |
| Instructional Activities Step 1 - How would you feel if the government passed a law denying you the right to vote? Explain how we will look at some of the ways throughout history people have been shut out of the democratic process. The teacher may begin the lesson by discussing past movements to extend the right of suffrage to other groups, including black males (15th Amendment), women (19th Amendment), and 18-20 year-olds (26th Amendment). The teacher might also note that in each instance, groups that felt they were denied the right to vote actively demonstrated and worked toward voting rights, and those groups still consistently exercise the right to vote today. Step 2 - Distribute handout What If You Couldn't Vote? Have learners read the introduction and the first section on women. Ask for volunteers to read out loud or read it aloud yourself, depending on level and comfort of students. Everyone should read along silently as reading while listening helps grow readers. Step 3 - After the first section, engage in a discussion asking these questions. Modify questions to fit each group: 1. How do you think women felt when they were not allowed to participate in the voting process? 2. Who do you think denied women the right to vote? Why would they want to do that? 3. Who might have helped women fight for the vote? Who would have fought against it? 4. Do you think women could ever have their right to vote banned again? Why or why not? Step 4 - Using the Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA) strategy, read through the next section on poor people. Discuss that topic using the questions. Go on to read and discuss each passage until you have completed all five passages about these groups. Step 5 - Finally, read the last passage about current restrictions on voting and engage in a general discussion or possibly use an | | | | | |

Agree? Disagree? Why? strategy with these questions:

- How might our country be different today if only white male property owners could vote?
- How would our government be different in the same situation?
- Some say that taking the right to vote from criminals is a racist policy? Why do you think people believe that? Do you agree? Do you think it is fair that released felons cannot vote?
- Do you think foreign-born people who are permanent residents of the U.S. should be allowed to vote? Why or why not?

Assessment/Evidence *(based on outcome)*

Teacher Observation

The Right to Vote Discussion Guide

Teacher Reflection/Lesson Evaluation

Not yet completed.

Next Steps

Using the *Right to Vote* Resource Packet, groups of students could identify one area of interest, go online to research additional information, and then present findings to the class. Other options might be to: create an Election Scavenger Hunt from the local newspaper; analyze editorial cartoons; borrow voting booths for classroom practice; or obtain sample ballots to read. The Right to Vote Learning Objects will give students additional information about constitutional amendments and the characteristics of people who vote.

Technology Integration

Democracy in Action. The Change Agent. March 2008 <http://www.nelrc.org/changeagent/pdf/issue26/issue26.pdf>

Are Your Students Politically Empowered? Beyond Basic Skills. Summer 1998.

http://eric.ed.gov/ERICDocs/data/ericdocs2sql/content_storage_01/0000019b/80/17/13/d1.pdf

Voting in the 2004 Elections. The Change Agent. March 2004. <http://www.nelrc.org/changeagent/pdf/issue18.pdf>

Directed Reading-Thinking Activity (DR-TA) Teaching Strategy http://literacy.kent.edu/statgies/dr_ta/pdf

Agree? Disagree? Why? Teaching Strategy http://literacy.kent.edu/statgies/agree_disagree.pdf

Purposeful/Transparent

Students have many questions and misunderstandings about the voting process. Information provided during this time will give the students a clear picture of exactly how they could become involved as citizens.

Contextual

During a presidential election while interest and opinions are piqued, learning can focus on the importance of civil responsibilities and how participation is needed to build a strong democracy.

Building Expertise

During this lesson, students practice using a questioning technique that will help them as they become expert readers.

THE RIGHT TO VOTE DISCUSSION GUIDE

Use this rubric to evaluate the group discussions during the DR-TA activity.

Assign number values to each criteria.

Always = 2 Sometimes = 1 Never = 0

Results can help determine next steps as students work on the *Read With Understanding* Standard.

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|---|--|--|--|--|--|--|--|
| <i>Names</i> | | | | | | | |
| Contributes prior knowledge about topics. | | | | | | | |
| Use comprehension strategies such as questioning, retelling, summarizing, and making inferences. | | | | | | | |
| Requests help and/or adjusts reading to understand text. | | | | | | | |
| Shares and communicates ideas, opinions, and conclusions clearly and completely. | | | | | | | |
| Accurately expresses relevant knowledge pertaining to issues raised during the discussion. | | | | | | | |
| Provides specific examples from the activity/resource to support ideas and opinions. | | | | | | | |
| <i>Optional:</i> Learning is extended by further reading or additional study of the topic. | | | | | | | |
| TOTAL SCORES | | | | | | | |

Additional observations:

RIGHT TO VOTE RESOURCES

WOMAN

League of Woman Voters

www.lwv.org

The League of Woman Voters online website provides links and access for registration. It also has up to date information on current issues and legislation, as well as historical facts.

Susan B. Anthony on Woman's Right to Vote

<http://www.historyplace.com/speeches/anthony.htm>

Read Susan B. Anthony's historical speech on this website. Anthony fought for women to gain the right to vote and this speech is a detailed account of her struggle.

Author: Lyon, George Ella

Title: *More Choices: Stories for Adult New Readers*

This book has a short story on voting. Although it may be brief it emphasizes the importance of voting and the right that each individual has.

Women's Suffrage

<http://www.shapethefuture.org/features/suffragettes.asp>

Overview of 10 women who were instrumental in the suffrage movement.

Suffrage Biographies

http://womenshistory.about.com/library/bio/blbio_suffrage_list.htm

Contains biographies of women key to gaining women's right to vote.

19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/constitution/html/amdt19.html>

The 19th amendment giving women the right to vote is posted at this website and information about women's suffrage rights.

Nineteenth Amendment to the United States Constitution

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Nineteenth_Amendment_to_the_United_States_Constitution

This wikipedia contains the text, history, proposal and state ratifications with references and additional links on women's suffrage topics.

POOR

History of Property Taxes in the United States

<http://www.eh.net/encyclopedia/fisher.property.tax.history.us.php>

This is the history of tax laws that commonly favored wealthy white males and the changes throughout U.S. history that made them more impartial.

24th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/constitution/html/amdt24.html>

This site has detailed information about federal elections and the abolition of the poll tax qualification in federal elections.

Twenty-Fourth Amendment to the United States Constitution

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Twenty-fourth_Amendment_to_the_United_States_Constitution

This wikipedia contains the text, proposal and state ratifications with references and additional links that apply to the payment of taxes.

YOUTH

Rock the Vote

<http://www.rockthevote.com>

The goal of this site is to increase the number of young people who vote. It provides several links and information to help America's youth become more aware and involved of politics.

Author: Cultice, Wendell W.

Title: Youth's Battle for the Ballot: A History of Voting Age in America

ISBN: 0313279624

This book covers the history of the voting age in the U.S. from 1607-1991. The histories of federal and state regulations are reviewed, up to the 26th Amendment. The book also, includes information on the last two decades of youth voting.

Passage of 26th Amendment

http://www.historychannel.com/speeches/archive/speech_331.html

At this site you can listen to the speech announcing that the 26th amendment was headed to Congress. It also gives facts that concerned the passage of this amendment.

26th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/constitution/html/amdt26.html>

This website provides a detailed description of the 26th amendment and the reduction of voting age qualifications.

Children's Political Rights

<http://intermargins.net/intermargins/YouthLibFront/YouthHumanRights/ageism/Children's%20Political%20Rights.htm>

This article presents beliefs and myths that may have an influence on youth voting. As it approaches each argument, logical reasoning is provided to support youth and their right to vote.

ILLITERATE

Voting Rights from Change Agent, March 2004 Issue 18, Pg. 13

This article covers the history of a typical literacy test in Alabama before the passage of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It details the literacy test that was administered with the Alabama Application Form. This literacy test had written and oral sections.

Civil Rights 101

http://www.civilrights.org/research_center/civilrights101/voting.html

The history leading up to the Voting Rights Act and the history of the act itself are on this site.

The National Voting Rights Act of 1965

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Voting_Rights_Act

This wikipedia contains the background, legislative history, periodic renewal and criticisms around the act.

Language Minority, Illiteracy and Voting Data Used in Making Determinations for the Voting Rights Act Amendments of 1975

<http://www.census.gov/population/socdemo/voting/p25-627/p25-627.pdf>

A population report affecting the 1975 Act.

Race, Voting Rights and Segregation

<http://www.umich.edu/~lawrace/disenfranchise1.htm>

This site contains techniques of direct disenfranchisement during 1880-1965.

AFRICAN AMERICAN

The Voting Rights Act of 1965

http://www.usdoj.gov/crt/voting/intro/intro_b.htm

The focus here is on the history of the 15th amendment. It explains the struggle and tension that existed even after the passage of the 15th amendment.

Author: Lusane, Clarence

Title: Black Americans and the Vote (African-American Experience)

This book is filled with facts of African-American politics and the difficult path to gain the right to vote. It follows the success and defeats of African-Americans in U.S. political history.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965: Blacks in the South Finally Get to Go to the Polls

http://www.core-online.org/History/voting_rights.htm

This website recognize the hardships that African-Americans were forced to face, despite the ratification of the 15th amendment. The focus is primarily on the South where African-Americans were more frequently denied the right to vote than any other region.

15th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution

<http://www.gpoaccess.gov/constitution/html/amdt15.html>

In addition to the amendment, contains information about the rights of citizen's to vote.

CRIMINALS

Restoring the Right to Vote: Isn't it Time?

http://www.njpp.org/rpt_votingrights.html

This site lists the various privileges that convicted criminals have in each state.

Restoring Your Right to Vote in Ohio

<http://www.lawyerscomm.org/2005website/ep04/electionprotectionpics/50states/ohio.pdf>

This is targeted specifically for Ohio's convicted criminals. It answers basic questions about voting while incarcerated, having felony convictions, and how criminals' right to vote is restored.

The Sentencing Project

<http://www.hrw.org/reports98/vote/usvot98o.htm>

Here an overview and summary is provided for felons, as well as detailed information according to state. This site also lists statistical information concerning those who have lost the right to vote due to criminal convictions.

Felony Disenfranchisement

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Felony_disenfranchisement

This wikipedia contains the history, current application, arguments and additional sites that apply to felons.

GENERAL

Charters of Freedom

<http://www.archives.gov/exhibits/charters/charters.html>

Contains the Declaration, the Constitution and the Bill of Rights

Elections in the United States

<http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/lessons/elections.html>

The Learning Network has developed lesson plan units that use recent New York Times articles as springboards for examining important curricular topics in interesting and exciting ways.

The U.S. Constitution Online

<http://www.usconstitution.net/constamnotes.html>

This interactive site provides a list of all the amendments in the U.S. Constitution. Each amendment can be viewed individually and has a history link, showing an overview of why the amendment was ratified and its importance in history.

Change Our World

<http://www.ohiospirit.org/>

Learn about important voting information on this Web site including: how to register to vote, what issues and candidates are on the ballot, election dates and results, boards of elections contact information, historical elections data, and much more.

By the People

<http://www.pbs.org/elections/>

Use this Web site to find the best election news and information. PBS brings you in-depth coverage and analysis from signature programs, as well as tools to research candidates and elections, a roundup of the best election Web sites, and a calendar to keep you current on campaign events.

What If the Government Said You Couldn't Vote?

Today in American society nearly everyone that wants to vote can. But, throughout American history, this hasn't always been true. Here are a few groups that have struggled to gain the right to vote over the past two hundred years.

1. **Women.** For many years only men had the right to vote. In 1890 Wyoming was the first state to issue voting rights to women. In Ohio, in 1917, women were granted few voting privileges, mainly for school board elections. After 75 years of protest, on August 18, 1920 through the 19th Amendment of the U.S. Constitution, women received the right to vote.
2. **Poor People.** When this country was first founded, only people who owned land were allowed to vote. Law-makers believed that only property owners had enough at stake in the country to vote responsibly. Property requirements were then replaced by a poll tax, which forced citizens to pay a fee to vote. The 24th Amendment made poll taxes illegal in 1964.
3. **Young People.** During the Vietnam War era the average age of a soldier was 19, but the voting age in America was 21. Many believed that if you were old enough to fight and die for your country, you should have the right to vote. It took just two months in 1971 for the 26th Amendment to be ratified. This was the quickest ratification in history and granted 18 year olds the right to vote.
4. **People Who Could Not Read and Write.** Early in U.S. history many states only permitted those who could read and write the right to vote. It was believed by many that those who could read and write were the only people with access to information that was needed to make smart choices. In today's society there are a variety of ways to get information that do not depend on reading or writing, for example television and radio programs. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 banned the use of literacy tests for voting privileges.
5. **African-Americans.** Voting was not restricted only to White people, but it was stated that only freemen, or those who were not slaves, could vote. Even though the 15th Amendment was ratified in February of 1870, allowing Black men the right to vote, many states still implemented laws restricting and preventing Black men from exercising their new right. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 removed the restrictions and returned the right to vote to those that had gained it decades earlier. Within the Voting Right Act of 1965 literacy requirements, poll taxes, and other limitations were eliminated. This act also set up a system to ensure that the new law would be followed.

Are There Still People in the United States Who Can't Vote?

Yes. Those who are incarcerated for a felony conviction under the laws of the U.S., in Ohio or any other state do not have the right to vote. In Ohio, only while the convicted criminal remains in prison are they denied their voting privileges. In addition to convicted criminals, there are also people who live, work, and pay taxes here in the U.S. and are not citizens. These people also do not have the right to vote.

What If You Couldn't Vote Handout



<http://www.wisconline.org>

Who Votes in America?

Author: Barbara Laedtke

School: Fox Valley Technical College **Date:** 8/4/2005

Description In this interactive object, learners identify common characteristics of people who are likely to vote.

http://www.wisc-online.com/objects/index_tj.asp?objID=SOC6105

Amendments to the US Constitution

Author: Mona Wenrich

School: Fox Valley Technical College **Date:** 5/5/2003

Description Students explore the history of U.S. Constitutional amendments and the process involved in adding an amendment. In an interactive exercise, learners author their own amendments and explain why these should be added to the Constitution.

http://www.wisc-online.com/objects/index_tj.asp?objID=SOC5602

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