

Women's History: Suffragists, Scientists & Activists

Knowledge Set Teaching Guide

This Knowledge Set explores how women around the world have challenged social constraints and worked to promote equal rights. Students will learn about women of different ages and backgrounds who used their influence and skills to enhance public perceptions of women. As the set concludes, students will evaluate the role that the media plays both in shaping and reflecting the status of women in society and the positive impact of recent films like Disney's Moana.

Target Grades & Subject(s): Grades 6-8; English-Language Arts, History

Learning Objectives

- Students will analyze details to better understand the character and actions of people who have worked to promote equal opportunities and rights for women. (CCSS RI.3)
- Students will use evidence from a text to infer and draw conclusions about public attitudes toward women during specific time periods and in different settings. (CCSS RI.1)

Before Teaching this Set

- Post three sheets of chart paper, each titled with one of the following terms: Suffragists, Scientists, and Activists. Define each term and ask students to brainstorm names to add to each sheet. As students are reading the texts in this set, encourage them to continue adding names to these lists.

Texts in this Set (download texts [here](#))

Text 1: 100 Years Of Women's Rights: From Suffrage To Equal Pay (2 pages)	
This text introduces the women's suffrage movement in the U.S. and describes the impact of several key leaders. As students read, they will learn about the social and political environment of the early 1900s and how these values were reflected in the treatment of women.	<u>Extension Activity:</u> Have students use the internet to learn about women's suffrage movements in other countries. Students can then create a timeline that shows when women received the right to vote in countries around the world.
Text 2: NASA Celebrates 30th Anniversary Of First American Woman In Space: Sally Ride (2 pages)	
This article focuses on the life and accomplishments of Sally Ride, the first American woman in space. This article highlights the challenges women have faced to achieve success and respect in science-related fields. The instruction in this article guides students to make inferences about public attitudes about women based on details in the text.	<u>Discussion Questions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Based on the article, what do you think most people believed about the capabilities of women prior to Sally Ride's first mission? - Do you think the negative attitudes that Sally Ride faced are still common today?
Text 3: Meaning Of Life According to Ruth Bader Ginsburg (1 page)	
This next article introduces Supreme Court Justice Ruth Bader Ginsburg and recounts some of her reflections on leadership. As students read, they will also analyze a short video and figures that provide insight into the principles that have guided Ginsburg's decisions and social advocacy.	<u>Discussion Questions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Do you agree with Ginsburg's definition of a meaningful life? Why or why not? - In your opinion, what should a person do in order to live meaningfully?
Text 4: Nobel Peace Prize: Extraordinary Malala a Powerful Role Model (2 pages)	
In this article, students will learn about Malala Yousafzai, an advocate for women's educational and social rights in Pakistan. This article provides an example of how women are continuing to fight for equal rights around the world. As students read, they will also consider how young people can apply their skills toward working for social change.	<u>Extension Activity:</u> Have students create a Venn Diagram comparing and contrasting Malala to one of the other female activists they have learned about in this set. Ask students to identify how each woman's values, talents, and background influenced their pursuit for equal rights.
Text 5: Moana Fulfills Disney's Long Journey From Timid Princess to Empowered Working Woman (3 pages)	
As this set concludes, students will consider the role the media plays in shaping perceptions of women in society. This text discusses the changes in social perceptions of women over the last several decades by examining the roles and responsibilities of female leads in popular Disney films.	<u>Discussion Questions:</u> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - What ways can the media and entertainment companies like Disney further promote equal rights and positive images of women in society? - In what ways do social perceptions and attitudes toward women still need to change today?