



The Rights of Women

Objectives

1. Describe how women won the right to vote.
2. Identify the new opportunities that women gained during the Progressive Era.
3. Explain how the temperance movement gained strength during the early 1900s.

Main Idea

After more than 70 years of effort, American women won the right to vote in all elections.

Prepare to Read

Reading Skill

Identify Central Issues From the Past What changes did people of the past work to achieve? As you read Section 3, try to identify the central issues at the core of women's efforts for change. In your own words, answer the questions: What was this struggle about? What change did these people seek?

Vocabulary Builder

High-Use Words

devise, p. 657

commit, p. 658

Key Terms and People

Carrie Chapman Catt, p. 657

suffragist, p. 657

Alice Paul, p. 658

Frances Willard, p. 659

prohibition, p. 659

★ **Background Knowledge** The Progressives' desire for reform touched many parts of society. However, Progressives were not particularly interested in women's rights. In this section, you will learn how American women finally won the right to vote.

Women Win the Vote

The Seneca Falls Convention of 1848 marked the start of an organized women's rights movement in the United States. After the Civil War, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony formed the National Woman Suffrage Association. This group pushed for a constitutional amendment to give women the right to vote.

Anthony spoke all over the country for the cause. In 1872, she was arrested for trying to vote. At her trial, she told the judge:

“My natural rights, my civil rights, my political rights, my judicial rights, are all alike ignored. Robbed of the fundamental privilege of citizenship, I am degraded from the status of a citizen to that of a subject.”

—*Proceedings of the Trial of Susan B. Anthony*

Women Vote in the West In most states, leading politicians opposed women's suffrage. Still, in the late 1800s, women won voting rights in four western states: Wyoming, Utah, Colorado, and Idaho. Pioneer women had worked alongside men to build farms and cities. By giving women the vote at least in local or state elections, these states recognized the women's contributions.

When Wyoming applied for statehood in 1890, many members of Congress wanted it to bar women from voting. Wyoming lawmakers stood firm. "We may stay out of the Union for 100 years, but we will come in with our women." Wyoming was admitted.

Growing Support In the early 1900s, support for women's suffrage grew. More than 5 million women worked outside the home. Although women were paid less than men, wages gave them some power. Many demanded a say in making the laws.

After Stanton and Anthony died, a new generation of leaders took up the cause. Carrie Chapman Catt devised a detailed strategy to win suffrage, state by state. Across the nation, suffragists, or people who worked for women's right to vote, followed her plan. Their efforts brought steady gains. One by one, states in the West and Midwest gave women the right to vote.

The Nineteenth Amendment Still, in some of these states, women could not vote in federal elections. More women joined the call for a federal amendment to allow them to vote in all elections.

Vocabulary Builder

devise (dee vīz) v. to carefully think out; to invent

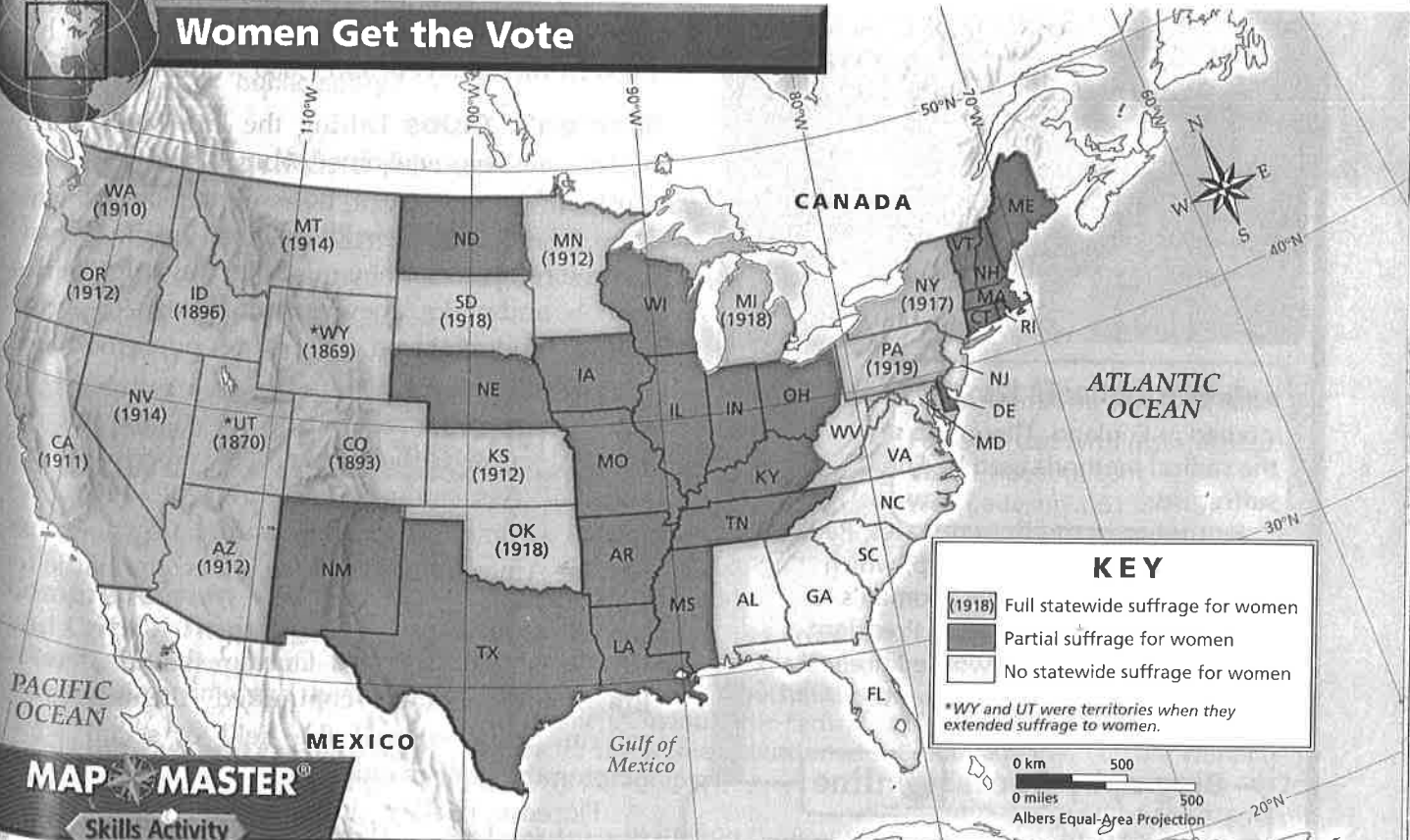


Identify Central Issues From the Past

Identify the central issue, or goal, for suffragists.



Women Get the Vote



MAP MASTER

Skills Activity

Wyoming was the first state where women could vote in state elections. By 1919, some states (shown in yellow) still did not allow women to vote.

- (a) **Read a Map** In what year did women win suffrage in Colorado? In California?
- (b) **Apply Information** How would this map change after passage of the Nineteenth Amendment?

MapMaster Online

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Vocabulary Builder

commit (kah MIHT) v. to make a pledge or promise

Main Idea

During the Progressive Era, women fought for access to jobs and education.

As the struggle dragged on, suffragists such as **Alice Paul** took more forceful steps. Paul met with President Woodrow Wilson in 1913. Paul told Wilson that suffragists had **committed** themselves to achieving such an amendment. Wilson pledged his support.

By 1919, the tide had turned. Congress passed the Nineteenth Amendment guaranteeing women the right to vote. By August 1920, three fourths of the states had ratified the amendment. The Nineteenth Amendment doubled the number of eligible voters.

Checkpoint Why did suffragists want a constitutional amendment?

New Opportunities for Women

Besides working for the vote, women struggled to gain access to jobs and education. Most states refused to grant women licenses to practice law or medicine.

Higher Education Despite obstacles, a few women managed to get the higher education needed to enter a profession. In 1877,

Boston University granted the first Ph.D., or doctoral degree, to a woman. Slowly, more women earned advanced degrees. By 1900, the nation had 1,000 women lawyers and 7,000 women doctors.

Women's Clubs During the late 1800s, many middle-class women joined women's clubs. At first, most clubwomen read books and sought other ways to advance their knowledge. In time, many became reformers. They raised money for libraries, schools, and parks. They pressed for laws to protect women and children, to ensure pure food and drugs, and to win the vote.

Faced with racial barriers, African American women formed their own clubs, such as the National Association of Colored Women. They battled to end segregation and violence against African Americans. They also joined the battle for suffrage.

Women Reformers During the Progressive Era, many women committed themselves to reform. Some entered the field of social work, helping the poor in cities.

Florence Kelley investigated conditions in sweatshops. In time, she was made the chief factory inspector for Illinois. Kelley's main concern was child labor. She organized a boycott of goods produced in factories that employed young children.

Checkpoint What gains did women make in education?

Biography Quest



Alice Paul
1885–1977

Alice Paul was an American who studied in England. There, she saw the radical methods used by English suffragists.

Returning to the United States, Paul formed a new suffrage group, which merged into the National Woman's Party in 1917. Paul called on President Wilson many times and worked tirelessly for the Nineteenth Amendment.

Biography Quest

How did Paul become involved in the struggle for a voting rights amendment?

For: The answer to the question about Paul

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The Crusade Against Alcohol

You have read that reformers began a temperance movement, or campaign against alcohol abuse, in the 1820s. Women took a leading role in the temperance movement. In the late 1800s, the movement gained new strength.

In 1874, a group of women organized the Woman's Christian Temperance Union, or WCTU. Frances Willard became its president in 1879. Willard spoke tirelessly about the evils of alcohol. She called for state laws to ban the sale of liquor. She also worked to close saloons. In time, Willard joined the suffrage movement, bringing many WCTU members along with her.

Carry Nation was a more radical temperance crusader. After her husband died from heavy drinking, Nation often stormed into saloons. Swinging a hatchet, she smashed beer kegs and liquor bottles. Nation won publicity, but her actions embarrassed the WCTU.

After years of effort, temperance leaders persuaded Congress to pass the Eighteenth Amendment in 1917. The amendment enforced **prohibition**, a ban on the sale and consumption of alcohol. The amendment was ratified in 1919.

✓Checkpoint How did supporters of temperance seek to influence public policy?

★ **Looking Back and Ahead** For many women, the Nineteenth Amendment was a final victory. Others saw it as just one step on the road to full equality. Today, Americans still debate issues involving the roles of women in society, government, the family, and the workplace.

Main Idea

Temperance supporters won passage of a constitutional amendment banning alcohol.



Cartoon of a temperance supporter

Section 3 | Check Your Progress

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Comprehension and Critical Thinking

- (a) Recall** What did the Nineteenth Amendment to the Constitution do?
(b) Link Past and Present How has its passage helped women?
- (a) Recall** What did the Eighteenth Amendment to the Constitution do?
(b) Make Predictions What would be the results of the Eighteenth Amendment? Explain your reasoning.

Reading Skill

- 3. Identify Central Issues From the Past** Reread the text under the heading "New Opportunities for Women." Identify the central issues for the women mentioned in those paragraphs.

Vocabulary Builder

Read each sentence below. If the sentence is true, write YES. If the sentence is not true, write NO and explain why.

- 4. Suffragists** were people who worked to ban alcohol.

- 5.** During prohibition, the sale and use of tobacco in the United States were outlawed.

Writing

- 6.** Imagine that you are working with a group of people in 1912 promoting women's suffrage. Create four slogans for banners and leaflets supporting the right of women to vote. Then, write a short persuasive paragraph supporting and developing one of those slogans.