

# The Women's Movement of the 19<sup>th</sup> Century

**Documents: Excerpts of the Important of Domestic Economy, by Catherine Beecher; Chapter IX of Uncle Tom's Cabin, by Harriet Beecher Stowe, a suffrage broadside written by Isabella Beecher Hooker, and the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment.**

## **FOCUS OF SUBJECT AREA**

- The debate over the role of women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century America.

## **INSTRUCTIONAL OBJECTIVES**

- Examine the social, political, moral, attitudes of women in the 19<sup>th</sup> century.
- Analyze strategies of the women to convey their public agenda.
- Evaluate the effectiveness of their persuasion techniques.

## **STRATEGIES**

Students will accomplish the instruction objectives by:

- Reading the 3 assigned primary sources;
- Participating in group activities and class discussion;

## **OVERVIEW OF LESSON ACTIVITIES**

This particular lesson on the women's movement will entail three 45 minute periods. Prior to the unit the students would have studied the Declaration of Sentiments written at Seneca Falls Convention. A solid understanding of this document will place the lesson into historical context. The Uncle Tom's Cabin excerpt should be assigned for homework the night before. The other excerpts are short enough to be read in class.

## **ASSESSMENT:**

Students will demonstrate their comprehension of the lesson by completing the following assignment:

Examine the 15<sup>th</sup> Amendment and explain why the word "gender" was not included in 1865. Using evidence from the three readings create an argument for why it wasn't until 1920 women became enfranchised?

## **DAY ONE: Examine Uncle Tom's Cabin**

- What factors might influence people's point of view?
- How are a variety of primary sources beneficial in studying history?
- What makes components of each primary source make it an effective tool in history?  
(What does it reveal about the time period?)

### **OPENING THE LESSON**

Begin the lesson with an open ended question. How are you similar and difference from you siblings (or how do your parents differ from their children)? What might account for some of the difference? Students will jot down some ideas and we will place on the board some possible theories for why they are different?

The teacher will then explain how the students will gain a snapshot of the reactions of women about the women's movement.

Develop a sense of the spectrum of reactions American women had to the demand for equality.

Examine the strategies in which these women use to promote their position.

### **PROCEDURE**

- Go over the terms and vocabulary list. Clarify any words that are questionable. Note the level of vocabulary of these women. Allow students to make some assumptions about their education.
- Handout the SOAPS Mode format and go over how to fill it in with *Uncle Tom's Cabin*.
- When students have completed the form review together as a class.
- Discuss whether or not *Uncle Tom's Cabin* is a primary source. It is fair to assume that the ideas of Stowe's character are her own. Is this an effective way to persuade people?
- Assign the other two readings for homework.

## **DAY TWO/THREE: Isabella and Catherine's Sources**

### **QUESTIONS ADDRESSED**

Same as day one.

### **PROCEDURE:**

- Have the groups fill out the SOAPS Mode for the remaining two sources.
- Discuss the strengths and weaknesses of all three sources.
- What makes one peevier stronger than another?
- How were these women a representation of American women of the 19<sup>th</sup> century?
- Explain assessment assignment.