

WOMEN'S LONG ROAD

MAINE STATE MUSEUM TEACHER MATERIALS



Lesson 1: State by State

How suffragists used maps to work for equal voting rights

Recommended grade level: 4-6

Instructional Materials

Image Guide - Lesson 1 - State By State (PowerPoint file)

Make your own map worksheet

Suffrage Map History Handout

Map Image Handout

Map Analysis Worksheet

Background Discussion

Lesson 1: State by State uses historic maps to hone students' visual literacy skills. The exercises take them deeper into suffrage movement in the decades leading up to the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1919. It gives students the opportunity to work with primary source documents in the form of maps and images.

Visual literacy maintains that students not only need to read traditional print texts critically, but that they also need to engage in analysis of visual imagery and how images are used to convey ideas and even advocate for specific causes. Historic maps serve as a **primary resource** for research into our past. Careful, critical analysis of maps is an important component of visual literacy; in the process of building these skills, students build literacy in all areas. Visual literacy helps students interpret and understand people, events, eras, and large ideas in a diverse array of contexts.

This lesson plan can stand alone but ideally builds upon some knowledge of the women's suffrage movement. The **Introduction to Maine Women's Suffrage** document can provide a starting point for teachers and students. The other lessons created for this unit—**Lesson 2: Cartooning for a Cause** and **Lesson 3: Mainers Speak Up**—are recommended for higher grade levels due to the content of the primary source documents that students will work with. Teachers may review them to see if they would be a good fit for their students.

Visual literacy (noun) –the ability to recognize, understand, make meaning of, and communicate through visible actions or images (pictures) or other visual media. - *Maine State Museum Curriculum*

Primary source (noun) –any piece of evidence about a historic event or past time period in which the creator of the source participated in or witnessed that historical moment. A primary source could be: a photograph, a drawing, a document (e.g., first-hand account in a diary, legal records from the time), an object or other cultural artifact, or an interview quoting a person from the time period.

Essential Questions

- What can a map tell us about a time period, place, a people, or the intent of the creator?
- How can evidence be used to support an argument?
- What is the difference between observation and interpretation?
- Why and how did maps contribute to the woman suffrage movement?

Plan of Instruction

Overview

The lesson starts with an introduction to suffrage, visual symbols, and the idea of conveying information through maps. Students create a map as a class. There is a visual exploration of how maps were used as tools in the suffrage movement. Students then gain visual literacy skills through practice ‘reading’ an image together. The lesson concludes with an in-depth analysis of maps used in the suffrage campaign and an opportunity for reflection.

Timing

This class can be broken into two approximately 45-minute sessions or combined into one 1.5 hour session.

SECTION ONE (approx. 45 min)

Suffragist —a woman or man who believed women should have the right to vote.

Part 1: Sharing ideas with images

1. **Slide 1:** The teacher introduces the lesson, and explains that the class will be talking about how women worked to get the law changed so that they would be allowed to vote. **“Women’s suffrage” means women’s right to vote.** In this lesson, the class will learn about the maps that people used to help fight for that right.
2. **Slide 2:** Definition of “symbol.” Review as a class.

3. **Slide 3:** The teacher asks students if they can identify the symbols on the slide, one at a time.
4. Class discussion: *Why do you think people use symbols instead of always writing or speaking with words?*
5. **Slide 4:** Show students the image of a very basic map. Discuss what makes a map a map—students should point out what they see on the page.
6. **Slide 5:** The teacher shows students a map of the United States, makes sure they can recognize it. What do the different colors show? [different states] What is the blue part? [ocean]
7. **Slide 6:** Maps can provide all kinds of information. This map shows which states have the happiest people, based on national polls.

Part 1.5: [Optional] Introductory Mapping Exercise

1. The teacher hands out the **Make-Your-Own Map worksheets** to students and explains that they will have **five minutes** to draw a very basic map of a place they care about. It should be a simple, small place—a favorite room, for example.
2. The teacher times out the five minutes, then leads a **guided discussion** with the full class:
 - What kinds of things did you choose to include on your map, and why?
 - What have you left off your map, and why?
 - Do you think if someone else drew a map of the same place, it would look about the same as yours? Why or why not?

Part 2: Meaning Behind the Map

There are two options for this exercise; teachers can select the best fit for their class. **Option 1 includes full class input into a map the teacher draws, option 2 asks students to create their own maps in groups** and then share out loud when they're finished.

Option 1: *The teacher stands in front of the classroom at the whiteboard and explains that the class will be creating a map together. This will be a map of an imaginary island, and the teacher will draw the map and add to it as the students call out the features of the island.*

Steps:

1. The teacher draws a large empty circle or oval shape on the board to make the island.

2. Ask the students for **suggestions about what should be on the island and where it should be located**. As the students make suggestions, the teacher adds them to the map. Suggested prompts include:
 - a. Does it have any important natural features—mountains, rivers, volcanoes, etc.?
 - b. Does it have any important human-made features—buildings, roads, etc.?
3. Now that the class has a map, the teacher explains that they will need to decide how they can use the map to tell viewers more about the island. **Use these question samples for a guided discussion:**
 - a. How do you share ideas with people without using words?
 - b. Can a map tell a story about a place?
 - c. Do you think if two people drew maps of the same place, the maps would be the same? Why or why not?
 - d. What if one of the people liked the place and the other didn't? How could they draw maps that made the place look good or bad?
4. Return to the class map of the island. Decide if students want to make the island look like a good place or a bad place. Students provide suggestions about **what can be added to the map to show people that the island is good/bad**. They can use symbols and stylistic ways to represent their ideas. Add those symbols, drawings, and designs to the existing map. Examples include:
 - a. Good island—cheerful colors, things the students like (favorite foods, animals, recreational activities), flowers, etc.
 - b. Bad island—scary/angry colors, warnings (skull and crossbones, 'Danger' or 'Keep Out' signs), things the students don't like, etc.
5. The teacher asks students what words they would add to the map, if they haven't already used words. *How do specific words impact the meaning and tone of the map?*
6. **Guided discussion** for review:
 - a. How do maps share information with people?
 - b. How can a map designer make decisions about their map design if their goal is to convince people of a certain idea?
 - c. How can symbols and words impact the meaning of a map?

Option 2: *The teacher explains that the class will be creating maps together. Divide into 2-4 groups, each group will be responsible for drawing one map. This will be a map of an imaginary island. Distribute one copy of the Make-Your-Own Map Worksheet to each group.*

Steps:

1. Each group has a designated artist; the other members provide ideas (unless multiple students want to draw).
7. The group artist draws a large empty circular shape on the paper (it can almost fill the paper, leaving some room at the edges. It can also have wavy edges, as coastal maps often do).
8. Ask the students to decide what should be on the island. As the students make suggestions, they should add them to the map. Suggested prompts include:
 - a. Does the island have any important natural features—mountains, rivers, etc.?
 - b. Does it have any important human-made features—buildings, roads, etc.?
2. Now that each group has a map, explain that they will need to decide how they can use the map to tell viewers more about the island. **Use these question samples for a guided class discussion:**
 - a. How do you share ideas with people without using words?
 - b. Can a map tell a story about a place?
 - c. Do you think if two people drew maps of the same place, the maps would be the same? Why or why not?
 - d. What if one of the people liked the place and the other didn't? How could they draw maps that made the place look good or bad?
3. Return to the maps of the island. Students may decide whether they want to make their island look like a good place to visit or a bad place to visit. Students provide suggestions about **what can be added to the map to show people that the island is good/bad**. They can use symbols and stylistic ways to represent their ideas. Add those symbols, drawings, and designs to the existing map.
4. Examples include:
 - a. Good island—cheerful colors, things the students like (favorite foods, animals, recreational activities), flowers, etc.
 - b. Bad island—scary/angry colors, warnings (skull and crossbones, 'Danger' or 'Keep Out' signs), things the students don't like, etc.
5. The teacher asks students what words they would add to the map, if they haven't already used words. *How do specific words impact the meaning and tone of the map?*
6. [Optional—takes additional time] Each group presents their map and explains the choices they made to the class.
7. **Guided discussion.** Bring the full class back together and lead students in a full group reflection on the activity.
 - a. How do maps share information with people?
 - b. How can a map designer add images to convince people of a certain idea?

- c. How can symbols and words impact the meaning of a map?
- d. When you were drawing your own maps, what challenges did you have?

Part 3: Maps as Tools for Change

1. **Slide 7:** “Part 3: Maps as tools for change.” The teacher reads the quote out loud to the class and explains what it means. Women in western states such as California and Wyoming had the right to vote years before women in eastern states such as Maine.
2. The teacher will share the **Suffrage Map History Handout** with students to explain how maps were specifically used in the suffrage movement. This information provides more detail to go along with the **Introduction to Maine Women’s Suffrage** document.
3. **Slides 8-12:** The teacher shows historical images of maps used in the women’s suffrage movement. The goal is to explore a variety of ways in which maps were used by suffragists. Teachers may either describe what is happening in each photo or ask students to describe what they see, but this should be a quick exercise.

Summary of images: (in the same order as the PowerPoint images):

1. Maine Suffragists in a Portland Maine parade, 1914.
2. “Celebrating the ‘Ratification’ by the Ninth State” parade float in Omaha, Nebraska, 1912.
3. People installing a suffrage billboard in 1916.
4. Nevada street scene with suffrage banner, 1914.
5. Scene from the silent film *Your Girl and Mine*, 1914. Notice the suffrage states are black—easier to see, though it doesn’t carry the same symbolism.

SECTION TWO (approx. 45 min)

Part 4: Analyzing the Maps (Slide 13)

1. **Slide 14:** The teacher shows the **Warmup Activity: Observation vs. Interpretation** page on projector or handout. Explain that the students will be practicing the skill of looking at images more closely. With this skill, you can read pictures almost like you get information from a book! Read through the steps together.
1. **Slide 15:** Practice the steps using the dog photo. Remind students that they should start with facts, or a basic description of what they see, like a list of the objects and actions in the image.
 - a. **Sample facts** from this photo: there is a brown dog; it is holding a bowl in its mouth; it is sitting down.

2. Opinions are your reflections on what the image means and the possible relationships between the elements of the image—what you think is happening and why. You are using your past knowledge and life experience to make educated guesses.
 - a. **Sample opinions** from this photo: the dog looks hungry (evidence—it is holding an empty bowl and looks sad), the dog is probably outside his owner’s house (evidence—it looks like the photo is taken through glass that might be a porch door, and the dog seems like it is familiar with the space).
3. **Practice as a class** by asking for more observations and interpretations of the dog photo. The teacher reminds students that **whenever they make an interpretation they need to back it up with evidence from the image**, asking “What do you see in the image that makes you think that?” or “How do you know?”
4. **Slide 16:** Practice again with an image from the America Chavez comic book series. Look closely, state facts, then share opinions and the evidence behind them.

In-Depth Map Analysis

1. **Slide 17-21:** The teacher will be showing a series of four women’s suffrage maps and giving students the opportunity to closely ‘read’ them. **Note that because the final map (Slide 20) is so detailed, the Powerpoint includes a close-up view in Slide 21).*
2. It is recommended that teachers distribute copies of the **Map Image Handout** so that students can look up close. They can share with people next to them.
3. [Optional] Rather than lead a full class discussion, the teacher may distribute copies of the **Map Analysis Worksheet** so that students can write down what they see in the images, rather than speaking out loud as a full class. If using this option, students can still report back to the class on what they saw in each image.
4. For each image:
 - a. Students should **look at the image silently** for 30-60 seconds and think about what they see.
 - b. The teacher opens a question to the room:
 - i. **What’s going on in this image?** Please try to start with **facts** (basic descriptions) only, wait to share opinions.
 - c. As students respond with their observations, the teacher may prompt them to look deeper, asking “What more can we find?” or directing students to specific elements they may have missed: “How is color used? Are there any words?”
 - d. Next, the teacher asks the students to **share their opinions** (reflections). Again, remind students **to back up their opinions with evidence** from the image: “You said the map was drawn by someone pro-suffrage. What do you

see that makes you say that?” The students should be able to support their statements.

- e. The teacher now asks the students for a **deeper analysis** with the following prompt:
 - i. Do you think this map would be an effective way to convince people that women should get the vote? Why or why not?
- f. **Repeat the process** for the three other suffrage maps.

Part 5: Reflection

Slide 22: The teacher prompts the students to **reflect on the maps, either as a guided discussion or as an optional writing exercise**. This will also allow the class to follow up on the activity at a later date if there is no more time in-class.

Suggested questions:

- Why was geography an important theme in the suffrage movement?
- What were suffragists’ reasons for distributing maps?
- How can artists and mapmakers use visuals to change peoples’ minds?
- What can these maps tell us about America in the early 1900’s?
- Do you think maps like this would be effective today? Why or why not?
- How do people today use images to change peoples’ minds?