

How did women attain suffrage?

Inquiry Assignment

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3/13/2013

How did women finally gain the right to vote in the United States of America?

ABSTRACT

Throughout United States history women have worked to gain freedom and equality. Through this evolution of women's rights a defining moment, most often recognized as the first step in the right path towards equality, took place when the Nineteenth Amendment was ratified on August 18, 1920. This amendment prohibits any United States citizen from being denied the right to vote based on sex. What is more interesting than just the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment were the trials and tribulations women went through to officially gain the right to vote in the United State of America. The ways in which women worked against and together to achieve this almost insurmountable goal is astonishing. They were able to illicit progress from the U.S. government even though they legally did not have a voice in politics. Through this journey how did women finally gain the right to vote in the United States of America?

IDEAL AUDIENCE

This inquiry lesson is meant to target a 10th grade American History class. This inquiry lesson requires students to think critically about complicated issues such as discrimination of people based on their sex. The lesson is designed to draw upon the student's ability to critically think about the data they analyze and to compile it into a supported or undermined hypothesis. With modification the lesson could be used in an 8th, 9th, 11th, or 12th grade class.

RATIONALE

An inquiry lesson on why and how Women finally attained the Vote in the United States of America is important because gender inequality still currently exists in some form in this country and around the world. My job as a teacher is most importantly formed around making a conducive environment for my students to become active, educated citizens. Understanding a part of history where discrimination existed based on an individual's sex/gender is valuable in combatting current and future gender discrimination in the U.S. and around the world. This lesson provides the opportunity for students to learn how our U.S. legislative bodies work, and how average citizens can hold them accountable. This inquiry topic will challenge students to use critical thinking skills through analyzing primary and secondary source documents. This lesson is designed to introduce students to the arguments for and against women's suffrage found in primary source documents. It is designed to help students understand how the rights of Americans have expanded since the Constitution was ratified. An inquiry lesson plan is such a powerful tool to use because it relates strongly with what the definition of social studies is. An inquiry lesson facilitates large amounts of discussion to enhance interpersonal communication skills. It gives every student the opportunity to participate individually; in addition, all students will be expected to contribute to small group, and whole-class discussions. Also, an inquiry lesson plan requires that students are able to analyze and interpret data, then use their interpretations

in order to create their own hypotheses. After the students have created their own hypotheses, they will be asked to use critical-thinking skills in order to defend them.

OBJECTIVES

- Knowledge: Students will analyze women's suffrage history and liberation, students will analyze how multiple suffrage groups cooperated and disagreed evaluating the different interpretations.
- Students will understand that women gained the right to vote despite great opposition.
- Demonstrate critical thinking skills; develop writing and research skills, and group work skills.
- Students will gain a respect for the different perspectives on gender roles in U.S. society and an understanding of the need for gender equality.

PRIMARY WISCONSIN MODEL ACADEMIC STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- B.12.1 Explain different points of view on the same historical event, using data gathered from various sources, such as letters, journals, diaries, newspapers, government documents, and speeches
- B.12.2 Analyze primary and secondary sources related to a historical question to evaluate their relevance, make comparisons, integrate new information with prior knowledge, and come to a reasoned conclusion
- B.12.3 Recall, select, and analyze significant historical periods and the relationships among them
- B.12.5 Gather various types of historical evidence, including visual and quantitative data, to analyze issues of freedom and equality, liberty and order, region and nation, individual and community, law and conscience, diversity and civic duty; form a reasoned conclusion in the light of other possible conclusions; and develop a coherent argument in the light of other possible arguments
- B.12.10 Select instances of scientific, intellectual, and religious change in various regions of the world at different times in history and discuss the impact those changes had on beliefs and values

SECONDARY WISCONSIN MODEL ACADEMIC STANDARDS ADDRESSED

- C.12.13 Explain and analyze how different political and social movements have sought to mobilize public opinion and obtain governmental support in order to achieve their goals.
- C.12.15 Describe the evolution of movements to assert rights by people with disabilities, ethnic and racial groups, minorities, and women.
- E.12.12 Explain current and past efforts of groups and institutions to eliminate prejudice and discrimination against racial, ethnic, religious, and social groups such as women, children, the elderly, and individuals who are disabled

TIME

The time needed to implement this inquiry lesson is a minimum of five 50-minute class periods. This specified time is necessary so that students may have the adequate time to read, analyze, discuss, and review all of the data sets. This is also necessary so that the students are allotted adequate time to read any background material and to properly create and evaluate potential hypothesis for the inquiry lesson.

MATERIALS

- Copies of the *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet* for each student
- Copies of data set packets for each student
- Guiding question handouts for each student
- Computers for students with internet access
- Internet Sites:
 - <http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/world/2011/09/26/jamjoom-saudi-women-vote.cnn>
 - <http://www.nwlc.org/press-release/fact-check-women-earn-77-cents-every-dollar-men-earn-says-national-womens-law-center>
- Video Projector
- Overhead Projector
- Chalkboard or Dry-Erase board
- Chalk or Dry-Erase markers
- Pens or Pencils for students
- Printer
- Printer Ink

INQUIRY LESSON PROCEDURE

ENGAGEMENT – LESSON DAY 1

Teacher Notes: The Seneca Falls Convention was an early and influential women's rights convention, the first to be organized by women in the Western world, in Seneca Falls, New York.. The meeting spanned two days, 19 and 20 July 1848, and had six sessions, included a lecture on law, a humorous presentation, and multiple discussions about the role of women in society. Stanton and the Quaker women presented two prepared documents, the Declaration of Sentiments and an accompanying list of resolutions, to be debated and modified before being put forward for signatures. A heated debate sprang up regarding women's right to vote, with many including Mott urging the removal of this concept, but Frederick Douglass argued eloquently for its inclusion, and the suffrage resolution was retained. Exactly 100 of approximately 300 attendees signed the document, mostly women.

Engagement Activity and Procedures: Cookies vs. Candy bars! The point of this activity is to conditions student's into what it might feel like to have choices made for you or denied of you for no logical seeming reason. – 5minutes

- Divide the class into two groups standing on either side of the classroom. You will then explain to the classroom that group A will be voting on whether they would like to have cookies or candy bars as a treat and explain the group b will not be given the choice to vote. You will then ask group A to take a vote on the treat decision.
- After getting the tally of the more desired treat have the whole class sit down, and pass out the desired treat to the entire class.
- It is apparent that group B was never asked what their choice might have been.
- Ask students in group B, although they still received a treat, how they felt about not even getting the chance to voice their opinion through the vote? Alternately, you could ask group A - if knowing that group B was not going to get a vote, did it make an impact on their decision?

Step 1: After the engagement activity, hand out a copy of DATA SET 1 - Declaration of Sentiments. Lecture on what the purpose of Seneca Falls Convention was, and its importance. (5 minutes)

Step 2: Pass out the question sheet for the Declaration of Sentiments Assign students into groups of 3-4. Ask students to read the first 2 paragraphs of the declaration of sentiments. As a group they need to discuss and write down their group answers to the questions on the handout. (20 minutes)

Step 3: As a class briefly discuss their answers to the questions. (10 minutes)

Step 4: hand out the Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet, and based off today's class readings and activities have students come up with potential hypothesis to the question: How did women finally gain the right to vote in the United States of America?

LESSON DAY 2

Teacher Notes: When Wisconsin gained statehood in 1848, there was little popular support for women's right to vote. Only a few reformers, such as Warren Chase, spoke out for suffrage at the two constitutional conventions, and it was never seriously considered. Bills to grant women full suffrage were introduced in 1855 and 1867 but both failed. The Wisconsin Women's Suffrage Association (WWSA) was formed in 1869 to begin an organized suffrage campaign, and in the same year the state legislature passed a law allowing women to run for school boards and other school offices. Following this partial success, the WWSA began an all-out suffrage campaign in the legislature in 1884. Elected officials, however, repeatedly refused to let voters consider the question. In 1911, a statewide referendum on suffrage was finally held, and Wisconsin voters - - all men, of course - - voted it down by a margin of 63 to 37 percent.

In 1913, the legislature authorized another referendum but Governor Francis McGovern vetoed the bill, and two years later a more conservative legislature rejected yet another bill that would have let people vote on the issue in a referendum. Concluding that the state legislature was never going to help the

suffrage cause in Wisconsin, WWSA leaders devoted their time and energy to the national campaign. Most of Wisconsin's congressmen were sympathetic to a federal women's suffrage amendment to the U.S. Constitution, which finally passed in 1919. Bowing to what it now regarded as inevitable, the Wisconsin legislature ratified the U.S. constitutional amendment giving women the right to vote in federal elections. But an effort to extend suffrage to state elections failed, and Wisconsin women did not gain the right to vote in state elections until the state constitution was finally amended in 1934.

Procedures: Ask students to pull out their *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet*. As a class ask if there are any more potential hypothesis they think they would like to ask before beginning today's lesson?

Step 1: Hand out DATA SETS 2 and 3, and the Guiding questions handout. (2 minutes)

Step 2: Have Students individually read both Data Sets. (20 minutes)

Step 3: After Students have read the sheets as a class go over the Guiding Questions Handout and answer the questions. (15 minutes)

Step 4: Using today's handouts and the answers to the guiding questions, ask the class to once again bring out their *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet*, and to see if their current hypothesis have been supported, or undermined; or if new hypothesis can be created? (20 minutes)

LESSON DAY 3

Teacher Notes: The decades between 1890 and 1920 constituted a period of such vital reform activity that historians have dubbed them "the Progressive era." In this age, millions of Americans organized in voluntary associations to devise solutions to the myriad problems created by industrialization, urbanization, and immigration.

One especially remarkable aspect of progressivism was the full participation of American women. Denied the vote through most of the period, women nevertheless exercised what they saw as their rights as citizens to shape public policy and create public institutions. Acting through such organizations as the Young Women's Christian Association, the National Consumers' League, professional associations, and trade unions, female reformers were at the forefront of the movement against child labor as well as the women's suffrage campaign. They won minimum wage and maximum hours laws for women workers, public health programs for pregnant women and babies, improved educational opportunities for both children and adults, and an array of social welfare measures at the local, state, and federal levels. They even succeeded in creating the Children's Bureau (1912) and the Women's Bureau (1920) in the federal Department of Labor. All in all, women's activism created a more intimate relationship between citizens and their government and laid part of the foundation for the welfare state that would take definitive shape during Franklin Roosevelt's presidency in the 1930s.

One institution that epitomized women's activism was the settlement house. Some American women--mostly middle-class and unusually well-educated--started opening settlements right around 1890. Settlement houses were places where middle-class women (and sometimes men) went to live in working-class, usually immigrant, and neighborhoods. Here, native-born women sought to acquaint their neighbors with "American" culture and government and to learn about the cultures of the newest

Americans. Over time, the hundreds of settlements that opened in cities all over the country routinely offered day care and kindergartens for the children of working parents, health care, English and citizenship classes, a space for Community Theater, all kinds of classes and clubs for children and adults, libraries, and organizational space for unions and political associations. As you will see in the upcoming itinerary, settlements like Lillian Wald's Henry Street Settlement in New York City became hotbeds of progressive reform. Indeed, one historian has referred to them as "spearheads for reform."

National Association Opposed to Woman Suffrage (NAOWS), organization formed in New York City in 1911 during a convention of state antisuffrage groups. Led by Josephine Dodge, the founder and first president, the NAOWS believed that woman suffrage would decrease women's work in communities and their ability to effect societal reforms. Active on a state and federal level, the group also established a newsletter, Woman's Protest (reorganized as Woman Patriot in 1918), that was a bellwether of antisuffrage opinion. In 1918 the NAOWS moved its headquarters to Washington, D.C., where it operated until its disbandment following the passage of the Nineteenth Amendment in 1920. Woman Patriot continued to be published through the 1920s, generally opposing the work of feminists and liberal women's groups.

Procedures: Ask Students to bring out their *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet*.

Step 1: Ask the class if they believed that all women supported Suffrage? And ask them why they think some women would support it and others would not? Have Class discussion. (10 minutes)

Step 2: Bring DATA SET – 4 on the projector and explain who the NAOWS are (reference in the teacher notes) and that this is their booth. Then ask them to explain if this modifies their opinions? (5 minutes)

Step 3: Hand out DATA SET – 5 and 6. While doing this briefly lecture/explain about the progressive movement, suffrage movement and NAOWS from the teacher notes. (10 minutes)

Step 4: Students will get into groups of 3-4, and will read the two data sets. They will be given a Guiding questions worksheet that will be started today, as a group, but not finished until after the next lesson. These two handouts will help them get started. (15 minutes)

Step 5: Review the *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet*, and ask how this supports or undermines our current class hypothesis.

LESSON DAY 4

Procedures: Ask students to bring out their Guiding Questions Worksheet and *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet*.

Step 1: Pass out DATA SETS – 7 and 8 (2 minutes)

Step 2: Students may return to their previous day's groups of 3 – 4. They are to review the two new DATA SETS and to finish the Guiding Questions Worksheet. (35 minutes)

Step 3: Ask students to identify some of their answers from the worksheet, and what they have started on their paragraphs from the worksheet and discuss as a class. (5 -7 minutes)

Step 4: Review *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet* and how today's new evidence supports or undermines current class hypothesis.

LESSON DAY 5

Engagement Activity and Procedures: Bring following website DATA SET – 9 up on projector: <http://www.buzzfeed.com/gavon/anti-suffrage-propoganda> go through each image on the web site. You will need to write two questions on the board: What is this image supposed to convey? How does this image represent the home life of a woman or how she is apparently abandoning it? Review the first five images and students will do this without talking. (15 minutes)

Step 1: As a class discuss the analysis of a few of the images (10 minutes)

Step 2: Ask Class if they think that all men were against Suffrage during the progressive era and let a few students answer the questions? (5 minutes)

Step 3: Bring DATA SET – 10 and 12 up on the computers and have students discuss what they think of the opposing 2 sets? Listen to their answers to make sure that they understand the images. (5 minutes)

Step 4: Pass out Max Eastman Excerpt have them read the first two paragraphs and instruct them they can read the rest at home and it is helpful for their Assessment. (5 minutes)

Step 5: Ask Students to bring out their *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking Sheet* and to discuss the remaining hypothesis, if they are supported or undermined. Pass out Final Assessment worksheet, rubric, and explain the assessment and/or answer any questions regarding it. (10 minutes)

DISCONFIRMING EVIDENCE

Teacher Notes: Although Suffrage cannot be disconfirmed and throughout the process supported and undermined evidence has been presented this make for a great opportunity for students to make a connection about suffrage beyond the classroom. Ask Students what they think about Suffrage worldwide? Do they think it is universal? Do you think sex discrimination such as Suffrage still exists in the U.S. and/or around the world? Then play the following video and read the following segment:

- <http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/world/2011/09/26/jamjoom-saudi-women-vote.cnn>
- <http://www.nwlc.org/press-release/fact-check-women-earn-77-cents-every-dollar-men-earn-says-national-womens-law-center>

ASSESSMENT

In order to confirm that the students have achieved the objectives of this inquiry lesson, use the informal and formal assessments provided. To assess the students informally listen in on their group conversations during discussions. Pay attention to the number of students participating in the class

discussion, and the quality of the points they are bringing up and debating. For the formal assessment use the handouts accompanying the data sets, the *Hypothesis/Evidence Tracking sheet*, and their formal argumentation essays.

Editor’s Note: Only the following materials for this inquiry lesson are provided after this plan: DATA SET – 1, DATA SET – 2, DATA SET – 3, DATA SET – 5, DATA SET – 6, DATA SET 7, DATA SET – 11. The remaining DATA SETS are found at the following web sites:

DATA SET – 4 <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a26270/>

DATA SET – 9 <http://www.buzzfeed.com/gavon/anti-suffrage-propoganda>

DATA SET – 10 <http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.mss/mnwp.159004>

DATA SET – 12 <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/resource/cph.3a39313/>

DISCONFIRMING EVIDENCE

- o <http://www.cnn.com/video/#/video/world/2011/09/26/jamjoom-saudi-women-vote.cnn>
- o <http://www.nwlc.org/press-release/fact-check-women-earn-77-cents-every-dollar-men-earn-says-national-womens-law-center>

INQUIRY LESSON REFLECTION

This lesson has information, data sets, and conversations that rank between that of 8th grade and 12th grade. The inquiry lesson falls in between the Wisconsin Model Academic Standards for Social Studies between 8th and 12th grade hence the grade level chosen for the lesson to be implemented in. The lesson could improve on a wider range of data sets that come in from scholarly journals, and personal diaries. I have learned that a lot goes into lesson planning. On many an occasion I have thought it would only take a couple of days but it took well over two weeks of researching and modification to get this lesson in its final stage and I wish I had more time to make it much better. This was great experience, and has given me better insight into the career of teaching.

POWERFUL AND AUTHENTIC SOCIAL STUDIES (PASS)

PASS STANDARD 1: HIGHER ORDER THINKING	Score: 4
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This lesson should meet *PASS Standard 1* by requiring students to be engaged in higher order thinking. This lesson requires students to manipulate information and ideas in ways that transform their meaning, they do this through their final assessment when they are required to choose a hypothesis and use the data given in class to support or undermine the hypothesis chosen. The students have to crucially analyze data and engage in substantive conversation regarding their interpretation of the data. This lesson received a score at 4 because higher order thinking is not required for every portion of the lesson. It is mostly required in their summative assessment.

PASS STANDARD 11: DEEP KNOWLEDGE**Score: 5**

In this lesson deep the instruction addresses the central ideas supporting and undermining the Women's Suffrage movement in the United State of America. Students not only receive a review on the broad concepts of the Suffrage movement throughout the lesson, they will get to explore in considerable detail the specific perspectives of individuals and groups within he suffrage movement and their interconnectedness and relationships. In this lesson the students sustain a focus on a significant topic, suffrage; demonstrate their understanding of the problematic nature of information and ideas through class and group discussion; and demonstrate their complex understanding by arriving at a reasoned, supported conclusion through their final assessment.

PASS STANDARD III: SUBSTANTIVE CONVERSATION**Score: 5**

Substantive conversation is seen throughout the entire inquiry lesson. Every day throughout the lesson students are either meeting in groups to discuss or are have class conversations about the topic. Students will get to discuss their opinions regarding the data sets and class information so the student have the option of going in many directions regarding the topic without too many limitations imposed by the teacher. The teacher is present to serve as the guide for the topic discussions. As a result of the substantive conversations students will enrich their understanding of the topic, data sets, and inquiry question.

PASS STANDARD IV: CONNECTIONS BEYOND THE CLASS**Score: 3**

This inquiry lesson is not strong in making connections beyond the classroom. It does study a topic that students are connecting to their personal experiences, such as being discriminated against for not logical reason. Towards the end of the lesson there is brief discussion of women's suffrage status worldwide and forms of gender discrimination still present in the U.S.

PASS STANDARD V: ETHICAL VALUING**Score: 5**

This inquiry lesson is strong in eliciting personal reactions from students in regards to the right or wrong of denying women suffrage. Several positions on suffrage are presented; supporting and opposing. Every day of the lesson students are discussing the views supporting and/or challenging women's suffrage in the U.S. during the progressive era.

PASS STANDARD VI: INTEGRATION**Score: 3**

This inquiry lesson integrates history, political science, and to a lesser degree the behavioral sciences. These integrations are more implicit than explicit therefore this affects the score given. The lesson focuses on two types of integration, each which enhances the social understanding and civic efficacy of the students receiving the lesson.

DATA SET - 1

Seneca Falls Convention - American Memory Timeline- Classroom Presentations and Activities... <http://www.loc.gov/teachers/classroommaterials/presentationsandactivities...>

Library of Congress Teachers

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National Expansion and Reform, 1815-1880

Reformers and Crusaders

Seneca Falls Convention, July 1848

In 1848, a convention to discuss the social, civil, and religious conditions and rights of women was convened in Seneca Falls, New York. The convention was organized and run by women who later became influential in the women's suffrage movement. In the Declaration of Sentiments, which is excerpted below, the organizers demanded government reform and changes in male roles and behaviors that promoted inequality for women. From what document in U.S. history was wording for the first two paragraphs of the Declaration of Sentiments taken? How would you summarize the ways the organizers believed men exercised tyranny over women? Who is the "he" described in the various declarations?

View the [entire document](#) from which this excerpt came, from [Votes for Women, 1848-1921](#). Use your browser's Back Button to return to this point.

DECLARATION OF SENTIMENTS.

When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights, that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they were accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men - both natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right of a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

He has made her, morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master - the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.

He has so framed the laws of divorce, as to what shall be the proper causes of divorce; in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given; as to be wholly regardless of the happiness of women - the law, in all cases, going upon a false supposition of the supremacy of man, and giving all power into his hands.

After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration.

He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction, which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education - all colleges being closed against her.

He allows her in Church, as well as State, but a subordinate position, claiming Apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the Church.

He has created a false public sentiment, by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral delinquencies which exclude women from society, are not only tolerated but deemed of little account in man.

He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and to her God.

He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

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View the [entire document](#) from which this excerpt came, from [Votes for Women, 1848-1921](#). Use your browser's Back Button to return to this point.

SUFFRAGE HYPOTHESES

Directions: It should make you glad to know that Women did eventually gain the right to vote but it happened over 70 years after the Seneca Falls Convention. I would like to consider our class discussion and make as many hypotheses as you can come up with for the question below.

How did women gain suffrage in the United States of America?

Hypotheses	Evidence (Supporting [+]; Undermining [-])

DATA SET - 2

http://www.wisconsinhistory.org/turningpoints/tp-032/?action=more_essay

The Woman's Suffrage Movement

On June 10, 1919, Wisconsin became the first state to ratify the 19th amendment granting national suffrage to women. From 1846 to 1919, different groups of women's rights supporters had focused much of their energy on winning the vote, though each pursued different strategies. Although Wisconsin had not been completely unenlightened in its approach to women's legal rights (the rejected 1846 constitution would have given married women property rights), neither had it been on the forefront of the cause. Just seven years before the 19th amendment passed, a statewide referendum on suffrage had met with a resounding two-to-one defeat, so it was in some ways unusual that Wisconsin was the first to ratify federal woman suffrage.

When Wisconsin gained its statehood in 1848, there was little popular support for woman suffrage in Wisconsin. Only a few reformers, such as Warren Chase, spoke out for suffrage at the two constitutional conventions, and it was never seriously considered. Bills to grant women full suffrage were introduced in 1855 and 1867 but both failed.

Women's rights groups began to form in Wisconsin for the first time in the late 1860s. Focusing primarily on temperance and suffrage, these groups also criticized the state of women's property rights, which continued to be interpreted narrowly by courts leery of setting legal precedents that might prompt litigation between husbands and wives. The Wisconsin Women's Suffrage Association (WWSA) was formed in 1869 to begin an organized suffrage campaign. Besides facing the objections made everywhere to women's political equality, many suffrage activists in Wisconsin were also leaders in the temperance movement, which generated hostility from the state's powerful brewing industry and from German Americans.

The heavy involvement of women in the movement to improve public schools, which seemed acceptable to many male policy-makers, gave them some success with suffrage. In 1869, the state legislature passed a law allowing women to run for school boards and other elective school offices. Neighboring states began allowing women to vote in elections related to school and temperance issues in the 1870s. Following their success in gaining women's right to run for local school boards, the WWSA began an all-out suffrage campaign in the legislature in 1884. The legislature refused to consider full suffrage but gave women the right to vote at any election "pertaining to school matters." Many suffrage leaders feared that if school board candidates appeared on a general ballot alongside other offices (rather than on a separate school ballot), women would not be allowed to vote at all -- a fear that was confirmed in the spring elections of 1887.

In many parts of the state that spring, women's ballots were accepted without question, but in Racine, the ballot of WWSA leader Olympia Brown was rejected. Casting her vote for municipal offices on the basis that they, too, affected local schools, Brown sued to force local officials to accept her ballot. Circuit Judge John Winslow agreed with Brown but the state Supreme Court reversed the decision in *Brown v. Phillips* (1888), contending that doing so would give women the right to vote for all offices which was not what the legislature had originally intended. The court also held that women could not use ballots that included any offices other than school offices, since there was no way to verify that women had only voted for school offices on a system of secret ballots. The court ruled that candidates for school offices would have to be listed on a separate ballot, and the legislature then refused to provide the power to local governments to do this, effectively nullifying the school suffrage law of 1869.

The first wave of the suffrage movement had advocated radical rather than gradual change. By the 1890s, a new generation of suffrage activists began to work for more incremental reforms. Led by Theodora Winton Youmans of Waukesha and Ada James of Richland Center, women's rights advocates began relying heavily on women's clubs to promote suffrage as just one part of a broader platform of civic reforms. The WWSA gave way to the Wisconsin Federation of Women's Clubs (WFWC) as the leader in the campaign for women's rights.

These new reformers concentrated on two short-term goals: placing more women in influential state government positions and making the school suffrage law actually work. In 1901, the legislature finally authorized separate school ballots, enabling women to vote for school offices. Governor Robert La Follette, whose wife Belle was an attorney active in the women's movement, advanced the second goal by appointing women to state boards and commissions. He also helped pass laws that ensured that women would always have positions on some state boards.

In 1911, Ada James enlisted the support of her father, a state senator, in the cause of full suffrage. Senator David James and the WFWC successfully lobbied the legislature to authorize a statewide referendum on suffrage, an issue that attracted much support but also powerful opposition. When the referendum was held, Wisconsin men voted suffrage down by a margin of 63 to 37 percent. The referendum's defeat could be traced to multiple causes, but the two most widely cited reasons were the schisms within the women's movement itself and the perceived link between suffragists and temperance that antagonized so many German Americans.

The years after the 1912 referendum remained difficult for suffrage activists. In 1913, the WFWC merged with the WWSA, continuing the campaign for suffrage as a new organization. The legislature authorized another referendum that same year, but Governor Francis McGovern vetoed the bill. Two years later, in 1915, a more conservative legislature rejected yet another referendum bill and dealt an even bigger blow to the movement by eliminating elective boards of education. This wiped out many elective school board positions gained by women since first being allowed to run in 1869.

Concluding that the state legislature was never going to help the suffrage cause in Wisconsin, the WWSA leaders decided to devote their time and energy to the national campaign. Most of Wisconsin's congressmen were sympathetic to a federal woman suffrage amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and it finally passed in 1919. Bowing to what it now regarded as inevitable, the Wisconsin legislature ratified the amendment giving women the right to vote in federal elections; the Wisconsin constitution was not amended until 1934. Soon after winning the vote, women organized the League of Women Voters to encourage use of the ballot and to direct it toward goals that the League believed desirable.

[Source: The History of Wisconsin vol. 3 and 4 (Madison: State Historical Society of Wisconsin); Kasperek, Jon, Bobbie Malone and Erica Schock. Wisconsin History Highlights: Delving into the Past (Madison: Wisconsin Historical Society Press, 2004); McBride, Genevieve. On Wisconsin Women (Madison: University of Wisconsin Press, 1993)]

DATA SET - 3

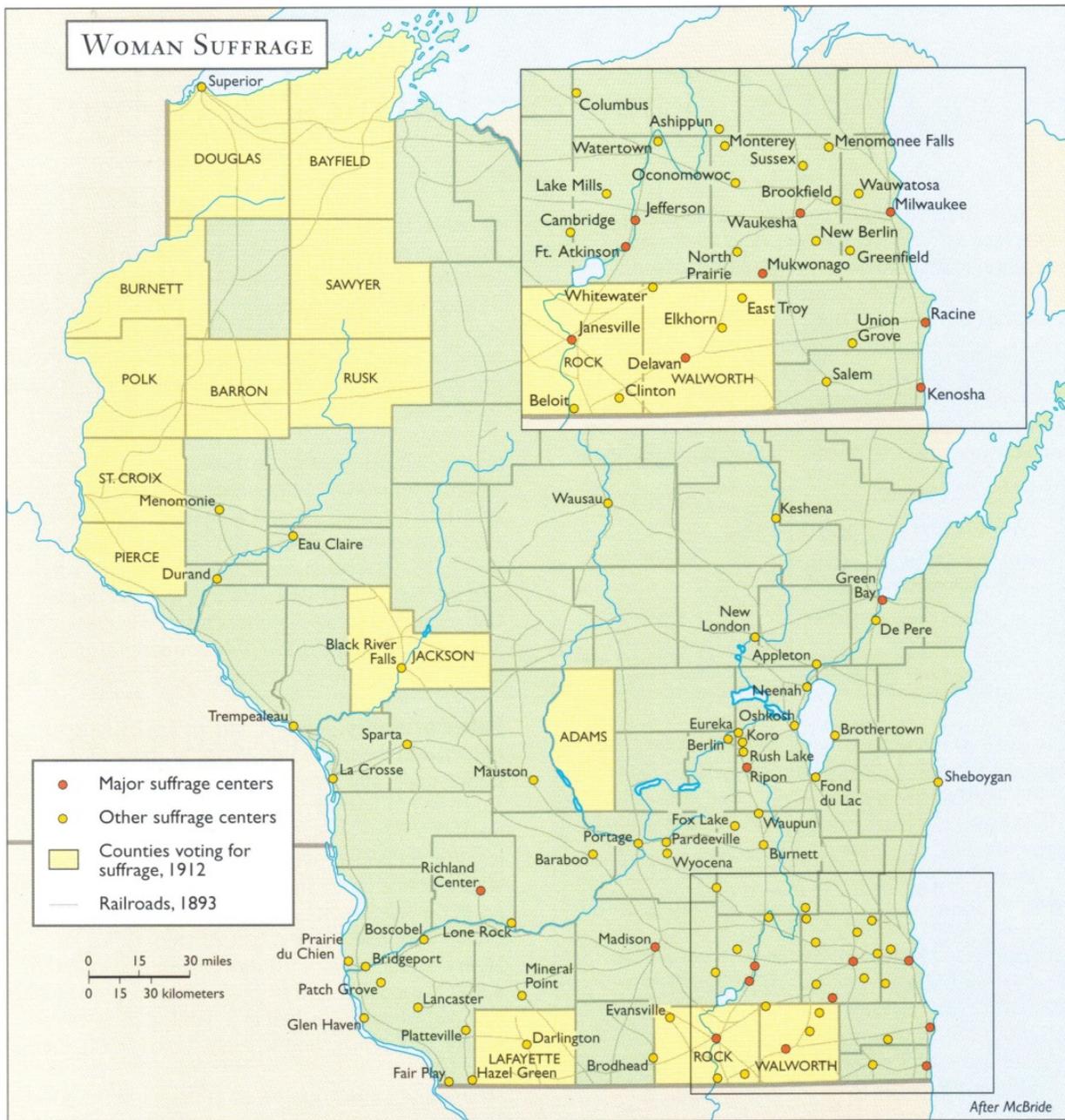
Map Detail: In a statewide referendum on November 4, 1912, male voters opposed woman suffrage by a margin of 63 percent to 37 percent. On the same day, four other states backed suffrage. Most of the 14 countries that backed suffrage were in the north, where relatively fewer women lived. Wisconsin granted women the full right to vote seven years later when the legislature ratified the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution.¹

Woman Suffrage. Public Sentiment grew very slowly in Wisconsin for woman *suffrage* (the right to vote). Throughout the 19th century, Wisconsin did not permit women to vote in state elections. Although the Assembly backed suffrage in an 1867 resolution, it was not upheld by the next legislature. In 1869, suffragist leaders Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton visited the state to help organize the Wisconsin Woman's Suffrage Association. Milwaukee physician Laura Ross Wolcott led the group through years of legislative efforts. The cause was joined by reformers Bell Case La Follette (see Progressives), Zona Gale (see Cultural Figures), the Reverend Olympia Brown (the first ordained female minister in Wisconsin), Carrie Chapman Catt (later a founder of the League of Women Voters), Ada L. James, and many others around the state (see map on facing page). Finally the recognition of women's contributions to the war effort in World War I increased support for suffrage. Congress granted suffrage by passing the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution, and sent it for ratification to the states, which raced to vote on it. On June 10, 1919, Wisconsin became the first state to ratify the amendment, notifying Congress only minutes before Illinois did. Considering Wisconsin's previous stance on suffrage, some were surprised that the state had taken the lead on the amendment.²

¹ Wisconsin's Cartographers Guild. Wisconsin's Past and Present: A Historical Atlas. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998

² Wisconsin's Cartographers Guild. Wisconsin's Past and Present: A Historical Atlas. Madison: The University of Wisconsin Press, 1998

DATA SET – 3 CONTINUED



PETITION

From the Women Voters Anti-Suffrage Party of New York TO THE UNITED STATES SENATE

Whereas, This country is now engaged in the greatest war in history, and
Whereas, The advocates of the Federal Amendment, though urging it as a war measure, announce, through their president, Mrs. Catt, that its passage "means a simultaneous campaign in 48 States. It demands organization in every precinct; activity, agitation, education in every corner. Nothing less than this nation-wide, vigilant, unceasing campaign will win the ratification," therefore be it
Resolved, That our country in this hour of peril should be spared the harassing of its public men and the distracting of its people from work for the war, and further
Resolved, That the United States Senate be respectfully urged to pass no measure involving such a radical change in our government while the attention of the patriotic portion of the American people is concentrated on the all-important task of winning the war, and during the absence of over a million men abroad.

NAME	ADDRESS	SERVICE
Jean M. A. Staples	528 Richmond Ave.	National League for Woman's Service
Mrs. G. K. Staples	528 Richmond Ave.	
Betty A. Feely	200 Niagara St.	National League for Women's Service
Mable Spawton	410 Hoyt St	"
Emma Burris	1698 Main St	National League for Woman's Service
Ruth L. Staples	528 Richmond Ave.	Govt Service
Mrs. W. C. Wood	75 Hampshire St.	Director of Aircraft Production
Elizabeth Cohen	426 Wilson St.	Red Cross
Edlyn Cantor	215 Hickory	Red Cross
Mrs. F. L. Tucker	168 Delaware Ave	
Bessie Murtough	215 Northland Ave	Red Cross
Mrs. Frances Drummond	39 Bennett St.	Red Cross
Mrs. Lou Jackson	424 Jefferson St	
Mrs. L. Licht	424 Jefferson St	
Helene Stern	195 Blenheim St	
Mrs. W. C. Stern	" " "	
Ethel Stearns	" " "	

Some Reasons Why We Oppose Votes for Women

Because the basis of government is force—its stability rests upon its physical power to enforce its laws; therefore it is inexpedient to give the vote to women. Immunity from service in executing the law would make most women irresponsible voters.

Because the suffrage is not a question of right or of justice, but of policy and expediency; and if there is no question of right or of justice, there is no case for woman suffrage.

BECAUSE IT IS THE DEMAND OF A MINORITY OF WOMEN, AND THE MAJORITY OF WOMEN PROTEST AGAINST IT.

Because it means simply doubling the vote, and especially the undesirable and corrupt vote of our large cities.

Because the great advance of women in the last century—moral, intellectual and economic—has been made without the vote; which goes to prove that it is not needed for their further advancement along the same lines.

Because women now stand outside of politics, and therefore are free to appeal to any party in matters of education, charity and reform.

Because the ballot has not proved a cure-all for existing evils with men, and we find no reason to assume that it would be more effectual with women.

Because the woman suffrage movement is a backward step in the progress of civilization, in that it seeks to efface natural differentiation of function, and to produce identity, instead of division of labor.

Because in Colorado after a test of seventeen years the results show no gain in public and political morals over male suffrage States, and the necessary increase in the cost of elections which is already a huge burden upon the taxpayer, is unjustified.

Because our present duties fill up the whole measure of our time and ability, and are such as none but ourselves can perform. Our appreciation of their importance requires us to protest against all efforts to infringe upon our rights by imposing upon us those obligations which cannot be separated from suffrage, but which, as we think, cannot be performed by us without the sacrifice of the highest interests of our families and of society.

Because it is our fathers, brothers, husbands and sons who represent us at the ballot-box. Our fathers and our brothers love us; our husbands are our choice, and one with us; our sons are what WE MAKE THEM. We are content that they represent US in the corn-field, on the battle-field, and at the ballot-box, and we THEM in the school-room, at the fireside, and at the cradle, believing our representation even at the ballot-box to be thus more full and impartial than it would be were the views of the few who wish suffrage adopted, contrary to the judgment of the many.

We do, therefore, respectfully protest against the proposed Amendment to establish "woman suffrage" in our State. We believe that political equality will deprive us of special privileges hitherto accorded to us by law.

Our association has been formed for the purpose of conducting a purely educational campaign. If you are in sympathy with this aim and believe as we do in the righteousness of our cause, will you not send your name to us and pass our appeal on to some one else?

NATIONAL ASSOCIATION OPPOSED TO WOMAN SUFFRAGE,

35 West 39th St., New York City.

JUSTICE

EQUALITY

Why Women Want to Vote.

WOMEN ARE CITIZENS,

AND WISH TO DO THEIR CIVIC DUTY.

WORKING WOMEN need the ballot to regulate conditions under which they work.
Do working men think they can protect themselves without the right to vote?

HOUSEKEEPERS need the ballot to regulate the sanitary conditions under which they and their families must live.
Do MEN think they can get what is needed for their district unless they can vote for the men that will get it for them?

MOTHERS need the ballot to regulate the moral conditions under which their children must be brought up.
Do MEN think they can fight against vicious conditions that are threatening their children unless they can vote for the men that run the district?

TEACHERS need the ballot to secure just wages and to influence the management of the public schools.
Do MEN think they could secure better school conditions without a vote to elect the Mayor who nominates the Board of Education?

BUSINESS WOMEN need the ballot to secure for themselves a fair opportunity in their business.
Do business MEN think they could protect themselves against adverse legislation without the right to vote?

TAX PAYING WOMEN need the ballot to protect their property.
Do not MEN know that "Taxation without representation" is tyranny?

ALL WOMEN need the ballot, because they are concerned equally with men in good and bad government; and equally responsible for civic righteousness.

ALL MEN need women's help to build a better and juster government, and
WOMEN need MEN to help them secure their right to fulfil their civic duties.



National American Woman Suffrage Association

Headquarters: 505 FIFTH AVENUE, NEW YORK

GUIDING QUESTIONS: DO YOU THINK ALL WOMEN SUPPORTED SUFFRAGE?

Directions: Read *Some Reasons Why We Oppose Votes for Women* and *Why Women Want to vote*. For each reading make a list of the reasons why suffrage was opposed or supported. After making your list, compare and contrast the two side's reasons and then write 2-3 paragraphs describing which ad you might have been persuaded to believe supporting your reason with evidence from the readings.

DATA SET – 11

Max Eastman

Confession of a Suffrage Orator (Excerpt)

Published: The Masses, November 1915

Transcribed: Sally Ryan for marxists.org in 2000

<http://www.marxists.org/history/etol/writers/eastman/works/1910s/suffrage.htm>

It was never a question of making people believe in the benefits of women's freedom, it was a question of making them like the idea. And all the abstract arguments in the world furnished merely a sort of auction ground upon which the kindly beauties of the thing could be exhibited. Aristotle, in his hopeful way, defined man as a "reasonable animal," and the schools have been laboring under that delusion ever since. But man is a voluntary animal, and he knows what he likes and what he dislikes, and that is the greater part of his knowledge. Especially is this true of his opinion upon questions involving sex, because in these matters his native taste is so strong. He will have a multitude of theories and abstract reasons surrounding it, but these are merely put on for the sake of gentility, the way clothes are. Most cultivated people think there is something indecent about a naked preference. I believe, however, that propagandists would fare better, if they were boldly aware that they are always moulding wishes rather than opinions.

There is something almost ludicrous about the attitude of a professional propagandist to his kit of arguments—and in the suffrage movement especially, because the arguments are so many and so old, and so classed and codified, and many of them so false and foolish too. I remember that during the palmiest days of the abstract argument (before California came in and spoiled everything with a big concrete example) I was engaged in teaching, or endeavoring to teach, Logic to a division of Sophomores at Columbia. And there was brought to my attention at that time a book published for use in classes like mine, which contained a codification in logical categories of all the suffrage arguments, both pro and con, and a priori and a posteriori, and per accidents and per definition, that had ever been advanced since Socrates first advocated the strong-minded woman as a form of moral discipline for her husband. I never found in all my platform wanderings but one suffrage argument that was not in this book, and that I discovered on the lips of an historical native of Troy, New York. It was a woman, she said, who first invented the detachable linen collar, that well-known device for saving a man the trouble of changing his shirt, and though that particular woman is probably dead, her sex remains with its pristine enthusiasm for culture and progress.

But the day of the captious logician, like the day of the roaring orator, is past. What our times respond to is the propagandist who knows how to respect the wishes of other people, and yet show them in a sympathetic way that there is more fun for them, as well as for humanity in general, in the new direction. Give them an hour's exercise in liking something else—that is worth all the proofs and

refutations in the world. Take that famous proposition that “womans sphere is the home.” A canvass was made at a women’s college a while ago to learn the reasons for opposing woman suffrage, and no new ones were found, but among them all this dear old saying had such an overwhelming majority that it amounted to a discovery. It is the eternal type. And how easy to answer, if you grab it crudely with your intellect, imagining it to be an opinion.

“Woman’s sphere is the home!” you cry. “Do you know that according to the census of 1910 more than one woman in every five in this country is engaged in gainful employment?”

“Woman’s sphere is the home! Do you know where your soap comes from?”

“Woman’s sphere is the home!—do you know that in fifty years all the work that women used to do within the four walls of her house has moved out into the —

“Woman’s sphere is the home! Do you know that, as a simple matter of fact, the sphere of those women who most need the protection of the government and the laws is not home but the factory and the market!

“Why, to say that woman’s sphere is the home after the census says it isn’t, is like saying the earth is flat after a hundred thousand people have sailed round it!”

Well—such an assault and battery of the intellect will probably silence the gentle idealist for a time, but it will not alter the direction of her will. She never intended to express a statistical opinion, and the next time you see her she will be telling somebody else—for she will not talk to you any more—that “woman’s proper sphere is the home.” In other words, and this is what she said the first time, if you only had the gift of understanding, “I like women whose sphere is the home. My husband likes them, too. And we should both be very unhappy if I had to go to work outside. It doesn’t seem charming or beautiful to us.”

Now there is a better way to win over a person with such a gift of strong volition and delicate feeling, than to jump down her throat with a satchel full of statistics. I think a propagandist who realized that here was an expression primarily of a human wish, and that these wishes, spontaneous, arbitrary, unreasoned, because reason itself is only their servant, are the divine and unanswerable thing in us all, would respond to her assertion more effectively, as well as more pleasantly.

FINAL HYPOTHESIS ASSESSMENT

Directions: Class for the last 5 classes we have learned about and worked on assignments about the Women's suffrage movement in the United States of America. Throughout this lesson we have constantly referenced our Hypotheses worksheet. After these lessons we have narrowed down our possible hypotheses to the question, *How did women gain suffrage in the United States of America?* Choose one of the remaining Hypotheses and type a 1-2 page double spaced paper supporting or undermining this hypothesis with the sources and websites we have accessed in class. I will expect you to cite your sources in your paper to support your argument.

HOW WOMEN ATTAINED SUFFRAGE INQUIRY LESSON FINAL ESSAY RUBRIC³

	Criteria					
	0	1	2	3	4	Score
Structure and Content	No Thesis, No closing paragraph	Thesis is unclear or disorganized, Closing paragraph is not connected to essay	Thesis is present but vague, closing paragraph present but vague	Thesis is clear and supported, well-written	Thesis is clear, consistent, and connects to opening paragraph and reasoned synthesis	
Support, Evidence, and Argument	No evidence from class materials, no interpretation of evidence	Very little evaluation of sources, Class Sources are referenced to lightly	Minimal evaluation of sources, Evidence is referenced minimally, thesis is supported	Substantial analysis of sources, Evidence is interpreted appropriately, Argument well supported	Thorough evaluation of class materials, evidence is thoughtfully interpreted, and integrated, Argument is obvious and supported	
Organization	Topic sentences are not present in paragraphs, incoherent, no transition sentences	Some body paragraphs have topic sentences, and transition sentences. Bad flow and organization	Paragraphs have topic sentences, and transitional sentences, essay is organized but lacks flow	All paragraphs have topic and transitional sentences, have reasoned flow and organization	All body paragraphs have topic and transition sentences, connected to central idea, essay is strong and organized.	
Mechanics and Grammar	Proper Grammar is disregarded in terms of punctuation, capitalization, and mechanics	The Essay is difficult to read, poor grammar and mechanics, some sources are cited or not cited correctly	Most vocab, grammar, punctuation is appropriate, with minor errors	Word Choice is appropriate, essay contains few grammatical, mechanical errors, most sources cited properly	Word choice is appropriate, essay mostly free of grammatical and mechanical errors, all sources are cited properly	
						/16

³ Dr. James Hartiwick, Professor Curriculum and Instruction, University of Wisconsin Whitewater, provided assistance and inspiration with the development of this rubric