

COMPARING WOMEN'S SUFFRAGE

Purpose

The experiences of women throughout history differ between regions and time periods. However, by using a historical investigation tool like comparison, we can view how women in history confronted similar challenges and common social expectations, regardless of place and time. By zooming in on the stories of women in specific societies, we can better understand the challenges women faced throughout history and continue to face in many parts of the world. You will question which groups get rights in our society, perhaps revealing who is included and excluded from our systems of government.

Practices

Contextualization, CCOT, writing

In this activity, you will examine the context in which women's roles were defined, and how women sought to challenge the traditional power structures in different regions. Additionally, you will need to identify how women's suffrage changed over time within the regions, why that change was possible, and how those changes inform women's roles in society today. Finally, you'll be writing thesis statements in response to two comparison prompts.

Process

In this activity, you will compare and contrast women's road to suffrage in two of the following six regions: New Zealand and Australia, Europe, Asia, North America, Latin America, and Africa.

First, your teacher will either hand out or have you download the Comparing Women's Suffrage Movements worksheet. With your class, review the questions that you are being asked to respond to in the Comparison Tool, included in the worksheet. This will ensure you're focusing on the right details when reading the article.

Then, individually read "A World Tour of Women's Suffrage." As you read, think about the most important similarities and differences in how women achieved suffrage across all of these regions. Once everyone's finished reading the article, your teacher will divide the class into pairs and assign each pair two regions from the article. You'll focus on these two regions and complete Part 1: Identifying and Describing of the Comparison Tool.

Once you and your partner have completed Part 1 of the tool, you'll work together on Part 2: Analyzing to write two thesis statements in response to the following prompts:

- *What is the most significant similarity when comparing how women achieved suffrage across these regions?*
- *What is the most significant difference when comparing how women achieved suffrage across these regions?*

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Remember that you can use the acronym ADE (amount, depth, and endurance) to help determine historical significance. Consider if these similarities and differences affected most people in these regions (amount); if people in these regions were deeply affected by these similarities and differences (depth); or if these similarities and differences were long lasting (endurance).

After you're finished writing your thesis statements, join with another pair of students to form a group of four. Share and discuss your thesis statements in your new group and build upon or revise your thesis statements based on these discussions.

Then, return to your seat and (working alone) write an exit slip on the back of your worksheet answering the following question (remember to support your answer with evidence from today's class):

- *To what extent are women's rights in the regions and periods you studied similar to women's rights in your nation today?*

Your teacher will collect your worksheets at the end of the activity to assess your understanding of the topic and this historical thinking practice.

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Part 1: Identifying and Describing

- 1. Write the topic of comparison at the top of the chart, and then add the cases you’re comparing and their associated time periods and locations.
- 2. Respond to the questions in the Part 1 chart for each case you’re comparing. Use the resources provided.
- 3. After responding to the questions for each case, identify and describe the similarities and differences between these cases.

Part 2: Analyzing

- 1. If you were going to write two essays about the similarities and/or differences you’ve identified for this topic, what are two thesis statements you might use? Write one thesis statement about similarities and one about differences.
- 2. If required, use your thesis statements to craft a response to the comparison prompt for this activity.

Topic of Comparison

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Part 1: Identifying and Describing

Cases You’re Comparing		
Time Period		
Location		

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Community <i>What obstacles did women face on the road to suffrage in this region?</i>		Similarities	
		Differences	
Networks <i>How did outside ideas or influences affect women's suffrage movements?</i>		Similarities	
		Differences	
Gender and Society <i>What connections can you make to the roles of women or minorities in your communities today?</i>		Similarities	
		Differences	

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Part 2: Analyzing

Thesis Statement 1: Similarities	
Thesis Statement 2: Differences	
Response	