

Lesson 2: Mary Church Terrell from Suffrage to Voter Suppression

Does hope triumph over despair?

Objective/Rationale <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Examine the history of voter suppression during the nineteenth and twentieth century.● Evaluate the reasons why Terrell fought for Black men and women to get the vote but particularly for Black women.● Analyze the motives whether or not the issues that Terrell faced in the 1800s are the same or similar to the ones many citizens are facing now.	
Materials <p>Links and or printouts, paper & pencil for students to take notes and or screens--depending on the classroom structure-online, hybrid or in person.</p> Suggested biography http://americanfeminisms.org/you-cant-keep-her-out-mary-church-terrells-fight-for-equality-in-america/	
Resource Links https://docs.google.com/document/d/1M0frbuenLyusw0H8CsYq4StSp7gyGj8qTky69Rhrf9w/edit?usp=sharing <ul style="list-style-type: none">● https://www.tolerance.org/projects/voting-and-voices/classroom-resources● https://people.howstuffworks.com/voter-suppression1.htm● https://t.co/SqPqIQb4tB https://twitter.com/AaronRHanlon/status/1321460351167352832?s=20● https://www.tolerance.org/magazine/the-civil-rights-act-of-1964-title-i-who-gets-to-vote (Primary documents)	
Essential Question: <p>Does voting matter?</p>	
Teacher/Facilitator <p>Directions: Teacher, please read and distribute the bio on Mary Church Terrell (use active reading strategies in accordance with your students levels and needs).</p> <p>Discuss: Terrell was a suffragist and Civil Rights activist in the late nineteenth century and early twentieth century. Terrell fought for Black men and women to get the vote but particularly for Black women--Black</p>	

men secured the right to vote first by way of the 15th Amendment in 1870. Women did not get the right to vote until the passage of the 19th Amendment in 1920.

QUESTIONS:

- What are the connections between the past and the present that the students can see?
- Why does this matter?
- What do they think Terrell would think if she could see what is happening today with the vote? Why?

Suggested Activities:

Note: This is a suggested list of activities which students can complete to explore this issue.

1. **Interactive vocabulary** -To create shared language and basic understanding, students should work with the list of terms--read the definitions, use them in complete sentences, look up the definitions on their phones, learn them for spelling etc. the day before or right before the class starts.
2. **Watch/log** into the site---to learn the difference between a primary and secondary source.
3. **Read a primary source** written for black voters in the South during Reconstruction in order to understand the restrictive voter suppression laws like poll taxes and literacy tests. [Poll Tax Primary Source](#)
4. **Transcribe:** Students will transcribe a primary source from the Mary Church Terrell archive that deals with voting rights. Explain that the Library of Congress (LOC)--Americas' library and that by doing this work they will contribute to the preservation of history. They are making history accessible for generations of present and future students. (See link on teachers page for instructions).

Summative exercise/homework

Students will watch this video on [current voter suppression](#) (15.15 minutes NY Times Grades 6-12)or this video on [voter suppression](#) (24.51 minutes Grades 8-12 Netflix Youtube).

After watching one of the videos, students will **write** a one-paragraph response to the essential question: Does voting matter? Or What can be considered a poll tax today?

Link to Post-Lesson Feedback Form

<https://docs.google.com/forms/d/1PBkoZrVOBAi2uSX7WjlNo7RxiOdZ8skhuNwJtLj0Gz8/edit>

Vocabulary/Terms

1. **Primary source**--immediate first-hand account about a topic or issue from people directly connected to it.
2. **Secondary source**--information created after an event happened by someone who was not there to experience it first-hand
3. **Suffragist**--a person seeking the right to vote through organized protest
4. **Vote**--a choice between two or more candidates expressed by a person or persons by ballot, voice, or other means
5. **Democracy**--a government by the people who hold supreme power which is exercised directly or by representation through free elections
6. **Gerrymander**--when a political groups changes a the shape of a voting district to favor their candidate
7. **Candidate**--(politics)--person who has been chosen by a political party to run for political office
8. **Poll tax**--a tax/fine/fee which people had to pay in order to vote
9. **Ballot**--a piece of paper or other medium (computer) on which a votes marks her choice
10. **Amendment**--addition added to make an idea, concept or law better more accurate