

## DECLARING THEIR SENTIMENTS

Learning Objectives: The student will

1. Describe the contributions of significant political and social leaders such as Elizabeth Cady Stanton.
2. Identify the political, social, and economical contributions of women to American Society.
3. Evaluate the impact of reform movements including women's rights.
4. Identify colonial grievances listed in the Declaration of Independence.

TEKS: 8.15C; 8.22B; 8.23E; 8.24B;

Vocabulary: Alliances, constrains, divine providence, hitherto, institute, sufferance, tyranny, usurpations

Materials Needed: Copies of the Declaration of Sentiments (attached), copies of the graphic of the comparison of the two documents (attached), copies of the Grievance Analysis Sheet (attached)

Teaching Strategy:

1. Introduce the lesson by telling students about the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848. The information below can be used:

The Seneca Falls Convention was organized to discuss the need for women to seek the rights they were denied in the early to mid 1800's. The document that was created at the convention was called the Declaration of Sentiments. It was based on the Declaration of Independence that was written in 1776 by the colonists seeking the rights they were denied from England at that time.

2. Give the students a copy of the Declaration of Sentiments. Guide the reading of the document by reading the following sections of the document: the Preamble (goals of the document), the theory on which the document is based, the reasons for the document (grievances), and the formal declaration. Discuss how these are the same divisions of the Declaration of Independence, written in 1776.
3. After students have read the Declaration of Sentiments, hand out the document analysis sheet. This portion of the lesson should be done with a partner. Use the first example, which is done for them as a model, to show how they are to complete the comparison analysis. Explain that they will first see a passage from the Declaration of Independence. They should read that passage and discuss its meaning. Next, they should look in the Declaration of Sentiments and find the passage that corresponds to the one from the Declaration of Independence. Once that is located,

have the students write it in the second column. Finally, in the third column, the students should explain in their own words the changes made by the women at the Seneca Fall Convention.

4. When the students have completed the comparison, discuss their ideas as to the similarities and major differences between the two documents.
5. Hand out the Grievance Analysis Sheet to each student. Explain to the students that they are to select the five grievances that they personally feel are the most serious and list them in the grievance section of the paper. After they independently have made their selections, they should paraphrase the meaning of the grievance and write it in that section of the sheet.
6. When all of the students have completed their analysis of the grievances, have them meet with another student and share their top five grievances one at a time. Continue having the students move to another partner to see if they can find someone who has several of the same grievances identified. If time allows, see if the class can come to a consensus on the three most serious grievances.

**Extensions Pre-AP/GT:**

Compose your own Declaration of Teenage rights. Use the format of the original Declaration of Independence with the Preamble, (states the goals), List of Grievances, Attempts to Fix the problems, and the statement of Declaration.

**Declaration of Sentiments,  
Seneca Falls, New York, 1848**

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 has 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 law 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 as 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 and, in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given, as to be wholly regardless of the happiness of the 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.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation, in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

In entering upon the great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to effect our object. We shall employ agents, circulate tracts, petition the state and national legislatures, and endeavor to enlist the pulpit and the press in our behalf. We hope this Convention will be followed by a series of conventions embracing every part of the country.

## **Resolutions**

*Whereas*, the great precept of nature is conceded to be that "man shall pursue his own true and substantial happiness." Blackstone in his *Commentaries* remarks that this law of nature, being coeval with mankind and dictated by God himself, is, of course, superior in obligation to any other. It is binding over all the globe, in all countries and at all times; no human laws are of any validity if contrary to this, and such of them as are valid derive all their force, and all their validity, and all their authority, mediately and immediately, from this original; therefore,

*Resolved*, That such laws as conflict, in any way, with the true and substantial happiness of woman, are contrary to the great precept of nature and of no validity, for this is "superior in obligation to any other."

*Resolved*, that all laws which prevent woman from occupying such a station in society as her conscience shall dictate, or which place her in a position inferior to that of man, are contrary to the great precept of nature and therefore of no force or authority.

*Resolved*, that woman is man's equal, was intended to be so by the Creator, and the highest good of the race demands that she should be recognized as such.

*Resolved*, that the women of this country ought to be enlightened in regard to the laws under which they live, that they may no longer publish their degradation by declaring themselves satisfied with their present position, nor their ignorance, by asserting that they have all the rights they want.

*Resolved*, that inasmuch as man, while claiming for himself intellectual superiority, does accord to woman moral superiority, it is preeminently his duty to encourage her to speak and teach, as she has an opportunity, in all religious assemblies.

*Resolved*, that the same amount of virtue, delicacy, and refinement of behavior that is required of woman in the social state also be required of man, and the same transgressions should be visited with equal severity on both man and woman.

*Resolved*, that the objection of indelicacy and impropriety, which is so often brought against woman when she addresses a public audience, comes with a very ill grace from those who encourage, by their attendance, her appearance on the stage, in the concert, or in feats of the circus.

*Resolved*, that woman has too long rested satisfied in the circumscribed limits which corrupt customs and a perverted application of the Scriptures have marked out for her, and that it is time she should move in the enlarged sphere which her great Creator has assigned her.

*Resolved*, that it is the duty of the women of this country to secure to themselves their sacred right to the elective franchise.

*Resolved*, that the equality of human rights results necessarily from the fact of the identity of the race in capabilities and responsibilities.

*Resolved*, that the speedy success of our cause depends upon the zealous and untiring efforts of both men and women for the overthrow of the monopoly of the pulpit, and for the securing to woman an equal participation with men in the various trades, professions, and commerce.

*Resolved, therefore*, that, being invested by the Creator with the same capabilities and same consciousness of responsibility for their exercise, it is demonstrably the right and duty of woman, equally with man, to promote every righteous cause by every righteous means; and especially in regard to the great subjects of morals and religion, it is self-evidently her right to participate with her brother in teaching them, both in private and in public, by writing and by speaking, by any instrumentalities proper to be used, and in any assemblies proper to be held; and this being a self-evident truth growing out of the divinely implanted principles of human nature, any custom or authority adverse to it, whether modern or wearing the hoary sanction of antiquity, is to be regarded as a self-evident falsehood, and at war with mankind.

**Declaration of Independence**

When in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one people to dissolve the political bands which have connected them with another...

**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.....

**Interpretation**

The phrase, one portion of the family of man, is referring to women. They feel that even though they have been living under one set of rules and laws they now need to change their position in society.

**Declaration of Independence**

Such has been the patient sufferance of these Colonies; and such is now the necessity which constrains them to alter their former Systems of Government.

**Declaration of Sentiments**

**Interpretation**

**Declaration of Independence**

...That these United Colonies are, and of Right ought to be, Free and Independent States, they have full power to Levy War, conclude Peace, contract Alliances, establish Commerce, and do all other Acts and Things which Independent States may of right do.

**Declaration of Sentiments**

**Interpretation**

**Declaration of Independence**

And for the support of this Declaration , with a firm reliance on the protection of divine Providence, we mutually pledge to each other our Lives, our Fortunes, and our sacred Honor.

**Declaration of Sentiments**

**Interpretation**

## Declaration of Independence

The history of the present King of Great Britain is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations, all having in direct object the establishment of an absolute Tyranny over these States.

## Declaration of Sentiments

Interpretation

## Declaration of Independence

We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all Men are created equal, that they are endowed by their Creator, with certain unalienable Rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness

## Declaration of Sentiments

Interpretation

List the five most serious grievances the women included in their Declaration of Sentiments with a paraphrase of its meaning.

1. Grievances

Paraphrase

2. Grievances

Paraphrase

3. Grievances

Paraphrase

4. Grievances

Paraphrase

5. Grievances

Paraphrase