



Women's Rights National Historical Park
136 Fall Street
Seneca Falls, NY 13148

Education Program for Seventh Grade

Taking a Stand: The Declaration of Sentiments

Pre - Visit & Post - Visit Materials

Pre - Visit Activities:

- 1. Viewing of film, *Dreams of Equality* (required):** This 30-minute film visits the 1848 Seneca Falls Convention through the eyes of fictional characters. If class time is not available to view the film, teachers should plan on adding 30 minutes to their site visit so that the film may be viewed on site. A student worksheet is included in the pre-visit that will help guide students in understanding the content of the film and may assist in discussion topics related to the film.
- 2. Experiencing Inequality (optional):** Let students experience inequality through a series of activities that do not allow an identifiable group to participate. Groups may be divided by gender, hair color, or eye color, with one group being allowed to participate in a certain activity. The groups should then be switched, allowing those who experienced "discrimination" to experience "privilege." Examples of activities could be the allowace one group to answer questions in class or participate in an activity, while the other group remains silent or is required to do an assigned tedious task, such as homework or take a quiz. The groups will then switch roles. The activity should be followed by a facilitated discussion where feeling regarding the respective positions are articulated, and what actions might have been taken if the discrimination had continued.



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Dreams of Equality Video Worksheet

Name: _____

You will soon be taking a field trip to Seneca Falls to visit Women's Rights National Historical Park and/or the National Women's Hall of Fame. To prepare for the field trip, you will be watching the video *Dreams of Equality*. You will learn about the two characters in the video, Lucy and Silas, through the letters they write beginning in 1848 and through the Civil War.

As you watch the video, answer the following questions.

1. What is the topic of the meeting that Lucy is attending at the Wesleyan Chapel in Seneca Falls?

2. Who does Elizabeth Cady Stanton meet at the World Anti-Slavery Convention in London?

3. The *Declaration of Sentiments* is modeled after what famous document?

4. As Elizabeth Cady Stanton reads the *Declaration of Sentiments*, write down two complaints she states about the rights of women.

a _____

b _____

5. Why do you think women, such as Lucy, chose not to sign the *Declaration of Sentiments*?

6. Did Lucy or Silas' beliefs about women's rights change during the course of the video? If so, how?



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Post - Visit Activities:

Document #1 Seneca Falls Declaration of Sentiments

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...

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward women, 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 taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

Now, because women have not had the right to vote, they had to follow unjust laws created only by men, and have generally been deprived of their rights, we insist that women have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.

Questions:

1a. Where was this declaration issued?

1b. According to the document, what is the one thing men have not allowed women to do?

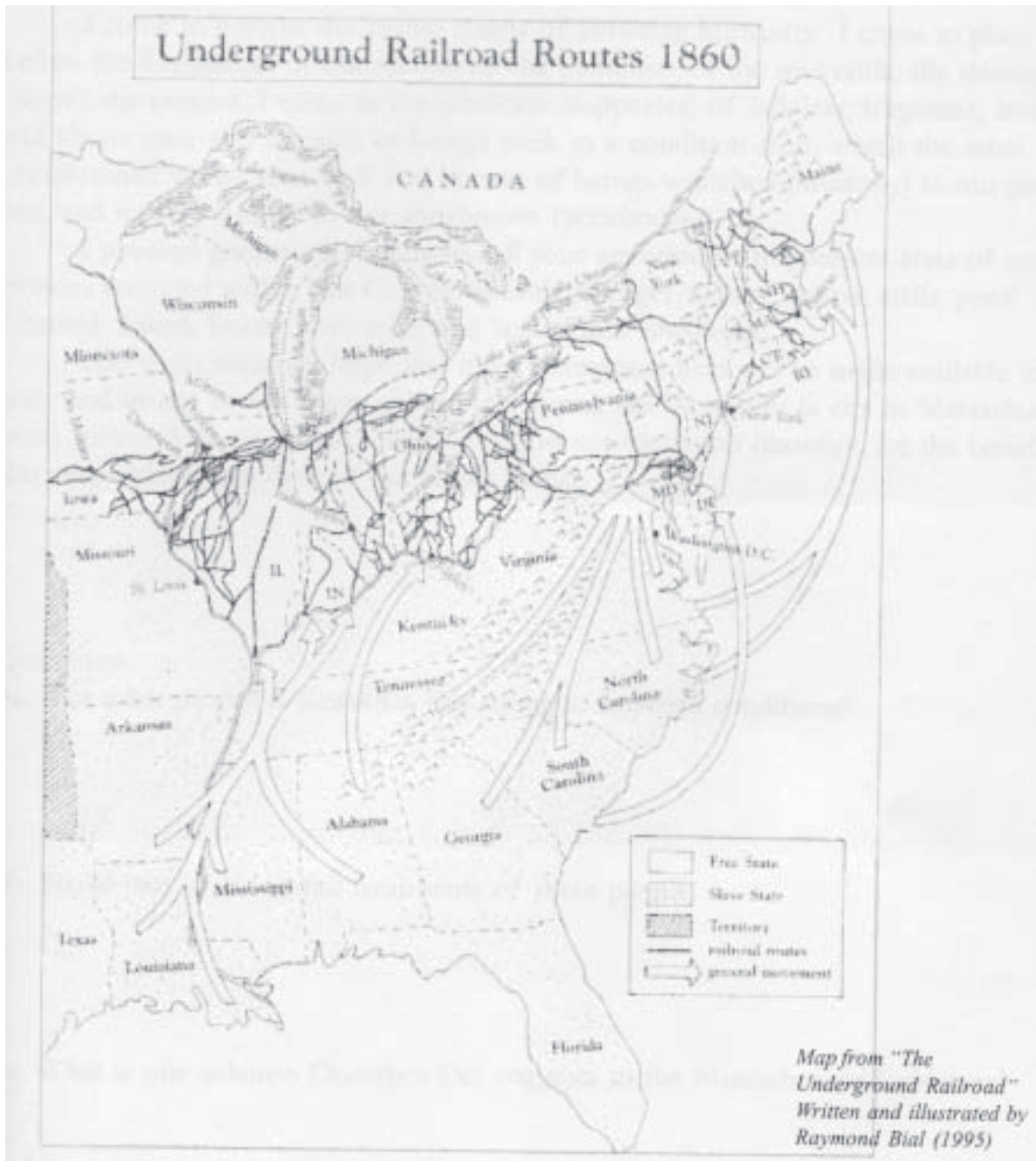
1c. For what changes are women calling?

1d. This document is modeled after what other famous document from United State history?



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Document #2 Map of the Underground Railroad





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Questions:

2a. What group of people did the Underground Railroad help?

2b. In what direction did the Underground Railroad most often travel?

2c. How did the Underground Railroad help to end slavery for some people?



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Document #3

Report to the Massachusetts Legislature by Dorothea Dix, 1843

I come to present the strong claims of suffering humanity. I come to place before the Legislature of Massachusetts the conditions of the miserable, the desolate (alone), the outcast. I come as the advocate (supporter) of helpless, forgotten, insane, and idiotic men and women; of beings sunk to a condition from which the most unconcerned would start with real horror, of being wretched (unhappy) in our prisons, and more wretched in our almshouses (poorhouses)...

I proceed gentleman, briefly to call your attention to the present state of insane persons confined within this Commonwealth, in cages, closets, cellars, stalls, pens! Chained, naked, beaten with rods, and lashed into obedience...

I do most sincerely hope that more permanent help will be made available to the poor and insane by the State, either by restoring the Worcester (a city in Massachusetts) Insane Asylum...or else make some just appropriation (money) for the benefit of this very unfortunate class of our fellow beings.

Questions:

3a. For what people is Dorothea Dix trying to improve conditions?

3b. Name one of the unfair treatments of these people?

3c. What is one solution Dorothea Dix suggests to the Massachusetts legislature?



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Document #4

Report No. 12 for the Massachusetts School Board, 1848

...our means of education are the grand machinery by which the "raw material" of human nature can be worked up into inventors and discoverers, into skilled artisans and scientific farmer, into scholars and jurists...By means of early education, these (young children can be taught to solve the difficult problems of our society)...Our schools, far more than they have done, may supply the Presidents and Professors of Colleges, Superintendents of Public Institutions, all over the land; and send, not only into our sister states, but across the Atlantic, the men of practical science, to superintend the construction of the great works of art.

Questions:

4a. From what group was this report issued?

4b. What is one goal of the schools in America according to this report?

4c. What problems does the Massachusetts School Board see with public education?