

PRIMARY SOURCE
AND
ACTIVITY SHEETS

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ABIGAIL ADAMS (1744-1818)

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF ABIGAIL ADAMS (1744-1818)

by Bonnie Hurd Smith

When Abigail Adams was a young girl growing up in Braintree, Massachusetts was still part of England. No one had even thought about the American Revolution yet. She lived in a colony, which is a far-away place owned by a country where its citizens could go to make money and make their country richer. Abigail, and everyone else around her, thought they were English.

Abigail's father was a minister, which was a lucky thing for her because it meant there were books in her home and people read and talked about ideas. Even though girls at that time did not go to school and only the daughters of wealthy families learned to read and write well, Abigail was educated at home and it was soon clear that she was very smart. She also had her own opinions, and her parents did not object. This was unusual. In the 1750s, girls and women were not supposed to speak their minds. By the time Abigail was a young woman she could read, write, talk intelligently about many subjects, and tell people her own ideas.

When Abigail was 19 she met a lawyer named John Adams who also had very strong opinions, especially about the way the American colonies were being run by England. John was becoming famous in Massachusetts for speaking in court and how much he knew about the law. He was also very smart, and when he met Abigail he knew he had found someone who would be his lifelong friend.

Abigail and John were married in 1764. Because John's law practice kept him in Boston, they spent part of the time living in Boston and the rest of it living on their farm in Braintree. During these years, they had five children. They also had servants to help run the farm and keep house in Boston. Many people in Massachusetts owned slaves, but Abigail and John never owned slaves because they knew slavery was wrong.

In the 1770s, Americans became more and more angry with England. Even though America was part of England, they did not think England was being fair to them. England wanted to take as much money as possible from America, but not let Americans vote or have any say in how they were governed.

By 1774, it was clear to many Americans that they should govern themselves. They wanted to have their own country. Since John was now a very famous lawyer, he was asked to help make this happen. In 1774 he went to Philadelphia, where important meetings were being held. The American Revolution officially started the next year. For the next ten years, John worked hard with others to create the United States of America. He believed that this was what he had to do, but he was away from Abigail, whom he called his "dearest friend", for all of that time.

Back in Braintree, Abigail kept the farm running and raised and educated their children. It turned out that she was a very smart business woman. Even John admitted this. In a letter to her, he told her the neighbors probably all thought that everything ran better when he was away.

When she wasn't working, Abigail wrote letters to John wherever he was. They loved each other very much, and they wrote a lot of letters over the ten years they were apart.



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John needed to know what was going on in Massachusetts during the war so he could make good decisions in Philadelphia, and Abigail told him everything. She also told him her opinion on things. He counted on her advice, and he trusted what she thought.

In one letter, when John was helping to write the new rules for governing America, Abigail told him to “remember the ladies.” What she meant was that women should have equal rights. This was long before women could even vote, get a good education, or earn a living. She was far ahead of her time.

All of the letters Abigail wrote are important for another reason. Since many women from that time could not write well, or they could not afford paper and postage which were very expensive, Abigail’s letters tell us about what life was like then. Because her family loved her, the letters she wrote were saved. We know much more about history during her time from these letters.

In 1783, the American Revolution was over and John Adams spent many years as an Ambassador for America which meant he was sent to other countries to make friends for America. Abigail went with him to France and England, but she missed their farm in Braintree.

When they came home, George Washington had been asked to be our first President and he asked John to be Vice President. John agreed, and Abigail spent the next eight years as the wife of America’s first Vice President. All along, she kept expressing her own ideas and people began to question how much influence she had over John. They thought she was too strong. They thought it was dangerous for a woman to have too much power.

After George Washington had finished his second term as President, he wanted his Vice President to take his place. John Adams became President in 1798 and Abigail was now the First Lady of the United States of America. The American government had been trying to decide where the official “capitol” should be. The City of Washington, D.C. did not exist yet. They had thought about New York and Philadelphia because they were large cities, but eventually everyone agreed that to be fair they should find a new place that was half way between the North and the South.

They created Washington, D.C., named after George Washington. They built a beautiful, large house that we call the White House today. Abigail was the first First Lady to live in the White House, but it was not easy. The house was still being built. It was huge and cold (there was no heat) and she had to keep 13 fires burning at all times just to stay warm.

John served one term as president and then they went home to the farm in Braintree they loved so much. They had grandchildren now, and Abigail and John lived out the rest of their lives very happily. Up until the very end of her life, Abigail kept writing letters to her family and friends. She said it was a “habit” of hers that was difficult to break.

Abigail’s oldest son, John Quincy Adams, became the sixth President of the United States. He is considered one of the smartest American presidents ever. He is also known for defending a group of slaves who tried to save themselves by taking over the slave ship, the Amistad, that had kidnapped them from Africa. Abigail, his mother, clearly taught him well.

Source #1: Abigail Adams's Letter for Rights

During the eighteenth century, before phones and emails, letters were the best method for communicating with people. Abigail Adams, a prolific writer, not only wrote letters as a means of staying connected, she also used them as a method of making her voice heard. During her lifetime (1744-1818), women were not viewed as equal to men and therefore, their opinions were not asked for, nor often respected, when it came to matters beyond the home.

A letter Adams is famous for challenges her husband to include women in the creation of the new government.

“...and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make I desire you would Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember that all men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the ladies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation.”

Letter to John Adams, Mar. 31, 1776

Questions:

1. Are letters effective in making change?
2. Do you think that her request was reasonable?
3. Do you think “all men would be tyrants if they could”?
4. The founding documents of America did not include women. Adams says in her letter that if attention is not paid to women’s concerns and rights, women will “...foment a rebellion...” Has this happened?
5. Who is Abigail writing this letter to? Her husband? A national leader?
A founder of a new nation?
6. What is Abigail Adams’s tone in this letter?

Source #2~ John Adams's Reaction to Women's Rights

In response to Abigail Adams's letter asking for the new country's constitution to include rights for women, John Adams claims her request "laughable".

As to your extraordinary Code of Laws, I cannot but laugh. We have been told that our Struggle has loosened the bands of Government every where. That children and apprentices were disobedient—that schools and Colledges were grown turbulent—that Indians slighted their Guardians and Negroes grew insolent to their Masters. But your Letter was the first Intimation that another Tribe more numerous and powerful than all the rest were grown discontented. ...We know better than to repeal our Masculine systems. Altho they are in full Force, you know they are little more than Theory. We dare not exert our Power in its full Latitude. We are obliged to go fair, and softly, and in Practice you know We are the subjects. We have only the Name of Masters, and rather than give up this, which would completely subject Us to the Despotism of the petticoat, I hope general Washington, and all our brave Heroes would fight.

Letter from John Adams to Abigail Adams, 1776

Questions:

1. Why does John Adams claim that he “cannot but laugh” at Abigail Adams’s request?
2. Who does John Adams compare women to? What do women, as a group, and these other groups have in common?
3. Do you think that John Adams is supportive of women’s rights?
4. Adams says, “we have only the name of masters”, yet in the same sentence he declares that he hopes men would fight to keep the role as “master”. Which statement do you believe?
5. Does one group always have to have power over another?
6. What is John Adams’s tone in this letter?

Source #3~ Abigail Adams's Beliefs about Women and Education

Along with her concern for women's rights, Abigail Adams was also interested in improving women's education. In the eighteenth century women were provided with very little schooling. Adams was not formally educated, but her family believed in education and as a child she was taught at home.

It is really very mortifying Sir, when a woman possessed of a common share of understanding considers the difference of Education between the male and the female Sex, even in those families where Education is attended too. Every assistance and advantage which can be procured is afforded to the sons, whilst the daughters are totally neglected in point of Literature. Writing and Arithmetick comprise all their learning. Why should children of the same parents be thus distinguished? Why should the females who have a part to act upon the great Theater, and a part not less important to Society, (as the care of a family and the first introduction of Children falls to their share, and if as we are told that first impressions are most durable), is it not of great importance that those who are to instill the first principals should be suitable qualified for the Trust, Especially when we consider that families compose communities, and individuals makeup the sum total.

Letter to John Thaxter, 1778

Questions:

1. What is “mortifying” about the difference between the education of girls and boys?
2. “Why should children of the same parents be thus distinguished?” Should daughters and sons receive different educations?
3. What does Adams mean when she says that women have an important part in society?
4. What contradiction does Adams raise?
5. Do you think education for women is connected to women’s rights? Why or why not?
6. Why can we say Abigail Adams was “a woman ahead of her time”?
7. Do daughters and sons in the 21st century receive educations of equal quality?

Activity Sheet #1~ Creating a Persuasive Letter for Women's Rights

Under the newly created American government, Abigail Adams did not have many rights. She was unable to vote, all her property (as a married woman) actually belonged to her husband, her education was limited, and she was strongly discouraged from holding any sort of job outside the home. Consider all the gains women have made since the eighteenth century—suffrage, property rights, members of Congress, leaders of corporation, the majority of students in higher education, mothers and professionals—the list is quite long. However, has equality been achieved?

Using the space below, brainstorm a list of areas where women are not treated equally to men, even today in the 21st century. After creating this list, choose a topic for a persuasive letter.

Your letter should address what the problem is, potential solutions, and some mention of importance/consequence. Consider Abigail Adams's letters while you are writing. Create and revise your letter on a separate piece of paper or on the computer. While most of us do not have a President as a pen pal, consider submitting your letter to the local or school paper.

Areas of Inequality:

Letter Topic: _____

Problem: _____

Potential Solutions: _____

Importance: _____



PHILLIS WHEATLEY (ca. 1753-1784)

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF PHILLIS WHEATLEY (ca. 1753-1784)

by Emily Curran

It was a summer day in 1761 more than 200 years ago, when a slave ship landed at Beach Street Wharf in Boston. This ship brought about 80 Africans, kidnapped from their homes, to be sold in America as slaves.

One of these Africans was a seven- or eight-year-old girl. She was so sick from the horrible trip on the slave ship that it was feared she would die. A woman named Susannah Wheatley bought the small girl for a low price. This frail girl would later be known as Phillis Wheatley. She would become a famous poet and write the first book ever published by an African American.



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It must have been hard for Phillis Wheatley when she first arrived in Boston. First of all, she did not know any English. She had grown up in West Africa, speaking another language. Secondly, she had been taken away from her family in Africa. She never saw her parents again. She was given a new name. She was called “Phillis” because that was the name of the slave ship that had brought her to America, and she was named “Wheatley” because it was the last name of her owners. No one in America ever knew her real African name.

Phillis Wheatley went to live with the Wheatleys and their eighteen-year-old twins, Mary and Nathaniel. She soon showed that she learned things quickly, and the Wheatley’s daughter, Mary, taught her to read and write. She was spared from some of the more difficult work that many enslaved persons had to do, and was encouraged to spend time on her studies. In just six months she learned to speak, read, and write an entirely new language: English. She studied Latin and geography, and began to write poems.

Her first poems, written when she was only 11 years old, amazed Bostonians. Some of them did not believe a slave could write poetry. During those times, many white people believed that Africans were not very smart. Phillis Wheatley’s talent and intelligence proved that they were wrong.

Susannah Wheatley decided that Phillis Wheatley’s poems were so good that they should be published in a book. A publisher in England agreed to print the book. But the English printer worried that people would not believe that a young African woman had really written the poems. A group of 18 important Boston men tested Phillis Wheatley by asking her questions about Latin, religion, and mythology. Her intelligent answers convinced them that she was the true author of the poems. The men signed a document that said this, and it was printed at the beginning of her book.

Phillis Wheatley was very religious. She went to church at the Old South Meeting House and became a full member. Many of her poems were about God or about ministers. She loved to write “elegies” — poems that praised people who had died. Elegies were very popular at that time. In many cases she was asked to write these poems for people.

Phillis Wheatley was never very healthy, and in 1773 she went on a trip to England



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with the Wheatley's son in hopes that her health would improve. She was known as a famous poet in England. She had a wonderful time there, meeting many of London's most important figures. While she was there, her book of poems was printed. It was called Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral.

Unfortunately, Phillis Wheatley's visit to England was cut short. She had to return to Boston because Susannah Wheatley was very ill. When she returned, Susannah Wheatley freed her from slavery. Phillis Wheatley continued to live with the Wheatleys, even after she was free. One year later, Susannah Wheatley died.

After this, Phillis Wheatley started to make her own living as a free African woman, but it was very difficult. Times were hard in Boston. She was now a free woman, but there were many Africans in Boston who were still slaves. In 1774 she wrote a letter to Samson Occum, an Indian and Christian minister who was an old friend of hers. In this letter she wrote that she thought slavery was wrong. She wrote that every human being, including slaves, had a "love of Freedom." This letter was printed in many New England papers.

In the spring of 1775, the American Revolution began. England and America went to war. George Washington was the Commander of the American Army. In 1776, Washington and his army were in Cambridge, getting ready to drive the English out of Boston. Phillis Wheatley admired George Washington and wrote a poem about how wonderful a general he was. She sent it to him with a letter wishing him "all possible success in the great cause you are so generously engaged in." George Washington wrote back to thank her for the poem, and invited her to visit him at his headquarters. We think that she did visit him a few months later.

In April of 1778 Phillis Wheatley married John Peters, another free African. The free Africans of Boston found it more and more difficult to survive in a town that was still having problems because of the American Revolution. Phillis Wheatley had written a second book of poetry, but no Boston printer would print it. Her husband could find little work. They had three children during those years, but Phillis was very sick and had little money.

Two important things happened in 1781. Slavery was made illegal in Massachusetts and the American Revolution ended. Phillis Wheatley was able to publish a poem called "Liberty and Peace" that praised the end of the American Revolution and the beginning of the United States of America. Sadly, she was still very sick. She died on December 5, 1784, at about age 30. Her baby died too. She was buried with her baby in an unmarked grave, but her fame lived on.

Many years later, in the 1800s, people were working hard to end slavery in the United States. They rediscovered Phillis Wheatley and her poetry. She became a symbol of African American achievement.

Source #4~ Excerpt from “To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth, His Majesty’s Principal Secretary of State for North America, &c.”

This poem is one of the few that contains information about Wheatley herself; the majority of poems focus on external subjects.

*I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
Was snatch’d from Afric’s fancy’d happy seat:
What pangs excruciating must molest,
What sorrows labour in my parent’s breast?
Steel’d was that soul and by no misery mov’d
That from a father seiz’d his babe below’d:*

*Such, such my case. And can I then but pray
Others may never feel tyrannic sway?*

Questions:

1. Whose feelings is Wheatley concerned about in this excerpt?
2. What words does Wheatley use when she writes about those who took her from Africa?
3. What biographical information can you find in this poem?
4. How would you describe Wheatley's feelings in the last thought of this excerpt?
5. Do you think Wheatley's tone is angry in this excerpt? Why or why not?
6. How could this poem be a vehicle for change?

Source #5~ Excerpt from “To S.M., A Young African Painter, On Seeing His Works”.

This is one of the few poems written by Phillis Wheatley that was to a living person. “S.M.” are the initials of Sapia Moorhead, also a slave in Boston. Moorhead created a portrait of Wheatley that can be found on the frontpiece of her volume of poems.

*To show the lab’ring bosom’s deep intent,
And thought in living characters to paint,
When first thy pencil did those beauties give,
And breathing figures learnt from thee to live,
How did those prospects give my soul delight, 5
A new creation rushing on my sight?
Still, wond’rous youth! each noble path pursue,
On deathless glories fix thine ardent view:
Still may the painter’s and the poet’s fire*

*To aid thy pencil, and thy verse conspire! 10
And may the charms of each seraphic theme
Conduct thy footsteps to immortal fame*

Questions:

1. What is the “message or theme” of this poem? Why is poetry a powerful method for this message?
2. What examples of imagery and metaphor exist in this poem?
3. This poem was included in Phillis Wheatley’s volume of poetry that was published in 1773. At the time of publication, Wheatley was 19 or 20 years old, yet she writes of Moorhead’s “wond’rous youth”.
What do you think she means by that phrase? Does she consider herself young?
4. What particular lines or phrases allow the reader to “see” the art and vision of the artist?
5. Do you think Wheatley and Moorhead feel that they have achieved “freedom” through art and writing?
Why or why not?

Activity Sheet #3~ Writing Poetry

Frequently, poems are vehicles for messages about social issues or personal situations. Much poetry uses literary devices such as symbolism, metaphor, and imagery. Through the use of these devices, a poem can take on new meaning beyond the dictionary definitions of the words.

1. After reading excerpts from Wheatley’s poems, consider what subjects motivated her to write poems and make a list of at least five.

2. Now brainstorm a list of at least five subjects that could motivate you to write poetry.

3. Choose one of the subjects from your list and brainstorm ideas and details (at least 8-10) about that subject that you can use in your poem. If you would like, make a web diagram.

4. Using your detail list from above, create a “list poem”—organize your details into a poem. You do not need to create phrases or sentences. Focus on the order of your ideas.

5. Finally, take your list poem and expand each line into verse. Use different poetic devices and don’t be afraid to experiment. Your first try is just that—the first step in the process. Remember, you can always change your poem!

Activity Sheet #4~ Picturing Words

Even though poetry has many styles, lengths, and subjects, all poems create an image in the reader's mind. Some are detailed while others only provide a quick glimpse. Wheatley's and Jordan's poetry is full of images. Re-read these poems and highlight particular images that stand out to you. With an image in mind, create a visual representation of it. Although this is meant to be a visual activity, you may include the words that inspired you.

List two or three of the images you chose (list the quote in original form).

- a.
- b.
- c.

Choose one of the images from above and brainstorm how you would best represent it visually. Your art can be non-representational—it can be symbolic. When you are brainstorming, think about: materials, the images you want to create, and the tone of your piece.

After you have brainstormed, begin working on your image. Remember to refer to the poem and your brainstorming whenever you need to. Also, don't be afraid to modify and change your ideas as you work; that is part of the creative process.

When your image is complete, share it with others in the class and discuss the similarities and differences between representations.

Source #6~ “*Something Like A Sonnet for Phillis Miracle Wheatley*” by June Jordan

When people speak of Phillis Wheatley, she is usually referred to as a poet first and foremost. And while this is true, is this accurate? Phillis Wheatley was the first African American to have her or his poetic verse printed in book form. It is important that people remember that Phillis Wheatley was a slave. Her birthday and even her true name are unknown. Jordan’s poem considers the dual role Wheatley played as slave and poet.

*Girl from the realm of birds florid and fleet
flying full feather in far or near weather
Who fell to a dollar lust coffled* like meat
Captured by avarice and hate spit together
Trembling asthmatic alone on the slave block
built by a savagery travelling by carriage
viewed like a species of flaw in the livestock
A child without safety of mother or marriage*

*Chosen by whimsy but born to surprise
They taught you to read but you learned how to write
Begging the universe into your eyes:
They dressed you in light but you dreamed
with the night.
From Africa singing of justice and grace,
Your early verse sweetens the fame of our Race.*

* *coffle-* (n) a group of slaves or animals fastened together

Questions:

1. Why does Jordan call her Phillis “*Miracle*” Wheatley?
2. In what poetic ways does Jordan differentiate between “slave” and “poet”?
3. In the second stanza, Jordan writes, *They dressed you in light but you dreamed/ with the night*. What is Jordan saying in these lines?
4. How did Phillis Wheatley feel about reading and writing? How do you know this?
5. What is the tone in each of the stanzas? What words support the tone?
6. Do you think that Phillis Wheatley was a slave or a poet foremost? Why?
7. Do you think she would rather be free, unknown, and illiterate or a slave, famous, and literate?
8. How can poetry make the world better?



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LUCY STONE (1818-1893)

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BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH OF LUCY STONE

by Mary Howland Smoyer

Lucy Stone did all sorts of things “first” — she had pioneering ideas about the rights of women, and she put her ideas into action. She was one of the first Massachusetts women to graduate from college, and the first married woman to keep her own name. The women who spoke for equal rights in the late 19th century called her their “morning star” because she worked so long and steadily for women’s rights. She founded and edited the *Woman’s Journal*, a women’s rights weekly newspaper. Even after she died, she was still challenging things. She was the first person in New England to be cremated. Lucy Stone believed that women should have equal rights with men, and she devoted her life to changing laws and customs so that women could have these equal rights.



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As Lucy Stone was growing up in Massachusetts, she became angry about the way women were treated. She felt that her mother worked too hard on the household tasks and noticed that her father and brothers did not help her mother. At church she could not vote because she was a woman; her father did not encourage her to learn and was not willing to help her go to college because she was a woman. Lucy realized that if she wanted to go to college, she would have to do it on her own. At age 16, she found a job teaching school, and eight years later, in 1843, she had enough money saved to enter Oberlin College in Ohio. She discovered that she was very good at making speeches and practiced before her friends. She was such a good student that she was asked to write a speech for graduation. However, women were not allowed to make speeches in public at Oberlin, so a man would have to be appointed to give her speech for her. When she found this out, she refused to write the speech. When Oberlin College celebrated its fiftieth anniversary in 1883, they invited Lucy back to speak and this time, she delivered her own speech!

After college, Lucy Stone decided to take a job making speeches against slavery and for women’s rights. She traveled all over the country. Lucy was a wonderful speaker. Many people were excited about her new ideas, but others were very upset by them. Sometimes towns refused to let her speak; some even refused to let her spend the night in their town. People shouted at her while she tried to talk and even threw things at her. Lucy Stone did not give up. She kept travelling and speaking out, saying that slavery should be abolished and that women should have the same rights as men. In 1850, Lucy helped organize the first national woman’s rights convention in Worcester, Massachusetts, and delivered a speech which convinced many of the women in the audience to join the campaign for woman’s rights.

In 1855, at age 37, Lucy Stone married Henry Blackwell. She wanted to be sure her marriage did not change her rights and that she would remain her own person. She decided to keep her own name, calling herself Mrs. Lucy Stone. Ever since, when a woman keeps her maiden name when she is married, she has been called a “Lucy Stoner”. Also, she and her husband made a special announcement at their wedding saying that their marriage was a partnership. Together, they read a protest against the laws which said that a married woman could not own property, keep the money she earned, make a will, or inherit property; they protested the fact that under the law wives were actually the property of their husbands. Lucy Stone was now related to a very remark-



Photo © 2003 Susan Wilson

able woman's rights family: Henry Blackwell's sisters, Elizabeth and Emily, were two of the first American women to become doctors, and his brother was married to Antoinette Brown, the first American woman to be ordained as a minister.

One of the most important rights that women spoke for was the right to vote. Under the original laws of the Constitution of the United States, only white men could vote. Lucy actively supported the 15th Amendment, which gave African-American men the right to vote, and of course, she spoke up for the right of women to vote. While many laws and customs changed during Lucy's lifetime, she did not live long enough to see women win the right to vote in 1920.

In 1869, Lucy Stone and her husband moved with their daughter Alice Stone Blackwell to the Dorchester section of Boston where she remained for the rest of her life. There, she became a leader of the New England suffrage movement and a founder of a weekly newspaper, the *Woman's Journal*. She wrote for it, edited it, and helped publish it for 20 years. After her death, her daughter Alice took over for her. The *Woman's Journal*, called the "voice of the woman's movement," was published for so long and so regularly that it significantly influenced the history of women's rights. It was "devoted to the interests of Woman — to her educational, industrial, legal, and political equality, and especially to her right of Suffrage."

After Lucy Stone died at age 75, Alice Stone Blackwell wrote the story of her mother's life. She wrote that Lucy Stone's last words were: "Make the world better." Certainly Lucy could look back over her life knowing that SHE had devoted it to making the world better for women.

Source #7~ *Lucy Stone's Desire for Rights*

Lucy Stone was concerned with the fact that women were expected to follow the rules set by the government, but were not allowed to participate in the government—at any level. After being asked to pay taxes in 1858—to a government she had no say in—she wrote this letter to the tax collector, and it was later re-printed in *The Orange Journal*, a local newspaper.

Sir:—Enclosed I return my tax bill, without paying it.

My reason for doing so, is, that women suffer taxation, and yet have no representation, which is not only unjust to one half of the adult population, but is contrary to our theory of government.

For years, some women have been paying their taxes, under protest, but still taxes are imposed, and representation is not granted.

The only course now left us, is to refuse to pay the tax. We know well, what the immediate result of this refusal must be.

But we believe that when the attention of men is called to the wide difference between their theory of government and its practice, in this particular, that they cannot fail to see the mistake they now make, by imposing taxes on women, while they refuse them the right of suffrage, and that, the sense of justice which is in all good men, will lead them to correct it. Then we shall cheerfully pay our taxes; — not 'till then.

*Respectfully,
Lucy Stone*

Questions:

1. What is Lucy Stone's request?
2. Is it fair to pay taxes if you are not allowed to participate in the government, especially if you are not allowed to vote?
3. "No taxation without representation" is a famous quote from the revolutionary days. American colonists did not want to pay taxes on British goods since they had no direct representatives in the British government. This lack of representation led to the Declaration of Independence and the Revolutionary War.
 - Do you think it was right for the American colonies to refuse to pay taxes to the British in this situation? Why or why not?
 - Do you think it was right for Lucy Stone and women to refuse to pay taxes? Why or why not?
 - Why do you think the American colonists' fought for their right to vote but later ignored women's right to vote?
4. Why do you think it took so long for women to gain the right to vote?
5. Are Lucy Stone's letter and actions an effective way to make change happen?
6. Do these changes make the world better?
7. In the final paragraph of her letter, Stone attempts to make clear the disconnect between the *theory* of America's government and the unequal treatment of women. Do you think this disconnect still exists today?

Source #8~ Lucy Stone's Speech at the National Women's Rights Convention, Cincinnati 1855

Public speaking was not considered an appropriate activity for women, but while in college in the 1840s, Lucy Stone was part of a secret debate society for women. After graduating from college, Stone began speaking publicly about abolishing slavery and women's rights. She frequently spoke at women's rights conventions. Lucy Stone's speaking career was not simple: she often had to fight to give her speeches and sometimes she was forced off of a stage or out of a town entirely.

Stone frequently spoke about women's suffrage, and was one of a small group of women who traveled the country speaking out on this issue.

From the first years to which my memory stretches I have been a disappointed woman... In education, in marriage, in religion, in everything disappointment is the lot of women. It shall be the business of my life to deepen that disappointment in every woman's heart until she bows down to it no longer.

Speech, National Woman's Rights Convention, Cincinnati 1855

Questions:

1. Consider the social climate and laws of the mid-1800's. What are some reasons Stone would be "disappointed" with
 - Education?
 - Marriage?
 - Religion?
2. Why does Stone want to "deepen that disappointment in every woman's heart"?
3. Are women still "bowing down" to disappointment in the 21st century?
4. How does the climate during Lucy Stone's life compare to the climate during Abigail Adams's and Phillis Wheatley's lives?
5. Does much of this statement still apply to women today?

ActivitySheet #5~ Debating the Importance of Words

When Lucy Stone was preparing to graduate from college, she was chosen to be the graduation speaker. However, because she was a woman, she was not allowed to read her speech; a male faculty member would have to do it for her. Ultimately, Stone chose not to have her speech read if she couldn't give it herself. Some of her peers argued that she should let her speech be read so that her points and opinions could be heard. As a group, consider both sides of this situation—withholding the speech entirely because the writer was not allowed to read it or allowing a man to read it so that the important words are heard. Why is the right to speak in public important? Break into two groups and debate the issue. The debate can cover Lucy Stone's particular situation and the topic in general.

Below is a quick outline of a sample debate format:

1. First Proposition Constructive 7 minutes
 The team arguing for the topic introduces their position(s).
2. First Opposition Constructive 8 minutes
 The team disagreeing with the Proposition team introduces their position(s).
3. Second Proposition Constructive 8 minutes
 The Proposition team continues debating their point(s).
4. Second Opposition Constructive 8 minutes
 The Opposition team continues debating their point(s).
5. Opposition Rebuttal 4 minutes
 The Opposition team ends and rebuts points made by the Proposition team.
6. Proposition Rebuttal 5 minutes
 The Proposition team ends and rebuts points made by the Opposition team.

To prepare for the debate, work as a group to prepare your position. You should choose a limited number of points to address and make sure you have information to back up your ideas. Use the space below to brainstorm your arguments.

As the debate is going on, take time to write down points from the other team to use in your rebuttal period.

Activity Sheet #6~ Why Vote?

For hundreds of years individuals have fought for the right to be represented in government by people they choose. People all across the globe recognize the power democracy places in the hands of the people. Consider what you read about representation in Lucy Stone's letter from the newspaper and Abigail Adams's letter to John Adams. These women and many others fought to get women the right to participate in government. In 1920, women were granted the right to vote with the nineteenth amendment. After such a long fight, one might imagine that women voted in force; however this did not happen, and over time, voter turnout across gender has decreased.

Imagine that you are an orator and writer like Lucy Stone. Craft a speech or article that would inspire people to vote. When you are deciding between an article or speech, consider which is a better way to effect change. Are some topics better suited to one method or the other? Your audience could be people in general or a specific population. Remember that you must *convince* your audience with facts and passion.

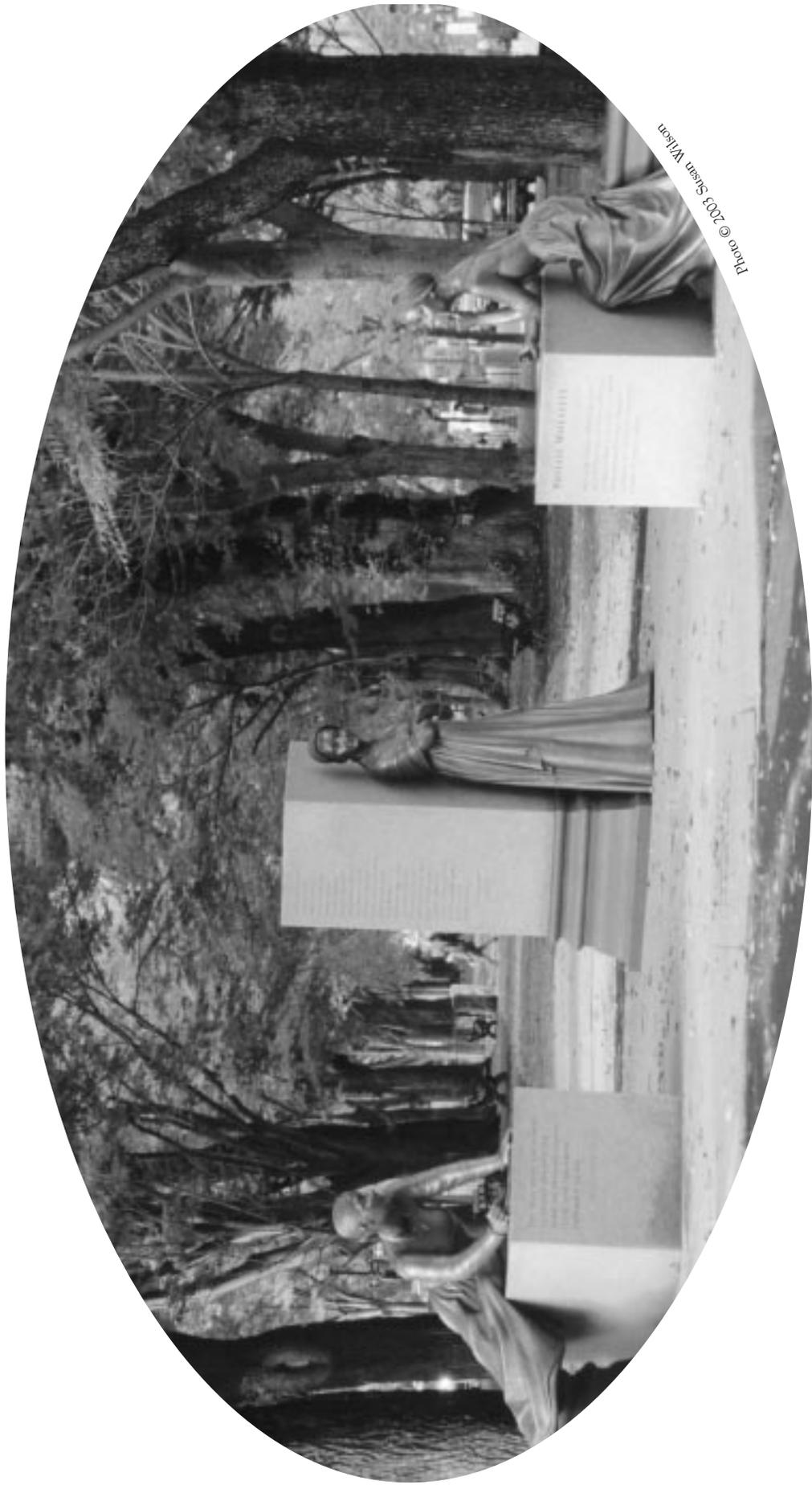
1. Brainstorm two lists:

Why people choose to vote	Why people choose not vote

2. Choose the top two or three reasons from each list to address in your article/speech. Not only is it important to defend your position, you also must show why the other position is not as strong.
3. Create a short outline that includes your thesis statement and the order of your argument.
4. Using your outline as a guide write a rough draft of your speech/article.
5. Review and revise your draft.

Questions:

1. What is the main idea of this cartoon?
2. Why is it called “The Anti and the Snowball”?
3. What does this image claim has made the women’s suffrage issue more powerful?
4. Can many people joined together effect change better than one person? What methods do people use today to join together?



BOSTON WOMEN'S MEMORIAL

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ABIGAIL ADAMS

1744 - 1818

Born in Weymouth, Massachusetts, she was the wife of the second president of the United States and the mother of the sixth. Her letters establish her as a perceptive social and political commentator and a strong voice for women's advancement.

...and by the way in the new Code of Laws which I suppose it will be necessary for you to make I desire you would Remember the Ladies, and be more generous and favorable to them than your ancestors. Do not put such unlimited power into the hands of the Husbands. Remember all Men would be tyrants if they could. If particular care and attention is not paid to the Ladies we are determined to foment a Rebellion, and will not hold ourselves bound by any Laws in which we have no voice, or Representation.

Letter to John Adams, March 31, 1776

If we were to count our years by the revolutions we have witnessed, we might number them with the Antediluvians. So rapid have been the changes: that the mind, tho fleet in its progress, has been outstripped by them, and we are left like statues gazing at what we can neither fathom, or comprehend.

Letter to Mercy Otis Warren, March 9, 1807

PHILLIS WHEATLEY

ca. 1753 – 1784

Born in West Africa and sold as a slave from the ship *Phillis* in colonial Boston, she was a literary prodigy whose 1773 volume *Poems on Various Subjects, Religious and Moral* was the first book published by an African writer in America.

*Imagination! who can sing thy force?
Or who describe the swiftness of thy course?
Soaring through air to find the bright abode,
Th' empyreal palace of the thund'ring God,
We on thy pinions can surpass the wind,*

And leave the rolling universe behind:

From star to star the mental optics rove,

*Measure the skies, and range the realms above.
There in one view we grasp the mighty whole,
Or with new worlds amaze th' unbounded soul.*

On Imagination

*I, young in life, by seeming cruel fate
Was snatch'd from Afric's fancy'd happy seat:*

*What pangs excruciating must molest,
What sorrows labour in my parent's breast?*

Steel'd was that soul and by no misery mov'd

*That from a father seiz'd his babe below'd:
Such, such my case. And can I then but pray*

Others may never feel tyrannic sway?

To the Right Honourable William, Earl of Dartmouth

... in every human Breast, God has implanted a Principle, which we call Love of Freedom; it is impatient of Oppression, and pants for Deliverance ... the same Principle lives in us.

Letter to the Reverend Samson Occom, February 11, 1774

Source #10 - Text from the Boston Women's Memorial

LUCY STONE

1818 – 1893

Born in Brookfield, she was one of the first Massachusetts women to graduate from college. She was an ardent abolitionist, a renowned orator, and the founder of the *Woman's Journal*, the foremost women's suffrage publication of its era.

Let woman's sphere be bounded only by her capacity.

Speech, Woman's Rights Convention, Worcester 1851

From the first years to which my memory stretches I have been a disappointed woman. . . . In education, in marriage, in religion, in everything disappointment is the lot of women. It shall be the business of my life to deepen this disappointment in every woman's heart until she bows down to it no longer.

Speech, National Woman's Rights Convention, Cincinnati 1855

The legal right for woman to record her opinion wherever opinions count, is the tool for whose ownership we ask.

Woman's Journal, 1891

I believe the world grows better, because I believe that in the eternal order there is always a movement, swift or slow, toward what is right and true.

Last published statement, The Independent, 1893

Questions:

1. Using your knowledge of the women (from the biographies), do you think these excerpts give a picture of their lives and actions?
2. How do these quotations serve as an inspiration?
3. For each woman, describe the main idea of her quotations.
4. What theme do all the quotations support?

Biographical Data Sheet

Using the handout and your own internet and library research, fill in this information about your character. You will not be able to find all of the information about each character. Write neatly; you will be turning in this sheet.

Character's Name: _____

Birthdate, birthplace, primary residence:

Education: _____

Event, role, publication, or idea most closely associated with this person:

Goals, Philosophy, and Tactics:

Goals	Philosophy	Tactics

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Primary Source Analysis Worksheet

After carefully reading your primary source document and either highlighting it or taking notes, fill in the answers on Part One of this sheet:

Part One

1. Who produced the document? When? Who was supposed to read it or hear it? What is it about?

2. Why was it produced? What purpose was it intended to serve? What does it tell us about the values, beliefs, institutions, and problems of the individual who produced it?

3. Why is what we learn from this document important? What importance does it have for our own world?

4. What two or three quotes from the document best summarize or emphasize the character's ideas?

Part 2

Introduce your character to the group by giving a short oral presentation which focuses on the information you got from the Biographical Data Sheet and the Primary Source Analysis Sheet. As each person presents, jot down some basic information about each character on the Listening Sheet.

In your group, write five or six questions for the other two characters who introduced themselves. Then form jigsaw groups and have a discussion based on the questions you prepared.

Listening Sheet

As each group presents, write down what you learn about the other women.

Abigail Adams:

Phillis Wheatley:

Lucy Stone:

Source #11~ The Creative Process

Creating a piece of public art requires not only artistic vision, but also an understanding of the community where the piece will be placed. Meredith Bergmann, the sculptor of the Boston Women's Memorial, worked to develop a sculpture that would blend the traditions of Boston's public art with a style uniquely suited to memorializing Abigail Adams, Phillis Wheatley, and Lucy Stone.

I knew that, to make a work of art, I had to find a powerful symbolic structure for the monument that would be immediately clear. Symbols can be very long-lived—you can see this in Phillis Wheatley's poetry, which speaks of real bondage and imaginative transcendence, Abigail Adams's letters, which speak with humor of husbands and wives as tyrants and rebels, and Lucy Stone's speeches and editorials comparing marriage and slavery. Looking at the existing monuments along the Mall, I realized that the symbols for remembrance, for heroism and for stature had to be used in a new and different way for women. So each woman, like the men already memorialized, will be sculpted in bronze, larger than life, and will have a tall granite pedestal with her words carved into it. But the women are not up on their pedestals, and they are not standing like statues; they are sculpted in action—using their minds and hearts to speak to us through their words. This design enables me to make three beautiful sculptures of three women I have come to admire, while using the freedom and humor of modern art to make a metaphor concrete. In this century, symbolically, women have come down off our pedestals. These women are even putting theirs to use.

Meredith Bergmann, 2000

Questions:

1. What symbols in the world have had a strong impact on you? Why?
2. Why does the artist say that “Looking at the existing monuments along the Mall, I realized that the symbols for remembrance, for heroism and for stature had to be used in a new and different way for women?”
3. Do you think that having the women off their pedestals is a strong statement? Why or why not?
4. After reading the excerpt and viewing the sculpture, do you feel that the artist’s vision was achieved?

Activity plan for visit to the Boston Women's Memorial

Quiet Observation

Students will have copies of the quotations carved into the Memorial to read during this time. Try to allow time for students to look at each individual woman.

Group Discussion

Discussion Points and Questions:

1. Public art as vehicle for history
2. Reactions to the sculpture
 - a. The artist has chosen to take the women off their pedestals. Why do you think she has done this?
 - b. Do you think women should be taken off pedestals? Why or why not?
3. Quotations on the sculpture from the three women
4. The power of language
5. Why do you think these three women were chosen?
6. What other women do you think should be memorialized with public art?
7. What symbols has the artist used to represent the subjects?
8. How does this sculpture fit in, or not fit in, with other pieces of public art in Boston?

Writing Activity

Students will complete a writing assignment (2-3 pages) in the style of one of the women.

Contemplative: Adams-letter

Imaginative: Wheatley- poem

Activist: Stone-article/speech

Worksheets connected to each of these styles are included in the Boston Women's Memorial Curriculum (pages 13, 23, 36) and are available on-line at www.bwht.org.

Research Activity

Students will conduct research about public art using written and electronic sources.

Questions to Consider:

1. What is public art?
2. How important is symbolism in public art?
3. How does public art differ from works created by an artist on her/his own?
4. How many pieces of public art honoring women can be found in Boston? The United States? The world?

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