

Suffrage is simply a term that means the right to vote. For much of American history, women were denied the right to vote. Things began to change, however, in 1840, when abolitionists Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott met in London for the World Anti-Slavery Convention. Mott, Stanton, and other women, however, were denied seats at the conference because they were women. Instead, they were ushered into a roped-off area hidden from view. The experience had a life-changing impact on Stanton.

Stanton helped organized the famous Seneca Falls Convention, which was held on July 19, 1848, in Seneca Falls, New York. Seneca Falls, and parts of western New York, were thought to be unusually receptive to women's suffrage. It was planned to coincide with the visit of Lucretia Mott, who had become renowned for her public speaking. The two-day convention featured discussions on current laws and the roles of women in society. As a result of the convention, a document called the Declaration of Sentiments, with the signatures of 100 people, 32 of which were men, was drafted calling for women's suffrage. It was modeled after the United States Declaration of Independence. Interestingly, the famous abolitionist and former slave Frederick Douglass was one of the 32 men to sign. The declaration was controversial at the time and many claimed it actually harmed the women's rights movement by taking women out of their traditional roles. Despite the controversy, the Seneca Rights Convention led to additional conventions in Rochester, New York, New York City, Massachusetts, and beyond.

In 1869, the National Women's Suffrage association was formed in New York City by Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony in response to their opposition to the 15th Amendment - unless it included the right to vote for women. The 15th Amendment eliminated race or color as a qualification to vote, but did not include gender. In 1872, Susan B. Anthony and 50 other women were arrested for voting in the presidential election illegally. None of the women were ultimately convicted of crimes. In 1876, Anthony, Stanton, and Matilda Gage began work on what would become the six-volume History of Women Suffrage. Encompassing more than 6,700 pages, the epic series was completed in 1922, three years after the passage of the 19th Amendment, which removed gender as a qualification of voting.

Unfortunately, Mott, Stanton, Anthony, and Gage all died well before Congress granted women the right to vote.

- 1. Why was Stanton's experience in London so impactful in her life?**
 - A. It showed her the urgency of eliminating slavery and she resolved to dedicate her life to the cause
 - B. She realized that life in America could and should be similar to life in London
 - C. She felt that women had less rights than men and resolved to change society
 - D. She was embarrassed that she lived in a country that allowed slavery

- 2. Which of the following best describes the Seneca Falls Convention?**
 - A. A conference held in New York in which laws were changed that allowed women to vote
 - B. A conference held in New York in which the roles of women in society were changed
 - C. A conference in which a document was drafted and signed by 100 people calling for women's suffrage
 - D. A conference organized by Lucretia Mott in which Elizabeth Cady Stanton gave a speech

- 3. Why was the Declaration of Sentiments controversial?**
 - A. Because it was signed by women
 - B. Because it was signed by both men and women
 - C. It was signed by a former slave named Frederick Douglass
 - D. Many people believed that women should stay in their usual roles

- 4. The 15th Amendment...**
 - A. gave women the right to vote.
 - B. denied African-Americans the right to vote.
 - C. gave men the right to vote regardless of race or color.
 - D. gave everyone the right to vote.

- 5. When was *The History of Women's Suffrage* published?**
 - A. Before the passage of the 19th amendment
 - B. Before the passage of the 15th amendment
 - C. 1919
 - D. After the passage of the 19th amendment

6. What could NOT be a synonym for “qualification” in the sentence below?

Encompassing more than 6,700 pages, the epic series was completed in 1922, three years after the passage of the 19th Amendment, which removed gender as a qualification of voting.

- A. problem
- B. condition
- C. requirement
- D. stipulation

7. Who is Matilda Gage?

- A. The passage does not say
- B. The passage does not say but we can infer she was an abolitionist
- C. The passage does not say but we can infer she was a women’s suffragist
- D. Matilda Gage was a speaker at the Seneca Falls Convention