



**FLORIDA JOINT CENTER
FOR CITIZENSHIP**

THE EVOLUTION OF VOTING RIGHTS

SS.7.C.3.7 Analyze the impact of the 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th amendments on participation of minority groups in the American political process.

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Lesson Summary

Essential Questions

How have voting and civil rights expanded over time? What has been the impact of this expansion?

NGSSS Benchmark

SS.7.C.3.7 Analyze the impact of the 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th amendments on participation of minority groups in the American political process.

Florida Standards

LAFS.68.RH.1.1	LAFS.68.RH.1.2	LAFS.68.RH.3.7	LAFS.68.RH.3.9
LAFS.68.WHST.1.2	LAFS.68.WHST.2.4	LAFS.68.WHST.3.9	LAFS.68.WHST.4.10
LAFS.7.SL.1.1	LAFS.7.SL.1.2	LAFS.7.SL.1.3	LAFS.7.SL.2.4

Overview

In this lesson, students will understand how civil rights have expanded over time and the impact the expansion has had on citizens.

Learning Goals/Benchmark Clarifications

- Students will recognize the rights outlined in these amendments.
- Students will evaluate the impact these amendments have had on various social movements.
- Students will analyze historical scenarios to examine how these amendments have affected participation in the political processes.
- Students will recognize how the amendments were developed to address previous civil rights violations.

Benchmark Content Limits

- Items will not require students to recall rights by specific amendment number.

Civics EOC Reporting Category

Reporting Category 2 – Roles, Rights, and Responsibilities of Citizens

Suggested Time Frame

- Three 45-50 minute class periods

Civics Content Vocabulary

- 13th Amendment, 14th Amendment, 15th Amendment, 19th Amendment, 24th Amendment, 26th Amendment, amendment, civil rights, Civil Rights Act of 1964, Civil Rights Act of 1968, discrimination, Equal Rights Amendment, literacy test, poll tax, prohibit, segregation, states' rights, suffrage, Voting Rights Act of 1965

Instructional Strategies

Close reading of complex text

Analysis of primary sources

Collaborative learning

Materials

Computer with internet access to project lesson activity sheets

Student activity sheets and reading materials:

- National Archives Cartoon Analysis Worksheet – *optional*
- Voting Rights Timeline student activity sheet
- Expansion of Voting Rights student activity sheet
- The Journey for Civil Rights reading

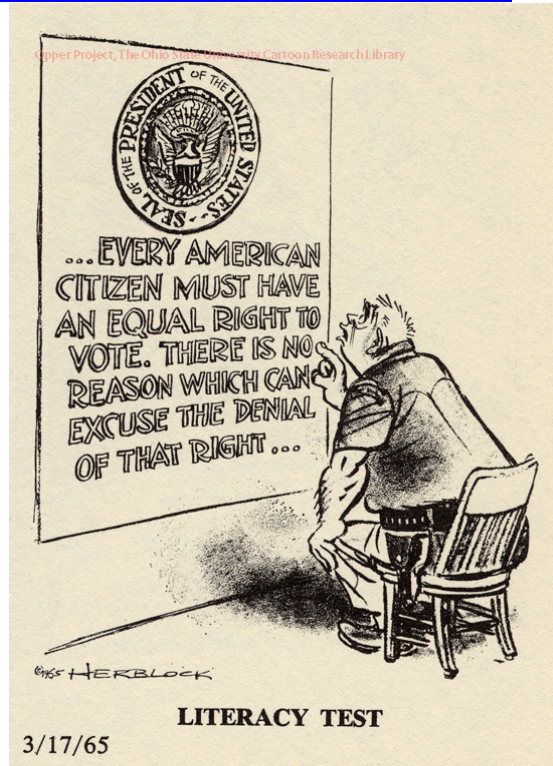
Lesson Activities and Daily Schedule

Please use the chart below to track activity completion.

Day	Task #	Steps in Lesson	Description	Completed? Yes/No
Day One	Task 1	1-4	Hook Activity	
	Task 2	5-10	Voting Rights Timeline	
	Task 3	11-17	Mock Voter Activity	
Day Two	Task 3	11-17	Mock Voter Activity (continued)	
	Task 4	18	Checking for Understanding A	
	Task 5	19-22	Equal Rights Amendment Discussion	
Day Three	Task 6	23-37	The Journey for Civil Rights Activities	
	Task 7	38	Checking for Understanding B	

Suggested Student Activity Sequence

1. To begin this lesson, project the cartoon below. Ask students to answer the following questions in complete sentences: “What do you think is going on in this cartoon? What is the issue on which it is focusing? How do you know? Who do you think this person represents? Why do you think the artist included the seal at the top of the cartoon?” Teacher note: If your students require additional direction for analyzing this cartoon, please use the National Archives Cartoon Analysis Worksheet: <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon.html>



2. Have students share out their answers.
3. Discuss with students the following key points about the political cartoon:
 - The 15th Amendment provided that the right to vote would not be denied or abridged on the basis of “race, color or previous condition of servitude”.
 - Although the 15th Amendment guaranteed the right to vote for African Americans, southern officials found various means to take that right away. One way was requiring that citizens pass a literacy test in order to register to vote.
 - A literacy test required citizens to prove that they were able to read and write before being registered to vote; literacy tests were used primarily to deny African Americans and other minority groups the right to vote.
4. Explain to students that the political cartoon represents one facet of the larger issue of voting rights and that during this lesson they will learn about specific amendments and laws related to voting rights and their impact on the participation of groups in the American political process. Share with students that voting rights are a subset of civil rights. Civil rights are the rights belonging to citizens; traditionally referring to the basic rights to be free from unequal treatment based on certain protected characteristics (i.e. race, gender, disability). Due to the fact that the right to vote is a civil right; the amendments that will be studied in the lesson will look at how amendments have been passed to address previous civil rights violations and expand the amount of people able to exercise the right to vote.

5. Pass out the “Voting Rights Timeline” student activity sheet and explain to students that they will learn about several amendments to the U.S. Constitution and how they have impacted voting rights. Remind students that an amendment is a change to the U.S. Constitution.
6. Read through the directions and complete the first three rows as a whole class.
7. Pose the following question for discussion: “Based on what we have read for 1788, what role did the states play in determining voting rights?” Explain to students that voting rights were originally a states’ rights issue and individual states determined who could or could not vote. Instruct students to take notes on this point in the 1788 row on their activity sheet.
8. Ask a student to share their summary sentence for the 14th Amendment with the class. Emphasize to the students that the 14th Amendment defines citizenship to include all persons born or naturalized in the United States. Share with students that we have civil rights as citizens and this amendment is significant because of the extension of citizenship (and rights) to a wider range of people. Share the definition of civil rights again and instruct students to add it to their notes on the 1868 row.
9. Place students in pairs and provide them with time to complete the rest of the activity sheet. Instruct students to leave the rows for 1964, 1965, and 1968 blank at this time.
10. Monitor students while pairs are completing the activity sheet.
11. Assign each pair one of the identities from the “Mock Voter Identity” handout. Teacher note: Prior to the start of the lesson, be sure to cut out enough identities for each pair.
12. Pass out the “Expansion of Voting Rights” student activity sheet to each pair.
13. Instruct the students to work with their pair to complete the activity sheet using their notes from the “Voting Rights Timeline” to determine when their mock identity was allowed to vote in federal elections.
14. Project the “Mock Voter Identity Timeline” on the board. Teacher note: Assign yourself the male, 21 year old, landowner role, so that you should be the only person standing when the activity begins and the year 1788 is read.
15. Explain to students that they will pretend that it is Election Day and begin a mock vote as a whole class. Start with the year 1788 and call out each date on the timeline. After each date is read aloud, instruct students to stand who have a mock identity that can vote in federal elections in that year. Instruct students to briefly explain how they acquired the right to vote by sharing the evidence they cited on their “Expansion of Voting Rights” student activity sheet.
16. Instruct students to remain standing until all of the voting years have been called.
17. Pose the following questions for discussion: “As the years were read from the timeline, what did you notice about the amount of students standing? (increases) If you were a woman or minority in the years 1788-1867, were you allowed to vote in federal elections? (no) What impact do you think this had on a woman or minority’s ability to participate in the political process? How do the amendments create an environment for greater participation?”
18. Checking for Understanding A:
 Instruct students to write a well-crafted informative response to the following prompt:
Prompt
 Using what you have learned from the “Voting Rights Timeline” reading and your experience during the mock vote activity, explain how the amendments you have learned about expand the civil right of voting. Cite specific examples from the amendments.
19. Explain to students that although amendments were added to the U.S. Constitution to expand civil rights, and especially the voting rights of certain groups, the amendments did not end the writing and passing of laws to protect civil rights of various groups. Instead, the amendments empowered various groups to pursue laws to gain equal rights in all aspects of life.
20. Project the following photograph from the Florida Memory project:
<http://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/102818>.
21. Pose the following questions for discussion: “What do you see in this photo? What does the signage say? What do you think the people in this photo want?”

22. Share with students the following information about the Equal Rights Amendment. Instruct students to take notes, summarizing this information in the blank row under the 19th Amendment on the “Voting Rights Timeline” student activity sheet.
 - Alice Paul, one of the leaders of the women’s suffrage movement, believed that freedom from legal sex discrimination required an Equal Rights Amendment. In 1923, the ERA was first introduced.
 - The amendment was introduced in every session of Congress until it passed in a reworded form in 1972.
 - In the 1960s, women organized to demand their rights, including the ERA.
 - The Equal Rights Amendment passed both houses of Congress on March 22, 1972 and was sent to the states for ratification. Congress placed a seven-year deadline on the ratification process, however the amendment was not ratified.
 - Anti-ERA organizers claimed that the ERA would deny woman’s right to be supported by her husband, privacy rights would be overturned and women would be sent into combat.
 - The Equal Rights Amendment continues to be pursued by women’s groups and members of Congress (www.equalrightsamendment.org).
 - Teacher note: For additional information and a student-friendly reading on the Equal Rights Amendment, see the lesson for SS.7.C.3.5.
23. Pass out the “The Journey for Civil Rights” reading and instruct students to number the paragraphs.
24. Instruct students to read the first three paragraphs independently and to write a summary statement about the Civil Rights Movement in their notes, on their own notebook paper.
25. Have students share out their summary statements.
26. Instruct students to read the fourth paragraph in the “The Journey for Civil Rights” reading.
27. Instruct students to take out their “Voting Rights Timeline” and write a summary sentence explaining the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in the blank row for 1964.
28. Project the political cartoon from the start of the lesson back on the board. Pose the following questions for discussion: “Based on what you have just read, why do you think this cartoon was created in 1965? What might have happened in the country to inspire the artist to create the cartoon during this year? Do you think that the passage of the amendments we read about gave everyone an equal opportunity to vote? Even though amendments were created to expand voting rights, do you think this solved all the problems with voting rights?”
29. Pass out or project the “Literacy Test” handout and have a student read the introductory paragraph aloud.
30. Read through some of the questions as a whole class.
31. Explain the following key points about literacy tests:
 - States determined voter registration procedures.
 - Some states created literacy tests to determine whether or not someone was eligible to register to vote.
 - Literacy tests were used as an intimidation factor to prevent minorities from registering to vote.
32. Ask students if they think most people would be prepared to take a literacy test like the one described in order to vote. Do they think it is fair to ask someone to do this before they can vote?
33. Show students a four minute excerpt from President Lyndon B. Johnson’s Special Message to the Congress: The American Promise: <http://www.lbjlibrary.org/lyndon-baines-johnson/speeches-films/president-johnsons-special-message-to-the-congress-the-american-promise/>. Cue the video to 11:15 and stop the video at 14:14.
34. Instruct students to take notes during the video to answer the following questions: What is President Johnson’s view on voting rights? How does President Johnson describe the voting conditions for African Americans? What words does he use to help you answer both of these questions?
35. Have students share out their answers.

36. Instruct students to read the fifth and sixth paragraphs of the “The Journey for Civil Rights” reading and write a summary statement about the Voting Rights Act of 1965 and the Civil Rights Act of 1968 in the blank rows for 1965 and 1968 on the “Voting Rights Timeline” student activity sheet.
37. Have students share out their summary statements for 1965 and 1968 and engage students in a whole class discussion, posing the following questions: “Why are the Civil Rights Acts and Voting Rights Act important? What did they do that the amendments we studied earlier did not? The title of the text was ‘The Journey for Civil Rights,’ how was the fight for civil rights a journey? What stood out to you from the reading or videos that helped you understand the journey?”
38. Checking for Understanding B (Formative Assessment):

Instruct students to write a well-crafted informative response using one of the following prompts:

Prompt 1

Based on what you have learned about the Civil Rights Movement, describe how you think the passage of the amendments you read about impacted groups to pursue additional laws guaranteeing their civil rights.

Prompt 2

How has the passage of the amendments and other laws you have learned about in this lesson support President Lyndon B. Johnson’s statement that, “*In our system the first and most vital of all our rights is the right to vote.*” Use specific evidence from the lesson activities to explain your answer.

Extension Suggestion: Break students into small groups, or as a whole class, play Seize the Vote from the National Constitution Center: <http://constitutioncenter.org/seize-the-vote/>. (requires Flash as of July 16, 2020)

Voting Rights Timeline

Directions: While reading, underline the text that helps you summarize the amendment that is being described. Write a complete sentence that summarizes the amendment or event. Based on the information provided, describe who can and cannot vote.

Date	Voting & Amendment Information	Summary of Text	Who Can Vote?	Who Cannot Vote?
1788	U.S. Constitution adopted. There is no agreement on a national standard for voting rights; states are given the power to regulate their own voting laws. In most cases, voting remains in the hands of white male landowners.			
1865	13 th Amendment Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.			
1868	14 th Amendment Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. In Section 2 a voter is defined as males, being at least twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States.			
1870	15 th Amendment SECTION. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.			
1920	19 th Amendment The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.			

1924	Congress passes legislation that grants citizenship to all Native Americans born within the territorial limits of the country.			
1964	24 th Amendment SECTION. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay poll tax or other tax.			
1964				
1965				
1968				
1971	26 th Amendment SECTION. 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.			

Sources: <http://www.kqed.org/assets/pdf/education/digitalmedia/us-voting-rights-timeline.pdf> and <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-indian-citizenship-act>

Mock Voter Identities

Male, 18 years old White, land-owning	Male, 21 years old African American
Female, 18 years old Hispanic	Female, 21 years old Non land-owning
Very Poor Male 21 years old, White	Male, 21 years old Hispanic
Female, 18 years old Asian	Male, 18 years old White, Non land-owning
Female, 18 years old Illegal Alien	Male, 21 years old Illegal Alien
Female, 18 years old Native American	Female, 21 years old African American
Male, 21 years old Asian	Male, 21 years old Native American

Expansion of Voting Rights

Directions:

1. Use the Voting Rights Timeline to determine when the “Mock Voter Identity” was allowed to vote in federal elections.

2. Cite at least two pieces of evidence from the voting rights timeline to support your conclusion.

Mock Voter Identity: _____

When	Evidence	Evidence

3. Using complete sentences and citing at least two pieces of evidence, when and how their mock identity was allowed to vote.

Mock Voter Identity Timeline



1788

1865

1868

1870

1920

1924

1964

1971

The Journey for Civil Rights

The 13th, 14th, and 15th amendments outlawed slavery, provided for equal protection under the law, guaranteed citizenship, and protected the right to vote for African Americans. The amendments also outlined that Congress could pass appropriate, specific legislation to enforce the rights outlined in the amendments.

Many of the laws to protect these rights were left up to the states to carry out. This led to individual states controlling the treatment of African Americans and some southern states found ways to abuse the civil rights of minorities. African American groups grew more and more vocal and persuasive in their demands for equal treatment and rights throughout the 1950s and 1960s, and many white Americans began to also see the need for civil rights laws.

During the 1950s, African Americans began to protest their treatment more publicly and actively as they demanded overall protection of their civil rights. African American protesters pointed to a number of social inequalities from which they suffered. Segregation, or separation based on race, prevented them from using a variety of public facilities on an equal basis with whites. African Americans were restricted in their use of public city buses, park facilities, and restrooms. Educational opportunities were also limited by the practice of separating African Americans and whites and providing African Americans with inferior instructional equipment. Finally, employment practices throughout the South and in many northern cities restricted African Americans' ability to advance economically.

The Civil Rights Act of 1964 was landmark legislation in attempting to improve the quality of life for African Americans and other minority groups in the United States. The Act prohibited discrimination, or unfair treatment, of all kinds based on race, color, religion, or national origin. The act outlawed segregation in businesses such as theaters, restaurants, and hotels. It banned discriminatory practices in employment and ended segregation in public places such as swimming pools, libraries, and public schools. The law also provided the federal government with the powers to enforce desegregation. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 made it illegal to apply unequal voter registration requirements but did not get rid of literacy tests.

The Voting Rights Act of 1965 banned race discrimination in voting practices by federal, state, and local governments. Despite the ratification of the Fifteenth Amendment in 1870, African Americans in the South faced enormous obstacles to voting, including literacy tests (a reading test used to determine if someone was eligible to register to vote) and other restrictions that resulted in being unable to vote. In some cases, African Americans faced harassment, intimidation, and physical violence when they tried to register or vote. As a result of these actions, very few African Americans were registered voters and they had very little political power at the local or national level. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 outlawed literacy tests and provided for the appointment of federal examiners to oversee the registration process in certain areas where there was a history of voter discrimination. Additionally, these areas could not change their voting procedures without getting approval from the federal government. This act shifted the power of qualifying voters from state and local officials to the federal government.

An additional Civil Rights Act, also known as the Fair Housing Act, was signed into law in April 1968. This act prohibited discrimination related to the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin and sex. This act was a follow-up to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and is seen as the final great legislative achievement of the civil rights era.

Sources: Adapted from, http://www.congresslink.org/print_basics_histmats_civilrights64text.htm#, Accessed March 8, 2013
<http://www.factmonster.com/spot/civilrightstimeline1.html>, http://crdl.usg.edu/events/civil_rights_act_1964/, <http://www.archives.gov/legislative/resources/education/voting-rights/images/historical-overview.pdf> and <http://www.history.com/topics/fair-housing-act>.

Literacy Test

Most citizens register to vote by signing their name and address on something like a postcard. But it was not always so. Prior to passage of the federal Voting Rights Act in 1965, southern, and some western, states maintained elaborate voter registration procedures whose primary purpose was to deny the vote to those who were not white. In the South, this process was often called the 'literacy test'. It was more than a test; it was an entire system designed to deny African Americans the right to vote.

The following test has a sample of questions that might have appeared on literacy tests prior to passage of the Voting Rights Act.

Literacy Test Directions: Answer each question to the best of your ability.

1. What body can try to impeachments of the president of the United States? _____
2. A person appointed to the U.S. Supreme Court is appointed for a _____ term.
3. When the Constitution was originally approved, how many states had to ratify it in order for it to be in effect? _____
4. Prior to the adoption of the United States Constitution, the organization of states was known as _____.
5. Of the original 13 states, the one with the largest representation in the first Congress was _____.
6. What words are required by law to be on all coins and paper currency of the United States? _____
7. Which of the following is a right guaranteed by the Bill of Rights: public education, employment, trial by jury or voting? _____
8. What officer is designated by the Constitution to be president of the Senate of the United States? _____
9. To serve as President of the United States, a person must be how old: 35, 40 or 45 years of age? _____
10. The first sentence of the United States Constitution is called the Preamble. True or False? _____
11. The electoral vote for President is counted in the presence of two governmental bodies. Name them: _____ and _____.
12. If no candidate for President receives a majority of the electoral vote, who decides who will become President? _____
13. The president is forbidden to exercise his or her authority of pardon in cases of _____.
14. If the president does not wish to sign a bill, how many days is he or she allowed in which to return it to Congress for reconsideration? _____ days
15. At what time of day on January 20th each four years does the term of the president of the United States end? _____
16. Can a state coin money with the consent of Congress? Yes or No? _____
17. The power to declare war is vested in _____.

Sources

Cartoon Analysis Worksheet: <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/worksheets/cartoon.html>

“Literacy Test” Political Cartoon by Herbert Block: <https://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/2012636958/>

Literacy Test Background Information: <http://hti.osu.edu/node/203>, Accessed October 2012.

Voting Rights Timeline: <http://www.kqed.org/assets/pdf/education/digitalmedia/us-voting-rights-timeline.pdf> and <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-indian-citizenship-act>

Mock Voter Identities, adapted from: Leon County Public Schools 7th Grade Civics Initiative

Equal Rights Amendment photograph: <http://www.floridamemory.com/items/show/102818>

Equal Rights Amendment information: <http://www.equalrightsamendment.org>

President Johnson speech video: <http://www.lbjlibrary.org/lyndon-baines-johnson/speeches-films/president-johnsons-special-message-to-the-congress-the-american-promise/>

The Journey for Civil Rights: Adapted from,

http://www.congresslink.org/print_basics_histmats_civilrights64text.htm# Accessed March 8, 2013,

<http://www.factmonster.com/spot/civilrightstimeline1.html>,

http://crdl.usg.edu/events/civil_rights_act_1964/,

<http://www.archives.gov/legislative/resources/education/voting-rights/images/historical-overview.pdf>

and <http://www.history.com/topics/fair-housing-act>.

Literacy Test Example: www.state.ia.us › Literacy%20Test.doc, Accessed October 2012

Voting Rights Timeline – **Sample Answers**

Date	Voting & Amendment Information	Summary of Text	Who Can Vote?	Who Cannot Vote?
1788	U.S. Constitution adopted. There is no agreement on a national standard for voting rights; states are given the power to regulate their own voting laws. In most cases, voting remains in the hands of white male landowners.	There is no national standard for voting. States are given the power to regulate voting.	White male landowners	All other people
1865	13 th Amendment Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.	The 13th Amendment ended slavery in the United States.	White male landowners	All other people
1868	14 th Amendment Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No state shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. In section 2 a voter is defined as males, being at least twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States.	In the 14 th Amendment, citizenship is defined and granted to former slaves. Voters are defined as male, at least 21 years old and citizens.	Male citizens at least 21 years old.	All other people.
1870	15 th Amendment SECTION. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.	The 15 th Amendment made it illegal for the federal or state governments to deny someone the right to vote based on race.	Male citizens at least 21 years old.	All other people.
1920	19 th Amendment The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.	The 19 th Amendment gave women the right to vote in federal and state elections.	Male and female citizens at least 21 years old.	People under the age of 21 and non-citizens.

	The Equal Rights Amendment was introduced shortly after the passing of the 19 th Amendment. Some believed that freedom from legal sex discrimination required an Equal Rights Amendment, however this proposed amendment has not been successfully ratified.			
1924	Congress passes legislation that grants citizenship to all Native Americans born within the territorial limits of the country.	All Native Americans become citizens born in the U.S.	Male and female citizens at least 21 years old, including Native Americans.	People under the age of 21 and non-citizens.
1964	24 th Amendment SECTION. 1. The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay poll tax or other tax.	The 24 th Amendment guarantees that the right to vote in federal elections will not be denied for failure to pay any tax.	Male and female citizens at least 21 years old.	
1964	Civil Rights Act of 1964 prohibited discrimination, or unfair treatment, of all kinds of people based on race, color, religion, or national origin. The act outlawed segregation in businesses such as theaters, restaurants, and hotels. It banned discriminatory practices in employment and ended segregation in public places such as swimming pools, libraries, and public schools. The law also provided the federal government with the powers to enforce desegregation. The Civil Rights Act of 1964 made it illegal to apply unequal voter registration requirements but did not get rid of literacy tests.			
1965	The Voting Rights Act of 1965 banned race discrimination in voting practices by federal, state, and local governments.			
1968	The Civil Rights Act of 1968, also known as the Fair Housing Act, prohibited discrimination related to the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin and sex.			
1971	26 th Amendment SECTION. 1. The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.	The 26 th Amendment changed the voting age from 21 to 18.	Male and female citizens at least 18 years old.	People under 18 years old and non-citizens.

Sources: <http://www.kqed.org/assets/pdf/education/digitalmedia/us-voting-rights-timeline.pdf> and <http://www.history.com/this-day-in-history/the-indian-citizenship-act>

Civics Content Vocabulary

Word/Term	Part of Speech	Definition
13th Amendment	proper noun	an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that made slavery unconstitutional in the United States
14th Amendment	proper noun	an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that defines citizenship, grants citizenship to former slaves and defines voters as males at least 21 year of age
15th Amendment	proper noun	an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that makes it illegal for the federal or state governments to deny someone the right to vote based on their race
19th Amendment	proper noun	an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that gave women the right to vote
24th Amendment	proper noun	an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that made poll taxes illegal as a requirement for voting
26th Amendment	proper noun	an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that lowered the minimum voting age to 18
amendment	noun	a change to a constitution (e.g., U.S. Constitution, Florida Constitution)
civil rights	noun	the basic rights of citizens to be free from unequal treatment based on certain characteristics (e.g., race, gender, disability)
Civil Rights Act of 1964	proper noun	a federal law that prohibits employment discrimination based on race, sex, color, religion, or national origin
Civil Rights Act of 1968	proper noun	a federal law that prohibits discrimination related to the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin or sex
discrimination	noun	treating a person or group unfairly based on their race, religion, gender, disability, or other reasons
Equal Rights Amendment	proper noun	a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlawing discrimination based on sex
literacy test	noun	a written test used to decide whether or not someone was eligible to register vote
poll tax	noun	a fee someone has to pay in order to vote
prohibit	verb	to forbid or to not allow something
segregation	noun	the separation of people, such as segregation based on race
states' rights	noun	a power or issue for individual states to determine
suffrage	noun	the right to vote
Voting Rights Act of 1965	proper noun	a federal law that banned race discrimination in voting practices by federal, state, and local governments

Essential Teacher Content Background Information

This section addresses the following issues:

1. The extension of civil rights and voting rights through the U.S. Constitution and federal law
2. Voter suppression in two southern states: Alabama and Mississippi

1. The extension of civil rights and voting rights through the U.S. Constitution and federal law

The U. S. Constitution has been amended to extend voting rights to specific populations and to reduce participation barriers. The Voting Rights Act of 1965 further extended voting rights by limiting or eliminating state-level practices that restricted voting rights guaranteed in the U.S. Constitution.¹

Event	Year	Event details and/or event impact on social movements
13 th Amendment	1865	Text: Neither slavery nor involuntary servitude, except as a punishment for crime whereof the party shall have been duly convicted, shall exist within the United States, or any place subject to their jurisdiction.
14 th Amendment	1868	Text: Section 1. All persons born or naturalized in the United States, and subject to the jurisdiction thereof, are citizens of the United States and of the State wherein they reside. No State shall make or enforce any law which shall abridge the privileges or immunities of citizens of the United States; nor shall any State deprive any person of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor deny to any person within its jurisdiction the equal protection of the laws. Section 2. Representatives shall be apportioned among the several States according to their respective numbers, counting the whole number of persons in each State, excluding Indians not taxed. But when the right to vote at any election for the choice of electors for President and Vice President of the United States, Representatives in Congress, the Executive and Judicial officers of a State, or the members of the Legislature thereof, is denied to any of the male inhabitants of such State, being twenty-one years of age, and citizens of the United States, or in any way abridged, except for participation in rebellion, or other crime, the basis of representation therein shall be reduced in the proportion which the number of such male citizens shall bear to the whole number of male citizens twenty-one years of age in such State. Note: The 14th Amendment has four sections
15	1870	Text: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of race, color, or previous condition of servitude.
Hayes-Tilden Compromise	1877	Suppressed black turnout Fraud used to under the effect of votes already cast
Former confederate states amended constitutions and	1890-1910	These laws included poll taxes, literacy tests, vouchers of “good character” (persons already registered had to vouch for applicants that they met residency qualifications) and disqualification for “crimes of moral turpitude”.

¹ Some material presented here is taken from “Introduction to Voting Rights Laws”, U.S. Department of Justice Civil Rights Division. Available at: http://www.justice.gov/crt/about/vot/intro/intro_a.php.

Event	Year	Event details and/or event impact on social movements
enacted laws to disenfranchise African-Americans from voting.		
<i>Guinn v. United States</i> , 238 U.S. 347	1915	U.S. Supreme Court held that voter registration requirements that included “grandfather clauses” violated the 15 th amendment. Grandfather clauses extended voter registration to those who were descended from men who had the right to vote before the 15 th amendment was ratified in 1870.
19 th Amendment	1920	Text: The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex.
Equal Rights Amendment	1923	a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlawing discrimination based on sex first introduced by Alice Paul
<i>Smith v. Allwright</i> , 321 U.S. 649	1944	U.S. Supreme Court held that Texas white primary violated the 15 th amendment. The Texas Democratic party prohibited African-Americans from voting in their primaries; as few, if any, Republicans ran for office, the winner of the Democratic primary won the general election by default.
Civil Rights Act of 1957	1957	Created the Civil Rights Division within the U.S. Department of Justice and the Commission on Civil Rights Attorney General granted authority to intervene on behalf of those whose 15 th amendment rights had been violated
Civil Rights Act of 1960	1960	Allowed federal courts to appoint voting referees to conduct voter registration
<i>Gomillion v. Lightfoot</i> , 364 U.S. 339	1960	U.S. Supreme Court held that the state legislature’s gerrymandered boundaries of Tuskegee, Alabama violated the 15 th amendment
24 th Amendment	1964	Text: The right of citizens of the United States to vote in any primary or other election for President or Vice President, for electors for President or Vice President, or for Senator or Representative in Congress, shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State by reason of failure to pay poll tax or other tax.
Civil Rights Act of 1964	1964	Contained several minority voting-related provisions
Voting Rights Act of 1965	1965	Outlawed discriminatory voting practices directed against African-Americans Prohibited states from imposing any "voting qualification or prerequisite to voting, or standard, practice, or procedure ... to deny or abridge the right of any citizen of the United States to vote on account of race or color." Outlawed the use of literacy tests as a condition of voter registration Established federal oversight of election administration
Civil Rights Act of 1968 (Note: Also known as the “Fair Housing Act”)	1968	a federal law that prohibits discrimination related to the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin or sex
26 th Amendment	1971	Text: The right of citizens of the United States, who are eighteen years of age or older, to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of age.

2. Voter suppression in two southern states: Alabama and Mississippi

All of the former confederate states worked in some way to suppress or eliminate voter registration and participation among African-Americans although Alabama and Mississippi were particularly repressive.

In Alabama, voter registration took place at the courthouse, where the registrar's office was usually open two or three days each month for about two hours. It was typical for Sheriff's deputies to spend time at the courthouse on these registration days to discourage "undesirables" from trying to register. Those who did get the chance to register faced further barriers, such as with the voucher system. Alabama also required that applicants pass a literacy test which consisted of three parts. The first part was an oral exam that asked applicants to interpret sections of the Constitution, while the second part required that applicants write answers to questions about information examined in the first part. Finally, applicants had to pass a written text that consisted of 68 questions. The 68 question exam was considered passed when all answers were answered correctly within the eight minute time limit. A three-member Board of Registrars would decide whether an applicant passed, no matter how that applicant performed on the three part examination. By contrast, it was typical for the Board of Registrars to "qualify" white voters even if their examination responses were incorrect.

Similarly, in Mississippi, black applicants were asked various questions, such as "How many bubbles are in a bar of soap?" or "How many seeds are in a watermelon?" as part of the voter application process. It was not uncommon for blacks to be asked to translate and interpret obscure Latin phrases, while whites who were asked to interpret the phrase "There shall be no imprisonment for debt" were allowed to register if they answered with "I thank that a Neorger should have 2 years in collage before voting because he don't under stand" (spelling and punctuation in the original).

The results of these efforts showed in voter registration and turnout rates for African-Americans in Mississippi in 1964. In the south, black voter registration was about one-third, while in Mississippi it was 5.2%. In Holmes County, all but .2% (one fifth of one percent) of blacks were disqualified from voting, while more than 100% of whites were registered in that same county. In three Mississippi counties, not a single African-American voted.

The experiences in these two Deep South states show the extent to which former confederate states went in order to avoid implementing the letter and the spirit of the 15th amendment.