

PARTICIPATION IN THE POLITICAL PROCESS

SS.7.CG.3.6 Analyze how the 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th and 26th Amendments broadened participation in the political process.

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2023 BENCHMARK UPDATES

- Updated from SS.7.C.3.7
 - Changed from “Analyze ~~the impact of~~ the 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th, and 26th amendments ~~on participation of minority groups in the American~~ political process.” to “Analyze how the 13th, 14th, 15th, 19th, 24th and 26th Amendments broadened participation in the political process.”
- Depth of Knowledge Changes within Benchmark
 - No changes
- Benchmark Clarification Changes
 - Changed from “Students will recognize the rights ~~outlined in these amendments.~~” to “Students will recognize how these amendments expanded civil rights to African Americans, women and young people.”
 - Changed from “Students will evaluate the impact these amendments have had on ~~various social movements.~~” to “Students will evaluate the impact these amendments have had on American society.”
 - Changed from “~~Students will analyze historical scenarios to examine how these amendments have affected~~ participation in the political processes.” to “Students will examine how these amendments increased participation in the political process.”
 - Elimination of “Students will recognize how the amendments were developed to address previous civil rights violations.”
- Vocabulary Changes
 - No changes

Essential Teacher Content Background Information

[Teacher Content Notes Not Appropriate For Student Use]

This section addresses the following topics:

1. The Extension of Civil Rights and Voting Rights through the U.S. Constitution and Federal Law
2. How Amendments Increased Political Participation
3. 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
15th Amendment	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

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
Former confederate states amended constitutions and enacted laws to disenfranchise African-Americans from voting.	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”.
<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

Event	Year	Event Details and/or Event Impact on Social Movements
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. How Amendments Increased Political Participation

Amending the U.S. Constitution has led to a myriad of changes to participation in political processes. Historically, when these amendments were introduced and added to the U.S. Constitution the impact of social and political revelations was unknown. The influence of adding amendments continues to broaden participation in the political process.

Amendment	Impact on Participation in the Political Process
13th Amendment	The 13th and 14th Amendments were important steps towards the ratification of the 15th Amendment, granting the right to vote to African American males. While passage of the 15th Amendment in 1870 initially increased participation in elections and elevated African-American men to political offices, continued limitations were put in place, specifically in the South, that impeded African American men from exercising their new rights. The deterrents achieved their goals of decreasing political participation. They were abolished many years later during the Voting Rights Act of 1965, helping return to the increased ability of African Americans to participate in political processes.
14th Amendment	
15th Amendment	
19th Amendment	During the 1800s, women organized, petitioned the government, and protested in attempts to achieve the right to vote. With the passing of the 19th Amendment, it increased the amount of eligible voters during elections. More slowly, women would begin holding elected offices. However, minority women continued to face struggles as voting opportunities were denied.
24th Amendment	The 24th Amendment forbade the use of poll taxes and removed a long time method of suppression to voter participation. It supported an opportunity to increase voter turnout at the federal level. One of the criticisms of the passage of the amendment was that it did not support all voters at the state and local levels.
26th Amendment	The 26th Amendment lowered the voting age to allow young people the opportunity to vote in elections as they were already engaging in other obligations and responsibilities of U.S. citizens. The younger population continues to be an integral demographic in elections and the voting process.

3. 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.

Lesson Summary

ESSENTIAL QUESTION		
How have voting and civil rights expanded over time? What has been the impact of this expansion?		
BENCHMARK		
SS.7.CG.3.6 Analyze how the 13 th , 14 th , 15 th , 19 th , 24 th and 26 th Amendments broadened participation in the political process.		
CIVICS EOC REPORTING CATEGORY		
N/A		
OVERVIEW		
In this lesson, students will understand the impact amendments to the U.S. Constitution have had on American society through the expansion of civil rights and increased participation in the political process.		
BENCHMARK CLARIFICATIONS		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Students will recognize how these amendments expanded civil rights to African Americans, women and young people. Students will evaluate the impact these amendments have had on American society. Students will examine how these amendments increased participation in the political process. 		
BENCHMARK CONTENT LIMITS		
N/A		
CIVICS CONTENT VOCABULARY		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> 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		
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Literacy Test political cartoon image (external link) National Archives Cartoon Analysis Worksheet (external link; optional) Key Points: Literacy Test slides Voting Rights Timeline activity sheet Mock Voter Identity Cards Expansion of Voting Rights activity sheet 		

- Mock Voter Identity Timeline
- ERA March image (external link)
- Key Points: Equal Rights Amendment slide
- The Journey for Civil Rights reading
- Louisiana Literacy Test (external link)
- Special Message to the Congress: The American Promise on the Voting Rights Act video (external link)

B.E.S.T. STANDARDS

- ELA.7.R.2.1- Explain how individual text sections and/or features convey a purpose in texts.
- ELA.7.R.3.2- Paraphrase content from grade-level texts.
- ELA.V.1.3- Apply knowledge of context clues, figurative language, word relationships, reference materials, and/or background knowledge to determine the connotative and denotative meaning of words and phrases, appropriate to grade level.
- ELA.K12.EE.1.1- Cite evidence to explain and justify reasoning.

Suggested Student Activity Sequence & Pace

DAY	ACTIVITY SEQUENCE
DAY 1	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> To begin this lesson, project the “Literacy Test” political cartoon image. Ask students to answer the following questions in complete sentences: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> What do you think is going on in this cartoon? Who do you think this person represents? Why do you think the artist included the seal at the top of the cartoon? <p>Teacher Note: If your students require additional direction for analyzing this cartoon, please use the National Archives Cartoon Analysis Worksheet.</p> Have students share out their answers. Discuss with students the following key points about the political cartoon from the “Key Points: Literacy Test” slides. 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. Pass out the “Voting Rights Timeline” 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. Read through the directions and complete the first three rows as a whole class. 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. Ask a student to share their summary sentence for the 14th Amendment with the class (row 3). 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 (see step 4) and instruct students to add it to their notes on the 1868 row. 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. Monitor students while pairs are completing the activity sheet. Review correct responses as a whole group. <p>Teacher Note: The remaining three rows will be completed on Day 3 and Day 4 of this lesson plan.</p> To wrap up the lesson, have students write a summary of voting rights.
DAY 2	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> Place students in pairs. Assign each pair one of the identity cards from the “Mock Voter Identity Cards”.

	<p>Teacher Note: Prior to the start of the lesson, be sure to cut out enough identity cards for each pair. 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.</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 3. Pass out the “Expansion of Voting Rights” activity sheet to each pair. 4. Instruct the students to work with their pair to complete the activity using their notes from the “Voting Rights Timeline” to determine when their mock identity was allowed to vote in national elections. 5. Project the “Mock Voter Identity Timeline” on the board. 6. 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 national 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. 7. Instruct students to remain standing until all of the voting years have been called. 8. 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 national 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? 9. Checking for Understanding: Instruct students to write a well-crafted informative response to the following prompt: <u>Prompt</u> 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.
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DAY 3	<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. 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. 2. Project the “ERA March” image from Florida Memory. 3. 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? 4. Discuss with students the following key points about the photo from the “Key Points: Equal Rights Amendment” slides. 5. Pass out the “The Journey for Civil Rights” reading. 6. Instruct students to read the first three paragraphs independently and to write a summary statement about the Civil Rights Movement in their notes. 7. Have students share out their summary statements. 8. Instruct students to read the fourth paragraph in the “The Journey for Civil Rights” reading. 9. Instruct students to take out their “Voting Rights Timeline” (from Day 1) and write a summary sentence explaining the Civil Rights Act of 1964 in the blank row for 1964. 10. Project the “Literacy Test” political cartoon image from Day 1 of the lesson back on the board. Pose the following questions for discussion: Based on what you have just read, why do
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	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?
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DAY 4

1. Project the “[Literacy Test](#)” political cartoon image from Day 1/Day 3 of the lesson on the board. Pose the following questions for discussion: 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?
2. Project the “[Louisiana Literacy Test](#)” from the Jim Crow Museum.
3. Read through some of the questions as a whole class and focus on the directions given as well.
4. Explain the following key points about literacy tests:
 - States determine 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.
5. 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?
6. Show students “[Special Message to the Congress: The American Promise on the Voting Rights Act](#)” a four minute video excerpt from President Lyndon B. Johnson on YouTube.
Teacher Note: Cue the video to 11:15 and stop the video at 14:14.
7. 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?
8. Have students share out their answers.
9. 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 (used in Day 1 and Day 3).
10. 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?
11. Checking for Understanding (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

	<p>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, ‘<i>In our system the first and most vital of all our rights is the right to vote.</i>’ Use specific evidence from the lesson activities to explain your answer.</p>
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Civics Content Vocabulary

Word/Term	Definition
13th Amendment	an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that made slavery unconstitutional in the United States
14th Amendment	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	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	an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that gave women the right to vote
24th Amendment	an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that made poll taxes illegal as a requirement for voting
26th Amendment	an amendment to the U.S. Constitution that lowered the minimum voting age to 18
amendment	a change to a constitution (e.g., U.S. Constitution, Florida Constitution)
civil rights	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	a federal law that prohibits employment discrimination based on race, sex, color, religion, or national origin
Civil Rights Act of 1968	a federal law that prohibits discrimination related to the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin or sex
discrimination	treating a person or group unfairly based on their race, religion, gender, disability, or other reasons
Equal Rights Amendment	a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution outlawing discrimination based on sex
literacy test	a written test used to decide whether or not someone was eligible to register vote
poll tax	a fee someone has to pay in order to vote
prohibit	to forbid or to not allow something
segregation	the separation of people, such as segregation based on race
states' rights	a power or issue for individual states to determine
suffrage	the right to vote

Voting Rights Act of 1965	a federal law that banned race discrimination in voting practices by federal, state, and local governments
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ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

[Civics 360 Resources](#)

Florida Department of Education's Civic Literacy Reading List

- *Words We Live By: Your Annotated Guide to the Constitution* by Linda R. Monk

ANSWER KEYS

Sample Answers: Voting Rights Timeline activity sheet

Sample Answers: Expansion of Voting Rights activity sheet

Sample Answers: Mock Voter Identity Timeline

Written Response: Sample Scoring Rubric

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/>.

Voting Rights Timeline: <https://www.history.com/news/voting-rights-timeline>

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

Special Message to the Congress: The American Promise on the Voting Rights Act:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=5NvPhiuGZ6I>

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

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

The Journey for Civil Rights: Adapted from, http://crdl.usg.edu/events/civil_rights_act_1964/,

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

Literacy Test: <https://jimcrowmuseum.ferris.edu/question/2012/pdfs-docs/literacytest.pdf>

Voting Rights: 15th Amendment: <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/15th-amendment>

Voting Rights: 19th Amendment: <https://www.archives.gov/milestone-documents/19th-amendment>

Voting Rights: 24th Amendment: <https://history.house.gov/HistoricalHighlight/Detail/37045>

Voting Rights: 26th Amendment:

<https://www.whitehouse.gov/briefing-room/presidential-actions/2021/06/30/a-proclamation-on-the-50th-anniversary-of-the-26th-amendment/#:~:text=On%20July%201%2C%201971%2C%20our,the%20voting%20age%20to%2018.>