



## Centennial of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment - Resources for High School Teachers

### Grades 9-12

**Play: *Failure is Impossible*** <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/woman-suffrage/script.html>

Failure is Impossible, a narrative script commissioned by The US National Archives, celebrates the anniversary of the passage of the 19th Amendment, granting women the right to vote. It is a dramatization of the debate for women's suffrage in the original words of its leaders, adversaries, and lawmakers. Based on historic documents in the archives, the struggle is told through the voices of Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Frederick Douglass, Susan B. Anthony, Sojourner Truth and Woodrow Wilson among others. This short play, 40 minutes long and involving four to fifteen students, is ideally suited to be read or acted in classrooms or school clubs, ranging from civics, US history, English drama, and debate.

<https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/woman-suffrage/script.html> Students enhance the performance of Failure is Impossible by creating a visual montage to serve as a backdrop. A resource for students is "Votes for Women: A Portrait of Persistence," an exhibit created by The Smithsonian's National Portrait Gallery. Selections from the exhibit, including photographs and biographies, show the struggle for full democracy led by heroic women. <https://npg.si.edu/exhibition/votes-for-women>

**Kids Voting USA lessons/activities** (free, register at <https://kidsvotingusa.org/> )

The exercise "Voting Rights Act of 1965" in Kids Voting USA curriculum emphasizes the struggle faced by minorities to secure the right to vote denied to them by decades of discrimination. In groups, students research actual instances of voter discrimination and choose to write a narrative, role play, or create a visual presentation illustrating the injustice. Students discuss the importance of the 1965 Voting Rights Act in addressing discrimination and consider recent attempts to deny voters their rights in state and federal elections. Two handouts from Kids Voting USA supplement this class activity: 1965 Alabama Literacy Test and chronology of the growth of suffrage.

### **TED Ed videos**

The fight for the right to vote in the United States - Nicki Beaman Griffin

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=P9VdyPbbzII> 5 minute video on how voting rights have changed since the first election in 1789.

The historic women's suffrage march on Washington - Michelle Mehrtens

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KhYRqozTDE> 5 minute video on the Women's Suffrage Parade in Washington, DC in 1913 and events leading to the passage of the 19<sup>th</sup> Amendment.

## **Spokesman-Review article**

“Women nationwide won the right to vote after long struggle 100 years ago, but Washington voters expanded suffrage a decade earlier” <https://www.spokesman.com/stories/2019/sep/29/women-nationwide-won-the-right-to-vote-after-long/>

## **Primary Documents on Women’s Suffrage**

National Archives: <https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/woman-suffrage>