



Law Day Teachers' Guide

Created to prompt discussion about the importance of voting and the ongoing struggle to ensure voting rights for all citizens of the United States

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Sponsored by:

Law, Youth and Citizenship Program of the New York State Bar Association
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About this guide

This guide was created to accompany and complement the New York News Publishers Association’s Law Day 2014 Newspaper In Education series of features. The features highlight public figures from the 1800s through today and their quotes about the importance of voting. The guide includes supplementary content and graphic organizers to make the materials easier to incorporate into the classroom.

The materials were funded by a grant from the Law, Youth and Citizenship Program of the New York State Bar Association and the New York Newspapers Foundation.

A highlighted Tri-State ELA Rubric of the Common Core State Standards for this group of lessons can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/LawDayTri-StateCCSSRubric>

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Background Resource Links:

Sojourner Truth

She was an African-American abolitionist and women's rights activist. Truth was born into slavery in Ulster County, New York with the name Isabella Baumfree. The quote in this feature comes from a speech given on May 10, 1867 which can be found in the *History of Woman Suffrage, Volume II*, edited by Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B. Anthony, and Matilda Joslyn Gage. Here's a link to the text online at Project Gutenberg: <http://www.gutenberg.org/files/28039/28039-h/28039-h.htm>

Alice Paul

This quote is taken from a protest banner accompanied by Alice Paul and others during a demonstration at in Washington in 1917. It is referenced in the book, "Gibson Girls and Suffragists: Perceptions of Women from 1900 to 1918" by Catherine Gourley. To view the portion of the book where this quote is referenced go online to <http://bit.ly/1qiT39x>. Additionally, here is a link to a slide show of quotes by famous women throughout U.S. History created by the League of Women Voters http://www.lwvaa.org/images/meetings/lwvaa_mtg_2012-03-17/WIJ%20slide%20show%20corrected.ppsx

Franklin Delano Roosevelt

The quote from this feature was taken from a radio address by Franklin Delano Roosevelt, President of the United States and Democratic Nominee for Reelection. Broadcast from White House, October 5, 1944
Here's a link to a transcript of the complete speech - <http://www.ibiblio.org/pha/policy/1944/1944-10-05a.html>

Lyndon B. Johnson

This quote is taken from President Lyndon B. Johnson's remarks in the Capitol Rotunda at the signing of the Voting Rights Act on August 6, 1965 - <http://www.lbjlib.utexas.edu/johnson/archives.hom/speeches.hom/650806.asp>

Gore Vidal

As stated in the feature the quote is from Vidal's book "Screening History" published by Harvard University Press in 1994. Here is link to other quotes by Gore Vidal with his views about politics and government - <http://www.gorevidalpages.com/2011/01/gore-vidal-quotes-us-politics-culture.html>

Roger Mudd

A short excerpt from “Code of Ethics” by Roger Mudd included in “The Princeton Anthology of Writing: Favorite Pieces by the Ferris/McGraw Writers at Princeton University”

Edited by John McPhee & Carol Rigolot

With a Preface by John McPhee © 2001 -

http://press.princeton.edu/chapters/s1_7108.html

Hillary Rodham Clinton

U.S. Senator Hillary Rodham Clinton (D-NY) was quoted with this statement in U.S. Senator Barbara Boxer’s press release on February 18, 2005 in reference to the Count Every Vote Act election reform bill.

Here’s a link to the original press release -

<https://www.boxer.senate.gov/en/press/releases/021805b.cfm>

Constitutional Amendments

(that relate to voting rights)

United States Constitution –

- **Amendment XV** - 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.
- **Amendment XIX** - 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.
- **Amendment XXIV** - 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.
- **Amendment XXVI** - 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.

Who Said It?

OVERVIEW:

Before the class begins reading/studying the series, this lesson will determine how much your students already know or can predict using contextual clues.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to read a nonfiction passage or text
- Understand and articulate what the text directly as well as indirectly states in order to make an assumption about the text

STANDARDS:

NYS Social Studies and ELA Standards (Key Ideas and Performance Indicators) by grade level: [Grades 9-10](#), [Grade 11](#), and [Grade 12](#)

A highlighted Tri-State ELA Rubric of the Common Core State Standards for this group of lessons can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/LawDayTri-StateCCSSRubric>

MATERIALS:

- Graphic organizer – Who Said It?

PROCEDURES:

- Identify the individuals pictured on the left side of the graphic organizer.
- Read the quotes on the right hand side of the graphic organizer.
- Match the quotes with the individual who said it.
- Students should be prepared to defend why they paired an individual to a particular quote.

Closure:

As a class, briefly discuss the Who Said It? activity

Evaluation:

Students will be informally assessed on their ability to obtain the facts from the newspaper and inferences about future actions based on those facts and by the completion of the student assessment:

- **What one new thing did you learn from this activity?**

Adaptations:

- Working in pairs or small groups will help ELL students and those with special learning needs to complete the desired tasks.

Name _____

Who Said It?

First, identify the individuals on the left hand side of the page. Then pair each person up with a quote from the right hand side of the page. Consider the time, purpose and possible audience of each quote to help determine who might have said it.

Individuals pictured are: **Hillary Clinton, Lyndon Johnson, Roger Mudd, Alice Paul, Franklin Roosevelt, Sojourner Truth and Gore Vidal.**



"I am sometimes told that - Women aint fit to vote. Why, don't you know that a woman had seven devils in her: and do you suppose a woman is fit to rule the nation? Seven devils aint no account; a man had a legion in him." (1867)

"We women of America tell you that America is not a democracy. Twenty million women are denied the right to vote." (1917)

"Nobody will ever deprive the American people of the right to vote except the American people themselves and the only way they could do this is by not voting." (1944)

"The vote is the most powerful instrument ever devised by man for breaking down injustice and destroying the terrible walls which imprison men because they are different from other men." (1965)

"Half of the American people never read a newspaper. Half never voted for President — the same half?" (1994)

"No matter what name we give it or how we judge it, a candidate's character is central to political reporting because it is central to a citizen's decision in voting." (2001)

"Voting is the most precious right of every citizen, and we have a moral obligation to ensure the integrity of our voting process." (2005)

Assessment: What one thing did you learn from this activity?

Reading Between the Lines

OVERVIEW:

Using the same historic quotes in the “Who Said It?” lesson, students will specify the inferences (reading between the lines) they used to help identify who was associated with each quote. Students will also practice this skill using current articles from the newspaper (print or electronic). This lesson can be done before or while reading/using the series.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to read a nonfiction passage or text
- Draw inferences from nonfiction text
- Identify, extract, and cite text to thoroughly support their responses

STANDARDS:

NYS Social Studies and ELA Standards (Key Ideas and Performance Indicators) by grade level: [Grades 9-10](#), [Grade 11](#), and [Grade 12](#)

A highlighted Tri-State ELA Rubric of the Common Core State Standards for this group of lessons can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/LawDayTri-StateCCSSRubric>

MATERIALS:

- Newspapers (in print or electronic)
- Internet access (for electronic editions of the newspaper or additional resources)
- Graphic organizers – Who Said It? and Reading Between the Lines

PROCEDURES:

- Read the historic quotes individually or as a class
- Individually or in small groups, have students infer information not explicitly stated in both the historic quotes and current news article
- Record inferences on graphic organizer – Reading Between the Lines

Closure:

Lead a discussion about inference and how past knowledge effects our understanding of new information and current events.

Evaluation:

Students will be informally assessed on their ability to obtain the facts of the selected case from the newspaper and other sources and by the completion of the student assessment:

- **Complete this statement: I still have a question about...**

Adaptations:

- By working in small groups, ELL students and those with special learning needs should be able to complete the graphic organizer.

Name _____

Reading Between the Lines

An inference is a reasonable guess based on available information. Making an inference is sometimes called “reading between the lines,” because the inference is not stated directly in the information you have. The information leads you to an inference. After reading the historic quotes about voting from the “Who Said It?” sheet and a current newspaper article about voting issues, use the chart below to record inferences you made while reading.

What I Know From Quote + What I Know From My Brain = My Inference

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What I Know From News Article + What I Know From My Brain = My Inference

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| | | |
|--|--|--|

Assessment: Complete this statement: I still have a question about...

Voting: Point of View

OVERVIEW:

This lesson will give students a basic understanding of how to identify an author or speaker's point of view, including the details of evidence (facts, examples, reasoning) he/she uses to support their opinions.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to read a nonfiction passage or text
- Demonstrate a basic understanding of the historic importance of voting
- Distinguish the difference between facts and opinions

STANDARDS:

NYS Social Studies and ELA Standards (Key Ideas and Performance Indicators) by grade level: [Grades 9-10](#), [Grade 11](#), and [Grade 12](#)

A highlighted Tri-State ELA Rubric of the Common Core State Standards for this group of lessons can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/LawDayTri-StateCCSSRubric>

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the NIE features for Law Day 2014 with historic quotes
- Newspapers (in print or electronic)
- Internet access (for electronic editions of the newspaper or additional resources)
- Graphic organizer – Voting: Point of View

PROCEDURES:

- Read the historic quotes individually or as a class
- Individually or in small groups, have students look for current examples of issues that affect voter rights today using newspapers (print or electronic) and other resources
- Each student or small group will select one current example and any three historical quotes from the features and complete the graphic organizer – Voting: Point of View

Closure:

Lead a discussion about facts versus opinions and how historic context shapes opinions.

Evaluation:

Students will be informally assessed on their ability to distinguish between facts and opinions, by participation in class discussion and by the completion of the student assessment:

- **Do you feel differently about voting now that you've learned more? Explain why or why not.**

Adaptations:

- Working in pairs or small groups will help ELL students and those with special learning needs to complete the desired tasks.

Name _____

Voting: Point of View

Look through the newspaper (print or online) for examples of current voting rights issues. Select one and any three historic quotes and fill in the graph below.

| | |
|--------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Who: Author/Speaker: | Who: Author/Speaker: |
| What: Audience | What: Audience |
| When and Where: Time and Place | When and Where: Time and Place |
| Why: Reason or Purpose | Why: Reason or Purpose |
| Tone or Mood: | Tone or Mood: |
| IMPORTANCE OF VOTING | |
| Who: Author/Speaker: | Who: Author/Speaker: |
| What: Audience | What: Audience |
| When and Where: Time and Place | When and Where: Time and Place |
| Why: Reason or Purpose | Why: Reason or Purpose |
| Tone or Mood: | Tone or Mood: |

Assessment: Do you feel differently about voting now that you've learned more? Explain why or why not.

Voting: Then & Now

OVERVIEW:

These historic quotes all reflect the importance of a citizen's right to vote. This lesson will have students compare and contrast these historic references with voting rights issues that still exist in America today.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Demonstrate the ability to read a nonfiction passage or text
- Identify current and historic U.S. challenges to the voting rights
- Identify, extract, and cite text to thoroughly support their responses

STANDARDS:

NYS Social Studies and ELA Standards (Key Ideas and Performance Indicators) by grade level: [Grades 9-10](#), [Grade 11](#), and [Grade 12](#)

A highlighted Tri-State ELA Rubric of the Common Core State Standards for this group of lessons can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/LawDayTri-StateCCSSRubric>

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the NIE features for Law Day 2014 with historic quotes
- Newspapers (in print or electronic)
- Internet access (for electronic editions of the newspaper or additional resources)
- Graphic organizer – Voting: Then & Now

PROCEDURES:

- Read the historic quotes individually or as a class
- In small groups, have students look for current examples of issues that affect voter rights today using newspapers (print or electronic) and other resources and complete the graphic organizer – Voting: Then & Now

Closure:

Each group take turns sharing with the class what they found for one of the quotes.

Evaluation:

Students will be informally assessed on their ability to obtain the facts of the selected case from the newspaper and other sources and by the completion of the student assessment:

- **Complete this statement: I was surprised to learn...**

Adaptations:

- By working in small groups, ELL students and those with special learning needs should be able to complete the graphic organizer.

Name _____

Voting: Then & Now

After reading the historic quotes about voting, look through the newspaper and other resources for news about voting rights today. Use the chart below to organize what you find.

| Voting Issues/Concerns of the Past | Current Voting Issues/Concerns |
|------------------------------------|--------------------------------|
| Susan B. Anthony | |
| Alice Paul | |
| Franklin D. Roosevelt | |
| Lyndon B. Johnson | |
| Gore Vidal | |
| Roger Mudd | |
| Hillary Clinton | |
| | |

Based on the available evidence, write a brief summary of current voting issues facing the United States public. Be sure back up your opinion with facts.

Assessment: Complete this statement: I was surprised to learn...

Voting: An Acrostic Poem

OVERVIEW:

Students will apply what they have learned about the importance of voting by creating an acrostic poem.

OBJECTIVES:

Students will:

- Understand and explain what an acrostic poem is
- Students will be able to use knowledge of antonyms and synonyms to determine meanings of words
- Demonstrate knowledge of the importance of voting through the acrostic poem each creates

STANDARDS:

NYS Social Studies and ELA Standards (Key Ideas and Performance Indicators) by grade level: [Grades 9-10](#), [Grade 11](#), and [Grade 12](#)

A highlighted Tri-State ELA Rubric of the Common Core State Standards for this group of lessons can be found at <http://tinyurl.com/LawDayTri-StateCCSSRubric>

MATERIALS:

- Copies of the NIE features for Law Day 2014 with historic quotes
- Newspapers (in print or electronic)
- Internet access (for electronic editions of the newspaper or additional resources)
- Graphic organizer – Voting Champions

PROCEDURES:

- Review or introduce Acrostic Poems depending on the background knowledge of your students including modeling an example of creating an acrostic poem.
- Independently, or in small groups, have students use the newspaper (print or electronic) to help find and brainstorm vocabulary words appropriate to the task.
- Write, share with a partner and revise if necessary based on feedback

Closure:

Re-cap different aspects of the importance of voting. Display the final acrostic poems on a class bulletin board or via an electronic slide presentation.

Evaluation:

Students will be informally assessed on their ability to obtain the facts of the selected case from the newspaper and other sources and by the completion of the student assessment:

- **What new vocabulary words did you learn doing this activity?**

Adaptations:

- Teacher may need to model more than one example or use a word wall to assist students in identifying appropriate words for the task.
- By working in small groups, ELL students and those with special learning needs should be able to complete the graphic organizer.

Name _____

Voting: An Acrostic Poem

Now that you know more importance of voting, why not write a poem about it? Acrostics are a fun poetic form that anyone can write. To complete the acrostic, from newspapers, select words that describe a leader and include the letters in the word, "VOTING." Note that the letters in the words you choose may appear at the beginning, middle or end of the words.

V
O
T
I
N
G

Follow-up: Explain your choice of words to another student. Respond to any questions. Then, write a paragraph or two about the importance of voting and why every vote counts in which you incorporate your words and your reasons for choosing them.

Assessment: What new vocabulary words did you learn doing this activity?

Source: This graphic organizer was modified from the original created by NCPF, NIE Coordinator, Sandra Cook called "What is a Leader?" For more lessons on leadership go to <http://allthingsvoting.org>

Web resources in alphabetical order:

[All Things Voting](#) – A website created by N.C. Newspapers In Education with lesson plans including a teaching guide for leadership.

[Bill of Rights Institute](#) – has lesson plans specific to voting called “Voting Rights in America.” The mission of the Bill of Rights Institute is to educate young people about the words and ideas of America’s Founders, the liberties guaranteed in our Founding documents, and how our Founding principles continue to affect and shape a free society. It is the goal of the Institute to help the next generation understand the freedom and opportunity the Constitution offers.

[iCivics](#) - Explore the evolution of voting rights in the United States through an interactive PowerPoint presentation highlighting landmark changes.

[Writing and Speaking about the Importance of Voting: Why Vote?](#) – A complete Common Core ELA module from EngageNY.org - This unit connects students’ study of the Women’s Suffrage Movement, voting in the present day, specifically the issue of low voter turnout among young adults.

[National Archives](#) - Using facsimiles of historical records from the files of the U.S. House of Representative Judiciary Committee, students will evaluate evidence and consider the constitutional issues that the committee encountered as it deliberated the Voting Rights Act of 1965. Students will examine the concept of federalism and weigh the proper balance of powers between Federal and state governments when protecting the right to vote.

[ReadWriteThink – Voting What’s It All About?](#) – This set of lessons explores what students already know or think they know about voting, has students researching current elections and determining facts from opinions.

[Scholastic – Voting and the Constitution](#) - Students will learn about the Constitution’s many provisions for voting. Students will participate in an informal discussion of the election process, including the Electoral College, the evolution of voting rights, and how the Constitution has been amended to keep up with the times.

[Southern Poverty Law Center – Teaching Tolerance – Expanding Voting Rights](#) - For several decades, voting in most states was limited to white male landowners, called freeholders. Gradually, the franchise, or right to vote, expanded to include non-landowners, then African-American men, then women, and eventually people as young as 18. The process had its twists and turns; it was far from a straight line of ever-expanding voting rights. And it involved the federal government taking a larger role in defining the people who could vote. This series traces that complicated process.

The [New York State Bar Association's Law, Youth and Citizenship Program \(LYC\)](#) promotes citizenship and law-related education in schools throughout New York State. LYC assists educators in creating opportunities for students to become effective citizens able to participate fully in our democratic society.