

History of Voting

Most of us take our right to vote for granted. But our state and federal governments sometimes did not let certain groups of people vote—including women, African-Americans, Native Americans, young people, people who didn't own land and who couldn't pay poll taxes, and people who couldn't read and write. In history, these groups of people organized to fight for their right to vote.

Activities

Brainstorm about what you already know about the history of voting. Write it on newsprint or the white board.

Do the History of Voting activity at <www.nelrc.org/changeagent/extras>.

Read “What if the Government Said You Couldn't Vote?” (on the next page), and consider these questions about each group:

Who do you think did not allow this group the right to vote? Why did they want to do that?

Who do you think helped this group fight for the vote? Who maybe fought against it?

Do you think anyone will stop this group from voting again? Why or why not?

Vocabulary

Suffrage means the right to vote. A **suffragist** was someone who fought for the right to vote. Write a sentence using suffrage or suffragist.



Write a caption for this photo.



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