Lesson Plan: Day 2

Unit Name:

3) Complaints in Declarat worksheet that asks them to match the grievances written in contemporary English with the grievances written in 1848 English. (Attach 5). They may work with a partner.
4) Go over answers as a class when everyone has finished. If students finish early,

Content: Elizabeth Cady Stanton
Seneca Falls Convention
Declaration of Sentiments

Assignment:

1) Complete open-response questions 1-
To be handed in tomorrow at the start of class.
2) a r Truth. (Attach 6). Be ready to

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When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied, but one to which the laws of nature and of nature's God entitle them, a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course.

We hold these truths to be self-evident; that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments are instituted, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government, laying its foundation on such principles, and organizing its powers in such form, as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness. Prudence, indeed, will dictate that governments long established should not be changed for light and transient causes; and, accordingly, all experience hath shown that mankind are more disposed to suffer, while evils are sufferable, than to right themselves by abolishing the forms to which they were accustomed. But when a long train of abuses and usurpations, pursuing invariably the same object, evinces a design to reduce them under absolute despotism, it is their duty to throw off such government, and to provide new guards for their future security. Such has been the patient sufferance of the women under this government, and such is now the necessity which constrains them to demand the equal station to which they are entitled.

The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world.

He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.

He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men - both natives and foreigners.

Having deprived her of this first right as a citizen, the elective

delinquencies which exclude women from society, are not only tolerated but deemed of little account in man.

He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and her God.

He has endeavored, in every way that he could to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious degradation, - in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves aggrieved, oppressed, and fraudulently deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of these United States.

In entering upon the great work before us, we anticipate no small amount of misconception, misrepresentation, and ridicule; but we shall use every instrumentality within our power to affect our object. We shall employ agents, circulate tracts, petition the State and national Legislatures, and endeavor to enlist the pulpit and the press in our behalf. We hope this Convention will be followed by a series of Conventions, embracing every part of the country.

Firmly relying upon the final triumph of the Right and the True, we do this day affix our signatures to this declaration.

Questions to answer:

1. **What document does the Declaration of Sentiments, especially its introduction, resemble?**
2. **What are three specific examples of how the documents are similar?**
3. **What are two specific examples of how the documents differ?**
4. **Who was the audience for this document?**
5. **What are four specific grievances listed in the Declaration of Sentiments? Put these in your own words.**
6. **Are the frustrations expressed in this document justified? In other words, did women have a right to be angry about their place in society during this period? Why or why not?**

Complaints in the Declaration of Sentiments

Elizabeth Cady Stanton wrote a Declaration of Sentiments for the first Woman's Rights Convention, held in Seneca, New York, in 1848. She based the document on Thomas Jefferson's Declaration of Independence. Like Jefferson, Stanton included a list of complaints.

I. Match these summary versions of Stanton's complaints, written in contemporary language, with her original complaints on the next two pages.

1. Women had to obey laws created without their input.
2. Women could not attend college.
3. Married women were, for all intents and purposes, legally dead.
4. Women were not allowed to vote.
5. Women's self-esteem was ruined due to their treatment at the hands of men.
6. Women had fewer rights than men with low morals and men who were not citizens.
7. Unmarried women were taxed with no say in how the money was to be spent.
8. Women could not be ministers, doctors, or lawyers. Women's work was low-paying.
9. Women in divorce cases had no say over matters such as who would raise the children.
10. A married woman had no rights to property or the money she earned.
11. Men were given complete control over and responsibility for their wives.
12. Men were unrightfully "playing God" by deciding what was appropriate for women.
13. Because women could not vote, they could be more easily exploited.
14. Women were not allowed to hold important positions in the church or the state.
15. There was a different standard of behavior for men and women.

Stanton's Original Complaints:

_____ He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.

_____ He has compelled her to submit to law in the formation of which she had no voice.

_____ He has withheld from her rights which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men, both natives and foreigners.

_____ Having deprived her of this first right as a citizen, the elective franchise, thereby leaving her without representation in the halls of legislation, he has oppressed her on all sides.

_____ He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.

_____ He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.

_____ He has made her morally, an irresponsible being, as she can commit many crimes with impunity, provided they be done in the presence of her husband. In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master — the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty and to administer chastisement.

_____ He has so framed the laws of divorce, as to what shall be the proper causes and, in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given, as to be wholly regardless of the happiness of the women — the law, in all cases, going upon a false supposition of the supremacy of man and giving all power into his hands.

_____ After depriving her of all rights as a married woman, if single and the owner of property, he has taxed her to support a government which recognizes her only when her property can be made profitable to it.

_____ He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration. He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.

_____ He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her.

_____ He allows her in church, as well as state, but a subordinate position, claiming apostolic authority for her exclusion from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the church.

_____ He has created a false public sentiment by giving to the world a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral delinquencies which exclude women from society are not only tolerated but deemed of little account in man.

_____ He has usurped the prerogative of Jehovah himself, claiming it as his right to assign for her a sphere of action, when that belongs to her conscience and to her God.
_____ He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.

II. **Questions** (Use the numbers above to identify complaints)**:**

1. Which complaint(s) would you consider the most serious?

2. Which complaint(s) most resemble complaints of colonists prior to the Revolutionary War?

3. Which complaint(s) relate more to entrenched attitudes about women than they do to legal obstacles to equality?

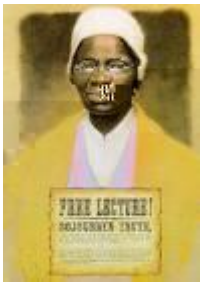
4. Which—if any—of the problems referred to in the complaints do you regard as still problematic today?

5. Which problem(s) referred to in the complaints, once solved, likely led to an improvement in society for everyone?

After reading, answer the following questions.

1. Who is the audience for this speech? Were there likely more men or women? Black or white? Why do you think?

2.

3.
emotions was she feeling? What do these words tell you about her character? Can you imagine her giving this speech? What kind qualities must a woman have had to give a speech like this?

4. Look for historical clues in her poem/speech. What does she say about white men? What does she tell you about her life as a slave?