



The Equal Rights Amendment: Lesson Plan

Topic	
<p>The Equal Rights Amendment (ERA) is a proposed amendment to the U.S. Constitution that guarantees equal constitutional rights to United States citizens of all sexes. The most recent proposition of the ERA reads, “Equality of rights under the law shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or any State on account of sex.” The ERA was originally created to further the active civic status of women after winning the right to vote. To this day, the only right granted to women by federal law is the right to vote.</p>	
Possible subjects/classes	Time needed
<p>History Social Studies Civics</p>	<p>45-60 minutes</p>
Video link:	
<p>https://academy4sc.org/topic/the-equal-rights-amendment-an-ongoing-struggle/</p>	
Objective: <i>What will students know/be able to do at the end of class?</i>	
<p>By the end of the lesson, students will be able to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Describe the purpose of the Equal Rights Amendment. • Identify the key issues that make the Equal Rights Amendment necessary. • Explain the degree to which women are protected by the U.S. Constitution. 	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
<p>Amendment, Ratify, Discrimination</p>	
Materials Needed	
<p>Paper and pens for students Worksheet</p>	
Before you watch	



Think-pair-share: Ask students to write down what they know about how personal rights are connected to the U.S. Constitution and the amendments to the Constitution. Also, ask students to write down the questions they have about the same topic. Then gather in small groups and review responses. Debrief as a class.

While you watch

Answer questions 1-4 on the Worksheet.

After you watch/discussion questions

1. What are some examples of discrimination based on sex?
2. How do the words spoken by Alice Paul almost a century ago resonate with you today? “We shall not be safe until the principle of equal rights is written into the framework of our government.”
3. What is the connection between being safe and being protected by the law?

Activity Ideas

- Brainstorm with a partner about the kind of rights you feel everyone is entitled to, whether they are included in the Constitution or not. As you come up with these rights (examples: right to food, shelter, water), consider examples of people who don’t feel secure in them (examples: those without access to safe food and water, or who are homeless). After brainstorming, debrief as a class. Have students share these rights and write them on the board. Reflect on how although these rights are considered universal and innate, different groups have had their rights infringed upon.
- Write a journal entry about a time when you or someone you know had been denied a right. Entries can be roughly a paragraph or two long. Then get into groups and discuss what it means to be included or excluded from the Constitution. Why is it important to be “protected” under the law? Then collectively answer questions 5-7 on the Worksheet.

Sources/places to learn more

1. Alice Paul Institute, (2018). Equal Rights Amendment Resources. <https://www.equalrightsamendment.org/> and [ERA Resources](#)
2. Alice Paul Institute: Education, Empowerment, Equality, (2015). “The History of the Equal Rights Amendment.” <https://www.alicepaul.org/era/>



3. Mrs. America (2020). Hulu series created by Dahvi Waller.
4. ACLU American Civil Liberties Union (2020). [Know Your Rights: Sex Discrimination](#)
5. United 4 Equality, LLC. #ERA2020 Campaign. <http://www.united4equality.com/landing-3>
6. Institute for Women’s Policy Research, (2020). [Pay Equity and Discrimination](#)