



Sojourner Truth: Lesson Plan

Topic	
<p>Sojourner Truth is a key historical figure known for her contributions in both the anti-slavery and women's rights movements. She was one of the only Black women to be a part of both campaigns, and one of the first people to acknowledge that these movements did not have to be mutually exclusive. Her speeches, like "Ain't I A Woman?" are seen as valuable primary sources to exemplify the efforts of Black women to make their way through the sexist and racist narratives of history.</p>	
Possible subjects/classes	Time needed
<p>History Politics Social Sciences English</p>	<p>45-60 minutes</p>
Video link:	
<p>https://academy4sc.org/video/sojourner-truth-aint-i-a-woman/</p>	
Objective: <i>What will students know/be able to do at the end of class?</i>	
<p>Students will be able to...</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Recognize and explain the legacy of Sojourner Truth in women's anti-racist issues. • Identify the challenges that Sojourner Truth overcame to carry out her activism. • Define feminist intersectionality and draw examples from the advocacy of Sojourner Truth. 	
Key Concepts & Vocabulary	
<p>Abolition, Suffrage, Feminist Intersectionality</p>	
Materials Needed	
<p>Worksheet</p>	

Before you watch

Turn & Talk: How do the movements for gender equality and racial equality intersect? How/why have Black women been historically marginalized by both movements?

While you watch

Answer questions 1-3 in the worksheet.

After you watch/discussion questions

1. What barriers do you think women like Sojourner truth faced within the anti-slavery and women's rights movements? Why?
2. What is the importance of acknowledging intersectionality within women's rights issues?
3. How does bias and prejudice manifest itself within social justice movements? How does it undermine their purposes? Do you find any examples of these in Sojourner Truth's life and activism?

Activity Ideas

1. Read both versions of the speech "Ain't I A Woman" by Sojourner Truth, found [here](https://www.thesojournertruthproject.com/compare-the-speeches): <https://www.thesojournertruthproject.com/compare-the-speeches>*. Ask students to list out the themes found, and to shortly describe the main takeaway of the speech. Discuss. Which one is more powerful? Why? On this site you can also find several videos of people reciting the speech. Choose at least one to watch together and discuss. Or, have different groups of students watch different versions and discuss their takeaways.
2. * Some of the words in these speeches are racial slurs. Be mindful of not reading them out loud for the sake of Academic freedom, as they have violent connotations.
3. Using the structure and topics discussed in the "Ain't I A Woman" speech, ask students to write their own, either advocating for or supporting an issue that Black women and/or women of color currently face.
4. Complete and then discuss answers from the worksheet.

Sources/places to learn more

1. "Her History." Sojourner Truth Memorial Committee, 16 Nov. 2017, sojournertruthmemorial.org/sojourner-truth/her-history/.



2. "Sojourner Truth." National Women's History Museum, 24 Jan. 2019, www.womenshistory.org/exhibits/sojourner-truth?gclid=EAlaIQobChMIoYDX-7LS6QIVAcDICH0tZwAXEAAAYASAAEgly9PD_BwE.
3. The Narrative of Sojourner Truth. Dictated by Sojourner Truth (ca.1797-1883); edited by Olive Gilbert; Appendix by Theodore D. Weld. Boston: The Author, 1850.
4. Blakemore, Erin. "How Sojourner Truth Used Photography to Help End Slavery." Smithsonian.com, Smithsonian Institution, 28 July 2016, www.smithsonianmag.com/smart-news/how-sojourner-truth-used-photography-help-end-slavery-180959952/.