

In this lesson, students will listen to various episodes of Prairie Public’s “Dakota Datebook” related to woman suffrage and create their own based on primary source documents.

Supplies

- Student access to the internet for research
- [“Dakota Datebook: 100 Years of Women Voting”](#)
- Copies of the “Dakota Datebook” Primary Sources worksheet
- Two copies of the “Dakota Datebook” Outline for each student

Setup

- This lesson would be a nice addition to a lesson on woman suffrage or women’s history. It would also work well as a standalone mini research project. You could broaden the topics of research based on student interest.
- Students will need access to research information. Scheduling a trip to or virtual meetings with the State Archives would be very helpful for this lesson. Contact the State Archives at 701.328.2091 or archives@nd.gov.

Objectives

- Students will learn about the woman suffrage movement in North Dakota.
- Students will learn to use primary resources and archival documents.
- Students will write a piece that could be used on “Dakota Datebook.”

Background

Woman suffrage in North Dakota refers to the historical movement advocating for the right of women to vote. Women worked at the state level to get a state constitutional amendment passed as well as at the national level for the passage of what would become the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution. North Dakota actively participated in the suffrage movement through both local and national

organizations, such as the National American Woman Suffrage Association, the Congressional Union, the Woman’s Christian Temperance Union, and the National Woman’s Party.

While the state constitution was being written, there were efforts to include woman suffrage as a right, but this failed to be included in the final draft. Though women could vote on school issues and for county and state superintendents of public instruction, they were barred from voting on other issues or offices. Woman suffrage bills and amendments were proposed every year, starting in 1889, the year North Dakota became a state. In North Dakota, the campaign for woman suffrage faced challenges similar to those encountered in other states. Suffragists organized rallies, lectures, and petitions to raise awareness and garner support. They argued for women’s right to participate in the democratic process and emphasized the principles of equality and justice. Elizabeth Preston Anderson, Clara Darrow, Elizabeth Darrow O’Neil, and Beulah Amidon were just a few of the women who led the way to get women the right to vote in North Dakota.

In the 1910s, the suffrage movement began to gain momentum at the state and national levels. North Dakota women formed the statewide suffrage association Votes for Women League. There were several leagues formed throughout the state, and they targeted their specific regions in agitating for suffrage. North Dakota finally granted women a partial right to vote in 1917, which allowed them to vote for the president of the United States and for municipal (city) issues. Full voting rights were not extended to women until the ratification of the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution in 1920. The contributions of women in North Dakota were crucial to the broader success of the suffrage movement in the United States.

Activity

1. Discuss the purpose of “Dakota Datebook.”
2. Have students listen to a few of the episodes relating to [woman suffrage](#) in North Dakota.
3. As they listen, have them note the general flow of the episode and length. Ask them what they noticed while listening.
4. Hand the students the “Dakota Datebook” Outline. Have the students listen to another episode from “Dakota Datebook” and complete the outline as they listen. You may need to have them listen to the episode more than once.
5. Once completed, discuss the different points in the outline and how these points were presented in the episode to ensure every student understands the process.
6. Give them the “Dakota Datebook” Primary Sources worksheet.
7. Tell them they will use the attached worksheets to conduct and record their research.
8. Have the students choose a person, event, or topic related to women’s history in North Dakota (or you could make it North Dakota history in general). It may be interesting to have students focus on their own community. We suggest starting with our State Archives [manuscript](#) and [subject guides](#) for inspiration.
9. Tell the students they need to find five primary sources related to their topic. Besides the State Archives information above, you can also use [Photobook](#), [Digital Horizons](#), [Chronicling America](#), and other repositories rich in primary sources.
10. Have an example of a primary source and the relevant information from that source you would like included.
11. Once the students have completed their research, they will start working on the outline for the “Dakota Datebook” episode they are writing. Hand out a second copy of the “Dakota Datebook” Outline so students can compose their episode using the outline.
12. Have the students present the episode to the class.

Extension

1. Students could submit their episode to Prairie Public’s “Dakota Datebook” series to see if it might get aired.
2. This project could be a jumping off point for a National History Day in North Dakota project.

Reflection questions

1. Based on what you learned in your research and through the presentations, how have women contributed to the state?
2. How can a short piece like an episode of “Dakota Datebook” inspire people to learn more about North Dakota?

“Dakota Datebook” Primary Sources

Dakota Datebook” episodes are short audio clips, approximately three minutes in length, that highlight aspects of North Dakota’s history. To create an episode, the students will need to use primary sources to find information and present about their topic. Use the worksheet below to gather primary sources and note each piece’s significance.

Topic: A topic should have a narrow and precise focus. Write a short thesis statement to the right.

Primary Source Title	Record the following information about the source: <i>Where is it from, date, source type, and what is it about?</i>
1.	
2.	
3.	
4.	
5.	

“Dakota Datebook” Outline

This worksheet breaks down a presentation into steps. Use the column on the left to guide you. Record the information for your presentation to the right based on that guidance. These entries are limited to 400 words.

Episode Outline	
<p>Title: The title should clearly demonstrate what the episode is about.</p>	
<p>Opener: Openers to an episode catch a listener’s attention by sharing what the episode’s topic will be in an engaging way.</p>	
<p>Transition to Point 1: Transitions help to create a cohesive feel in episodes. Use them to develop a storyline between the talking points.</p>	
<p>Point 1: This should be a near direct quote or description of primary source material and only a few sentences long.</p>	
<p>Analysis of Point 1: Analysis helps illustrate for listeners what the talking point is trying to convey. Make it clear for listeners what you think about the talking point from a historical perspective.</p>	

Episode Outline	
<p>Transition to Point 2: Show the relatedness between your talking points by using a transition that draws a clear connection.</p>	
<p>Point 2: Repeat the directions for Point 1.</p>	
<p>Analysis of Point 2: Repeat directions for Analysis of Point 1.</p>	
<p>Transition to Point 3: Repeat directions for Transition to Point 2.</p>	
<p>Point 3: Repeat the directions for Point 1.</p>	
<p>Analysis of Point 3: Repeat directions for Analysis of Point 1.</p>	
<p>Summary: Wrap up an episode by revisiting highlights of the analysis. This allows listeners to have a clear message to walk away with.</p>	