

Who Represents You?

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Read the “Directions” sheets for step-by-step instructions.

SUMMARY

In this activity, children will use three Web sites to gather data about the people in their home state and those who represent them in Congress, then use an online tool to visually compare the data.

WHY

By exploring informational Web sites, children will build the foundation for using the Internet to do research for school or for personal information gathering.

By creating a visual display out of numerical information, children may develop a deeper comprehension of the information they have gathered.

TIME

- 25 minutes

RECOMMENDED AGE GROUP

This activity will work best for children in 1st through 4th grade.

CHALLENGE WORDS

- **Congress:** the group of elected men and women that makes laws for the United States of America, as described in the U.S. Constitution
- **percent:** one part in one hundred

GET READY

- Read *Mama Went to Jail for the Vote*. This book is a work of historical fiction about the woman suffrage movement. For tips on reading this book together, check out the **Guided Reading Activity** (http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/pdf/suffrage/suffrage_reading.pdf).
- Read the **Step Back in Time** sheets.

More information at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/suffrage/>.

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YOU NEED

- **Directions** sheets (*attached*)
- **Step Back in Time** sheets (*attached*)
- **ThinkAbout** sheet (*attached*)
- Computer with Internet access
- *Mama Went to Jail for the Vote* book (*optional*)

More information at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/suffrage/>.



Smithsonian
National Museum of American History
Kenneth E. Behring Center

Thinkfinity.org
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For more information, visit the National Museum of American History Web site <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/suffrage/>.

Voting is one of the main ways that people can direct the government and change laws.

Women had voted in some colonies and early states but after 1807 no women could vote in the United States. In 1848 a group of women, and men, concerned with women's right held a convention and signed the Declaration of Sentiments. The Declaration was modeled after the Declaration of Independence and demanded rights for women, including the right to vote. Despite their efforts, women could only vote in nine states by the time the parade in this story takes place.

Woman suffragists were the first group to organize pickets outside of the White House. They created banners and stood

outside the White House gates to show the signs to the President and members of the public.

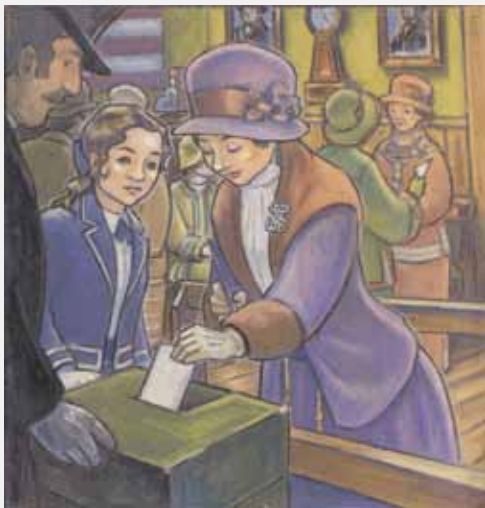
Although they were peaceful, some who disagreed with their protests sometimes started fights and hurt the suffragists.

Throughout the woman suffrage movement, over 150 suffragists were put in jail, mostly in Virginia and Washington, D.C. Life in the jails was tough and dirty, and the women weren't treated well.

Some women wanted to show the American public how unfair it was that they were in jail, so they refused to eat while behind bars. They were



Jailed for Freedom pin
The National Museum of American History owns three "Jailed for Freedom" pins that belonged to Lucille Calmes, Amelia Walker, and Alice Paul.



Mama voting at the precinct
from *Mama Went to Jail for the Vote*

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forcibly fed by their jailers. After they were let out of jail, the suffragists were given special “Jailed for Freedom” pins, to show proudly that they had stayed in jail to help get the right to vote for women.

Alice Paul, one of the leaders in the protests, had been a part of the woman suffrage movement in England. When she came back to the United States, she reused some of the strong British tactics in the American woman suffrage movement.

It took many years for the woman suffrage movement to change the minds of lawmakers and the public; but finally, in August 1920, the United States Constitution was amended to protect women’s right to vote.

The woman suffrage movement’s nonviolent protests were sources of inspiration for Mohandas Gandhi, while he worked for independence in India, and Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., while he worked for equal rights during the civil rights movement in the United States.

amended: changed the words and often the meaning of a law

movement: a series of organized activities in which many people work together to do or achieve something

tactics: an action or method that is planned and used to achieve a particular goal

***Mama Went to Jail for the Vote* is a work of historical fiction.**

In historical fiction, make-believe stories are set against a backdrop of real events or incorporate them into the story. This means that sometimes things are changed to suit the story or make it more dramatic.

Although there was a woman on a white horse in the suffrage parade it wasn’t really Mama. The rider was a Washington lawyer named Inez Milholland Boissevain. When she later died while traveling to promote woman suffrage she was considered to be a martyr to the cause.

Purple, white, and yellow were the colors used in the parades and by the pickets of the National Woman’s Party although purple, white, and green were used in other places like New York and Connecticut.

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For adults and kids to follow together.

1. Read through the **Step Back in Time** sheets or *Mama Went to Jail for the Vote*. What were people in the woman suffrage movement trying to achieve?

2. Visit the **Quick Facts Web site** (<http://quickfacts.census.gov/qfd/>) from the United States Census to find out what percent of your state is women. First, select your state from the map. Read from line 7 “Female persons, percent, (year)” and the first column of numbers to find the percent of females in your state. Record that percentage on the **ThinkAbout** sheet.

Tip For more challenge, compare the percent of females in your state to the percent of females in the nation (rightmost column).

Take a look at the address for the Census Web site. Do you notice the .gov in the address? Those letters mean that the United States government is publishing the information on this site. Many people trust the information they see that is published by the United States government.

3. Now figure out how many women represent you in Congress. Congress is made up of two parts: the House of Representatives and the Senate.
 - a. Visit the Web site for the **House of Representatives** (http://www.house.gov/house/MemberWWW_by_State.shtml). Click on your state. Count the number of Representatives your state has in the House of Representatives. Record this number on your **ThinkAbout** sheet.

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- b. Now count the number of Representatives from your state who are female. If you can't tell from the name of the Representative, click on the name to get more information and pictures of the Representative. Record the number of female Representatives from your state on your **ThinkAbout** sheet.

Tip For more challenge, identify the Representative that represents your town in Congress.

From this site you can also write a letter to your Representative to express your views on an issue. On the top left corner of the site, there is a yellow icon that says "Write Your Representative."

Take a look at the address for this site. It is also a .gov site.

- c. Next, visit the Web site for the **U.S. Senate** (http://senate.gov/general/contact_information/senators_cfm.cfm). Select your state from the drop down menu. Count the number of Senators for your state. Record this number on your **ThinkAbout** sheet.
- d. Count the number of Senators from your state who are female. If you can't tell from the name of the Senator, click on the name to get more information and pictures of the Senator. Record the number of female Senators from your state on your **ThinkAbout** sheet.

Tip All states have two Senators. How many states are there? Do the math together to figure out how many Senators there are!

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Tip You might notice that “American jurisdictions” such as the District of Columbia (Washington, DC), Guam, and Puerto Rico do not have Senators.

4. Talk about what a “percent” means. See the **Parent Guide** for a definition, and find examples of percentages at the bottom of the **ThinkAbout** sheet.

Tip The National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Illuminations has more lessons to help children learn about fractions and percentages. To search these lessons, visit <http://illuminations.nctm.org/>.

Children don’t need to master the concept of percentages in order to complete the activity.

5. Next, visit the **fractions model** from the National Council of Teachers of Mathematics (<http://illuminations.nctm.org/ActivityDetail.aspx?ID=225>). This tool will help you show the information you have collected. Draw the circle charts you create on your **ThinkAbout** sheet.

Tip For help using the fractions model for this activity, watch the tutorial at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/v/fractionmodel.html>.

To create a circle chart showing the percentage of women in your state, set the bottom slider to 100 and the top slider to the number you recorded on your **ThinkAbout** sheet for question 1.

Tip The slider can only be set to whole numbers, so you might have to round up or down to the nearest whole number.

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To create a circle chart showing the percentage of Congress people from your state who are female, set the bottom slider to the number you recorded on your **ThinkAbout** sheet for question 4b and the top slider to the number you recorded on your **ThinkAbout** sheet for question 4a.

6. Take a look at your two circle charts.

- Are they similar or not?
 - Do you think that when women vote, they vote mostly for women candidates?
-

7. Talk about the information you have gathered:

- Do you think it matters if the members of Congress from a state look like the people in their state?
 - Can male Congress people represent the way female voters feel about issues? Or the other way around?
 - What could you do if you want to change who represents you in Congress?
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For more activities and information about *Mama Went to Jail for the Vote* and the woman suffrage movement, visit <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/suffrage/>.

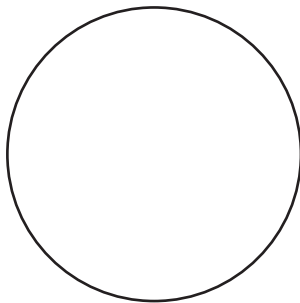
Mama Went to Jail for the Vote by Kathleen Karr. Illustrations by Malene Laugesen. Used by permission of Hyperion Books for Children.

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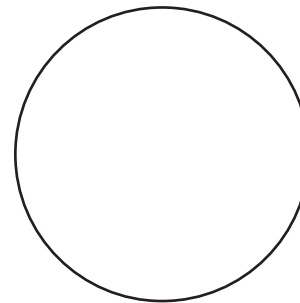
ThinkAbout

1. My state is ____% (percent) female.
2. My state has ____ Representatives in the House of Representatives. ____ of those Representatives are female.
3. My state has ____ Senators in the Senate. ____ of those Senators are female.
4. Congress is made up of the Senate and the House of Representatives. All together, my state has _____a Congress people. _____b of those Congress people are female.
5. My Congress people are ____% female.
6. In the circles below, draw the circle charts that show the percentages of females in your state and female Congress people for your state.

Percentage of females in my state



Percentage of female Congress people for my state



Percent: one part in one hundred. For example:

- If 35 of the students in your school are girls and your school has 100 students, 35% of your school are girls. ($35/100=35\%$)
- If there are 100 questions on your test and you get 90 correct, you are 90% correct on the test. ($90/100=90\%$)

More information at <http://americanhistory.si.edu/ourstory/activities/suffrage/>.

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For Teachers, page 1 of 2

Read the “Parent Guide” and “Directions” sheets for step-by-step instructions.

OBJECTIVES

The students will be better able to:

- Compare the percentage of women in their state to the number of women representing their state in Congress.
- Create and understand fractions and percentages.
- Create and understand pie graphs.

STUDENT PERFORMANCE CRITERIA

- Records accurate information from Web research.
- Inputs information into Fraction Model.
- Reproduces, in sketches, the pie graphs developed on the Fraction Model.

STANDARDS

NCHS History Standards

K-4 Historical Thinking Standards

2G: Draw upon the visual and mathematical data presented in graphs.

K-4 Historical Content Standards

2A: The student understands the history of his or her local community.

4A: Demonstrate understanding of how the United States government was formed and of the nation’s basic democratic principles set forth in the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution.

21st-Century Skills

Information, Media, and Technology Skills

- Information Literacy

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ISTE National Educational Technology Standards (NETS-S)

1. Creativity and Innovation

- c. Use models and simulations to explore complex systems and ideas.

3. Research and Information Fluency

- b. Locate, organize, analyze, evaluate, synthesize, and ethically use information from a variety of sources and media.

National Council of Teachers of Mathematics Standards

Number and Operations Standard

Grades 3-5 Expectations

- Recognize and generate equivalent forms of commonly used fractions, decimals, and percents.

Data Analysis and Probability Standard

Grades PreK-2 Expectations

- Represent data using concrete objects, pictures, and graphs.

Grades 3-5 Expectations

- Represent data using tables and graphs such as line plots, bar graphs, and line graphs.

