

Seventh Grade Lesson Plan
Women in 20th Century Texas Politics:
From the City Council, to the Governorship, to the U.S. Congress

Introduction: Starting with the 20th Century, when the 19th Amendment to the U.S. Constitution granted women the right to vote, women have served the people of Texas as public officials in cities, as members of the Texas Legislature, as governors of the Lone Star State, and as members of the U.S. Congress.

Objective: This lesson plan introduces students to women’s involvement in Texas politics. At the end of the lesson, students will have gained an understanding of how Texas women have contributed to different levels of government. The three activities in the lesson plan can be covered in three-to-six class periods, depending on the amount of time that can be devoted to them. Some aspects of each activity can be completed outside of class as homework.

TEKS:

(b) Knowledge and skills.

(18) Citizenship. The student understands the importance of effective leadership in a democratic society. The student is expected to:

(B) identify the contributions of Texas leaders

(21) Social studies skills. The student applies critical-thinking skills to organize and use information acquired through established research methodologies from a variety of valid sources, including electronic technology. The student is expected to:

(A) differentiate between, locate, and use valid primary and secondary sources such as computer software, databases, media and news services, biographies, interviews, and artifacts to acquire information about Texas;

(B) analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions;

(C) organize and interpret information from outlines, reports, databases and visuals, including graphs, charts, timelines, and maps.

(22) Social studies skills. The student communicates in written, oral, and visual forms. The student is expected to:

(B) use standard grammar, spelling, sentence structure, punctuation, and proper citation of sources;

(C) transfer information from one medium to another, including written to visual and statistical to written or visual, using computer software as appropriate; and

(D) create written, oral, and visual presentations of social studies information.

Teachers' (* for teacher only) and Students' Materials:

1. **The Handbook of Texas Online* article "Women and Politics" found at: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/WW/pwwzj.html>. (This is a complex article, so the teacher should read it thoroughly in advance in order to guide the students and to be prepared to point out the main ideas. The teacher should use the activity sheet (see #2 below) to prepare a summary of main ideas with the students.
2. "Women and Politics" main ideas table.
3. "From Children's Rights to Everybody's Rights" table
4. "Texas Women Fighting to Win, Winning to do Good" essay sheets
5. "20th Century Female Texas Governors": *The New Handbook of Texas Online* biographical sketches found at:
 - a. <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/ffe6.html>
 - b. <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/RR/fri62.html>
6. "Governors Ferguson and Richards: A Debate"
7. Debate Guidelines Sheets
8. "20th Century Texas Women Leaders: An Introduction"
9. "20th Century Texas Women Leaders: Student Research"
10. "20th Century Texas Women Leaders" activity sheets: Part I and Part II

Procedures

Day One

The teacher:

1. provides an overview and summary of women in Texas Politics by sharing *The Handbook of Texas Online* article "Women and Politics" found at: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/WW/pwwzj.html>.
2. using the "Women and Politics" article, works with students to complete the "Women and Politics" Main Ideas Table
3. using the "Women and Politics" article, works with students to identify specific goals that women politicians have supported: children's rights, women's rights, and civil rights.
4. discusses with the students the differences and/or similarities in the political involvement of women from different racial and ethnic backgrounds found in the "Women and Politics" article.
5. assigns the students the one-page table handout: "From Children's Rights to Everybody's Rights" and the accompanying two-page essay handout, "Texas Women Fighting to Win, Winning to do Good." (One or both of these can be homework assignments.)

Closing: Students discuss some of the main ideas they discovered about female politicians.

Day Two (Refer to page 10 of lesson plan: “Governors Ferguson and Richards: A Debate”)

The teacher:

1. reviews with the students the biographies of Governors Miriam “Ma” Ferguson and Ann Richards.
2. discusses with them each governor’s main interests, ideas, or values found in their biographies:
 - a. <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/ffe6.html>
 - b. <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/RR/fri62.html>
3. hands out the debating assignment and debate guidelines.
4. discusses how to organize the debating assignment.

Closing: Students form into debating groups to be ready for day three.

Day Three (Refer to page 10 of lesson plan: “Governors Ferguson and Richards: A Debate”)

The teacher:

1. oversees students’ work in organizing the debating questions and presentations.
2. answers questions regarding debating guidelines.

Day Four

The teacher:

1. facilitates the student team debates on the debate topic “The public records of Governors Ferguson and Richards reflected their interests, ideas, or values.”

Day Five

The teacher:

1. discusses with students the “20th Century Texas Women Leaders: An Introduction” by
 - a. reviewing with students the introduction and the student research information sheet.
 - b. working with students as they determine which Texas woman leader to research: a local government leader or a state or congressional leader.
 - c. handing out and discussing the “20th Century Texas Women Leaders” activity sheets: Part I and Part II.

Closing: Students will report orally on which kind of leader (local, state, or national office) they have chosen to research.

Day Six

The teacher:

1. works with students as they complete their work on a PowerPoint presentation, a poster, or an essay on their topics.

Closing: Students can display their posters on the classroom wall or outside in the hallway. Those creating PowerPoint presentations can show them at a later date.

“Women in Politics” Main Ideas Table

Using the example below, add four more “main ideas” you found in the article.

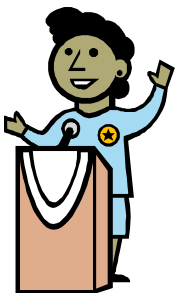
Year	Main Idea	Individual(s) or group(s) Responsible
1887	Succeeded in getting a boy’s reformatory established to keep them from being imprisoned with adult criminals	Women’s Christian Temperance Union

From Children’s Rights to Everybody’s Rights

Review with your teacher some of the main ideas about children’s rights, women’s rights, and civil rights that are in *The Handbook of Texas Online* article “Women and Politics”: <http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/WW/pwwzj.html>

Select at least three ideas you found in the article that cover children’s rights, women’s rights, and civil rights. Write these ideas in the chart below. You will use one idea from each column to write an essay on women’s involvement in Texas politics. Use the next two pages, “Texas Women Fighting to Win, Winning to do Good,” to write your essay.

Children’s Rights	Women’s Rights	Civil Rights
1.	1.	1.
2.	2.	2.
3.	3.	3.



20th Century Female Texas Governors

Governor Miriam Amanda (Ma) Ferguson

(b. 1875- d.1961)

Photo:

http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Miriam_A._Ferguson.jpg

Biography:

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/ffe6.html>



Dorothy (Ann) Willis Richards

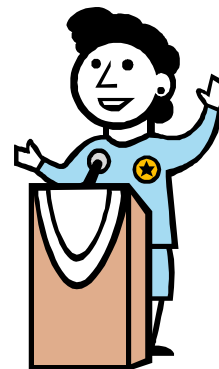
(b. 1933- d. 2006)

Photo: <http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Image:Ann-Richards-STS-40-JSC-visit-1992.jpg>

Biography:

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/RR/fri62.html>

Governors Ferguson and Richards: A Debate



Day Two of Lesson Plan

With your teacher, read and discuss *The Handbook of Texas Online* biographies of Governor Miriam Amanda (Ma) Ferguson:

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/FF/ffe6.html>

and Dorothy (Ann) Willis Richards:

<http://www.tshaonline.org/handbook/online/articles/RR/fri62.html>.

Day Three of Lesson Plan

Form teams of four students, or in the best way the class can be divided equally. Two of the team members will list and describe on index cards two major issues each governor dealt with while in office. They will also examine each governor's biography to understand how they became involved in politics. Then they will formulate a response to the following debate question: "The public records of Governors Ferguson and Richards reflected their interests, ideas, or values."

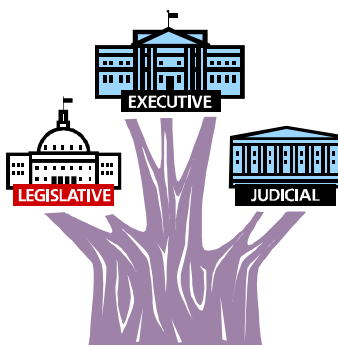
Day Four of Lesson Plan

Two members of the debate teams will each have three-to-five minutes to debate. They may use the notes developed by their teammates.

Judging: Preferably two teachers will serve as the debate judges. Other judging arrangements can be substituted (school volunteers, other school staff members, parent volunteers with no students in the class, etc.). The judges will maintain strict adherence to time limits.

Because debates take time, you may need to limit the number of debating teams or devote two days to this activity.

Refer to the debate guidelines on the next two pages.



Debate Guidelines

A debate can be about current events, history, or other areas of interest. A debate is an argument for a point of view. A debate has rules of conduct in arguing your position. Remember: Debaters sometimes argue for a point of view with which they may personally disagree.

Debate Teams: For this debate, each debating team will have two speakers who play specific roles but must also work as a team to be effective. These roles are described below in the order that the speakers will speak.

Affirmative Team (First Speaker):

- defines the topic in one short sentence.
- presents the affirmative team line (“why the topic is true”) in a short sentence.
- states briefly what the other affirmative speaker will say.
- presents the first half of the affirmative case.

Negative Team (First Speaker):

- accepts or rejects the definition of the topic.
- presents the negative team line (“why the topic is false”) in a short sentence.
- states briefly what the other negative speaker will say.
- rebuts one or more of the main points of the first affirmative speaker.
- presents the first half of the negative case.

Affirmative Team (Second Speaker):

- reaffirms the affirmative team line.
- rebuts all the remaining points of the negative case.
- presents a summary of the affirmative case.

Negative Team (Second Speaker):

- reaffirms the negative team line.
- rebuts all the remaining points of the affirmative case.
- presents a summary of the negative case.

Use of Logic in Debates: You cannot just say the other side is wrong. You must show why the other side is wrong. One of the best ways to do this is to take one of the other side's main points and show that it does not make sense.

Remember: Criticize what your opponents say, not them as individuals.

Maintain Eye Contact: Look at your audience rather than your note cards.

Use your Voice Effectively: Combine speaking quietly with perhaps a sudden loud burst to keep the audience's attention.

Use your Body Effectively: Use your hands to make a point. Move your head and body to indicate you are talking to each audience member. You can walk up and down, but do so with confidence.

Source: http://www.stgeorge.freeservers.com/guide_debate.htm



20th Century Texas Women Leaders: An Introduction

City Council

Office of Mayor

Texas Legislature

U.S. Congress

WHO?

WHAT?

WHERE?

WHEN?

WHY?

City Council

Have women served on your city council? On what kinds of issues (transportation, city services, housing, cultural arts, business expansion, etc.) did they base their campaigns? What did they do about the issues on which they ran after they were elected? Did some women run and lose? What were the challenges they faced that may have caused them to win or to lose?

Office of Mayor

Has a woman in your city served as the mayor? In what year(s) did she serve? What was her background? What was her record in office? Consult city government historical records at your local library to learn if your city has had a woman mayor. If your current mayor is a woman, consult the local newspapers to learn about her record in office.



Texas Legislature

Does a woman represent you in the Texas House of Representatives or in the Texas Senate? Find out by visiting the state government web sites for these two chambers (see next page). Learn what you can about the individual and what she has accomplished in state government. See the book *Capitol Women: Texas Female Legislators, 1923-1999* to read about women in the Texas Legislature in the 20th Century.

U.S. Congress

Does a woman represent you in the U.S. House of Representatives or in the U.S. Senate? Go to the web sites of legislative branches of the U.S. government (see next page). Look up information about these leaders and their records.

Discuss the assignment on the following sheet with your teacher before completing it.

20th Century Texas Women Leaders: Student Research

Texas Women Leaders: Who did what where, when, and why.
(If possible, complete steps 1, 2, and 4 in class and step 3 as homework.)

1. Select only one of the four public offices from the previous page: City Council, Office of the Mayor, Texas Legislature, and U.S. Congress. In making your decision, think about whether you want to focus on a Texas woman leader in local, state, or national government.
2. Once you decide which office you are interested in exploring, take a look at the suggested areas below under “Research Suggestions” for doing research on a woman leader.
3. Complete “20th Century Texas Women Leaders,” Part I and Part II.
4. Present your project and/or display your results in your classroom or in the hallway.

Research Suggestions

Local leaders (City Council or Office of the Mayor): You can obtain information from primary and secondary sources available: campaign materials, council minutes, newspaper articles, and the Internet. Also, consult the local public library for historical information on local leaders.

State or national leaders (Texas Legislature, U.S. House of Representatives, or U.S. Senate): You can refer to the following web sites to contact the leaders, to learn about their records, and to obtain other pertinent information. You should also consult at least two other sources. The web sites below are just a starting point for your work.

Members of the Texas Legislature:

<http://www.capitol.state.tx.us/>

Members of the U. S. House of Representatives:

<http://www.house.gov/>

Members of the U.S. Senate:

<http://www.senate.gov/>



20th Century Texas Women Leaders: Part I



Fill in after completing your research.

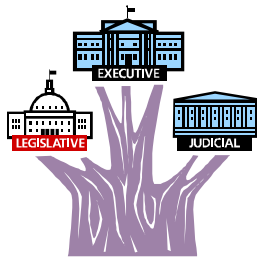
Name	Office Held (City Council Member, Mayor, Member of Texas Legislature, Member of US House or US Senate)	Dates in Office (example: 1934-1940)	Campaign Platform (List two or three)	Record of Accomplishments (List two or three)



20th Century Texas Women Leaders: Part II

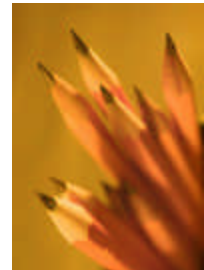
Using the information you placed in the 20th Century Texas Women Leaders, Part I table, complete one of the following:

1. Create a PowerPoint presentation on the individual you selected. Add illustrations to it from the individual's web site or other sites that may have illustrations that would be applicable. Make sure that the text you write goes along with the illustrations. Try to balance the amount of text you write with illustrations. In other words, do not rely too heavily on either words or illustrations.



2. Create a poster depicting the work of the individual you selected. Again, make sure you add just the right amount of text and illustrations. Be creative. Make your own illustrations about the individual's life and accomplishments. You can either type out your text or write it in longhand. Make sure others can read it easily.

3. Write a one-page essay on the individual you selected, noting what she did and providing information on her background. Add a title page to your essay and illustrate it with either an example of something the individual accomplished or a photograph on her that you found in your research.



Teresa Palomo Acosta created this lesson plan for the Ruthe Winegarten Foundation. The lesson plan is free to users for educational purposes.