

# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## *Susan B. Anthony and the Suffrage Movement: Power and Empowered Women*

by Hannah Koch

**Big Idea:** Power has many faces.

### *Overview*



### **Lesson Summary:**

There are two goals for this lesson. The first is to explore what it means to be powerful. The second is to explore what it means to be an empowered woman. The lesson will refer to *The Dinner Party* for examples of how women have used power in the past. It will also look to the Suffrage Movement to learn about how women envisioned the vote as a means to empowerment. As a study on how power is visually communicated in our culture, students will investigate examples of action figures from the past and present. They will also explore how the Suffrage Movement used imagery to portray empowered women. Finally, students will examine how Judy Chicago portrayed powerful women in *The Dinner Party*. Students will use their acquired knowledge to create suffragist action figures. These will be based on key figures of the United States Women's Suffrage Movement. The suffragist action figures will serve as the performance task assessment for this lesson.

### **Artworks, Persons, and/or Artifacts:**

*The Dinner Party* by Judy Chicago; Susan B. Anthony, Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Alice Paul, and other noted suffragists.

### **Standards:**

Content Standard 6: Making connections between visual arts and other disciplines.

### **Achievement Standard:**

1. Students compare the characteristics of works in two or more art forms that share similar subject matter, historical periods, or cultural context.
2. Students describe ways in which the principles and subject matter of other disciplines taught in the school are inter-related with the visual arts.

### **Objectives:**

Knowledge: *Students will know that:*

1. There are many ways to be powerful..
2. The suffragists viewed the vote as the path to empowerment.
3. Power can be the ability to create change.

Skills: *Students will know how to:*

1. Analyze a concept for meaning and add new meaning.
2. Critique, compare, and contrast images to extract meaning.
3. Use their knowledge to create a work of art that reflects their learning.

### Assessment:

Students' understanding of the lesson objectives may be informally assessed along the way. This formative assessment can take place through the daily review questions that occur at the beginning and end of each class. There will also be an opportunity for informal and formative assessment throughout the art-making portion of the lesson.

Students' understanding of the lesson objectives may be formally assessed after completing their performance task assignment, the suffragist action figures. Assess each project using the criteria outlined in the *Power and Empowered Women Studio: Criteria and Instructions* given to each student at the beginning of the studio portion of the lesson.

### Sequence of Action:



#### Day One

*Goals for today:*

1. Define and analyze the concept of power..
2. Illustrate the concept of power.
3. Investigate how the suffragists viewed power and empowerment.

*Materials and resources needed:*

1. Whiteboard and markers..
2. 9 x 12-inch sheets of white paper, one per student.
3. *Power and Empowered Women: Power and Suffrage* informational sheet.
4. Optional resource: Check out the attached documents from the Library of Congress entitled *Votes for Women! The Woman's Reason and Why Women Want to Vote*.

*Motivation:*

Spend 10 to 15 minutes introducing the lesson with a discussion of power using the following questions and statements, recording student responses on the board:

1. What is one possible definition for the word "power"?
2. Who are powerful people?
3. What are powerful things and images?
4. Who are some powerful women?

*Development:*

After all questions have been answered, give each student a sheet of paper. Within the time frame of 10 to 15 minutes, have students illustrate their idea of power.

*Conclusion:*

Finally, use remaining class time to investigate how the suffragist movement viewed power and empowerment. Use the *Power and Empowered Women: Power and Suffrage* information sheet. Review with the following questions and statements:

1. Describe what power women had before they had the right to vote.
2. Why do you think that suffragists wanted the right to vote?
3. What other opportunities would suffrage bring to American women?
4. How did suffragists think the vote would change their lives?
5. Now that women have had the right to vote for over 80 years, do you think that the suffragists' goals were accomplished?

## Day Two



### Goals for today:

1. Introduce the studio art portion of the lesson.
2. Investigate action figures of the past and present, critiquing them for meaning.
3. Explore figural imagery used in the suffrage movement.
4. Explore how Judy Chicago used symbols to represent a powerful woman.

### Materials and resources needed:

1. LCD projector and computer and/or printed copies of images of action figures and suffragists.
2. Susan B. Anthony biographical information found at the Susan B. Anthony House website: <http://www.susanbanthonyhouse.org>. You may want to have students read this in a computer lab or you may want to print copies.

### Motivation:

Review the last class by using the following statements and questions:

1. Our "big idea" for this lesson is power has many faces.
2. During our last class we discussed the definition of power.
3. What are some of the definitions that were mentioned?
4. What were some of the ways that you illustrated the concept of power? Why?
5. What did we learn about how the suffragists viewed power?

### Development:

- ▶ Spend five minutes introducing the studio art project. Use the following statements and questions:
  1. Raise your hand if you know what an action figure is.
  2. What are some definitions of an action figure? Note to teacher: the Oxford American Dictionaries define "action figure" as "a doll representing a person or fictional character known for vigorous action, such as a soldier or superhero. The figure typically is able to be posed, using jointed limbs."
  3. What is an example of an action figure? Create a list of 10.
  4. Are action figures different from dolls? If so, how?
  5. For this lesson, we will be creating our own action figures. They will be important people or characters from the suffrage movement. You will use Sculpey polymer clay and paint.
  6. First let's look at some examples of action figures.
- ▶ Spend 15 to 20 minutes on the following section. Create a slideshow or a packet containing an assortment of six different action figures. Choose three traditional action figures of the past, such as Barbie, G.I. Joe or Superman. Then choose three contemporary action figures, such as Bratz dolls, the new Batman, and something else fun. Many companies now make action figures that challenge stereotypes or are satirical; for instance, a male nurse action figure. Make sure to choose at least one figure that challenges stereotypes to demonstrate to children the ways that action figures have evolved. Finally, use the supplied pictures of suffragists.

► As a class, critique the images of action figures and images of suffragist characters. While viewing images, have students describe each image. Using the whiteboard, compare and contrast the images by making lists of what the images have in common and how they are different. Use three columns. Label the first column, Action Figures of the Past. Label the second column, Action Figures of the Present. Label the third column, Characters of the Suffrage Movement. Use the following questions and statements to prompt responses:

1. Describe the figure's body.
2. Describe the figure's clothing.
3. Describe the figure's facial expression.
4. Who does this figure represent?
5. What is the mission of this figure?
6. What kind of life does it lead?
7. What kind of ideas does this figure represent?
8. How are those ideas expressed through imagery?
9. Do any of these figures represent power? What kind of power? How?

*Conclusion:*

Finally, spend the rest of class investigating the Susan B. Anthony runner to understand how Chicago represented a powerful woman in *The Dinner Party*. Use the following questions and statements to guide you through an exploration of *The Dinner Party* imagery:

1. What colors are incorporated into this runner?
2. What might those colors symbolize?
3. What images do you recognize in the runner?
4. Why might Judy Chicago have used that image to represent this woman's life?
5. Now read the Susan B. Anthony biographical information found on <http://www.susanbanthonyhouse.org/>.
6. Look at the runner again. What symbols do you understand now that you have read about Susan B. Anthony's life?
7. What do you think the axe symbolizes?
8. What do you think the symbols in the illuminated letter 'A' stand for?
9. What about the 'B' and 'C'?
10. What might the large red triangle with fringe symbolize?
11. What about the names written on the runner? Who might those women be? Why do you think their names are included in Susan B. Anthony's runner?

**Day Three**



*Goals for today:*

1. Distribute *Power and Empowered Women Studio: Criteria and Instructions*.
2. Students sketch plans for their action figure..
3. Demonstrate the basic construction of a Sculpey clay action figure.
4. Students complete armature and Sculpey basis of figure.

*Materials and resources needed:*

1. *Power and Empowered Women Studio: Criteria and Instructions.*
2. List of Suffragists.
3. Computer lab.
4. <http://www.sewallbelmont.org/>.
5. <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=Women's%20History>.
6. <http://www.nmwh.org/>.
7. 9 x 12-inch white paper, one sheet per student..

*Motivation:*

Briefly review with the following questions and statements:

1. Our “big idea” is power has many faces.
2. What different definitions of power did we come up with on the first day of this lesson?
3. Can anyone name one way we have explored the concept of power?.
4. How did the suffrage movement envision power?
5. How did the various action figures represent power?
6. Now you are going to create your own suffragist action figure that represents a significant suffragist or suffragist character.

*Development:*

Distribute *Power and Empowered Women Studio: Criteria and Instructions* as well as one sheet of 9 x 12-inch white paper to each student. Using the list of suffragists and suffragist characters, allow students to choose a person to represent. Try for minimal duplicates. Using your school’s computer lab, have students research for information and images related to their suffragist.

To find photographs of many famous suffragists, visit the National Woman’s Party Digital Archives at the Sewall-Belmont House and Museum website.

▶ Visit <http://www.sewallbelmont.org/>. ◀

Under the Museum Highlights section, click on Digital Collection link. You may either search or browse the collection. Make certain to search Suffrage. If you choose to browse, you will see all the pictures at once and can sort through them. If you choose to search, be prepared to enter a specific name. Choose the Individuals category for photographs of particular persons. Additionally, do not hesitate to review the Events or Organizations categories to get an idea of what the life and times of suffragists looked like.

Make sure that students print the photograph they have chosen.

Also, the Library of Congress has an excellent website entitled American Memory. You can search the Women’s History division of the website using the following link:

▶ <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=Women's%20History>. ◀

This website provides everything from prints and photographs to informational essays about suffrage. It is a unique resource full of information. Try to be specific when searching as there is so much information, it can be overwhelming.

Last, the National Women’s History Museum Website has a wonderful visual tour of suffrage imagery where students can find images of suffrage characters as well as banners, buttons, and other ephemera used during the movement. Make sure to see the Herald Figure and The Goddess of Liberty. This website provides real visual examples of the colors and aesthetics of the suffrage movement. Click on the Cyber Museum link and choose Votes for Women.

Students may choose between an In-Depth Tour and the Image Gallery. The tour is more informational whereas the image gallery is mostly visuals. To take advantage of this resource, visit the following link:

▶ <http://www.nmwh.org/>. ◀

*Conclusion:*

Allow students to use any remaining time to sketch their ideas.



## Day Four

*Goals for today:*

1. Demonstrate how to make an armature.
2. Students make an armature.

*Materials and resources needed:*

1. Sketched plans.
2. Aluminum foil.
3. Toothpicks or small craft sticks.
4. Sculpey brand polymer clay.

*Motivation:*

Use the following statements to begin class:

1. During our last class, we made plans for our suffragist action figures. We will be using information about a suffragist or suffragist character to create an action figure that has a power. You should have a sketched plan for your particular figure. Today we will begin to build the body of our figures. Before we begin working, I need to show you how to create an armature.

*Development:*

Gather students for a demonstration and show them how to use aluminum foil to create an armature. Explain that if appendages are not attached to the body, students will need to use toothpicks or craft sticks to enforce joints like shoulders. The sticks should go through an arm into the shoulder. This helps to keep the arm up if that is necessary. Add a thin coat of Sculpey brand polymer clay to create the base. Allow students to return to their seats to create their armature and initial Sculpey layers.

Allow students to work for the remainder of the class period.

*Conclusion:*

Review with the following exercise:

1. Go around the room and have each student share the identity of their suffragist action figure, what their power is, and how they will represent that

## Day Five



### *Goals for today:*

1. Demonstrate how to use tools to create detailed surfaces.
2. Students complete at least half of figure construction.

### *Materials and resources needed:*

1. Sketched plans.
2. Prepared armatures.
3. Sculpey-brand polymer clay.
4. Toothpicks.
5. Clay tools.

### *Motivation:*

Gather students for a demonstration. Show them how to add enough Sculpey to complete part of their figure. Then use clay tools to demonstrate how to model clay and add texture. Remind students that they will be required to include an accessory that symbolizes their suffragist's power.

### *Development:*

Give students the remainder of class to work on their construction.

### *Conclusion:*

Review using the following questions:

1. What is one thing you enjoy about this project?
2. What is one thing you learned today?
3. What is challenging about the art-making process?
4. What do you need to learn how to do in order to make your project work?
5. Who has suggestions?

## Day Six



### *Goals for today:*

1. Complete construction of figures.
2. Begin to dry figures.

### *Materials and resources needed:*

1. *Power and Empowered Women Studio: Criteria and Instructions.*
2. Sculpey-brand polymer clay.
3. Toothpicks.
4. Clay tools.
5. Hairdryer, heat gun, toaster oven, or conventional oven for drying.

### *Motivation:*

Briefly review the criteria for the lesson so that all students understand what is required of them.

*Development:*

Demonstrate your chosen heating technique. Make sure that students know that it is possible to burn the polymer clay. Allow students to use the rest of the day to finish projects. Allow students to begin heating their figure.

*Conclusion:*

Allow enough time for students to walk around the room and observe the work of their classmates.

## Day Seven



*Goals for today:*

1. Demonstrate painting techniques.
2. Students paint figures.

*Materials and resources needed:*

1. Completely set polymer clay figures.
2. Acrylic or tempera paint.
3. Paintbrushes in variety of sizes.

*Motivation:*

Briefly review the project objectives using the following statements and questions:

1. The “big idea” for this lesson is power has many faces.
2. In what ways have we discussed power?
3. How did the suffragist movement believe that women would be empowered? Why?
4. Name an example of how the artist Judy Chicago used symbolism to represent a powerful woman.
5. Name a way that you used symbolism to represent a powerful woman.
6. How can color be used to symbolize an aspect of your action figure?
7. How did Judy Chicago use the color red symbolically in the Susan B. Anthony runner?
8. What colors do you associate with power?

*Development:*

Demonstrate how to paint an action figure. Remind students that color can be used symbolically. Allow students to paint for the remainder of class.

*Conclusion:*

Allow students to walk around the room and observe the work of their classmates. Take time to spend an eighth day on teacher-facilitated class critique.

## Preparation

### Teacher Preparation and Research:

It is recommended that teachers read the Susan B. Anthony section of *The Dinner Party* book in order to obtain some background information on the Suffrage Movement.

Teachers should also create their own example of a suffragist action figure for students to see. This will serve as motivation and explanation.

Finally, teachers need to research, print out and copy the necessary accompanying instructional resources listed below.



### Instructional Resources:

1. *Power and Empowered Women Studio: Criteria and Instructions.*
2. *Power and Empowered Women: Power and Suffrage* informational sheet.
3. Images of action figures and suffragists.
4. Susan B. Anthony biographical information from <http://www.susanbanthonyhouse.org/>.
5. Library of Congress American Memory Women's History Manuscripts Division informational website. A great place to find information about the movement: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/awhhtml/awmss5/index.html>.
6. Library of Congress American Memory Women's History website search page. This is a good place to search for photographs, prints, and propaganda: <http://memory.loc.gov/ammem/browse/ListSome.php?category=Women's%20History>.
7. The National Women's History Museum website. Visit this to take a visual tour of the movement. Especially helpful for imagery of ephemera and visual rhetoric: <http://www.nmwh.org/>.
8. Visit the Sewall-Belmont House and Museum website for exceptional photographs of suffragists in the National Woman's Party Digital Archives: <http://www.sewallbelmont.org/>.
9. List of Suffragists.
10. Blow dryer, heat gun, toaster oven, or conventional oven.



### Student Supplies:

1. Computer lab.
2. 9 x 12-inch white paper, two sheets per student.
3. Aluminum foil.
4. Sculpey-brand polymer clay.
5. Acrylic or tempera paint.
6. Paintbrushes of various sizes.

# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Power and Empowered Women: Power and Suffrage



*Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*

Before suffrage, life for women was very different from the life we know today. Women living before the Suffrage Movement had very little power. Here is a picture of what life would have been like if you were a girl before the success of United States American Woman Suffrage Movement.

During childhood, girls attended school for a shorter time than boys. Some girls were fortunate enough to attend school until they were in their early teenage years. It was considered more important for girls to learn how to run a household and take care of a husband. Women were not allowed to attend college, although a handful did. Many people believed that it was dangerous for women to be educated, especially in the company of men. Coeducation was not considered normal, and many girls attended school separately from boys if they were allowed to go to school at all.

When a girl grew up and married, she no longer had the same rights that she did when she was not married. Legally, married women were not allowed to keep their first names. For instance, if a woman's name was Anne Clark, and she married John Smith, her new name would legally be Mrs. John Smith. Also,

as a married woman, she was no longer allowed to own property. If her parents died and left her property or money, it immediately became the property of her husband. This also meant that if a woman had a job, her husband could take all of her earnings. Women had no right to their own hard-earned money.

Women also did not have legal rights to their own children. If a woman divorced, she had no legal rights to her children. This meant that many women remained in unhappy or abusive marriages so that they could remain with their children.

Finally, women did not even have the right to their own body. Legally, a woman was the property of her husband and by law had to do what he said. This was a particular problem in the case of physical abuse. Because a wife was the property of her husband, it was not against the law for men to violently beat their wives.

The American Woman Suffrage Movement sought to change all of this. Beginning with a few determined women and men, a women's rights movement was born. Suffragists first fought to reform marriage and property laws. That was only the beginning. They would later realize that the right to vote was the key to empowerment. Women understood that if they had the power to vote, they would have the power to challenge and change injustice towards women. The American Women's Suffrage Movement began at the Seneca Falls Convention in 1848 and grew to a national movement consisting of thousands and thousands of women. It lasted until 1920 with the ratification of the 19th amendment to the U.S. Constitution, giving women the right to vote, giving them power.

Today, it is hard to imagine a time when girls could not learn in the same classroom as boys, or even go to college. It is hard to believe that women could not own their own property or keep their own wages. It seems ridiculous to think that it was perfectly legal to abuse women. When you think of how different your life is today, think of the women who made it all possible. Think of the suffragists who fought to empower future generations of American women.

# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Power and Empowered Women: Studio Project Criteria and Instructions

### For this project you will need to:

1. Create an action figure that represents a specific suffragist or suffrage character. You must use information from your research to guide your studio work. For example, if you choose Amelia Bloomer, you will want to picture her wearing her famous style of dress that inspired the name “bloomers.”
2. Your action figure must represent the woman’s style of dress and must also include an accessory. For example, if you were to choose Elizabeth Cady Stanton, you may create a small book in her hand to represent *The Woman’s Bible*. You may also choose to show her with a magic pen, as Stanton was one of the greatest writers of the U.S. Woman Suffrage Movement.

### Before you begin to work you will need to think about the following questions:

1. Which of the suffragists do you identify with the most? Would you be interested in choosing an African-American suffragist or one of the male suffragists? These people are less well known and worth researching.
2. When you research your suffragist, what characteristics or accomplishments stand out in your mind?
3. How can you make an action figure powerful without resorting to stereotypes?
4. How can you use humor and creativity to bring a contemporary perspective to a historical figure?
5. How can you use exaggeration to prove a point?

Remember that artists make choices to fit their desired outcome. Think about how Judy Chicago designed each runner to represent the type of needlework done during that woman’s lifetime. Each choice you make should reflect what you want your viewer to think when they view your action figure. In other words, be purposeful.

### Instructions:

1. Research your suffragist or suffrage character of choice thoroughly.
2. Sketch a design of your action figure on a 9 x 12-inch sheet of paper. Make sure to include the appropriate dress and an accessory.
3. Have your design approved by the teacher.
4. Use aluminum foil and toothpicks to create an armature.
5. Add Sculpey-brand polymer clay to mold your figure.
6. Dry the figure with a blow dryer or heat gun.
7. Use paint to color the figure.

# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project

## Suffragist Leaders



Susan Brownell Anthony  
Naomi Talbert Anderson  
Alva Erskine Smit Vanderbilt Belmont  
Alice Stone Blackwell  
Henry Blackwell  
Lillie Devereux Blake  
Harriot Stanton Blatch  
Amelia Bloomer  
Inez Milholland Boissevain



Louise de Koven Bowen  
Olympia Brown  
Lucy Burns  
Nannie Helen Burroughs  
Frances Elizabeth Caroline  
Mary Ann Shadd Carry  
Carrie Lane Chapman Catt  
Laura Clay  
Phoebe Wilson Couzins  
Paulina Kellogg Wright Davis



Mary Coffin Ware Dennett  
Anna Elizabeth Dickinson  
Lavinia Lloyd Dock  
Rheta Childe Dorr  
Frederick Douglass  
Abigail Scott Duniway  
Crystal Eastman  
Sara Bard Field  
Abigail Kelley Foster  
William Dudley Foulke  
Margaret Fuller  
Matilda Joslyn Gage  
Sarah J. Smith Thompson Garnet  
William Lloyd Garrison  
Charlotte Anna Perkins Stetson Gilman  
Helen Mar Jackson Gougar  
Angelina Emily Grimké  
Sarah Moore Grimké  
Francis Ellen Watkins Harper  
Louisine Waldron Elder Havemeyer



Marry Garrett Hay  
Elsie Hill  
Isabella Beecher Hooker  
Jessie Annette Jack Hooper  
Julia Ward Howe  
Addie D. Waites Hunton

Abigail Jemima Hutchinson  
Florence Kelley  
Belle Case LaFollette  
Daisy Adams Lampkin  
Miriam Florence Folline [Squier] Leslie, Mrs. Frank Leslie  
Mary Ashton Rice Livermore  
Belva Ann Bennett McNall Lockwood  
Mary Eliza Mahoney  
Anne Henrietta Martin  
Mary Ann M'Clintock  
Katharine Dexter McCormick  
Catherine Gougar Waugh McCulloch  
Virginia Minor  
Esther Hobart McQuigg Slack Morris  
Lucretia Coffin Mott  
Maud Wood Park  
Alice Stokes Paul  
Wendell Phillips  
Parker Pillsbury  
Robert Purvis  
Harriet Purvis, Jr.  
Jeannette Pickering Rankin  
Ernestine Louise Siismondi Potowski Rose  
Rose Schneiderman  
Carolina Maria Seymour Severance  
Anna Howard Shaw  
Gerrit Smith  
Elizabeth Cady Stanton  
Maria Stewart  
Lucy Stone  
Jane Grey Cannon Swisshelm  
Mary Eliza Church Terrell  
Augusta Lewis Troup  
Sojourner Truth  
Harriet Taylor Upton  
Lila Hardaway Meade Valentine  
Mabel Vernon  
Fanny Garrison Villard  
Ida Bell Wells-Barnett  
Sue Shelton White  
Victoria Claflin Woodhull  
Fanny Bullock Workman  
Martha Coffin Pelham Wright  
Maud Younger

# The Dinner Party Curriculum Project



Lucy Stone



Elsie Hill Katherine Morey



Inez Millholland



Alice Paul



Lucy Burns



Elizabeth Cady Stanton and  
Susan B. Anthony