TEACHING AMERICAN HISTORY PROJECT

Early American Reform Movements

From Kristen DeBona

Grade – 11th Grade U.S. History

Length of class period – (2) 50 minutes [Note: While the activity takes two periods to do, I set aside extra days to discuss what the students learned and analyzed.]

Inquiry – (What essential question are students answering?)

- Why did America enter into a period of social reform during the early 1800s?
- What types of reform movements did women and other Americans participate in during the early 1800s?
- Did the reform movement bring about real and meaningful changes to American society during the 1800s?

Objectives (What content and skills do you expect students to learn from this lesson?)

- The students will analyze various written and visual primary and secondary sources in order to examine the types of reform movements that Americans participate in during the early 1800s.

Materials (What primary sources or local resources are the basis for this lesson?)

- American Reform Movement PowerPoint
- Folders labeled Reform Document Analysis Worksheet, Cult of Domesticity, Temperance, Health Reform, and Education Reform (Note: You need a Reform Document Analysis Worksheet through Education Reform folder set for each group of students)

Activities (What will you and your students do during the lesson to promote learning?)

- Initiation: Briefly review the Second Great Awakening using attached PowerPoint
- Assign the students to work in small groups no bigger that 3-4. (smaller groups work best)
- Instruct the students that they will need to get through all four aspects of reform – Women’s Rights, Temperance, Health Reform and Education Reform stages between the two class periods. Stages 1 and 2 are the largest, and in order to successfully get through all of the materials and appropriately analyze them the students should try their best to get through at least the Cult of Domesticity documents on day one.
- Students should start by working with the materials in the Cult of Domesticity Folder and then return the materials and pick up each new set of materials as they work through each folder. As students move from stage to stage they should examine all the sources within each folder as possible, read all the available excerpts and answer the analysis questions on the Document Analysis Worksheet.
- Monitor the students as they progress from station to station, point out interesting aspects within individual photographs, visuals, excerpts and sources, and ask questions to help the students analyze each set of sources.
- Closure: Verbally close the lesson by asking and discussing the following questions:
  - Why did Americans engage in reforms during the early 1800s?
  - Use the questions on the Document Analysis Worksheet and images on the PowerPoint to discuss aspects of the Reform Movement that students found interesting or might have glazed over during their analysis.
  - Did the Reform Movement really bring about real and meaningful changes during the Reform Movement?

How will you assess what student learned during this lesson?
- **Informal:** Monitor and assess the students’ analysis by asking them questions during the activity.
- **Formal:** Collect and grade the student’s analysis packets as well as hold them accountable for the material on the unit test/quiz.

**Connecticut Framework Performance Standards**

- Analyze and explain multipurpose visual materials
- Evaluate primary and secondary interpretations of a historical event
- Ask relevant questions related to social studies/history to initiate, extend, debate a point of view
**Cult of Domesticity Document A: Excerpt from The Seneca Falls “Declaration of Sentiments”**

*When, in the course of human events, it becomes necessary for one portion of the family of man to assume among the people of the earth a position different from that which they have hitherto occupied... a decent respect to the opinions of mankind requires that they should declare the causes that impel them to such a course.*

*We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness...*

*The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries and usurpations on the part of man toward woman, having in direct object the establishment of an absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted to a candid world...*

*He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise (voting).*

*He has compelled her to submit to laws, in the formation of which she had no voice.*

*He has made her, if married, in the eye of the law, civilly dead.*

*He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.*

*In the covenant of marriage, she is compelled to promise obedience to her husband, he becoming, to all intents and purposes, her master--the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to administer chastisement.*

*He has so framed the laws of divorce, as to what shall be the proper causes, and in case of separation, to whom the guardianship of the children shall be given, ... giving all power into his hands.*

*He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives but a scanty remuneration (payment). He closes against her all the avenues to wealth and distinction which he considers most honorable to himself. As a teacher of theology, medicine, or law, she is not known.*

*He has denied her the facilities for obtaining a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her.*

*He has endeavored, in every way that he could, to destroy her confidence in her own powers, to lessen her self-respect, and to make her willing to lead a dependent and abject life.*

*Now ... we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States.*

It is the grand feature of Divine economy, that there should be different stations of superiority and subordination. In this arrangement of the duties of life, Heaven has appointed to one sex the superior, and to the other the subordinate station...

It is therefore as much for the dignity as it is for the interest of females, to conform (obey) to the duties of this relation.

But while woman holds a subordinate relation in society to the other sex, it is not because it was designed that her duties or her influence should be any the less important... it was designed that the method of gaining influence and of exercising power should be altogether different and peculiar.

Woman is to win everything by peace and love; by making herself so much respected, esteemed and loved, that to yield to her opinions and gratify her wishes, will be the free-will offering of the heart. But this is to be all accomplished in the domestic and social circle. There let every woman become so cultivated and refined in intellect, that her taste and judgment will be respected; so benevolent in feeling and action; that her motives will be reverenced... and every heart will repose (relax) in her presence...so that fathers, husbands, and sons, will yield not only willingly but proudly.


I have often been amused at the vain efforts made to define the rights and responsibilities of men and women. No one has yet found out just where the line of separation between them should be drawn, and for this simple reason, that no one knows just how far below man woman is, whether she be a head shorter in her moral responsibilities, or head and shoulders, or the full length of his noble stature, below him, i.e., under his feet.

Confusion, uncertainty, and great inconsistencies, must exist on this point, so long as woman is regarded inferior to man...

... place her where Maker placed her, on the same level of human rights with man, side by side with him... and then the truth will be self-evident, that whatever it is morally right for a man to do, it is morally right for a woman to do. I recognize no rights but human rights – I know nothing of men’s rights and women’s rights; for in Christ Jesus, there is neither male nor female.
Now, I believe it is woman’s right to have a voice in all the laws and regulations by which she is governed, whether in Church or State; and that the present arrangements of society are a violation of human rights, a rank usurpation of power, a violent seizure and confiscation of what is sacredly and inalienably hers...

...I contend that woman has just as much right to sit in solemn counsel in Conventions, Conferences, Associations and General Assemblies, as man—just as much right to sit upon the throne of England, or in the Presidential chair of the United States.

**Temperance Document A:** The verse below is from the song *The Drink We Choose*, one of several ballads sung by the Cold Water Army, a children’s temperance group in Connecticut during the late 1840s.

The drink, that’s in the drunkard’s bowl is not the drink for me;
It kills his body and his soul; how sad a sight is he!
But there’s a drink that God has given, distilling in the showers of heaven,
In measures large and free; oh, that’s the drink for me.

**Temperance Document B:** *The Effects of Drunkenness (1841)* from a children’s book

![Image of Temperance Document B]

**Temperance Document C:** *The Victim of Ardent Spirits (c.1837-1841)*
**Temperance Document D: The Scale of Temperance (1828)**

### Scale of Temperance, and Excess in Drinking Liquors, and Their Consequences.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Temperature</th>
<th>Health, Riches, Longevity and Happiness</th>
<th>Cheerfulness, Strength, and Nourishment</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Spring water, and Malt</td>
<td>Everlasting, Reputation</td>
<td>Longevity and Happiness</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Table beer, Cider, Perry, Porter, or Ale, Wine</td>
<td>Cheering, strength</td>
<td>and Nourishment</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>when used only at meals and in moderation</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Excess

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excess</th>
<th>Disease</th>
<th>Punishments</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Nausea</td>
<td>Debt</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Vomiting</td>
<td>Black eyes, torn clothes,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>20</td>
<td>Morning sickness</td>
<td>Dragged apparel,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>30</td>
<td>Fainting</td>
<td>Wretched diet,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>40</td>
<td>Illness</td>
<td>Starvation,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>50</td>
<td>Palsy, Typhus</td>
<td>Infirmity,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>60</td>
<td>Pulling,</td>
<td>Poor-house,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>70</td>
<td>Murder,</td>
<td>Palsied,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>80</td>
<td>Suicide</td>
<td>Penitentiary,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>90</td>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>Banded with iron,</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>100</td>
<td>Homicide</td>
<td>Gallows,</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

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**Note:** The image contains a cartoon depiction of the effects of alcohol consumption, illustrating the consequences of temperance and excess. The text provides a scale for measuring the effects of different levels of alcohol consumption.
**Temperance Document E:** *The Drunkards Progress: From the First Drink to the Grave (c.1800s)*

**Temperance Document F:** *The Annual Consumption of Distilled Spirits*
Health Reform Documents A: Women’s Fashion in the early 1800s
Health Reform Document B: "The Cholic" by George Cruikshank, 1819. Engraving on paper. Claude Moore Health Sciences Library, Historical Collections
Health Reform Documents C: Women’s fashion and leisure in the 1800s
**Education Reform Document A: Education Reform Timeline from Mass.gov**

*First private school for blacks*

1800 - After failing to move the legislature to extend public education to black children, Prince Hall invites black families to start a private school in his home.

1810 - **School Districts Grow in Influence**
School districts supported with local taxes grow in independence from the control of state government.

1817 - **1st School of Law**
The creation of professional training programs such as Harvard Law School starts to refocus higher education from its orientation toward literature and classic languages.

1821 - **First Free High School**
Boston English School provides instruction in no language other than English. Its curriculum emphasizes math, logic, science and history with the goal of professional preparation.

1825 - **1st High School for Girls**
Boston starts the first high school for girls.

1825 - **Amherst College**
The Legislature charters Amherst College in 1825. This further exemplifies the role played by religious institutions in promoting higher education.

1827 - **Education laws**
Towns with more than 500 families are required to provide public English high schools.

1829 - **First School for the Blind in America**
The Perkins School for the Blind, originally called the New England Asylum for the Blind, extends education to the disabled.

1837 - **First permanent women's college**
Mary Lyons establishes the Mount Holyoke Seminary for women. By this time there are already 120 colleges for men in the United States; by then Harvard College is over 200 years old.

1837 - **First Board of Education in US**
Horace Mann doubles state funding to education and teacher salaries. Fifty new high schools are built, along with formal teacher training programs and school district libraries.

1839 - **First State School for Teachers**
Three young women report to a school in Lexington a state operated teacher training program.

1852 - *School Attendance Law*

It requires children between ages eight and fourteen to attend three months of school. Towns rarely enforced this rule, but it popularizes the norm of schooling.
Reform Movement Document Analysis

1. Using Cult of Domesticity Document A what grievances did the women express in the “Declaration of Sentiments”? What did the authors want?

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____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
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2. According to Cult of Domesticity Document B what should a woman’s role be within society? What should be the woman’s “sphere of influence”?

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3. According to Cult of Domesticity Document C what should a woman’s role be within society? What should be the woman’s “sphere of influence”?

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4. Using the Cult of Domesticity Documents A-C draw a conclusion about the status of women in the United States during the 1800s.

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________

____________________________________________________________________________________________________________________
5. What do Temperance Documents A-E suggest is a social problem during the 1800s? Why do you think this “social ill” is such a common problem during this time period in U.S. History?

6. Using Temperance Documents A-E draw a conclusion about what women, amongst others, were trying to accomplish with these visuals. Why do you think they were trying to make these changes? (Hint: 2nd Great Awakening)

7. Using Temperance Document F were the efforts of women and Temperance workers effective? Explain.

8. Using Health Reform Documents A-B why do you think an 1850 survey reveal that only 1 in 4 women were healthy?

9. Using Health Reform Documents C what changes were made in order to improve women’s health? Do you consider these to be major changes?
10. Using **Education Reform Document A** identify three ways in which the education system was reformed and improved.