

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

## FIGHTING FOR THE VOTE

Using what you know about women's rights and their place in society around World War I, answer the following questions:

1. Which do you think came first – women being allowed to enlist in the military or being allowed to vote nationwide?
2. Which service branches do you think allowed women to serve in World War I? – the Army, Navy, Marine Corps, or Coast Guard?
3. Do you think women of color were allowed to serve in the military during World War I?
4. What kind of jobs do you think women were allowed to have in the military during World War I?
5. Do you think women were allowed to keep serving in the military after the war ended?

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# FIGHTING FOR THE VOTE: DOCUMENT-BASED QUESTION

**Suggested reading and writing time: 1 hour.**

**Directions:** This question is based on the accompanying documents. The documents have been edited for the purpose of this exercise.

In your response you should do the following.

- Respond to the prompt with a historically defensible thesis or claim that establishes a line of reasoning.
- Describe a broader historical context relevant to the prompt.
- Support an argument in response to the prompt using at least six documents.
- Use at least one additional piece of specific historical evidence (beyond that found in the documents) relevant to an argument about the prompt.
- For at least three documents, explain how or why the document's point of view, purpose, historical situation, and/or audience is relevant to an argument.
- Use evidence to corroborate, qualify, or modify an argument that addresses the prompt.

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**DBQ prompt:** Evaluate the extent to which World War I impacted the American women's suffrage movement.

### Document 1

Source: "Principles of a Permanent Peace," published by the International Congress of Women, 1915. The Congress was chaired by Jane Addams and composed of about 1,500 delegates from twelve countries. They met at The Hague in April 1915 to discuss peaceful resolution of international disputes.

Since the combined influence of the women of all countries is one of the strongest forces for the prevention of war, and since women can only have full responsibility and effective influence when they have equal political rights with men, this International Congress of Women demands their political enfranchisement.



## Document 2

Source: Protest banner held by suffragist Virginia Arnold outside the White House in August 1917.



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### Document 3

Source: Julia Stimson, superintendent of the Army Nurse Corps during World War I, in a letter written October 9, 1917 describing the work of nurses serving in Europe.

They are working terribly hard, sleeping with helmets over their faces and enamel basins on their stomachs, washing in the water they had in their hot-water bags because water is so scarce, operating fourteen hours at a stretch, drinking quantities of tea because there is no coffee and nothing else to drink, wearing men's ordnance socks under their stockings, trying to keep their feet warm in the frosty operating rooms at night, and both seeing and doing such surgical work as they never in their wildest days dreamed of, but all the time unafraid and unconcerned with the whistling, banging shells exploding around them. Oh, they are fine! One need never tell me that women can't do as much, stand as much, and be as brave as men.

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## Document 4

Source: Carrie Chapman Catt, speech titled “Open Address to the U.S. Congress – November 1917,” which Catt delivered on multiple occasions during speaking tours but never to Congress.

It is true; democracy, votes for men and votes for women, making slow but certain progress in 1914, have suddenly become established facts in many lands in 1917. Already our one-time mother Country has become the standard bearer of our Americanisms, the principles she denied, and - cynical fact - Great Britain, not the United States, is now leading the world on to the coming democracy. (The present bill provides that the parliamentary note shall be extended to women. All other suffrage rights on equal terms with men have long been enjoyed by the women of England, Scotland, Ireland and Wales. The women of Canada have had municipal suffrage for many years, the qualifications varying in different provinces, and the women of Australia and New Zealand have long had full suffrage on equal terms with men. The Scandinavian countries too have outstripped us in applied democracy and have taken the second lead. Universal suffrage including women is already established in Finland, Norway, Denmark and Iceland, even Sweden long ago gave women equal political rights with men except the vote in Parliament. The King has twice recommended that this disability be removed and action is promised soon.) Any man who has American blood in his veins, any man who has gloried in our history and has rejoiced that our land was the leader of world democracy, will share with us the humbled national pride that our country has so long delayed action upon this question that another country has beaten us in what we thought was our especial world mission.



## Document 5

Source: Flyer produced by the Public Interests' League of Massachusetts, circa 1917.

## Woman Suffrage As A War Measure

Mrs. Catt, President of the National Woman's Suffrage Association, urges Congress to pass the Federal Suffrage Amendment as a "**War Measure.**"

**Is it a good war measure** to increase enormously the cost of elections and of state governments by doubling the electorate at a time when all our resources are desperately needed to feed the world and to win the war? No!

**Is it a good war measure** to move toward securing dozens of Miss Rankins in Congress, who "would like to stand by their country, but who cannot vote for war?"

What would happen to our country if, with the men at the front and the average patriotic woman too busily engaged with additional work to take an efficient part in politics, the suffragists, pacifists and weaklings should join together and send women—or men—to Congress **who would not vote to support our army and navy?**

**Is it a good war measure** to move toward making this possible? No!

**Is it a good war measure** to put much greater political power in the hands of pacifists in war times? The National Suffrage News (organ of Mrs. Catt's party) for February, 1917, says: "There is hardly a suffragist who is not a pacifist." Mrs. Catt herself is a pacifist. The New York Times of October 9, 1916, called attention to the fact that **not one woman** prominent among the suffragists had declared herself for military preparedness and against peace without honor! Dr. Anna Shaw openly declared her opposition to preparedness. The Woman's Peace Party, a suffrage organization of which Mrs. Catt was Vice-President, went on record in 1916, when the war had been in progress two years, as opposed to Preparedness!

**Is it a good war measure** to enfranchise in time of war a large body of women who hold such views?

# NO!

**NO WORSE WAR MEASURE COULD BE DEvised**

Issued by the Public Interests' League of Massachusetts, 687 Boylston St., Boston, Mass.

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### Document 6

Source: Political cartoon by William Charles Morris published in *The Brooklyn Magazine*, November 10, 1917.





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## Document 7

Source: President Woodrow Wilson, address to U.S. Senate on September 30, 1918.

Through many, many channels I have been made aware what the plain, struggling, workaday folk are thinking upon whom the chief terror and suffering of this tragic war falls. They are looking to the great, powerful, famous Democracy of the West to lead them to the new day for which they have so long waited; and they think, in their logical simplicity, that democracy means that women shall play their part in affairs alongside men and upon an equal footing with them. If we reject measures like this, in ignorance or defiance of what a new age has brought forth, of what they have seen but we have not, they will cease to believe in us; they will cease to follow or to trust us. They have seen their own governments accept this interpretation of democracy—seen old governments like that of Great Britain, which did not profess to be democratic, promise readily and as of course this justice to women, though they had long before refused it, the strange revelations of this war having made many things new and plain, to governments as well as to peoples.

Are we alone to refuse to learn the lesson? Are we alone to ask and take the utmost that our women can give—service and sacrifice of every kind—and still say we do not see what title that gives them to stand by our sides in the guidance of the affairs of their nation and ours? We have made partners of the women in this war; shall we admit them only to a partnership of suffering and sacrifice and toil and not to a partnership of privilege and right? This war could not have been fought, either by the other nations engaged or by America, if it had not been for the services of the women—services rendered in every sphere—not merely in the fields of effort in which we have been accustomed to see them work, but wherever men have worked and upon the very skirts and edges of the battle itself.