Voices for Votes

How Alabama women worked for voting rights before 1920

SS24.5.2a "Summarize how women in Alabama participated in the suffrage movement prior to the ratification of the Nineteenth Amendment."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline one way women organized, one way they shared their message, and one way they tried to change the law. Circle the setback they faced in 1915.

Seeking the Vote in Alabama

1 Imagine asking your neighbors to change a rule that shuts you out. In the early 1900s, Alabama women could not vote in state elections. Some formed the Alabama Equal Suffrage Association in 1912. Pattie Ruffner Jacobs, an organizer from Birmingham, helped lead it. Members built local groups, held meetings, and spoke with neighbors about why women should have a voice in government.

2 To reach more people, suffragists gave speeches, handed out leaflets, and wrote for newspapers. They also asked Alabama lawmakers to let voters decide whether to change the state constitution and give women the vote. In 1915, the state legislature did not pass that proposal. The loss did not end their work. Supporters kept organizing and pressing lawmakers to back women's voting rights.

3 Not all women had the same chance to join these efforts. Black women in Alabama worked for voting rights through community groups, but racism often shut them out of white-led groups. Alabama lawmakers did not approve the Nineteenth Amendment before it became law across the country in 1920. The amendment barred denying the vote because of sex, yet racist voting rules still kept many Black women from the polls.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. In one sentence, summarize how the Alabama Equal Suffrage Association organized women to work for the vote.

2. How did suffragists try to win support from the public and from lawmakers? Summarize one action for each group.

3. Summarize what happened to the suffragists' proposal in 1915 and how supporters responded.

4. How did racism affect Black women's work for voting rights before 1920 and their ability to vote afterward?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a four-sentence museum label about Alabama women's work for voting rights before 1920. Summarize how they organized, how they tried to change minds or laws, what setback they faced, and how racism shaped who could take part.

Voices for Votes

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline one way women organized, one way they shared their message, and one way they tried to change the law. Circle the setback they faced in 1915. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	In one sentence, summarize how the Alabama Equal Suffrage Association organized women to work for the vote.	**Its members built local groups and held meetings to gather support for women's voting rights.**
2	How did suffragists try to win support from the public and from lawmakers? Summarize one action for each group.	**They reached the public through speeches, leaflets, or newspapers and asked lawmakers to let voters decide whether to give women the vote.**
3	Summarize what happened to the suffragists' proposal in 1915 and how supporters responded.	**The state legislature did not pass the proposal, but supporters kept organizing and pressing lawmakers.**
4	How did racism affect Black women's work for voting rights before 1920 and their ability to vote afterward?	**Racism often kept Black women out of white-led groups before 1920, and racist voting rules still kept many from the polls after the Nineteenth Amendment became law.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before 1920, Alabama women formed suffrage groups and held meetings to build support for voting rights. They shared leaflets and asked lawmakers to let voters decide whether women could vote. The legislature did not pass that proposal in 1915, but suffragists kept organizing. Black women worked through community groups, while racism often kept them out of white-led groups.

Accept other accurate actions from the passage, including speeches, newspaper writing, and talking with neighbors. The museum label should connect women's actions and setbacks in a four-sentence summary, not simply list facts.