Voices That Moved

Trace how reformers turned evidence into demands for change.

8.H.21 "Analyze the influence of early individual social reformers and movements such as the abolitionist, feminist, and social reform movements."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline a reformer's action in each paragraph, circle a change it helped bring, and number one limit or delay in each paragraph so you can trace how reform efforts influenced society.

Making a Case for Change

1. In 1847, Frederick Douglass began publishing The North Star, an antislavery newspaper. Born into slavery, he had escaped and could describe its violence from experience. Through speeches and print, Douglass challenged claims that slavery was harmless and urged readers to oppose it. Abolitionists also sent petitions to lawmakers and built groups that demanded an end to slavery. Their pressure helped make slavery a national political issue, but the Civil War and the Thirteenth Amendment in 1865 were needed to end legal slavery across the United States.

2. At a meeting in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848, Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Lucretia Mott helped organize a convention about women's rights. Its Declaration of Sentiments argued that laws and customs denied women equal opportunities. Stanton proposed a resolution calling for women's voting rights. Douglass attended and argued in its favor, showing a connection between abolition and the women's rights movement. The convention did not change voting laws immediately. Instead, it gave reformers a public demand they could organize around for decades.

3. Other reformers asked what happened to people whom society often ignored. In the 1840s, Dorothea Dix visited jails and found people with mental illnesses confined in poor conditions, sometimes alongside prisoners. She reported what she saw to lawmakers and pressed states to fund hospitals for their care. Her investigations helped persuade several states to create or expand such hospitals. Like Douglass and the organizers at Seneca Falls, Dix turned evidence into a public argument. These reforms changed laws and institutions, yet new hospitals did not always provide the care reformers hoped for.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How did Douglass's experience and his newspaper help the abolitionist movement influence public debate?

2. How did Douglass's role at Seneca Falls show a connection between two reform movements?

3. How did Dix turn what she observed in jails into a change in state institutions?

4. Why does the passage show that reform was not a single, complete victory? Give one delay and one limit.

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Imagine you are a reformer in 1850 concerned about unsafe factory conditions. In four sentences, plan how to persuade lawmakers to address the problem by adapting two tactics from the passage, naming who used each tactic, and explaining how each could build support.

ANSWER KEY

Voices That Moved

GRADE 8 · 8.H.21

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline a reformer's action in each paragraph, circle a change it helped bring, and number one limit or delay in each paragraph so you can trace how reform efforts influenced society. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How did Douglass's experience and his newspaper help the abolitionist movement influence public debate?	**Douglass used his experience of slavery to challenge claims that it was harmless. His newspaper spread that argument and urged readers to oppose slavery.**
2	How did Douglass's role at Seneca Falls show a connection between two reform movements?	**Douglass, an abolitionist, supported Stanton's call for women's voting rights at the convention.**
3	How did Dix turn what she observed in jails into a change in state institutions?	**Dix reported poor conditions to lawmakers and pressed for hospitals. Her investigations helped persuade several states to create or expand hospitals.**
4	Why does the passage show that reform was not a single, complete victory? Give one delay and one limit.	**The Seneca Falls convention did not change voting laws immediately, and the hospitals Dix promoted did not always provide the care reformers hoped for.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

I would ask factory workers to describe unsafe machines and print their accounts in a newspaper, as Frederick Douglass used print and firsthand experience to challenge slavery. These stories could help readers understand why workplace safety matters. I would also visit factories, record dangerous conditions, and report my findings to lawmakers, as Dorothea Dix did after visiting jails. Evidence from these visits could help convince lawmakers to consider safety rules.

Accept other passage-based tactics, such as petitions or organizing a public meeting, if the response names who used them and explains how they could build support. Do not require students to predict that a law would pass.