Who Gets Heard?

The impact of women's suffrage in Indiana

IS.1.15 "Assess the impact of the Women's Suffrage Movement on the residents of Indiana."

NAME _____ DATE _____

1 READ AND MARK

Read it twice

YOUR JOB Underline two ways Indiana residents worked for voting rights, circle the 1917 setback, and number two effects or limits of the 1920 amendment to help you assess what changed.

A Vote and a Voice in Indiana

1 In 1916, imagine an Indianapolis woman asking a city official to improve the water supply. She could sign a petition and speak at a meeting, but Indiana law did not let her vote for the officials who decided what to do. This gap mattered beyond elections: voters could reward leaders who listened or replace leaders who ignored them. Many Indiana suffragists argued that women needed the ballot to influence decisions about schools, public health, and work. Other residents opposed changing voting rules, so the movement also brought disputes about who should have political power into local newspapers and public meetings.

2 Indiana women organized clubs, gave speeches, and pressed legislators for change. Helen Gougar of Lafayette spoke across the state for women's voting rights. In 1917, lawmakers passed a measure that would have let women vote in certain elections, including presidential elections. Supporters could see a path toward a stronger voice, but the Indiana Supreme Court ruled the measure unconstitutional under the state constitution. That setback meant organizing had not yet produced a secure vote for Indiana women. It also showed that state lawmakers alone could not easily settle the issue. Suffragists kept pushing for a change to the United States Constitution.

3 Indiana ratified the proposed Nineteenth Amendment in January 1920. After enough states ratified it, the amendment became law that August, barring denial of the vote because of sex. In the November presidential election, eligible Indiana women could vote, and candidates had to consider their views as voters. Yet legal change did not erase every barrier. Black women, for example, could face racism in political life even though the amendment protected their voting rights regardless of sex. The movement changed who could formally take part in elections, but equal influence still depended on whether residents could participate and be heard.

2 ANSWER WITH EVIDENCE

Use the passage

1. How would gaining the vote give the Indianapolis woman more influence than signing a petition alone?

2. How did the court's 1917 decision affect Indiana women who had worked for voting rights?

3. How did the Nineteenth Amendment change the relationship between eligible Indiana women and candidates in 1920?

4. Why did the Nineteenth Amendment not guarantee equal political influence for all Indiana women?

3 YOUR TURN

Your own words

Write a 75 to 95 word museum label about how the movement changed life for two Indiana residents: a woman who had petitioned officials and a Black woman who faced racism. Use at least two details from the passage, explain one new possibility for each resident, and explain why the amendment did not guarantee equal political influence.

Who Gets Heard?

PART 1 · READ AND MARK

Underline two ways Indiana residents worked for voting rights, circle the 1917 setback, and number two effects or limits of the 1920 amendment to help you assess what changed. Accept any marking that follows this job and points at the right text.

PART 2 · ANSWERS

#	QUESTION	ANSWER
1	How would gaining the vote give the Indianapolis woman more influence than signing a petition alone?	**She could help choose officials and vote against those who ignored her concerns, rather than only asking them to act.**
2	How did the court's 1917 decision affect Indiana women who had worked for voting rights?	**It blocked the limited voting rights the new measure would have provided, so their organizing had not yet secured the vote.**
3	How did the Nineteenth Amendment change the relationship between eligible Indiana women and candidates in 1920?	**Eligible women could vote in the November election, giving candidates a reason to consider their views.**
4	Why did the Nineteenth Amendment not guarantee equal political influence for all Indiana women?	**It barred denial of the vote because of sex, but barriers such as racism could still affect participation and whose views were heard.**

PART 3 · YOUR TURN (SAMPLE ANSWER)

Before 1920, an Indianapolis woman could petition officials about the water supply but could not vote them out if they ignored her. After the Nineteenth Amendment took effect, she could help choose those officials. A Black Indiana woman also gained protection against being denied a vote because of sex. She could cast a ballot in the November presidential election if she met other voting requirements, yet racism could still make it harder for her voice to be heard. The movement expanded political power, but it did not make political influence equal.

Accept other supported explanations that distinguish the new voting right from equal access or influence. For the museum label, check the 75 to 95 word range, two passage details, a new possibility for each resident, and a remaining limit.