**The Declaration of Sentiments,  Seneca Falls Conference, 1848**

*Elizabeth Cady Stanton & Lucretia Mott, two American abolitionists, organized the first conference to address women's rights in Seneca Falls, New York, in 1848. 68 women and 32 men signed this document, drafted at the conference.*

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| **Original Text** | **In Your Own Words** |
| …We hold these truths to be self-evident: that all men and women are created equal; that they are [given] by their Creator with certain inalienable rights; that among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness; that to secure these rights governments [derive their powers from the] consent of the governed. Whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of those who suffer from it to refuse allegiance to it, and to insist upon the institution of a new government… |  |
| The history of mankind is a history of repeated injuries…on the part of man toward woman, having…absolute tyranny over her. To prove this, let facts be submitted… |  |
| He has never permitted her to exercise her inalienable right to the elective franchise.He has [forced] her to [obey] laws, in the formation of which she had no voice. |  |
| He has withheld from her rights, which are given to the most ignorant and degraded men--both natives and foreigners… |  |
| He has taken from her all right in property, even to the wages she earns.[In] marriage, she [must] promise obedience to her husband, he becoming…her master--the law giving him power to deprive her of her liberty, and to [give punishment]. |  |
| He has monopolized nearly all the profitable employments, and from those she is permitted to follow, she receives [little pay]. He has denied her the [ability to obtain] a thorough education, all colleges being closed against her. |  |
| He allows her in church…but a subordinate position, [excluding her] from the ministry, and, with some exceptions, from any public participation in the affairs of the church. |  |
| He has created…a different code of morals for men and women, by which moral [crimes], which exclude women from society, are not only tolerated, but [considered] of little [importance] in man. |  |
| 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…life. |  |
| Now, in view of this entire disfranchisement of one-half the people of this country, their social and religious [worsening]--in view of the unjust laws above mentioned, and because women do feel themselves [angry due to mistreatment], oppressed, and [illegally] deprived of their most sacred rights, we insist that they have immediate admission to all the rights and privileges which belong to them as citizens of the United States. |  |

**Right There Questions:**

1. What do the people have a right to do if the government doesn’t protect their rights?
2. What is marriage like for women in 1848?

**Think & Search:**

1. What rights are women seeking according to the Declaration of Sentiments?
2. What comparisons can be drawn between the lives of men and women in 1848?

**Author & Me:**

1. How does marriage in the US in 1848 compare to marriage in other parts of the world today?
2. How has the role of women in society changed from 1848 to today?

**On My Own:**

1. Why is gender equality important?
2. Have the problems listed in the Declaration of Sentiments been solved?

**Sojourner Truth’s “Ain’t I a Woman?”**

*Take notes on Truth’s ideas, attitudes, and her audience as you watch the reenactment.*

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