

Name _____ Date _____

Susan B. Anthony & Perseverance

Learn more about this topic! Each section gives more detail on one of the lyrics from the song. Read each section, and then respond by answering the question or taking notes on key ideas.

1. b'

Susan Brownell Anthony was born on February 15, 1820 in Adams, Massachusetts. Her parents were Quakers and therefore believed in equality and activism. They believed in abolition and worked to end slavery in the United States. In the Quaker meeting house, men and women had an equal voice, so Anthony grew up thinking men and women were treated equally everywhere.

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2. b'

Quakers also believed in temperance, or not drinking alcohol. As an adult, Anthony joined the Temperance Movement, a group of people working to create stronger liquor laws. As a temperance worker, she met Elizabeth Cady Stanton, also an activist, and the two would be friends for the rest of their lives.

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While fighting for temperance, Anthony and Stanton encountered many obstacles. Once, they collected 28,000 signatures on a petition to the New York State Legislature to limit liquor sales. The legislature ignored the petition because most of the signatures were from women. Since women could not vote, they held no power over the government. Anthony and Stanton realized that, to be taken seriously, women needed to be able to vote. They focused their efforts on women's suffrage, or the right of women to vote.

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3. b'

In its original form, the US Constitution didn't guarantee women the right to vote. In order for women to be allowed to vote in elections, there needed to be an amendment, or change, to the Constitution. In 1869, Anthony and Stanton founded the National Woman Suffrage Association to try to convince Congress to add an amendment giving women the right to vote. Anthony traveled around the country making speeches to raise awareness for women's suffrage and to emphasize the importance of an amendment.

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4. b'

In 1872, Anthony and a group of other women cast ballots in the presidential election. Anthony was so famous for her activism that the police arrested her, and not the other women, for voting. Her case went to trial. The judge directed the jury to find her guilty without even discussing her case. At the time, people on trial were not allowed to speak in their own defense, so Anthony was only allowed to speak after the trial was over. She said, 'You have trampled underfoot every vital principle of our government. My natural rights, my civil rights, my political rights, my judicial rights, are all alike ignored.' The jury found her guilty and the judge sentenced her to a \$100 fine. She refused to pay.

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5. b'

Anthony was not always a popular person. Many people didn't like the causes she fought for. Often people would call her names and write bad things about her in newspaper articles. She ignored all this and kept fighting for the things she believed in, showing perseverance and determination. While she is best known for fighting for women's suffrage, she also fought for women's rights, education reform, labor reform, temperance and abolition. She spoke to Congress about a suffrage amendment every year from 1869 to 1906, the year that she died.

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Women finally got the right to vote in 1920, 14 years after Anthony died, when Congress passed the 19th Amendment. The alternate name for the amendment was the Susan B. Anthony Amendment. In 1979, the United States government honored her contribution to the country by making her the first woman to be depicted on a coin. You can still find some Susan B. Anthony dollar coins in circulation today.

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6. b'

While Anthony and other well-known suffragists fought hard for women's right to vote, they focused mainly on White women. At the time the Civil War ended, only White men could legally vote. Black and White activists often worked together to advocate for universal suffrage, or voting rights for every citizen, no matter their race or gender.

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That changed when the 15th Amendment was proposed. This amendment would give all Black men the right to vote. Anthony opposed the legislation. She argued that the rights of one group should not come before others. She did believe that Black men should have the right to vote, but not before White women did. Anthony and Stanton realized that they would have to get White conservative politicians on their side. They employed racist and elitist arguments as to why White women should get the vote before Black men. They intentionally excluded Black women from the movement. This created a divide between Black and White feminists that still exists today.

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