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The Cult of True Womanhood

Approximate Duration of Lesson

1. Students will read/annotate the article for homework (3 nights)
2. 3- fifty minute class periods

Overview of Lesson

Students will read and annotate Barbara Welter's article, "The Cult of True Womanhood: 1820-1860" and answer discussion questions for homework. During the first class period, we will put our desks in a circle and discuss the questions and other issues that emerge from the discussion. In the next class, we will finish discussing the questions and connect the "Cult of True Womanhood" to a photograph of Sojourner Truth. This lesson connects to Illinois Learning Standards 16.A.5a and 16.D.5 (US) and Common Core reading standards 1, 2, and 4, because students need to analyze the picture and cite evidence for their explanation as well as determine the meaning of the words in the caption. The written response uses Common Core writing standards 1 and 4, because students need to craft a response that uses clear and coherent ideas. Moreover, it uses Common Core reading standards 7 and 9, because students need to evaluate and corroborate information on the "Cult of True Womanhood" from multiple sources.

Lesson Objectives

1. Students will be able to identify characteristics of a "true woman" in 19th century America.
2. Students will be able to analyze to what extent is the 'Cult of True Womanhood' is reflected in other sources, citing specific textual evidence.
3. Students will be able to integrate multiple sources to analyze the legacy of the "Cult of True Womanhood" in the twentieth century.

Learning Standards

Illinois Learning Standards for Social Science (IL Content Standards)

16.A.5a Analyze historical and contemporary developments using methods of historical inquiry (pose questions, collect and analyze data, make and support inferences with evidence, report findings).

16.D.5 (US) Analyze the relationship between an issue in United States social history and the related aspects of political, economic and environmental history.

Common Core State Standards for "Literacy in History/Social Studies":

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in Federalist No. 10).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.7

Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.8

Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RH.11-12.9

Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.1

Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.11-12.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Academic Vocabulary and/or Glossary Terms

Piety

Purity

Submissiveness

Domesticity

Planning and Preparation

This article discussion provides the beginning of our unit on antebellum culture and reform, so it will provide the foundational knowledge for later understanding of women's rights and antebellum reform movements such as education, mental illness reform, and temperance. Students will sit as a large group, with their desks in a circle, facing each other.

Resources

- Students will have their own copy of the Welter article, discussion questions, Sojourner Truth image, and "Election Day" political cartoon
 - Handout with the following (formatted handout is at the end of the lesson): **Directions:** Answer the questions below using Barbara Welter's "The Cult of True Womanhood" as a guide. Use complete sentences and answer in your own words.
1. List and briefly describe the four (4) virtues of a true woman.
 2. Explain the role of religion in a woman's life.
 3. How was purity connected to femininity?
 4. How did novels, stories and magazines reinforce purity?
 5. Why was submissiveness the most feminine of the virtues?
 6. How was the home a moral refuge for the family?
 7. How was domesticity connected to nursing?

8. How was housework connected to domesticity?
 9. What kinds of education should a True Woman receive?
 10. Why was marriage beneficial for the True Woman?
 11. Describe how a True Woman should view motherhood.
 12. How did the True Woman influence the New Woman?
- *Sojourner Truth*. Photograph. Miller NAWSA Suffrage Scrapbooks, 1897-1911; Scrapbook 3; front matter. Library of Congress, Rare Book and Special Collections Division, Washington, D.C. 20540. photomechanical print. <http://memory.loc.gov/cgi-bin/query/h?ammem/rbcmillerbib:@field%28DOCID+@lit%28rbcmiller001306%29%29> (accessed January 3, 2015).
 - Gustin, E.W. *Election Day!* Illustration. 1909. Library of Congress Prints and Photographs Division Washington, D.C. 20540. 1 photomechanical print: photogravure. <http://www.loc.gov/pictures/item/97500226/> (accessed January 3, 2015).

Procedure

Day 1

Opening (5 minutes):

- Students will answer in their notebook: “Explain the role of religion in a woman’s life, according to Barbara Welter.”
- Teacher will call on both students with their hands raised and those without their hands raised and record their answers on the board or digital whiteboard

Transition: Now that you’ve had a chance to read the article and answer the questions, we will move our desks into a circle to discuss the questions.

Large Group (35 minutes): Teacher should lead class discussion on the questions from the student handout. In order for this lesson to work successfully, teachers need to be prepared with their own annotated copy of the article so they can facilitate student responses. For example, if the teacher asks a student, “How did novels, stories and magazines reinforce purity?” and the student responds, “I don’t know,” the teacher needs to be ready with a follow-up question, such as, “Looking at paragraph three on page 155, what might be an example here?” Or, if a student responds that books help teach girls to be pure,” the teacher might redirect that question to another student and ask, “What evidence exists within the article to support that argument?” Encouraging the students to think critically is essential for this activity. Teacher should work through questions 1-6 within this time frame, encouraging students to build off each other’s answers. To encourage discussion, teachers should try to avoid calling on students, unless they specifically want to bring quiet students into the conversation. The conversation should inspire student connections to their own experiences. For example, someone might say, “This reminds me of at home when my mom does...” or “my dad does...” These tangential discussions should be encouraged, but the teacher can transition them into a discussion of the next question in the interest of time.

Closure (10 minutes): Students will write down on a slip of paper, “Briefly explain which one of the four virtues had the most impact on women’s lives.” Teacher can ask students to share what they wrote, asking students who did not speak much during the discussion first. Then they will put their desks back in the regular classroom set up.

Day 2: Students will turn the desks into a large circle to begin discussion.

Opening: Teacher will open with a question from the question worksheet, encouraging someone who did not speak much on day 1 to begin discussion.

Large Group (35 minutes): Teacher and students will finish discussion questions from day 1, focusing on 7-12. Again, teacher will refer to his/her own annotated copy of the article to facilitate discussion. The teacher should think of outside examples to stimulate discussion, such as school dress codes that target female clothing, television shows and how they portray men and women, and music lyrics and videos, and their portrayal of men and women. These can inspire student discussion, and the teacher can ask students to connect their arguments back to the article. For example, a school dress code which restricts tight clothing among girls emphasizes purity, to keep the girls from tempting the boys. These discussions of student experiences help the teacher check for understanding. At the conclusion of the discussion, students will turn their desks back into small group pods of four.

Closure (10 minutes): Students will write down on an exit slip of paper to what extent they think the “Cult of True Womanhood” exists today and why. The teacher should call on students who were not as vocal during the class discussion to share their reflections.

Day 3

Opening (5 minutes):

The teacher hands out a copy of the Sojourner Truth image to each student and with projects the image on an interactive whiteboard. Students will have 2-3 minutes to write down in their notebook their thoughts on the following prompt: “Write down what you see in the image, including the caption at the bottom.” We will have a whole class discussion, making sure students understand the meaning of the caption. We will also discuss as a large group why the wording is not in “proper” English, as reflected in the Sojourner Truth’s speaking manner.

Small Group (20 minutes): Students will discuss the following question in small groups at their table, and write a paragraph individually to turn in: “To what extent is the ‘Cult of True Womanhood’ reflected in this image? Use specific evidence from the image and the Welter article to support your argument.”

Individual work (20 minutes): Students will get a copy of the “Election Day!” political cartoon and will write a two-paragraph response, “How is the ‘Cult of True Womanhood’ displayed in this political cartoon? Explain what you think is the impact of the ‘Cult of True Womanhood’ on early twentieth century women. Use specific evidence from the image and the Welter article to support your argument.”

Assessment

Formative (ongoing) and Summative (end of lesson) assessments

- **Formative:** Teacher will monitor student answers to discussion questions, directing students to specific passages, if the student responses lack evidence and/or analysis. Teacher will collect exit slips at the end of day 1 to check for understanding.
- **Summative:** The one paragraph response on Sojourner Truth and the two-paragraph response on “Election Day!” will be the two summative assessments. They will be graded using the following rubric:

Strong Response: This response is a strong answer to all parts of the prompt, analyzing the connections between the images and the articles. The response cites clear, specific evidence from BOTH the images and the article, explaining to what extent “The Cult of True Womanhood is seen in the images. This response integrates evidence from the multiple sources (images and article) into a coherent response.

Average Response: This response is a sufficient answer to some or all parts of the prompt, analyzing the connections between the images and the articles. The response cites clear, specific evidence from EITHER the images or the article, but not both. However, the analysis is too weak to earn a higher score because the response is unclear regarding supporting examples or explanations. The response does not analyze to what extent “The Cult of True Womanhood” is seen in the images, and only integrates evidence from some, not all of the sources.

Weak Response: This response is confused and mostly incorrect, without specific evidence from either the images or the article. The response is mostly a summary of the ideas, and it lacks connections and analysis between the image and the article.

Grading Scale:

One Paragraph Response

Strong: 9-10 points
Average: 7-8 points
Weak: 5-6 points

Two Paragraph Response

Strong: 18-20 points
Average: 15-17 points
Weak: 12-14 points

APUSH
Mrs. Stacy

Name_____

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(2) Explain the role of religion in a woman's life.

(3) How was purity connected to femininity?

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