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Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2021 Volume III: Democracy and Inequality: Challenges and Possible Solutions

Breaking Barriers: The Fight for Gender Equality, Equal Pay and Civil Rights

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The Equal Rights Amendment (E.R.A.) stands as a century-long dream for many women, suffragists, feminists, and activists as it would ban discrimination based on sex and guarantee equality for women in the Constitution. Lawmakers and advocacy organizations have put the E.R.A amendment back on the nation's agenda to guarantee women full constitutional rights. The E.R.A. is still pending as of August 2021 and will need to have a new ratification date to secure the passing of the amendment. The complex issues of the E.R.A. were propelled by the social movements to enact advances and action in the courts.

Essential questions of this unit include: Should the E.R.A pass or not? How have issues of gender inequality been successful or not in advancing equal protection? Written for 9th and 10th grade U.S. government students, we will study the history of the E.R.A., the 14th Amendment, the Equal Protection Clause and how this clause relates to the E.R.A. We will also discuss how the Courts have argued issues and landmark cases of gender inequality that are not stated in the Constitution but have been fought and have advanced the causes of justice for men and women in the United States.

(Developed for U. S. Government, grades 9-10; recommended for U. S. Government and Civics, grades 9-12)

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