



## NSDAR Educational Resources Committee

“Monuments to the 19th Amendment & The Sculptor  
Adelaide Johnson”

**Contributor:** Aryssa Damron **Grade Level:** 4<sup>th</sup>-5<sup>th</sup>

1. **Identify the standards to be addressed:** Common Core Standards

2. **Statement of the objective and lesson outcomes:**

Students will learn about two portrait monuments related to the 19th Amendment and women’s suffrage, learn about sculptor Adelaide Johnson, and have a chance to talk about art, compare and contrast two pieces of art, and create their own idea for a portrait monument related to history.

While primarily a language-based art activity, this has ties to social studies and history as well via talking about the sculptor, the 19th Amendment, and other movements in U.S. history.

3. **Materials, resources, and technology to be used by teacher/students:**

Provided biographic sheet on Adelaide Johnson

Photograph of The Portrait Monument

Photograph of The Womens Rights Pioneers Monument created by Meredith Bergmann

Internet access

Access to book titles or online renderings of Stanton, Anthony, Truth and Mott.

4. **Introduction of the topic:**

See attached pages

5. **Procedure for instruction:**

See attached pages

6. **Assessment of Understanding:**

See attached pages

## INTRODUCTION OF TOPIC

The 19th Amendment was ratified in 1920 and finally gave women the right to vote nationwide. It was a HUGE deal for women who had been working to win this right, and have an amendment added to the Constitution, for decades! Lots of women were involved in the fight for women's suffrage—leading campaigns, running for office themselves, giving speeches, raising money, etc. Some women, for many different reasons, are MOST associated with the movement. Some of them include Elizabeth Cady Stanton, Susan B Anthony, Lucretia Mott, and Sojourner Truth.

The text of the 19th Amendment reads: "The right of citizens of the United States to vote shall not be denied or abridged by the United States or by any State on account of sex."

The 19th Amendment is sometimes referred to as the Susan B Anthony amendment.

In celebration of the 19th Amendment being passed, lots of cultural things happened, and art was created.

Think about the monuments in Washington, D.C. or around the country that commemorate big things or big people. What monuments or sculptures do you think about when you think about big moments in history?

Let's look at two monuments to women's suffrage—created almost a hundred years apart—but very similar in their goals of remembering the women

# PROCEDURE FOR INSTRUCTION

## 1. Warm Up Questions

- a. What does this monument make you feel? Do you recognize these women? What would you guess about each of them based on this sculpture?

## 2. Introduction to Adelaide Johnson and Women's Suffrage

- a. Read the biographical sheet provided on Adelaide Johnson.
- b. When did she live? When did she die?
- c. What is she best known for?
- d. Research Johnson on your own and see if you can find where she is buried

## 3. Art Study #1-Adelaide Johnson's Portrait Monument (See Provided Sheet)

- a. Take 5 minutes to study the sculpture.
- b. Write down--5 words that you think of when you see this sculpture. They can be adjectives or nouns.
- c. Write down--What can you guess about the person who sculpted this?
- d. Write down--Does the sculpture seem light or heavy? What do you think it is made of?
- e. Write down--Where do you think this sculpture lives now?
- f. Talk in small groups--What do you like about this sculpture?
- g. Talk in small groups--What don't you like about this sculpture?
- h. Talk as a large group--Why do you think parts of the sculpture look like they are unfinished?
- i. Talk as a large group--What does this monument make you feel?

## 4. Art Study #2--The Womens Rights Pioneers Monument by Meredith Bergmann (See Provided Sheet)

- a. Take 5 minutes to study the sculpture.
- b. Write down--5 words that you think of when you see this sculpture. They can be adjectives or nouns.
- c. Write down--What can you guess about the person who sculpted this?
- d. Write down--Does the sculpture seem light or heavy? What do you think it is made of?
- e. Write down--Where do you think this sculpture lives now?
- f. Talk in small groups--What do you like about this sculpture?
- g. Talk in small groups--What don't you like about this sculpture?
- h. Talk as a large group--What does this monument make you feel?

# PROCEDURE FOR INSTRUCTION

## 5. Compare and contrast

- a. Think about what you know about the 19th Amendment, women winning the right to vote, etc. What stories do these two monuments tell?
- b. What is similar in these monuments?
- c. What is different?

## 6. Research

- a. Find answers to questions 3E, 3F, and 3G using online or print resources, including books on the 19th Amendment, online articles about the sculpture, etc.
- b. Some examples of resources for this include:
  - i. <https://www.aoc.gov/explore-capitol-campus/art/portrait-monument-mott-stanton-anthony>
  - ii. <https://www.loc.gov/exhibitions/women-fight-for-the-vote/about-this-exhibition/seneca-falls-and-building-a-movement-1776-1890/a-movement-at-odds-with-itself/adelaide-johnsons-portrait-monument/>
  - iii. <https://suffrage2020illinois.org/2020/07/27/sculptor-adelaide-johnson-from-illinois/>
  - iv. <https://wanderwomenproject.com/women/adelaide-johnson/>
- c. Find answers to questions 4D and 4E using online or print resources, including books on the 19th Amendment, online articles about the sculpture, etc
- d. Some examples of resources for this include
  - i. <https://monumentalwomen.org/sculptors-page/>
  - ii. <https://meredithbergmann.com/public-art-commissions/womens-rights-pioneers-monument-central-park-nyc>
  - iii. <https://www.centralparknyc.org/locations/womens-rights-pioneers-monument>
  - iv. <https://bwht.org/women-monuments-in-2-cities-2/>

## LESSON CLOSURE

1. Talk about what Adelaide Johnson's life must have been like when sculpting this monument. Would it have been easy? What would she have been thinking about when carving?
2. The passing of the 19th Amendment was a huge moment in rights for women, and something so many people had been working towards for decades. Think about other moments in history that had big culminations—the Civil Rights Act, for example. Does that also fit Adelaide's choice to leave her sculpture "unfinished" for the work to come? Can you think of any other examples of movements unfinished?

## ASSESSMENT OF STUDENT UNDERSTANDING

1. Think about other figures in big moments in the history of the world or on a topic you're passionate about. What three people would you put on a monument to that moment? Would it be finished, or unfinished?

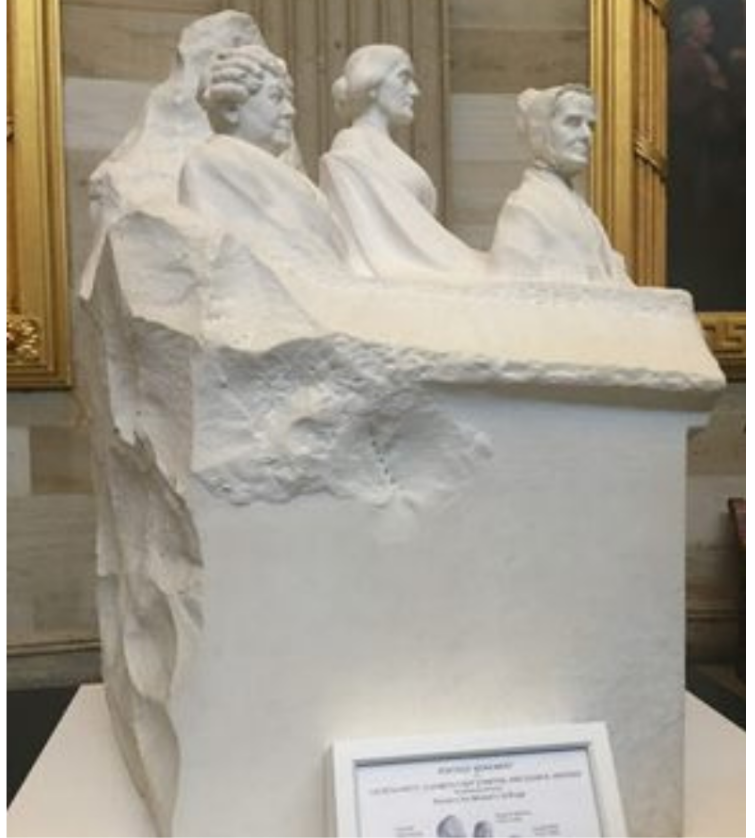
a. Examples to get kids thinking: Civil Rights, Climate Change Activism, The American Revolution, the Civil War, Man Landing on the Moon, World War II, the War in Iraq, etc.

2. Design your monument of the three people and their movement—either by describing it, drawing it, creating it in modeling clay, etc.

a. Who are you depicting and why?

b. What movement or moment in time are they associated with?

c. What other elements of your sculpture tell their story?



# ADELAIDE JOHNSON

SCULPTOR & SUFFRAGIST

September 26, 1859--November 10, 1955

Adelaide Johnson was born Sarah Adeline Johnson in Illinois in 1859. She is best known for her sculpture *The Portrait Monument*, which features three famous suffragists, that was commissioned by the National Women's Party after the ratification of the 19th Amendment.

Johnson knew from a young age that she had artistic skill and attend the St. Louis Design School. In the 1880s, Johnson fell down an elevator shaft and was gravely injured, but survived. She used the money she won in a lawsuit to move and study sculpture in Europe.

Johnson was commissioned to make the *Portrait Monument*, which was dedicated in February 1921, but not everyone was happy with the finished product.

A major criticism of the *Portrait Monument* is that it looks "unfinished." That was intentional on Johnson's part to represent that women's equality work was not finished.

Some time after it's 1921 unveiling, the sculpture was moved to the Capitol Crypt and lost to sight. It was brought out of the Crypt and put back on display in 1997.

# PORTRAIT MONUMENT

Take 5 minutes to study the sculpture and then complete the following questions and exercises



Write down 5 words--nouns or adjectives--that come to mind when you look at this sculpture:

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What can you guess about the person who made this?

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Does the sculpture seem light or heavy? What do you think it is made of?

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Where do you think this sculpture lives now?

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What do you like or dislike about this sculpture?

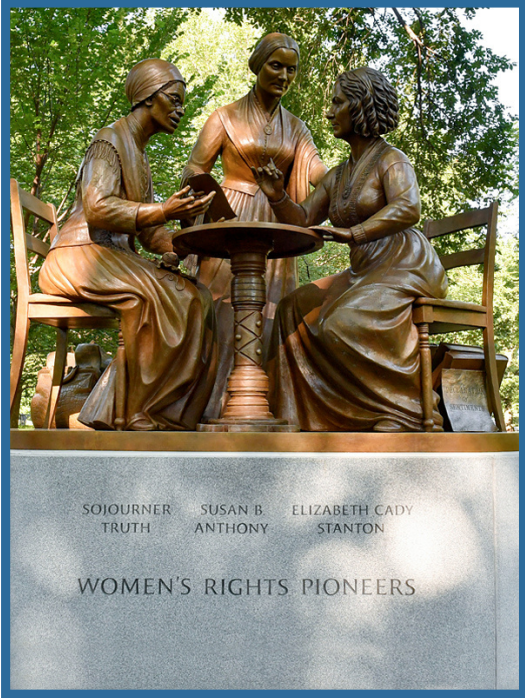
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# WOMENS RIGHTS PIONEERS

Take 5 minutes to study the sculpture and then complete the following questions and exercises



Write down 5 words--nouns or adjectives--that come to mind when you look at this sculpture:

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What can you guess about the person who made this?

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Does the sculpture seem light or heavy? What do you think it is made of?

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Where do you think this sculpture lives now?

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What do you like or dislike about this sculpture?

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