



THE UNIVERSITY OF ARIZONA
COLLEGE OF SOCIAL & BEHAVIORAL SCIENCES

Center for Middle Eastern Studies

Assignment Description (For Teachers)

Title: Challenges and Change for Iranian Women: DBQs to Creative Writing

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Purpose/Connection to the Curriculum: This lesson is designed for high school Social Studies or English classes and meets numerous World History, Geography, and Writing standards. The lesson helps students analyze the impact of government policy and social norms on women's lives, develop their critical thinking skills, and improve their facility in creative and academic writing.

Overview: The lesson begins with a short overview of modern Iranian history (from the late 19th to early 21st centuries). Students then analyze some short documents and photos related to women's issues at various stages of Iran's modern history. Based on what they have read, they write a structured essay about the development of women's rights in Iran. They conclude with a creative writing assignment in which they incorporate facts that they have learned.

Grade Level: High School.

Time: 3-4 class periods, depending on if you assign homework.

Objectives: Students are expected to: analyze a variety of primary and secondary sources, write effectively (in both formal and informal writing styles), and develop a greater understanding of Middle Eastern history, culture, and society.

Suggested Procedures

1. Background reading: Students read the background reading on modern Iranian history. (They can do this for homework or in class, individually or as a group.) **See #2, Overview of Modern Iran.**
2. Reading the documents: There are ten documents grouped into three historical periods. A teacher may require students to read all the documents, individually or in groups, OR

assign different groups to read – and report on – one of the three document sets. Regardless of the methods, students should have access to and know about all of the documents. (I usually post them online, and have students read them on the computer.)

See Folders: 3a, 3b, and 3c.

3. Sharing ideas: In preparation for writing, students brainstorm a list of rights and restrictions faced by Iranian women.

4. Writing a formal essay: Have students write a 5-paragraph essay on the writing prompt about how Iranian women's rights and lives have changed over the course of the last century and a half. Students need to use specific examples from some of the sources provided. According to the teacher's directions, students may be required to include a Works Cited section. **See #4, Questions and Writing Prompts.**

5. Creative writing: Working in groups or individually, students choose one of two creative writing options. They must include at least five specific facts from the readings. (The teacher can direct them either to underline or list the five facts.) **Also #4, Questions and Writing Prompts.**

Assessing Student Learning

30%: Class participation (reading/brainstorming)

40%: Formal essay with Works Cited section

30%: Creative writing

Extending the Lesson: Have students read 1-2 of the creative writing works of other students and respond to what they read.