

6.3 - Women Advancing Equality

The Asian American Education Project

Grade Levels	Grades K-6
Lesson Overview	Good Americans (1950 – 1960s). Patsy Mink’s life story exemplifies advocacy for change and equality. She confronted discrimination when she wanted to become a doctor and lawyer. Then she joined the Democratic Party to fight for equality. Despite her initial setback in gaining the support of the decision makers in the party in being elected to the House of Representatives, she succeeded in her subsequent attempt. As an elected member of Congress, her actions and deeds led to progressive changes in legislation creating openness, fairness and equality.
Lesson Objectives	Students will be able to: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make personal connections to the meaning of equality• Create a profile of a role model who advocates for equality• Describe obstacles minorities may confront in education and employment• Recognize how the Civil Rights Act of 1964 led to the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965.

Women Advancing Equality Essay:

Throughout her life, Patsy Takemoto Mink faced obstacles because she was Asian and female. Patsy Matsu Takemoto was born in Paia, Hawai‘i Territory in 1927 to two Japanese American parents. Mink was an ambitious student, winning junior class president and graduating as valedictorian. When she tried to become a doctor, Mink was rejected by medical schools. She decided to attend the University of Chicago Law School, where she met her husband, John Francis Mink. Upon her graduation in 1951, she had difficulty finding a job at a law firm and started a private practice in Hawai‘i. Eventually, she joined the Democratic Party in order to fight for equality and change.

Mink wanted to run for the House of Representatives to represent Hawai‘i, which had recently become a state in 1959. However, she did not get the support of the decision-makers of the Democratic Party. Despite this lack of support, Mink decided to run against Daniel Inouye and, in the end, did not win the election. While the loss was emotionally difficult for Mink, she did not give up her pursuit of a political career. Mink gave a stand-out speech during the 1960 Democratic National Convention, advocating for a firm civil rights agenda. In 1964, Mink ran again, still without the support of the Democratic party, and supported by small, individual donations. Mink was elected to Congress. At the time, Mink was one of only 11 women to serve in the House of Representatives; moreover, she became the first woman of color to serve as a Congresswoman.

Throughout her decades-long political career, Mink fought for education and women’s rights, among other issues. She believed that men and women should be treated equally in education and society. While in Congress, she had two major victories on women’s rights: Title IX and The Women’s Educational Equity Act. Mink co-authored Title IX, a federal civil rights law passed as part of the Education Amendments of 1972. This law protects people from discrimination based on sex in education programs or activities that receive Federal financial assistance. This law removed barriers for girls and women getting into college and sports. Mink helped passed the Women’s Educational Equity Act in 1974, which gave money for programs that supported gender equality, professional opportunities for women, and making sure women appear fairly in school textbooks. In addition to working on Title IX, Mink also worked tirelessly on civil rights issues,

ranging from housing to immigration to health care. Over her lifetime, Mink served a total of 15 terms as a member of the House of Representatives.

Works Cited:

“Mink, Patsy Takemoto.” *United States House of Representatives History, Art & Archives*, <https://history.house.gov/People/detail/18329>. Accessed 12 March 2021.

“More About Patsy Takemoto Mink.” *The Patsy Takemoto Mink Education Foundation*, 2018, <https://www.patsyminkfoundation.org/more-about-patsy-mink>. Accessed 12 March 2021.

“No One Would Hire Her. So She Wrote Title IX and Changed History for Millions of Women. Meet Education Trailblazer Patsy Mink.” *The 74 Media Inc.* <https://www.the74million.org/article/no-one-would-hire-her-so-she-wrote-title-ix-and-changed-history-for-millions-of-women-meet-education-trailblazer-patsy-mink/#:~:text=The%20first%20woman%20of%20color%20elected%20to%20Congress%2C%20she%20co,women%20and%20men%20in%20education.&text=After%20her%20success%20with%20Title,prevent%20discrimination%20in%20education%20programs>. Accessed 12 March 2021.

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“What is Title IX?” *Harvard University*. <https://titleix.harvard.edu/what-title-ix>. Accessed 12 March 2021.

Vocabulary:

- **Amendment:** an addition or alteration made to a constitution, statute, or legislative bill or resolution¹
- **Civil Rights:** guarantees of equal social opportunities and equal protection under the law, regardless of race, religion, or other personal characteristics²
- **Equality:** a situation in which people of different genders, races, religions, etc. are all treated fairly and have the same opportunities³
- **Fairness:** quality or act of treating people equally or in a way that is right or reasonable⁴
- **Grit:** courage and determination despite difficulty⁵
- **Immigration:** travel into a country for the purpose of permanent residence there⁶
- **Incarceration:** the act of imprisoning someone or the state of being imprisoned⁷
- **Policy:** set of ideas or plans that is used as a basis for making decisions, especially in politics, economics, or business⁸
- **Role model:** a person whose behavior in a particular role is imitated by others⁹

¹Definition is adopted from the Encyclopedia Britannica

²Definition is adopted from the Encyclopedia Britannica

³Definition is adopted from the Cambridge Dictionary

⁴Definition is adopted from the Cambridge Dictionary

⁵Definition is adopted from the Cambridge Dictionary

⁶Definition is adopted from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary

⁷Definition is adopted from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary

⁸Definition is adopted from the Collins Dictionary

⁹Definition is adopted from the Merriam-Webster Dictionary

Discussion Questions:

- Patsy Mink said that women have a tremendous responsibility to shape the future of America. What does she mean?

- Patsy Mink was the first woman of color elected to Congress. She even ran for President. She was a trailblazer in politics. How has her political advocacy influenced minorities in elected offices today?

Activity 1: Patsy Mink. Grade: Kindergarten

A. Show this video to students or read the excerpt below to the students.

- Video: *Patsy Mink: Ahead of the Majority*, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QsHncY17Xcg>
- Excerpt from this lesson's *Women Advancing Equality Essay* to the students:

“Throughout Patsy Takemoto Mink’s life she had difficult times because she was an Asian American and a woman. She was born in Hawai‘i in 1927. Her parents were two Japanese Americans. Mink was often the number one student in her class. She wanted to be a doctor, but no medical schools would take her. Then she decided to go to law school. After she graduated in 1951, no law firm would hire her because she was Asian American and a woman. Eventually, she joined the Democratic Party in order to fight for equality and change.

In 1964 Mink was elected to Congress. At the time, Mink was one of only 11 women to serve in the House of Representatives. She was the first woman of color to serve as a Congresswoman.

Mink worked a total of 24 years in Congress. She fought for education and women’s rights. She believed that women and men should be treated equally in education and society. When she was in Congress, she had two major victories on women’s rights. Mink co-wrote the law called Title IX in 1972. This law says girls and women can get into college and sports like boys and men. Mink helped passed another law in 1974. This law gives money for programs that treat women the same as men for example in school textbooks. She also worked very hard on civil rights, fair housing, fair immigration, and fair health care.”

B. Discuss the story:

1. Where did Patsy Mink grow up?
2. What did she like to do as a child?
3. When she grew up, what did she want to do but could not because she was a woman?
4. Do you think that it is fair?
5. Do you think that boys and girls should be able to do the same kind of jobs? Why or why not?
6. Draw a picture of some jobs both girls and boys can do well.
7. Talk about your picture with another classmate. Students may choose to share and talk about their picture with the class.

C. Discuss the video:

1. What does the video say?
2. What did Patsy Mink do? What did Patsy Mink say?
3. Do you think it is good for girls and boys to have the same education and sports if they want?
4. Patsy Mink said yes. Do you think that is good?
5. Draw a picture of some jobs both girls and boys can do well.
6. Talk about your picture with another classmate. Students may choose to share and talk about their picture with the class.

Activity 2: What is equality? Grades 1-3

- Show this lesson’s video to students.
- Read this lesson’s essay to students.

A. Discussion Questions

1. What does fairness mean?
2. What does equality mean?
3. Why is fairness and equality important in society?
4. How do people show equality in our school and communities?

B. Activity

1. Create an acrostic poem using the word fairness or equality to show what it means to you.
An example of an acrostic poem using the word grit:

Giving your best effort

Resilience

Introspective

Totally awesome!

2. Students will take turns sharing their acrostic poems with the class.

Activity 3: Role Models Grades 3-5

- Show this lesson's video to students.
- Read this lesson's essay to students.

A. Discussion Questions

1. When the Democratic Party advised that Patsy Mink should not run for the House of Representatives, but she insisted on running, do you agree with her action?
2. What are civil rights?
3. At the Democratic Party convention, she strongly advocated for the civil rights platform as it is written. What personal experiences prompted her commitment to civil rights?
4. What is grit?
5. How has grit helped Patsy Mink to pursuing her goals in life?

B. Activity

1. Distribute the *Bubble-Maps* handout or ask students to draw one.
2. Ask students to write this in the middle box: My role model is.
3. Think of someone in your life who advocates for equality in a group and can be a role model for others. Maybe it is your teacher, school counselor, playground supervisor or a relative.
4. Create a profile of your role model.

Fill out the bubbles in the Map by answering the following questions:

- How has this person created an environment of fairness and openness for everyone in the group?
 - How does this person promote inclusiveness?
 - What character trait does he/she display?
 - How does this person intervene or make changes when someone in the group is not being treated fairly?
 - Think of two other good deeds this person has done.
5. Students share their profiles with the class.

Activity 4:

Civil Rights Movement, Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965 and the Title IX of the Education Amendment Grades 5-6

- Show this lesson's video to students.
- Read this lesson's essay to students.

A. Background Information for this Activity:

In 1959 Patsy Takemoto Mink ran for House of Representatives to represent Hawai‘i. She did not get the support from the Democratic Party. She lost. She did not give up. She ran again. In 1964 she got elected. In Congress, she co-authored Title IX, a law to ensure that no one will be discriminated against in education and federally funded activities based on gender. She believed that men and women should be treated equally in education and society. This law removed barriers for girls and women getting into college and into sports.

She also fought racial barriers by supporting civil rights. Asian Americans had been victims of discrimination in U.S. history. The Exclusion Act of 1882 banned Chinese from entering the U.S. and was later expanded to include other Asians. During World War II, almost the entire population of Japanese Americans in the continental United States (over 120,000 people) were incarcerated in camps without any trial. Facing propaganda by Japan that the U.S. society is racist, the U.S. repealed the Chinese Exclusion Act in 1943; but immigration quotas for Asians were kept very low. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and African Americans led the Civil Rights Movement to demand desegregation and a more just society. The passage of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 led to examination and revision of discriminatory laws and policies. It helped bring an end to the immigration law allowing only a small number of immigrants from Asia and Africa to enter the U.S. In 1965. A new immigration law, The Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965, based on a system of preference and family reunification was enacted, helping many Asians and Africans to reunite with their families in America. Ten years after the law was passed, Asian American population doubled, and eventually become the fastest growing population.

B. For Supplemental Information, please see <https://asianamericanedu.org/files/AAEP-Black-Am-Help-Asian-Immig-Key.pdf>.

C. Discussion Questions

1. What is the Title IX Amendment?
2. What motivated Patsy Mink to co-author the Title IX Amendment?
3. How does Title IX benefit all Americans?
4. What is Patsy Mink’s stand on the civil rights? How was she instrumental in pushing for civil rights?
5. What is the Civil Rights Act of 1964?
6. What is the Immigration and Nationality Act of 1965?
7. How did the Civil Rights Act lead to changes in immigration law which benefits Asian Americans?

D. Activity

1. Distribute the *Women-Cause-and-Effect-Diagram* handout for student to fill out.
2. Use the examples in *Women-Cause and Effect Examples* for students to analyze causes and effects.
 - What are the causes of Patsy Takemoto Mink co-authoring The Women’s Educational Equity Act, Title IX? And what are the effects of Title IX?
 - What are the causes of changing the immigration laws and policies in 1965? And what are the effects of these changes to Asian American population?
3. Ask students to share their analysis on the board or in class discussions.

Further Information

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