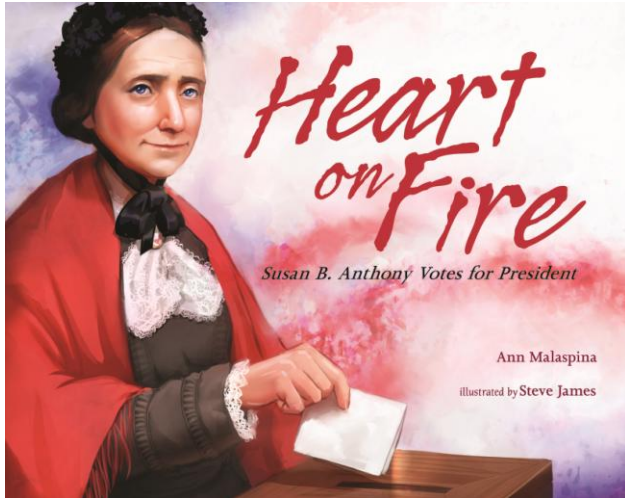


## Classroom Guide for

# HEART ON FIRE: SUSAN B. ANTHONY VOTES FOR PRESIDENT

by Ann Malaspina, illustrated by Steve James



Published by Albert Whitman & Company, 2012

<http://www.albertwhitman.com/>

Historical nonfiction picture book

32 pages

Ages 6-10/Grades 1-4

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**Summary:** In this true story based on primary documents, Susan B. Anthony marches to her local polling station in November 1872 to cast her vote for president and other candidates for office. She believed the new Fourteenth Amendment allowed for the women's vote, but many people disagreed. New York State did not allow women to vote yet. Anthony was arrested for illegal voting and put on trial the following year. Written in free verse, and with illustrations by artist Steve James, Anthony's lifelong fight for equal rights for women is brought to life in this nonfiction story for young readers.

**Themes:** Civil Rights, Equality, Women's Rights, Civil Disobedience, Voting Rights.

**Curriculum tie-ins:** Women's History Month, Constitution and Bill of Rights, Voting and Elections, Heroes and Heroines, Nineteenth Century U.S. History, New York State, Narrative Poetry, Art and Literature.

## Look Through the Book

Flip through the pages of the book. What are your first impressions? Notice the way the people are dressed. When do you think the story takes place? Look at the expressions of the people. What emotions do they convey? What other hints do the paintings give you about the story? The free verse form uses only a few words on every page. Why do you think the author chose to write the story this way?

## Pre-reading Discussions

1. Why were American women not allowed to vote in the 1800s?
2. Why does voting matter?
3. What risk did Susan B. Anthony take when she decided to vote?
4. What would you do if you were in her shoes?
6. Discuss the meaning of civil disobedience.

Susan B. Anthony's story in **Heart on Fire** is a good way to introduce **Women's History Month** in March. It is also inspiring for discussions on voting and elections in November.

## Post-Reading Discussions

1. Did Susan B. Anthony do the right thing, or should she have tried to win her battle for her right to vote in a different way?
2. Did the judge make the right decision by finding her guilty?
3. If you were Susan B. Anthony in Rochester in 1872, would you have voted, even if it were against the law?
5. Why were women's voting rights so important to Susan B. Anthony?

6. Why did many people (and Congress) in the 1870s believe that women should not be allowed to vote in the United States?
7. Is it ever right to break the law?

### Writing and Literature

1. Fire is an important metaphor in this story. Why did the author use this metaphor? Find all the words in the text that relate to fire and use them in a poem. Or pick a strong metaphor as a central image in your own story.
2. Choose one of your heroes. Find an important episode in his or her life. Research with primary sources. Write a nonfiction story.
3. Write a character sketch about a woman who is important to you.
4. Write a fictional story about a person who stands up for what he/she believes in.
5. Write a dialogue between two people who strongly disagree about something.
6. Make *Heart on Fire* into a play. Let class members have a chance to play different roles.
7. Write a rap song about something you feel strongly about.
8. Write a free verse poem about a person you admire.

### Social Studies

1. Divide the class into two teams and hold a debate about whether Susan B. Anthony was right or wrong when she voted in 1872.
2. Find other people in American history who believed civil disobedience was a way to make changes.
2. Pretend it's Election Day, 1872, when women were not allowed to vote. Write a diary entry. Maybe you, your mother, or your sister is not allowed to go to the polls that day. How do you feel about this? What are you going to do about it?
3. Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were lifelong friends and fought together for women's equality. Find friendships of famous people in history and discuss how the two friends supported each other in their dreams.

4. Read the 14<sup>th</sup> Amendment to the Constitution on the first page of the book. Decide if you think it allowed women the right to vote or not in the 1870s.
5. Make a timeline about voting rights in the U.S. that includes African Americans, Chinese Americans, and Native Americans, as well as women.
6. Compare the civil rights movement in the 1960s and the suffragists' movement. What is the same—and different—about the two movements?
7. Hold a mock election in the class on a local issue in your school or community.

## Art

1. Draw a poster that Susan B. Anthony might have carried to protest her innocence before her trial.
2. Design an election campaign poster about an issue you feel strongly about.
3. Paint a class mural of a women's voting rights demonstration.
4. Make campaign buttons for a local election. Create a slogan!
5. With other classmates, write and perform a song for the suffragists about a woman's right to vote.

## Vocabulary

The text of *Heart on Fire* includes some challenging words. Many are related to voting, law, and the court system. Talk about the vocabulary words with the class and use them in sentences.

Amendment civil disobedience suffragist protest citizen ballot cast tinder federal

Determined register bail consequence witness principle vital judicial penalty

Charge prosecutor lawful trample unjust

## About the Author and Illustrator

**Author Ann Malaspina** is the author of many books about history and social issues for young people. She was born in Brooklyn, New York, and now lives in Ridgewood, New Jersey. Ann began her writing career as a newspaper reporter. She likes to write about people who overcome great obstacles to achieve their dreams. Her book *Finding Lincoln* is about a boy in 1950s Alabama who confronts library segregation. *Touch the Sky: Alice Coachman, Olympic High Jumper* is about the first black woman to win an Olympic gold medal. Her author's website: <http://www.annmalaspina.com/>.

**Illustrator Steve James** is from a family of nine children. He earned a BFA in Illustration from Brigham Young University where he studied traditional painting techniques. He has illustrated *Dewey: There's a Cat in the Library!* and *Dewey's Christmas at the Library* as well as many book covers. He now lives in Lehi, Utah, with his wonderful wife and lazy cat. He enjoys running in the mountains in his homemade sandals. His illustrator's blog: <http://stevejamesart.blogspot.com/>

## Resources on the Web

*National Susan B. Anthony Museum and House*

URL: <http://susanbanthonyhouse.org/index.php>

*The Trial of Susan B. Anthony*

URL: <http://law2.umkc.edu/faculty/projects/ftrials/anthony/sbahome.html>

*Not for Ourselves Alone: The Story of Elizabeth Cady Stanton and Susan B. Anthony*

URL: <http://www.pbs.org/stantonanthony/index.html>

*Rights for Women: The Suffrage Movement and Its Leaders*

URL: <http://www.nwhm.org/online-exhibits/rightsforwomen/index.html>

*Women's Rights National Historical Park*

URL: <http://www.nps.gov/wori/index.htm>

The National Women's History Project

URL: <http://www.nwhp.org>.

We would love to hear what you think about *Heart on Fire*. You can contact Ann by email:

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