

Address to the First Women's Rights Convention
Elizabeth Cady Stanton – July 19, 1848

Directions: We will read, highlight, reflect, discuss, and analyze the famous speech by Elizabeth Cady Stanton. You will be responding to the following questions on a separate sheet of paper and developing your answers using at least **THREE (OR MORE)** sentences that include textual support and your own thoughtful commentary.
This will be a graded assignment so put forth a quality effort!!

Paragraph 1

1. What is the purpose of the speech? Why is this important to establish at the start of her speech? Why is having the right to vote so important?

Paragraph 2 & 3

1. Cady Stanton uses a **sarcastic tone** in this part of the speech in addressing the topic of clothing. She says, “As to their costume, the gentleman need feel no fear of our imitating that...we still admire the graceful folds, and consider our costume far more artistic than theirs.” What is her point in telling men that fashion is not a concern for women? What is her point in saying that “bishops, priests, judges, barristers, and lord mayors...the Pope of Rome, with his cardinals, too, all wear the loose flowing robes”? Why is she being sarcastic in addressing the topic of clothing in her speech?
2. What is her point in **repeating** the references to items of clothing such as high heeled boots, belts, and stocks (neck ties)? How do they make people physically feel? What do they represent with the cause she is speaking about?

Paragraphs 4 & 5

1. How do the “disgraceful laws” that Cady Stanton describes demonstrate the relationship between men and women? Comment on this.
2. The first five lines of paragraph 5 show **parallel structure** – why is this important?
3. Identify some examples of her using **ethos** in this section. Why is this important to her speech?

Paragraphs 6 & 7

1. Explain the importance of beginning both of these paragraphs with the **repetition** of the phrase: “The right is ours.” How would you define “the right” she continues to reference?
2. Cady Stanton uses a **rhetorical question** in paragraph 6. Explain the importance of the question she asks. How does she respond to the question? Comment on her ideas.

3. What is an example of **parallel structure** in this section? Why is it important?

Paragraphs 8 – 10

1. Identify an example of **personification** in this section. Explain its importance.
2. How does Cady Stanton's use of **figurative language (imagery)** contribute to the development of complex ideas in this excerpt? Include textual evidence to support your analysis.
3. Identify an example of a **metaphor** in this section. Why is it important to her deeper meaning?

Paragraphs 11 & 12

1. What does Cady Stanton mean when she describes women as "slaves"? What is the effect on the nation if women are slaves? What is your reaction to this description?
2. Identify her use of a **Biblical allusion** in paragraph 12. Explain how this contributes to her point of view. Do you agree or disagree with her view?
3. How is she using **ethos** and/or **pathos** in these paragraphs? Identify an example. Why is this effective in supporting her argument?

Paragraphs 13 & 14

1. Cady Stanton refers to the famous Joan of Arc who lived in France in the 1400's. She claimed to have heard voices and seen visions of angels. She led French soldiers in a victorious battle against England in the Hundred Years War. She dressed in men's clothing to fight with soldiers, but was arrested and convicted of dressing as a man. She was burned at the stake at 19.

Explain the importance of this **allusion** in the speech. What connection is Cady Stanton trying to make between Joan of Arc and the women's movement?

2. Identify the **metaphor** in paragraph 14. How does this help to develop her central idea?
3. How does Cady Stanton's use of **figurative language** in paragraph 14 contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text? Include textual evidence to support your analysis.
4. Identify the example of **juxtaposition** in paragraph 14 and explain its importance to the speech.

Overall Questions

1. What is your opinion of the speech? What parts were most important to you? How can you connect to her message?

2. How have life, culture, and politics changed for women since this speech was made in 1848? How do you think Elizabeth Cady Stanton would react to the status of women in the 21st century? What would she be pleased about? What would disappoint her?
3. What is a modern day issue that you believe is important? What are key points you would make to an audience to listen to you and take action? What important rhetorical devices would you include in a speech? Explain your selections.