



Click! The Ongoing Feminist Revolution

Rosie the Riveter: Women on the Homefront in World War II

View Online: www.cliohistory.org/click/classroom/workplace-family/rosie-the-riveter

Grade Level: Grades 6-12

Estimated Time: One class period

Introduction

Rosie the Riveter is one of the most iconic images from World War II. She represents women who took on industrial work for the duration of the war. Students will look at poster art to examine how women on the home front were represented as patriotic workers during World War II. They will learn about one of the most extraordinary propaganda campaigns in American history.

Learning Objectives

- Students will be able to demonstrate a broad understanding of how women’s lives changed during World War II.
- Students will be able to understand how wartime demands changed societal conditions and individual lives.

Essential Questions

- How did the activities of home front workers in the United States contribute to the war effort during World War II?
- How do citizens demonstrate their patriotism during wartime?

Materials

- Computer with Speakers and Internet Access
- [Image of Norman Rockwell’s “Rosie the Riveter”](#) (1943)

Warm Up Activity: Film Viewing and Discussion

1. Show a clip from the film “[On the Job: Women Launching a New Tradition](#)” (27:06 min.)
Or, show the shorter clip from the film “[Life and Times of Rosie the Riveter](#)” (3:25 min.)
2. Have the students discuss what they have learned about women workers during wartime.

Main Activity: Propaganda Analysis, Class Discussion, and Writing Exercise

1. Show the students an image of Norman Rockwell's "Rosie the Riveter" (1943).
 - a. Ask them if they have seen the image before.
 - b. Have them describe the details in the image and explain the purpose of the image.
 - c. Lead class discussion into a short introduction of how women took on nontraditional jobs during World War II.
2. Have students go to [Click](#) and look at the timeline entry, "1941: U.S. Enters World War II."
3. Have the students click on the link National Archive, "It's a Woman's War Too!"
4. Divide the class into four groups and have each group compare the posters. Tell them they will share their description and evaluation with the class. Guiding questions include:
 - a. Who is the audience for the posters?
 - b. How do the images and texts reinforce each other?
 - c. What are the different messages being conveyed by the posters?
 - d. How do the images help them understand patriotic war service?
5. Have each group discuss and write a summary of their findings.
6. Bring the class back together and have representatives from each group share their findings.
7. Have the students return to their groups. Have them click on the "Rosie to the Rescue (1943)" link in the 1941 timeline entry. Tell them that the picture contains symbols and tools depicting 31 jobs women took on when men went off to war.
 - a. Can they name the 31 occupations? (The answer is in the text, so make sure they do not read this first.)
 - b. Have them create a list of the 31 jobs.
8. Bring the class back together to discuss their findings.
 - a. How has looking at this new image expanded their understanding of work done by women during World War II?
 - b. Ask them to discuss the value of this work to the war effort.
 - c. Ask them to discuss how new work opportunities for women changed and challenged women and men's lives, and society more generally.

Extension Activity

Share the lyrics of the song "Rosie the Riveter" and have students sing along.

- <https://www.awesomestories.com/asset/view/Rosie-the-Riveter-Four-Vagabonds>; or
- <http://www.tcm.com/mediaroom/video/1130334/Life-And-Times-Of-Rosie-The-Riveter-The-Movie-Clip-They-Do-A-Man-s-Job.html>

Common Core Anchor Standards

Reading

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7](#)

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

Writing

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.W.1](#)

Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Speaking and Listening

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.SL.2](#)

Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.