

## Mini-Lesson: Activism through Poetry

Grades: 6-12

Duration: approximately 20 minutes

### OBJECTIVE:

Students will read and analyze poetry written and published during the women's suffrage movement as a form of activism and social protest.

### INSTRUCTIONS:

1. Give students time to read through the poem independently, before reading it aloud together.
2. Working with your student, discuss the poem sharing their reactions and thoughts about the poem. *(Optional discussion questions are below).*

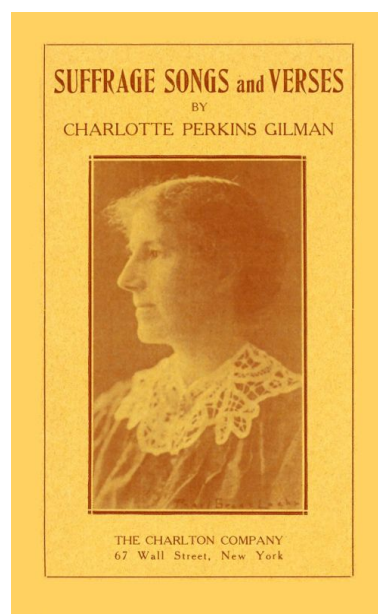
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## She Walketh Veiled and Sleeping

Charlotte Perkins Gilman

Adaptive: [Listen to the poem](#)

She walketh veiled and sleeping,  
For she knoweth not her power;  
She obeyeth but the pleading  
Of her heart, and the high leading  
Of her soul, unto this hour.  
Slow advancing, halting, creeping,  
Comes the Woman to the hour!—  
She walketh veiled and sleeping,  
For she knoweth not her power.



About This Poem:

*"She Walketh Veiled and Sleeping" was published in Suffrage Songs and Verses (The Charlton Company, 1911). Charlotte Perkins Gilman lived from 1860-1935. She was a sociologist, social reformer, and writer. This poem is in the public domain.*

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**Discussion:**

3. Discussion points for the poem *She Walketh Veiled and Sleeping* by Charlotte Perkins Gilman could include the following:
    - 3.1. What does Gilman mean when she says "For she knoweth not her power"?
    - 3.2. What does Gilman mean when she says women are "veiled and sleeping"?
    - 3.3. What is happening at this point in history? What does Gilman mean when she refers to "this hour"?
    - 3.4. Why is the language different from how we speak and write today?
    - 3.5. Charlotte Perkins Gilman was a "social reformer." What does that mean?
    - 3.6. Charlotte Perkins Gilman was also a "sociologist." What does that mean?
    - 3.7. Why would poetry be a form of protest for social justice?
    - 3.8. How can artists help advance important issues and create positive social change in their communities?
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**Optional Activities:**

- Have the student record themselves reading/performing this poem.
  - Encourage the student to write their own poem about the importance of women having the right to vote.
  - Have the student rewrite this poem, using more modern language.
  - Encourage the student to put this poem to music to turn it into a song or rap it.
  - Have the student research what kinds of clothing were worn by women in 1911, the year this poem was published.
  - Have the student research what kinds of phones and other technology were popular in 1911, the year this poem was published.
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*This lesson meets the following curriculum standards/strands/topics:*

- *America in the World*
- *Active Citizenship in the 21st Century*
- *Civics, Government, and Human Rights*
- *History, Culture, and Perspectives*
- *Literacy in Humanities/Social Studies*