

Abigail Adams asks to be remembered

March 31, 1776 | Grade 4 · Explain with evidence

Words to know

rights — freedoms and protections people are entitled to

request — ask for something

change — become different

Look closely



Painted portrait of Abigail Adams wearing a white lace cap and shawl over a dark red dress.

Read the story

Abigail Adams wrote to her husband John. She asked him to consider women when new laws were made. Women did important work but lacked many rights. Her letter helps us hear a woman's voice.

The phrase remember the ladies came within a larger exchange. A request for change does not mean that change happened immediately. Compare ideals expressed in letters with actual laws and access to power.

Think, talk, and show evidence

1. State the main idea. Support it with two details from the reading.
2. Explain a change or challenge described in the text. Which words support your answer?
3. Use one vocabulary word in a new sentence about this event.
4. What can the image and caption help explain? What can they not tell you?

Follow-up reading: The Massachusetts Constitution

1780

Massachusetts adopted a constitution, a plan for government. John Adams was its main author. The document described rights and branches of government. It remains in use with amendments. Rights were not equally enjoyed by everyone.

It is widely described as the oldest written constitution still functioning in the world. Read that claim with attention to written form and continuing use. Its equality language became important in freedom cases.

Compare the two readings. Explain one similarity or difference using a detail from each. Their order does not prove that one caused the other.

Teacher guide & source trail

Original classroom adaptation. Suggested reading levels are instructional choices, not standardized readability certifications. Use professional judgment and learner feedback.

ELA practice: RI.4.1: refer to details; RI.4.2: main idea and summary; RI.4.3: explain events; RI.4.7: interpret visual information; W.4.2 and SL.4.1: explain and discuss.

These tasks support selected skills in the [Massachusetts 2017 ELA framework](#); they do not establish mastery of an entire standard.

Answer guidance

Factual anchor: Abigail Adams wrote to her husband John. She asked him to consider women when new laws were made. Women did important work but lacked many rights. Her letter helps us hear a woman's voice. The phrase *remember the ladies* came within a larger exchange. A request for change does not mean that change happened immediately. Compare ideals expressed in letters with actual laws and access to power.

Accept accurate main ideas and explanations supported by the text. Vocabulary meanings are in the opening word bank. For picture questions, use the caption and credit below; distinguish what is visible from what is inferred. For comparison, accept a specific connection supported by both readings. Do not require personal accounts of trauma.

Continue the inquiry

[Research source for this event ↗](#)

[Research source for follow-up ↗](#)

[Event page, accessible HTML reading, and vocabulary game ↗](#)

Image: Gilbert Stuart / National Gallery of Art, public domain.

[Image source and rights record ↗](#)

The PDF contains selectable English text and embedded fonts. For adjustable text and browser reading tools, use the event's [HTML page](#). External sources may need adult guidance.