Name _____ Date _____

Reform Movements: Abolition, Women's Rights and the Seneca Falls Convention

Directions: Read the passage about reformers before the Civil War. Then answer each question.

Abolition and Women's Rights

Working for Freedom and Equal Rights

In the first half of the 1800s, many Americans set out to reform, or improve, their society. Some worked to end slavery. Others worked to win equal rights for women. These two movements grew up side by side, and many reformers joined both.

People who worked to end slavery were called abolitionists. Many of them were free Black Americans in the North. In January 1831, William Lloyd Garrison began a Boston newspaper, *The Liberator*, that demanded an end to slavery at once. Two years later, abolitionists formed the American Anti-Slavery Society. Frederick Douglass escaped from slavery in Maryland in 1838 and became one of the movement's most powerful speakers. In 1845 he published the story of his life in slavery, and in 1847 he started his own antislavery newspaper, *The North Star*. Harriet Tubman escaped in 1849. She went back to Maryland about 13 times and brought about 70 people, many of them relatives and friends, out of slavery.

Abolitionists were a small minority, even in the North, and mobs sometimes broke up their meetings. Women were among the movement's hardest workers. They gathered names on petitions to Congress, raised money and wrote articles. Yet when women spoke in public, many people objected that public speaking was not a woman's place.

That conflict came to a head in London in June 1840. At the World Anti-Slavery Convention, the American women who came as delegates were not allowed to take part. They could only watch from a separate section. There, Lucretia Mott met Elizabeth Cady Stanton. The two became friends and began to talk about holding a meeting on women's rights.

Eight years later, they did. On July 19 and 20, 1848, Stanton, Mott and three other women held the first women's rights convention, in Seneca Falls, New York. About 300 people came. Stanton was the main writer of a Declaration of Sentiments, which followed the pattern of the Declaration of Independence. It listed the ways women were treated unfairly. Women could not vote. In most states, a married woman's property and wages belonged to her husband, and few colleges or careers were open to women. The convention demanded equal rights in all these areas. A resolution calling for women's right to vote caused the most debate. Even Lucretia Mott worried that it went too far. Frederick Douglass spoke strongly for it, and the convention approved it. In the end, the declaration had 100 signers: 68 women and 32 men.

Seneca Falls is often seen as the start of the organized women's rights movement in the United States, and more conventions soon followed. The two movements won their goals at very different times. Slavery ended with the 13th Amendment in 1865. Women won the right to vote across the nation only in 1920, with the 19th Amendment.

1. Which choice gives the central idea of the whole passage, not just one part of it?

A. By 1840, most Northerners had joined the abolitionists, so mobs no longer broke up their meetings.

B. In 1848, the Seneca Falls Convention won American women the right to vote in national elections.

C. William Lloyd Garrison started *The Liberator*, a Boston newspaper that called for an end to slavery at once.

D. Reformers worked to end slavery and to win equal rights for women, and the fight against slavery helped start the women's rights movement.

2. Which sentence is the most accurate summary of what the passage says about Frederick Douglass?

A. He escaped from slavery, spoke and wrote against it, and started his own newspaper.

B. He escaped from slavery and then went back to Maryland about 13 times to free others.

C. He started *The Liberator* in Boston and formed the American Anti-Slavery Society.

D. He wrote the Declaration of Sentiments and organized the meeting at Seneca Falls.

3. Match each reformer to one thing the passage says that person did.

Write the letter of the matching answer on each line.

1. _____ Elizabeth Cady Stanton
2. _____ William Lloyd Garrison
3. _____ Harriet Tubman

Choices for question 3

A. Was the main writer of the Declaration of Sentiments

B. Ran the 1840 antislavery meeting in London

C. Began a Boston newspaper that called for ending slavery at once

D. Wrote the antislavery novel Uncle Tom's Cabin

E. Went back to Maryland many times to lead people out of slavery

4. Which event does the passage give as the start of Mott and Stanton's plan to hold a women's rights meeting?

A. Congress passed a new law that took away the property of every married woman.

B. Slavery ended everywhere in the United States.

C. Women delegates could not take part in an antislavery meeting in London.

D. Frederick Douglass asked them to start an antislavery newspaper for women readers.

5. Pick the term from the word bank that fits each sentence about the two movements.

Word bank
Declaration of Independence • delegates • Declaration of Sentiments • abolitionists
Underground Railroad

People who worked to end slavery were called _____. At Seneca Falls, the _____ listed the ways women were treated unfairly.

6. Which is the best summary of the passage's description of the Seneca Falls Convention?

A. The Seneca Falls meeting was held to plan an end to slavery in the state of New York.

B. About 300 people met in 1848, listed women's unfair treatment and demanded equal rights.

C. Frederick Douglass wrote a declaration at Seneca Falls and was the only person to sign it.

D. In 1848, women won the right to vote at a two-day meeting in Seneca Falls, New York.

7. According to the passage, which demand made at Seneca Falls caused the most debate?

A. The right of women to attend college

B. Higher wages for women in the textile mills

C. The right of women to vote

D. A ban on selling enslaved people in the nation's capital

8. The passage names one thing that followed from the Seneca Falls Convention. What was it?

A. Slavery ended in the Northern states.

B. More women's rights conventions soon followed.

C. Women won the right to vote that same year.

D. Women were allowed to speak at the 1840 convention in London.

9. The passage describes women's work in the abolition movement. Which two statements match that description?

☐ A. They ran most of the abolitionist newspapers.

☐ B. They were not allowed to sign petitions to Congress.

☐ C. They gathered names on petitions and raised money.

☐ D. Many people objected when they spoke in public.

☐ E. They were allowed to vote at the London convention.

10. The passage says "The two movements won their goals at very different times." Which details support this statement?

A. Garrison's newspaper began in 1831, and Douglass's began in 1847.

B. Slavery ended in 1865, but women won the vote across the nation only in 1920.

C. The London convention met in 1840, and the Seneca Falls Convention met in 1848.

D. Douglass escaped from slavery in 1838, and Tubman escaped in 1849.