

Section Summary

WOMEN MAKE PROGRESS

In the early 1900s, a growing number of women sought to do more than fulfill their roles as wives and mothers. Many went to college to prepare for careers in teaching and nursing. Women had already won a shorter workday, but reformers saw the need for more changes. **Florence Kelley** believed that unfair prices for household goods hurt women and their families, so she helped found the **National Consumers League (NCL)**. The NCL labeled products made in safe workplaces. The NCL also asked the government to improve food and workplace safety and assist the unemployed.

Women also sought changes in the home. With the **temperance movement**, led by the Women's Christian Temperance Union (WCTU), women tried to reduce or end the consumption of alcohol. Members of the WCTU blamed alcohol for some men's abuse and neglect of their families. **Margaret Sanger** sought a different change. She thought that family life and women's health would improve if mothers had fewer children. Sanger opened the nation's first birth-control clinic. **Ida B. Wells** established the National Association of Colored Women, which helped African American families by providing childcare and education.

One of Progressivism's boldest goals was **suffrage**—the right to vote—for women. This fight was started in the 1860s but was reenergized by **Carrie Chapman Catt** in the 1890s. Catt toured the country encouraging women to join the **National American Woman Suffrage Association (NAWSA)**. This group lobbied Congress for the right to vote and used the referendum process to try to get women the vote in individual states. By 1918, this strategy had helped women get the vote in several states. **Alice Paul** was more vocal in her efforts. In 1917, she formed the National Woman's Party (NWP), which staged protest marches and hunger strikes and even picketed the White House to demand the right to vote. When the United States entered World War I in 1917, the NAWSA supported the war effort. Its actions and those of the NWP convinced a growing number of legislators to support a woman suffrage amendment. This reform became official in 1920 as the **Nineteenth Amendment**. Women finally had the right to vote for President.

Review Questions

1. Why did many women want to end the drinking of alcohol?

2. What methods did reformers use to fight for women's suffrage?

READING CHECK

What is the Nineteenth Amendment?

VOCABULARY STRATEGY

What does the word *strategy* mean in the underlined sentence? What clues can you find in the surrounding words, phrases, or sentences? Circle the words in the underlined sentence that could help you learn what *strategy* means.

READING SKILL

Identify Main Ideas What goal did Margaret Sanger, Ida B. Wells, and Florence Kelley share?
