



# Better Days Reading Club

## WEEK 3

### HOW THE BICYCLE PAVED THE WAY FOR WOMEN'S RIGHTS

The article we'll be reading together this week is from Adrienne LaFrance in *The Atlantic*, and it's all about one simple invention: the bicycle. In the 1890's, bicycles had really gained popularity because a new version of the bicycle had been released in 1885. It was much safer to ride than the previous version (referred to as the penny-farthing), and more realistic for women to ride. This version of the bicycle gave women mobility and independence. Both Susan B. Anthony and Elizabeth Cady Stanton were quoted saying that "woman is riding to suffrage on the bicycle". LaFrance's article explores how people of the time reacted to women riding bicycles, as well as how women's fashion changed considerably in reaction to this new mode of transportation. The bicycle significantly changed culture for American women, and completely changed the game for the women's suffrage movement.

### QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

- How did the bicycle help women gain more freedoms?
- How have other technologies impacted women throughout history? (For example: the railroad, radios, television, the internet, etc.)
- How can other forms of transportation and new technologies help women around the world today achieve more mobility and independence?