**Is it a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?**

**Directions:** The following text is taken from a speech that Susan B. Anthony delivered in 1873 in various locations near Rochester, New York. Read the excerpt and then answer the questions.

Friends and fellow citizens: I stand before you tonight, under indictment for the alleged crime of having voted at the last Presidential election, without having a lawful right to vote . . .

We appeal to the women everywhere to exercise their too long neglected “citizen’s right to vote.” We appeal to the inspectors of elections everywhere to receive the votes of all United States citizens as it is their duty to do. We appeal to United States commissioners and marshals to arrest the inspectors who reject the names and votes of United States citizens, as it is their duty to do, and leave those alone who, like our eighth ward inspectors, perform their duties faithfully and well.

We ask the juries to fail to return verdicts of “guilty” against honest, law-abiding, tax-paying United States citizens for offering their votes at our elections. Or against intelligent, worthy young men, inspectors of elections, for receiving and counting such citizens votes.

We ask the judges to render true and unprejudiced opinions of the law, and wherever there is room for a doubt to give its benefit on the side of liberty and equal rights to women . . .

And it is on this line that we propose to fight our battle for the ballot—all peaceably, but nevertheless persistently through to complete triumph, when all United States citizens shall be recognized as equals before the law.

**Reflection and Analysis Questions**

1. **What appeal does Anthony make to each of the following groups?**
   a. All American women  
   b. Election officials  
   c. Potential jurors  
   d. Judges

2. **On what Founding principles does Anthony base her argument?**

3. **Susan B. Anthony took a personal risk by voting illegally, and she was willing to accept the consequences of her action to bring attention to her cause. Now she calls on her fellow citizens to take risks. To what extent is personal risk sometimes necessary to challenge injustice? What virtues are necessary to do this?**