Reading Comprehension and Writing.

Let's celebrate the improvements that the 1978 Spanish Constitution brought about.

Women in the 19th and 20th century.

Women in the 19th century

0 -A Only a few could vote

For most of the 19th century, Spain was a country in which political participation was restricted to a social minority by means of electoral role, in which the electoral practice was characterized by the adulteration of elections. The acknowledgement of womenôs social roles, maternity and care for the family, and the attainment of civil rights were sought rather than the attainment of the right to vote.

1 - _____

Concepción Arenal (1820-1893) and Emilia Pardo Bazán (1851-1921) are two examples of this pioneer fight to get equal rights for men and women. In ñLa España Modernaò (Modern Spain, 1890) Emilia Pardo Bazán denounced that cultural and political improvements attained throughout the 19th century only increased the distance between the sexes.

The expert in criminal law Concepción Arenal insisted in her writings in the importance of the role of mother and wife for women, claiming that the experience of feminine life was not exclusively centered in the exercise of these roles.

2- _____

There was little effort to promote womenôs educational development throughout the 19th century. In some areas of the country 70% of women could not read and write at the turning of the century.

3- _____

Women, considered as ñhome angelò, had as almost exclusive social function home chores and the care of the family.

4- _____

In Spain we have to wait until the 20th century to be able to speak properly of a collective movement of womenôs emancipation.

The situation of Spanish women on starting the 20th century.

5- _____

Women were basically on a subordinate position to men. This was due to a discriminarory legislation based on the 1870 Penal Code, the 1885 Commerce Code and the 1889 Civil Code.

6- _____

Spanish women needed the authorization of their husband to carry economic activities, to sign contracts and to purchase other goods than those devoted to domestic consumption. They didnôt have full legal capacity to control their own salary.

7- _____

The Penal Code established strong sanctions for wives who did not follow husbandsô instructions. It also established that if the husband killed or attacked the adulterous wife or her lover on the spot, he would only be exiled for a short period of time. The penalty for a woman in the same situation was severer.

8- _____

Women were under a strong social control. The stereotype that women had to be ñhome angelsò, the ñdiligent motherò and the ñsweet wifeò imposed a strict behavior code. Any purpose of leaving this role was strongly reprimanded.

Clara Campoamor, *also MP of the Radical Party, assumed a passionate defense of feminine vote. She argued at the Parliament that individual rights required an equal treatment for both men and women and democratic principles had to ensure the writing of a republican Constitution based on equality and on the elimination of any discrimination based on sex.*

According to a decree passed by the provisional republican government in May 1931 men over 23 were given the right to vote. Women and priests had no right to vote, but could be elected to Parliament. Clara Campoamor and Victoria Kent were the only elected MPs among 465 members in the Parlia-ment.

I- Two women pursued constitutional equality between men and women.
E- Illiterate women.
B- Home as a priority.
D- When did womenôs liberation start?
G- Codes which did not help.
F- Inequality when dealing with money matters.
H- Stronger punishments for women than for men.
C - Women had to fulfill their conventional roles.

According to the texts you have just read, establish comparisons between Spanish men and women in the past. Use comparative and superlative words and structures such as *the most é , more é than é , lessé than, (not) asé as, etc*. Adjectives and adverbs to be used are: equally treated, notable, literate, late, independent, hard, and other adjectives that you can think of to write comparative or superlative structures. Write at least 7 sentences.

1. é
2. é
3. é
4. é
5. é
6. é
7. é