

MIDDLE SCHOOL/HIGH SCHOOL

Social Studies Staff

Teacher:	
Subject:	U.S. History, Civics, or American Government
Grade Level:	High School (7-12)

UNIT GOALS:

-Students will learn to use, analyze, and judge primary sources and first hand accounts to attempt to understand and reconstruct the puzzle of a historic event by studying, in-depth, the events surrounding the May 4th Shootings at the Kent State University campus.

-Students will examine citizenship roles and responsibilities in terms of the First Amendment freedoms by referencing the campus protest movement of the late 1960's and early 1970's by studying, in-depth, the events surrounding the May 4th Shootings at the Kent State University campus.

LESSON ONE:

OVERVIEW: AS MARVIN GAYE ASKED... WHAT'S GOIN' ON?

Central Theme/Question(s):

-What happened at Kent State University from May 1st – May 4th 1970?

-What was happening on college campuses across the United States during the late 1960's and the early 1970's?

-What are a United States citizen's First Amendment rights? How do those rights protect citizens?

Materials:

Text Book, Internet, Investigative Journal

Methods of Instruction:

Research, Discussion, Individual Work

Activities:

Students will be asked to do some text book and internet research to find out what happened at Kent State University from May 1st – May 4th 1970. Based on their limited text and internet research students will then be asked to answer questions in their investigative journal. The questions are as follows:

-Based on the text book and internet research you did, what happened at Kent State University from May 1st – May 4th 1970?

-Based on the text book and internet research you did, what was happening on college campuses across the United States during the late 1960's and the early 1970's?

The instructor should allow one to two class periods for research and investigative journal responses, and one class period for discussion over student responses to the questions. The instructor should hand out a copy of the 1st Amendment and ask students to interpret it for their response to question three. The Instructor should also allow students to use standard "bill of fare" research materials like the class text book, wikipedia, etc. or other unsubstantiated sources. The Instructor should encourage students to do reaction journal entries throughout their time researching and investigating history and citizenship and established an agreed upon minimum number of entries that react to research, class discussions, research interpretation, or any relevant idea or feeling.

Assessment:

Investigative Journal, Oral Interview Exam

LESSON TWO:

CROSBY STILLS NASH & YOUNG'S *OHIO* AND THE SHOOTINGS AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY

Central Theme/Question(s):

-How does this song/art reflect the greater issues of history, citizenship, culture, and/or politics during the time it was made?

Materials:

-CD or MP3 file of Crosby Stills Nash and Young Song *Ohio*, Crosby Stills Nash and Young Song *Ohio* Lyrics, Investigative Journal

Methods of Instruction:

Individual Work, Discussion

Activities:

Students will be introduced to the song *Ohio* by Crosby Stills Nash and Young. They will be given a copy of the lyrics and will also listen to the song. Students will then be asked to answer questions about the song in their investigative journal. The questions are as follows:

- Based on the song and its lyrics, what do you think this song is about? Why do you believe this?
- What people and events are mentioned in the song? Who are these people and what happened in terms of these events?

Students should discuss the song and their various interpretations. The instructor should allow one to two class periods to play the song and have students answer their investigative journal questions as well as discussion over the questions. The instructor should introduce the topic by explaining that *Ohio* speaks to the student protest movement against the war in Vietnam and Cambodia and the first four days in May that culminated with the Kent State University shootings.

Assessment:

Investigative Journal, Oral Interview Exam

LESSON THREE:

UNDERSTANDING HISTORICAL INVESTIGATION: A TEXT BOOK IS ONLY ONE BOOK!

Central Theme/Question(s):

- What criteria should be used to determine the validity of a source?
- What is the difference between a primary source and a secondary source?

Materials:

Introduction Notes, Guidelines, and Expectations, Criteria for Evaluating Historical Sources Handouts, Investigative Journal

Methods of Instruction:

Discussion, Lecture, Individual Work, Pen

Activities:

Students will be introduced to some criteria and procedures for evaluating historical sources and analyzing historical events via handouts. Students will then be asked to answer questions in their investigative journal. The questions are as follows:

- Is it possible that someone's attitude, opinion, or question(s) of historical events can change based on further research and investigation? Why or why not?
- In your opinion, what are the roles and responsibilities of a good citizen in the United States?

Students should discuss the possibility of their attitudes, opinions, and questions of historical events changing based on further research and investigation. Students should also discuss their opinions about what they believe the roles and responsibilities of citizens in the United States are. The instructor should allow one class period for topic introduction notes, guidelines, and expectations and discussing criteria for evaluating historical sources and investigative journal responses to the questions, and one to two class periods for discussion over student responses to the questions. The instructor should also be purposely vague about the topic of the four days in May that culminated with the Kent State University shootings.

Assessment:

Investigative Journal, Oral Interview Exam

LESSON FOUR:

A PICTURE IS WORTH... ANALYZING HISTORICAL PHOTOS FROM THE SHOOTINGS AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY AND THE EVENTS OF MAY 2, 1970 – MAY 4, 1970

Central Theme/Question(s):

-What do these first hand accounts show us about the activity on the Kent State campus from May 2nd – May 4th?

Materials:

Selected Photos from the Kent State May 4th Archives and Ohio Historical Society, Investigative Journal

Methods of Instruction:

Individual Work, Discussion

Activities:

Students will view various photographs taken on the Kent State campus from Friday, May 1, 1970 through Monday, May 4, 1970. Students will then be asked to analyze the photos and answer questions in their investigative journal that serve to help students interpret the photos and establish a historical description of what happened. The questions are as follows:

- Describe the setting of the photographs.
- List the people, places, and things you see in the photographs.
- Why do you believe people are gathered together in some of the photos? What is their purpose?
- Who are the armed men in the photographs? Why do you believe they are gathered together?
- What actions do you see taking place in these photographs?
- What do you believe the perspective of the photographer is?

The Instructor should allow one class period for photo viewing and investigative journal responses to the questions, and one to two class periods for discussion over student responses to the questions.

Assessment:

Investigative Journal, Class Timeline, Oral Interview Exam

LESSON FIVE:

OUR OWN CONSTRUCTION OF HISTORY: ANALYZING PRIMARY SOURCE DOCUMENTS AND ORAL HISTORIES ABOUT THE SHOOTINGS AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY AND THE EVENTS OF MAY 1, 1970 – MAY 4, 1970

Central Theme/Question(s):

-How can we use primary sources to become our own historians?

Materials:

Selected Oral Histories from the Kent State May 4th Archives, Selected Primary Sources from the Kent State May 4th Archives and Ohio Historical Society, Investigative Journal

Methods of Instruction:

Group Work, Discussion

Activities:

Students will read divide into small groups and read various oral histories, first hand accounts, and primary sources taken from the Kent State May 4th archives and the Ohio Historical Society that chronicle the events on campus from Friday, May 1, 1970 through Monday, May 4, 1970 and their aftermath. While in their groups, the students will be asked to analyze and interpret the oral histories, first hand accounts, and primary sources and answer questions in their investigative journal that serve to help students establishes a historical perspective of what happened. The students should be split evenly into four groups: Kent State Students, Faculty, and Staff, Kent Mayor LeRoy Satrom and the Citizens of Kent, Ohio Governor James A. Rhodes, Reports form the Ohio Attorney General's Office, and the National Guard, and U.S. President Richard Nixon and excerpts from the Commission on Campus Unrest. The various oral histories, first hand accounts and primary sources will reflect the differing viewpoints of these people and groups.

- What is the general overall attitude of the different sources you read in your group?
- How do the various accounts of May 1st – May 4th and their aftermaths describe what happened?
- Do you believe the sources to represent the truth and to be accurate? Why or why not?
- Which sources did you find to be the most compelling or convincing? Why? Which sources were the weakest? Why?
- Based on your investigation of the primary sources how do you interpret the history of May 1st – May 4th and its aftermath from the point of view of the people in your group?
- Based on your investigation of the primary sources how do you interpret the history of May 1st – May 4th and its aftermath from your point of view?

The Instructor should allow two to three class periods for reading the various oral histories, first hand accounts, and primary sources and to answer investigative journal responses to the questions, and one to two class periods for discussion over student responses to the questions in order to situate the different historical interpretations of the build up to May 4th Shootings and their aftermath. The Instructor should also encourage students to begin research and digging for their own primary and secondary sources.

Assessment:

Investigative Journal, Research, Class Timeline, Map Exercise, Oral Interview Exam

LESSON SIX:

WHAT'S THE TIME: ESTABLISHING A TIMELINE SURROUNDING THE SHOOTINGS AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY, THE EVENTS OF MAY 1, 1970 – MAY 4, 1970, AND THEIR AFTERMATH

Central Theme/Question(s):

-What can we deduce from establishing a chronology of events leading up to, including, and after the shootings at Kent State University?

Materials:

Selected Oral Histories from the Kent State May 4th Archives, Selected Primary Sources from the Kent State May 4th Archives and Ohio Historical Society, Investigative Journal

Methods of Instruction:

Group Work, Discussion

Activities:

As a class, students will develop a timeline of events based on various oral histories, first hand accounts, and primary sources taken from the Kent State May 4th archives and the Ohio Historical Society that chronicle the events on campus from Friday, May 1, 1970 through Monday, May 4, 1970 and their aftermath. Students will be asked to analyze and interpret the oral histories, first hand accounts, and primary sources to try and tie together the order of events as they happened in history thus establishing a more clear historical depiction of what happened. The students and the instructor can construct the timeline together using any agreed upon start date and end date as well as any appropriate supplies. The photos viewed previously as well as any other first hand photos gathered via research could serve as appropriate markers to anchor a particular event to a date or point in time in the historical sequence of events. The Instructor should allow one to two class periods to discuss, build, develop, and construct the classroom timeline and new events can be added each day as determined by the class throughout the duration of time studying May 1st – May 4th and its aftermath.

Assessment: Class Timeline, Investigative Journal, Research, Oral Interview Exam

LESSON SEVEN:

MAP TIME: HOW HAS THE KENT STATE UNIVERSITY CAMPUS CHANGED SINCE THE MAY 4th SHOOTINGS?

Central Theme/Question(s):

-Did the May 4th Shootings at Kent State forever alter the structure, layout, or growth of the physical campus environment?

Materials:

Selected Campus and Campus Area Maps, Selected Oral Histories from the Kent State May 4th Archives, Selected Primary Sources from the Kent State May 4th Archives and Ohio Historical Society

Methods of Instruction:

Individual Work, Discussion

Activities:

Students will study and analyze a series of three maps of the Kent State University campus. The students will view a close-up map which is both historical and contemporary. The first map delineates where each of the four slain students lay as well as also indicating where wounded students were hit and where the National Guard fired from. The second map is a parking services map of the entire Kent State University campus as of 1970. The third map is a current map of the Kent State University campus. Based on these maps the students will locate the areas of campus that were uniquely involved in the events of May 1st 1970 – May 4th 1970. The Instructor should allow one to two class periods for viewing the various maps and plotting out how the different parties involved in the events of May 1st – May 4th moved about within the space of the campus based on the oral histories, first hand accounts, and primary sources (including the still photos used in the process). Via discussion students will then be asked to make any appropriate inferences to discuss/informally debate how the May 4th Shootings may or may not have altered the structure, layout, or growth of the physical campus environment

Assessment:

Map Exercise, Investigative Journal, Oral Interview Exam

LESSON EIGHT:

AND THE ANSWER IS... HISTORICAL RESEARCH, CITIZENSHIP ROLES, AND OTHER CONCLUSIONS ABOUT THE SHOOTINGS AT KENT STATE UNIVERSITY AND THE EVENTS OF MAY 1, 1970 – MAY 4, 1970

Central Theme/Question(s):

- What happened at Kent State University from May 1st – May 4th 1970?
- What criteria should be used to determine the validity of a source?
- What is the difference between a primary source and a secondary source?
- How can we use primary sources to become our own historians?
- What do these first hand accounts show us about the activity on the Kent State campus from May 2nd – May 4th?
- What can be learned about the roles and responsibilities of citizens from studying Kent State University from May 1st – May 4th 1970?

Materials:

Selected Oral Histories from the Kent State May 4th Archives, Selected Primary Sources from the Kent State May 4th Archives and Ohio Historical Society, Selected Photos from the Kent State May 4th Archives and Ohio Historical Society, Investigative Journal

Methods of Instruction:

Group Work, Discussion

Activities:

As a class, the students and instructor will engage in a reflection discussion which addresses the following questions:

- What did you learn in terms of the overall process of historical investigation? Do you feel like you have a clear understanding of what happened at Kent State University in early May of 1970? Why?
- Please compare and contrast the initial research information you found on the events on the campus of Kent State University from May 1st – May 4th 1970 with the primary sources we studied in class. In your opinion, which provides a more accurate detail of history primary sources, or secondary sources? Why?
- How did our investigation of early May, 1970 at Kent State through primary sources complicate your understanding of what happened, as compared to your initial textbook and internet findings?
- In terms of their roles and responsibilities as U.S. citizens did the protestors/students do anything wrong, or were they being active citizens making use of their First Amendment freedoms? Please explain your answer in detail.
- Why do you ultimately believe the National Guard chose to fire their weapons at the protestors/students? In your opinion, is there ever a reason for one person to be commanded to kill another? Why do you believe what you do?
- Based on our historical investigation of primary sources, why did the shootings at Kent State University occur? Who is responsible for the shootings at Kent State University? What evidence can you use to support your ideas? Please explain in full.

Students should also reflect on these questions in their Investigative Journal by formulating their own written responses, thus preparing them for the Oral Interview Exam. The Instructor should allow three to five class periods for reflection discussion, and one to two class periods for students to complete their Investigative Journal responses. Oral Interview exams should take place by appointment after school, and if students cannot attend they will be given the option of submitting a written response.

Assessment:

Investigative Journal, Class Timeline, Map Exercise, Oral Interview Exam

DELIBERATE CHOICES:

-I should start with Gordon's book... *Four Dead in Ohio: Was There a Conspiracy at Kent State?* My interest was very much rekindled in this particular event in history. As an undergraduate student at KSU I had done quite a bit of independent research on this topic for no rhyme or reason other than personal interest. I always found it appealing that I could walk on hallowed ground just a few hundred yards outside my dorm, or that there was an entire archive of boxed files and papers that we were (sort of) allowed to dig through. Needless to say my interests were peaked once again and thought this subject could be a fascinating and learned endeavor to explore with students. (I found it noteworthy that so many were very critical of Gordon's book... although it has some holes I found it to be fairly well research and an interesting read).

-It is no secret that my Unit Goals happen to parallel the goals of our class this semester. Using these ideas/disciplines to buoy almost any study of social studies is a powerful and long lasting ideal that will influence my teaching and lesson preparation throughout the remainder of my teaching career.

-Using a song to introduce and situate a lesson historically is a deliberate choice because I thought it was very interesting and effective idea. Music can be a great way to help draw student interest to a topic. In terms of the classroom, I have long ignored my own affinity for music, but after Dr. James used Pink Floyd's "The Wall" to introduce a lesson and after a couple of conversations with Dr. Gershon about the important impact music can have in the classroom environment, I thought Crosby Stills Nash and Young's *Ohio* was a natural choice to help begin student thinking and investigation of this lesson.

-The deliberate choice of teaching how to analyze historical sources is very much the influence of Dr. VanSledright's articles "What Does it Mean to Think Historically" and "Confronting History's Interpretive Paradox". The idea of treating the study of history through the disciplined practice of historical investigation and the lens of a historian creates a much more honest and dynamic view of the actual history of an event(s) versus the mundane, thumbnail sketch/overview presented in a typical school textbook. As obvious as this pursuit would seem for a social studies/history teacher to employ, I must admit that until our course and our readings it was a concept and a philosophy in the classroom I somehow missed.

-If I may wax poetic again on the concepts of Dr. VanSledright, his other articles, "Source, Perspective, Reliability, and Subtext" and "Constructing Ideas About History in the Classroom: The Influence of Competing Forces on Pedagogical Decision Making", provide a blueprint of sorts to consider the "how to..." of historical thinking. In some way, shape, or form the design of my Kent State lesson is predicated upon the primary source investigation and sprawling discussions to advocate for appropriate historical thinking and analysis. The two articles mentioned above take the important step of allowing the audience to see the writer as the teacher and to see how they did things, what worked, what did not, and the struggle along the way. It seems that that kind of professional courtesy is far from omnipresent in many of the theory based articles that we read. I felt that a greater amount of candor existed and that made sense to me in the context of those articles. The contributions of Dr. James to the latter VanSledright article about her reflections on her work with her third grade class were thoughtful, inspiring, and insightful. Particularly for a high school educator, it was most impressive to read about the analytical abilities of the third graders in their class investigation of culture, racial issues, and civil rights.

-I recall the Bryant article "What is Good Citizenship" having a profound affect on me after I read it. The idea that constructs of citizenship are complex is something I have always thought, but shied away from bringing into the classroom. It was not until I read this article that it "clicked" for me. I believe the Kent State Shootings and the campus events that occurred leading up to and after the shootings to be a good place to think about the complex dynamics of citizenship. There are so many sides to the story and so many perspectives to consider that the question what is does a good citizen do is an analytical and appropriate one for students to consider.

-I thought the Noddings article "War, Critical Thinking, and Self-Understanding" also applied to the lessons on May 4th 1970 at Kent State. I believe that the back-and-fourth that occurred between the protestors/students and the National Guard to be an isolated example of a kind of civilian war. Noddings' push to explore the horrors of violence in a chaotic situation again lends perspective that there are not simple answers, but rather a complicated

web of idiosyncrasies. The part in the article that asks essentially how war can bring out the worst in mankind was similar to asking the question why the Ohio National Guardsmen fired.

-Kohlberg's article on "Moral Reasoning" made a strong impact. I did not realize how much of a role our own morality plays in our every decision. From interpreting historical sources to deciding on appropriate roles and responsibilities of a citizen, our moral and value judgments form a regimented framework that can sometimes be difficult for students (and teachers) to see beyond. It is important for educators and learners alike to have at least some understanding of how their personal moral code is fabricated and to allow for that to be a part of, but not the whole, for arriving at their own historical and civic decisions.

-Miner's interview with Howard Zinn in "Why Students Should Study History" was a powerful piece. I have long been a fan of Zinn's "A Peoples History of the United States" (I have even strongly considered using his book as a base text should I actually ever teach history... ironically as a social studies teacher I have not taught world or American history). I enjoyed Zinn's candor in the interview and found that his passion to teach the "truth" in history by discussing the good, the bad, and the ugly of our country's history played a significant role in helping to consider which primary sources could be gathered in order to best reflect all of the differing perspectives and to best tell the story of the Kent State University Shootings.