Making Meaning of May 4
K-12 Teaching Plan

Name of Educator:  Becky Villagran
Educator’s Teaching Plan Number & Title:  Project 38, “May 4th Inquiry: IB History of the Americas”
Level of Students for Educator’s Teaching Plan:  Grades 11-12
Subject Area for Educator’s Teaching Plan:  History
Educator’s State:  California

Description of Educator’s Teaching Plan:  Students’ preceding work views the Vietnam War as a case study for how well American democracy functions. This line of inquiry is repeated for May 4, regarding which students select a focus from one of 8 elements of democracy spelling out R-E-S-P-E-C-T, such as R is for rights.

This educational teaching plan was developed during Kent State University’s Summer 2021 workshop titled Making Meaning of May 4: The 1970 Kent State Shootings in US History. The workshop was supported by Kent State and the National Endowment for the Humanities (NEH) grant program titled Landmarks of American History and Culture: Workshops for School Teachers.

This teaching plan is shared to promote understanding of the Kent State shootings on May 4, 1970; enhance humanities education across the disciplines; and illustrate the meaning of May 4 for today.

You have permission to use this project for educational purposes. Commercial use is prohibited.

Acknowledge use of this teaching plan with the following citation:


Terms of Use

By using the website www.kent.edu/ehhs/making-meaning-may-4 (the Site), the user agrees to accept the ‘Terms of Use’ stated here. Any copyrighted content in the Site is made available for personal use only. For any commercial purpose, users are responsible for obtaining the copyright holder’s permission.

The digital content contained in the Site is not available for re-sale, re-use, incorporation, or copying into any databases or commercial product without express, written permission from Kent State University [www.kent.edu/ehhs/making-meaning-may-4/About] and when applicable the copyright holder. No unauthorized mass downloading or scraping into any format is permitted from this website.

Kent State University requests that citation be provided for use of all material on this Site.
MAY 4TH INQUIRY
May 4th Inquiry Context

IB Paper 2 Topic

● Development of Democratic States
  ○ The American War in Vietnam (1945-1975) is examined as a case study in the challenges to the development and maintenance of a Democratic State
  ○ To what extent does the United States function as a Democracy during this time period?
    ■ Expansion of Democracy: 18-20 year olds get suffrage, Protest, Civil Rights, Engaged Citizens, Media, Tinker Case
    ■ Democracy in Decline: Imperialism, State Sanctioned Violence, Tonkin Resolution/Blank Check for War/ Pentagon Papers, Kent State and other massacres, War on Drugs, Cointelpro, My Lai Cover-Up
RESPECT Acronym
R- Rights
E- Equality
S- Suffrage
P- Pluralism
E- Education
C- Citizenship
T- Transparency

[Photo: Aretha Franklin, with “R-E-S-P-E-C-T” superimposed]
Inquiry

Looking at the May 4th Shootings at Kent State:

Students will develop an inquiry question to research and create a product to share with a small group for a panel discussion on the Meaning of May 4th, 1970

[Photo: Alan Canfora waves black protest flag in the direction of Ohio National Guardsmen pointing their rifles, May 4, 1970]

What does this event reveal about the status of Democracy in the United States?
**Requirements**

Question should have a chosen theme.

Question should address at least one element of Democracy (RESPECT Acronym)

Product should utilize 3 secondary academic sources and 2-3 primary source visuals

Product should have at least 10 pieces of evidence and reach a well reasoned conclusion.
Jamboard or Google Slides (Student work: South Africa topic)

[Image: Sample “Jamboard” graphic]
EXTENSION

Since Inquiries should be done in cycles, if time, I would have one more cycle of Inquiry where students evaluate May 4th and one other event to examine the continuity and the change between the two events/periods related to their first inquiry.

For example: If first question was: To what extent was the May 4th shooting the result of the rise of polarized rhetoric in the early Nixon Era?

Then the second inquiry question might be: To what extent has rhetorical polarization increased between the May 4th shooting and the Trump Era?