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Making Meaning of May 4 **K-12 Teaching Plan**

Name of Educator: Jessica Woodson-Moss

Educator's Teaching Plan Number & Title: Project 4, "American Literature-American Government Unit Plan"

Level of Students for Educator's Teaching Plan: Grade 11

Subject Area for Educator's Teaching Plan: American Literature, American Government

Educator's State: Ohio

Description of Educator's Teaching Plan: Students begin with Vietnam War context, incl. the draft and hawks vs. doves, then experience the human side of history through *The Things They Carried* and the lives of Allison, Bill, Sandy, and Jeff and May 4. Students study context of the Civil Rights & Black Student Movements; compare Orangeburg & Kent and Jackson State; and view today through lasting results of Black United Students' activism and new poetry reflecting African American experience.

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.

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Making Meaning of May 4th - Workshop Unit Plan

Context:

Coming from an inner-city school in Ohio with a large African American population, JROTC program, activist students, and students enrolled in multiple musical programs and classes, this unit will attempt to give perspectives of soldiers (both in Vietnam and more recent wars), Civil Rights Movement material, and protest music and poetry in the years before and after May 4th, 1970. The hope is that this unit will lend itself to collaboration with the social studies department, specifically the American Government course our students will also be taking while enrolled in our English 3 (American Literature) courses.

Day 1 - Introduction:

- Entrance ticket: “You might be a hippie if…” quiz
- Students will be exposed to the “hippie culture” of the 1960s through a simulation/choose your own adventure presentation
 - Students will experience events such as the Draft Lottery, deciding their stance on the Vietnam War, choosing Hawks vs. Doves, deciding to follow mainstream or counterculture, and deciding whether to draft dodge or participate in the war.
- Exit reflection: Reflect on your experience with 1960s events. How did it feel to experience the various events? What was memorable and shocking? How can these events relate to our current day?

Days 2-5 - *The Things They Carried*:

- Day 2 - “The Things They Carried”
 - Look into your bookbags/purses/wallets/pockets and identify 3-5 things that you “carry” that represent you as an individual. Why are these items on you today? How do they represent who you are and or/what you enjoy or value?
 - Form small groups of 3-5. Look around your group and share your items with each other. What do you learn about each other? What do you have in common? What is unique about your group members?
 - “The Things They Carried” - In your group, choose 5 soldiers from the list/chart to search for the things they carried. What do these items show or imply about them as a deeper person?
 - Vietnam War Music
- Day 3 - “On Rainy River”
 - Journal
 - Bravery vs. Cowardice Theme Analysis
 - Exit reflection: What do you consider Tim O’Brien to be after reading this story: coward or brave?
- Day 4 - “The Man I Killed”
 - Journal
 - “The Man He Killed” - Thomas Hardy vs. “The Man I Killed” original poetry creation
 - “Guns” - Bill Ehrhart
 - Modern soldier poetry
- Day 5 - “Love”
 - Journal
 - Socratic Seminar (assessment)

- Exit Reflection: What does this chapter show you about the lives the soldiers had when they returned home? What happened to their dreams and motivations? How does this play into the motivation for the anti-war protests by both civilians and veterans?

Day 6-10 - Kent State & Anti-war Protests:

- Day 6 & 7 - Kent State 5/4/70
 - Quickwrite: What comes to mind when you hear May 4th? What about Kent State? What do you know about the events of May 4th, 1970? If you know nothing, take some time to look up what took place on this day at Kent State University.
 - Brief introduction/explanation and disclaimer of events
 - Fire in the Heartland - viewing and comprehension questions
 - Decompress, discuss, questions
 - "Ohio" - Listen & Analyze
- Day 8 - Jeff, Bill, Sandy, Allison
 - Journal
 - Jeff, Bill, Sandy, Allison video
 - Slideshow & distances
 - Student poetry/art analysis
 - Anti-war music analysis
- Day 9 - Rhetorical features
 - Journal
 - Gov. Rhodes 5/3 Press Conference
 - Dr. Frank speech
 - Students choose an recorded account from the archives to analyze and share
- Day 10 - Archive exploration
 - Students will use the class time to work alone or with a partner to explore the archives and create a slideshow of interesting resources to share with the school via QR code on a bulletin board outside the English hallway
 - Anti-war music in background as the students work

Days 11-15 - Civil Rights Movement

- Day 11 - MLK
 - Journal
 - "Civil Disobedience" - Thoreau
 - Letter from Birmingham Jail
- Day 12 - Arc of Tragedy
 - Journal
 - Brief discussion and presentation of each tragedy listed from the NHL presentation
 - Student exploration: Focusing on Orangeburg, Kent State, and Jackson State, what do these three events have in common aside from time period?
 - Exit reflection: Why do you think Orangeburg and Jackson State did not receive the same level of media attention as Kent State did?
- Day 13 - BUS
 - Journal
 - Origination of BUS & Africana Studies now at Kent State

- Oakland PD Protest
- Compare/contrast to today
- Day 14 & 15 - *Look Both Ways* & Poetry
 - Journal
 - Prof. [Mwatabu] Okantah poetry & student poetry
 - *Look Both Ways* Excerpts
 - Modern protests

Days 16-20 - Student exploration & Projects

- This last week will consist of a field trip to Kent for a walking tour of the shooting site, Visitors Center, and talk with a survivor. Students will also explore campus and various areas of interest to them.
- The remainder of the week will be time for students to work on a project of their choosing. Some options are as follows:
 - Oral History from a community member or family member interview
 - Memorial presentation for someone who lost their life fighting for a cause
 - Letter to a government official
 - Original protest song/poetry with performance
 - Create your own protest plans (Poster, slogan, reasoning, location, etc)
 - Design a memorial for a significant event in our country's history with explanation
 - Other approved student ideas