



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES



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

Name of Educator: Michael E. Browning

Educator's Teaching Plan Number & Title: Project 18, "Kent State Five Day Lesson Activity"

Level of Students for Educator's Teaching Plan: Grades 8-12

Subject Area for Educator's Teaching Plan: American History and Government

Educator's State: Ohio

Description of Educator's Teaching Plan: *How are controversial historical events covered by textbooks and/or the media?* Students gain knowledge through examining aspects of the Vietnam era: Why Vietnam?; the counterculture; "Ohio" and *Laugh-In*; and protests at Kent State, May 1–4, 1970. May 4 reveals a lack of communication, the substantial distance of students from those who shot them, and how media is used to sway opinion—as in portrayals within mainstream US textbook treatments of May 4 history.

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:

Browning, Michael E., Project 18, "Kent State Five Day Lesson Activity," Making Meaning of May 4. Kent State University, accessed [add date], www.kent.edu/ehhs/making-meaning-may-4/sample-teaching-plans.

Terms of Use

By using the web site 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.

Kent State Five Day Lesson Activity

How are Controversial Historical Events Covered by Textbooks and/or the Media

Day One: Lecture/Discussion (Large Group Activity)

- I. Introduction to the Vietnam War and the Anti-War Movement - 25 minutes
 - Overview of the War - location, why we were fighting and how long the war was fought
 - Anti-War Movement - the length of the war, how the poor and minorities were much more likely to serve in the military, the ethical questioning of the war (My-Lai, etc)
 - Show counter culture style/hair, etc
 - Play Buffalo Springfield - "For What It's Worth"
 - Watch a few minutes of "Laugh-In"
- II. Invasion of Cambodia/Protests at Kent State - 15 minutes
 - Nixon - campaign promises and war strategy
 - Student Protests at KSU May 1-3, 1970
 - Actions of Gov. James Rhodes and National Guard

Day Two - Continuation of Day 1

- I. Events on Kent State Campus on May 4, 1970 - 15 minutes
 - The confusion between the University President and law enforcement
 - The planned student protest at noon
 - The actions of Ohio National Guard and the use of the campus map
 - The distance between the National Guard and the students at the time of the shooting
 - The closing of the campus that day
 - The immediate use of the media to sway public opinion - Governor Rhodes and National Guard v. CSNY "Ohio"
- II. Examining Various History Textbooks and How the Kent State Shootings are Taught - 10 minutes
 - The following textbooks that have been used by the Gahanna Jefferson School District that we will use as resources:
 - "The American Odyssey: The United States in the 20th Century"
 - "The American Journey"
 - "The Americans"
 - "Ohio's Heritage"
 - We will do a simple comparison of facts from the FBI Report on Kent State and compare those facts with how the event is portrayed in the textbooks.

- III. Students will break into groups of 3-4 students per group - 5 minutes
- IV. Provide a list of events in U.S. History for students to examine, including
But not limited to: 20 minutes
The Boston Massacre - examining from an American and British perspective
The Boston Tea Party - “ “ “ “ “ “ “
Dred Scott Decision - North v. South perspective
Election of 1860 - “ “ “
The Civil War - Northern textbooks v. Southern textbooks
Creation of Japanese Internment Camps - examining old textbooks v. newer
Brown v. Board decision - examining newspaper articles
The Election of 2000 - liberal v. conservative sources
Jan 6, 2020 coverage - liberal v. conservative sources
- Each group will choose one event and research how the portrayal of their chosen event can differ based on the source

Days Three and Four

Both of these days will be research days but we will also use “Workshop Method”, where I will meet for a 5 minute session to check in with each group, monitor progress, give feedback, etc.

Day Five

There will be 8 student groups and each group will give a five minute presentation on their topic

Opportunities for me to share my experiences with other teachers:

I am the Social Studies Department Chair at my school and I will share this information and the knowledge that I obtained with our history teachers at the beginning of the upcoming school year

I am also on the district Social Studies Leadership Committee so I will also share this information at our leadership committee meeting

I will also share my experiences with our Language Arts staff