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

**Name of Educator:** Christopher M. Belch

**Educator's Teaching Plan Number & Title:** Project 19, "Kent State Lesson Plan"

**Level of Students for Educator's Teaching Plan:** 10-12 grade

**Subject Area for Educator's Teaching Plan:** US History, Civics, European History

**Educator's State:** Michigan

**Description of Educator's Teaching Plan:** US Supreme Court decisions affecting pre-college student rights; one most important to each student. May 4: Doug Wrentmore interview; why didn't students leave area?; who was responsible? May 4 meaning for citizens & dissenters today. Activities incl. creating late night talk show and a debate.

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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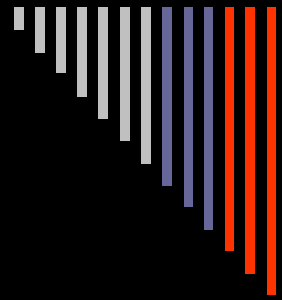
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# Kent State

## Lesson Plan

# Themes

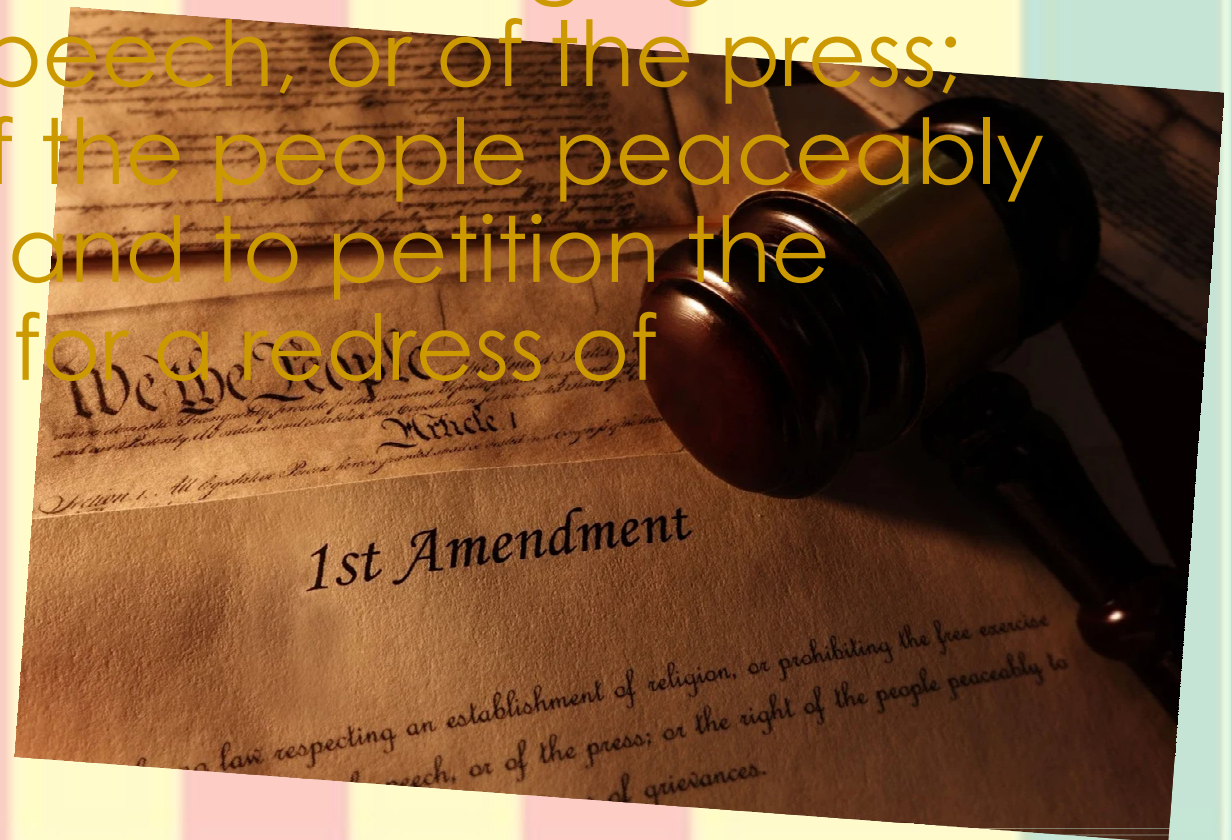
- Driving Questions:
  - Why didn't the students disperse when confronted by the National Guard?
  - Who was most responsible for the attack – the National Guard or students?
  - How can the lessons we learned during the Kent State protests apply to student protest today?



# Day 1: First Amendment

# First Amendment

- Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the Government for a redress of grievances.



# **Worksheet**

## **First Amendment Landmark Cases Worksheet**

# Landmark Cases

- Research the following cases:
  - West Virginia State Board of Education vs. Barnette (1943)
  - Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)
  - Bethel School District v. Fraser (1985)
  - Hazelwood v. Kuhlmeier (1988)
  - Morse v. Frederick (2007)

# **Worksheet**

## **First Amendment Landmark Cases – Groupwork Analysis Worksheet**



## Class Discussion

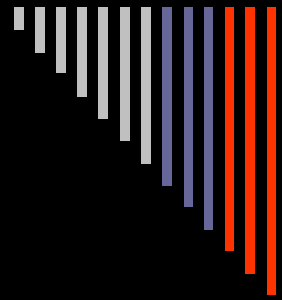
- ☐ **Which case does your group think is most relevant to your lives today? List the case and explain your rationale.**
- ☐ **Which case do you think is the least important? List the case and explain your rationale.**

## Class Discussion

- *Pick a case in which you disagree with the Supreme Court's decision. Explain what you think they got wrong and why.*
- Which case do you think will have the greatest impact on society today? List the case and explain your rationale.

# Limits in Schools

- Schools May Limit Free Speech IF:
  - It creates a substantial disruption (Tinker)
  - It is vulgar or lewd (Fraser)
  - It advocates illegal drug use (Morse)
  - Their Censorship is viewpoint neutral and based on a reasonable educational justification (Hazelwood)



## Day 2: The Kent State Incident

# War in Cambodia (1970)

## ■ Nixon Announces Entering Cambodia

[Time cover – The New War:  
Will Nixon's Gamble Work?]

[Map - US Bombing of  
Cambodia: All 115,273  
Targets – Oct. 4, 1965 to Aug.  
15, 1973]

# May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1970

## ■ Burying the Constitution

## ■ Symbolized: Murder of the Constitution

10-146  
10-91

Heap US . . . . .

### BURY THE CONSTITUTION OF THE UNITED STATES

President Nixon has flagrantly violated our constitutional rights by invading a sovereign nation without a declaration of war by Congress. Nixon has garnered all governmental power to the executive and committed us to a course of national barbarity; a crime that we will never be able to shed. He has been motivated only by his own personal whims. He has neither consulted Congress or the citizens of the United States. In essence he has usurped power in a fashion not dissimilar to a coup d'etat. President Nixon has murdered the Constitution and made a mockery of his claims to represent law and order. In recognition of the deceased we will commit the Constitution to the earth at . . .

12:00 NOON TODAY

ON THE COMMONS IN FRONT OF THE VICTORY BELL

World Historians Opposed to Racism and Exploitation

[Photo – Burial of the US Constitution, May 1, 1970]

# May 1<sup>st</sup>, 1970

- Riots in Downtown Kent
  - Some Broken Windows
  - Police Dispersed the Crowd
  - Kent Mayor
    - Heard rumors of a radical plot
    - Declared a state of emergency
    - Telephoned the governor in Columbus for assistance.
    - A National Guard officer was immediately dispatched.
    - Bars were closed by local authorities

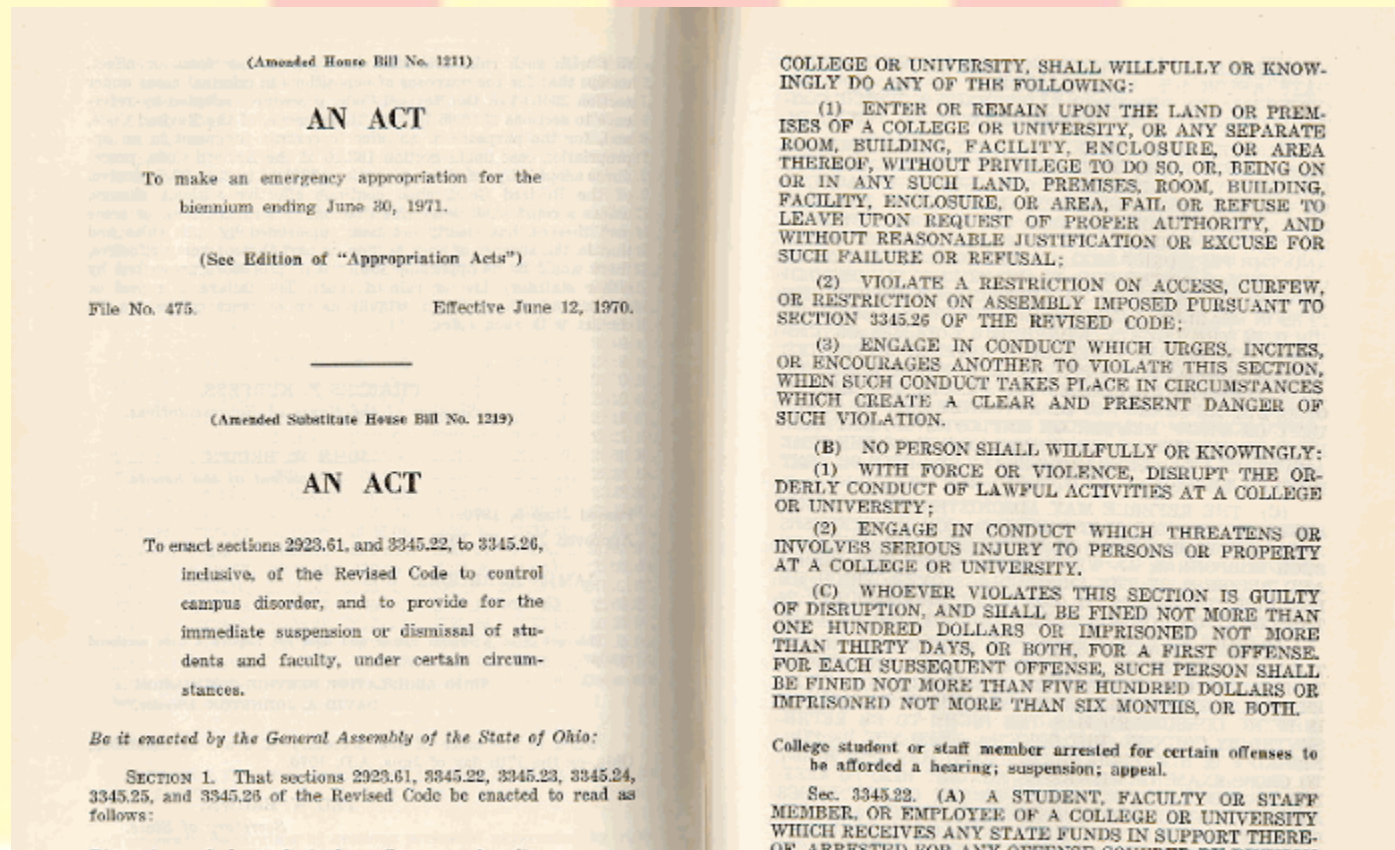
**May 2<sup>nd</sup>, 1970**

- Downtown Cleanup
  - Newspaper Article?



# May 3<sup>rd</sup>, 1970

- Ohio Riot Act
- Crowd Asked to Disperse
- Tear gas Fired



a

## ■ Burning of ROTC Building

[Two photos – Burned ROTC  
Building, May 1970]

# May 4<sup>th</sup>, 1970

- Resumption of Classes
  - Gathering on the Commons
    - Guard Enters with Fixed Bayonets

[Photo – Two students  
standing near where tear gas  
canisters landed]

# Video

- Clips from:
  - [Documentary showing what was happening on May 4, 1970, on the site]
  - May 4<sup>th</sup> Augumented Reality - <https://may4thxr.kent.edu/index.html>
  - Order to Fire - <https://archive.wksu.org/news/story/20800>
  - Photos - <https://www.beaconjournal.com/photogallery/OH/20200501/NEWS/501009998/PH/1>
  - <https://www.washingtonpost.com/magazine/2021/04/19/girl-kent-state-photo-lifelong-burden-being-national-symbol/>

# Kent State Protests

[Photo – KSU protest]

# Video

- Student Interview
  - <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pVCoNEJCokE>

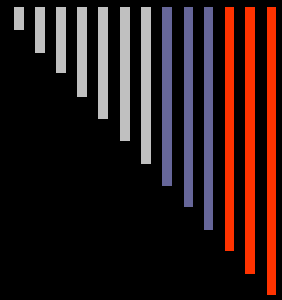
# Kent State Protests (1970)

## ■ Results

- 4 Dead
- 9 Wounded

[Three images –

1. Jeff Miller after being killed, May 4, 1970
2. LIFE cover, May 1970
3. Student strike photo following Kent State Shootings, Louisiana State University]



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# Day 3: Social Movements Today

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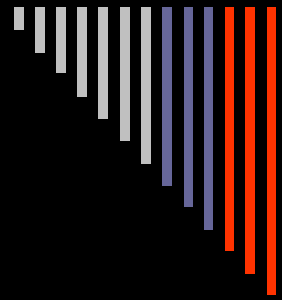
# Class Discussion

- Black Lives Matters
- Pride Movement

## **Article**

# **“What Black Lives Matter Demonstrators Can Learn from Civil Rights Protests of the Past”**

**<https://newsela.com/read/lib-blm-civil-rights-protest-history/id/2001018483/>**

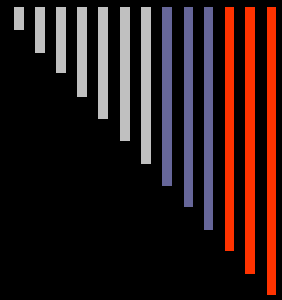


# Day 4-7: Interview

# **Activity**

**May 4<sup>th</sup>**

**Late Night Talk Show  
Presentation**



# Day 8: Debate

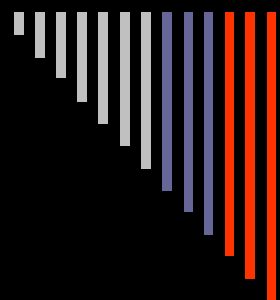
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# Topics to Consider

- Could the shootings on the campus of Kent State been prevented?
- Who was most responsible for the events of May 4<sup>th</sup>?
- Is May 4<sup>th</sup> relevant today?
  - (Hint: Think about current protest movements and explain what we can learn from May 4<sup>th</sup>.)

# Worksheet

## Kent State Briefing Notes



End

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