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

Name of Educator: Nicole Anita Booher

Educator's Teaching Plan Number & Title: Project 50, "Social Studies Choice Board Options"
[Created as collaboration with projects 27 and 40]

Level of Students for Educator's Teaching Plan: Grade 8

Subject Area for Educator's Teaching Plan: Social Studies

Educator's State: Ohio

Description of Educator's Teaching Plan: This social studies component of a collaborative, cross-disciplinary approach features choice board options: compare/contrast the Boston Massacre & Kent State Shootings; reliability of May 4 sources; First Amendment freedoms/boundaries and absence of freedoms in another country. Activities include visiting the May 4 site and a final reflection read by teachers of 4 subject areas.

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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Social Studies Choice Board Options

Compare/Contrast the Boston Massacre (1770) with the Kent State Shootings

Boston Massacre and the Kent State Shootings - "Arc of Tragedy"

All too often, we see history repeating itself...especially tragic events. Give students an opportunity to study/review the Boston Massacre and also to examine the Kent State Shootings using the May 4th digital archives. Construct a Venn diagram showing what aspects of the two events applied only to the Boston Massacre, only to Kent State, and also the aspects the two shared in common.

Decide who do you think was the most responsible for the Boston Massacre: The English, The Colonists, or Both were Equally at Fault. Explain your reasons. Do the same for the Kent State Shootings: The Student Protestors, The National Guard, or Both were Equally at Fault. Again, explain your reasons.

Groups will then be formed from all the classes according to how they answered the questions to this Choice Board option. Time will be set aside at a later date to have an open forum and discuss their thoughts and opinions on these two historic issues. Students will need to be prepared to defend their positions based on their research.

Analyze Primary and Secondary Sources

In this Choice Board option, students look for accuracy in primary and secondary source materials. Students will select three primary and three secondary sources pertaining to the Kent State Shootings from the May 4th digital archives. The emphasis for the activity is to understand both perspective and reliability of the information found in primary and secondary source materials. By determining the reliability of sources, students will attempt to determine the facts for the event in question.

Students will indicate an understanding of how to analyze the reliability of primary and secondary sources based on three criteria:

Immediacy - How soon after the event was the source created?

Motive - What was the reason for the creation of the source?

Bias - Could there have been any prejudice or preconception held by the creator?

Students will create a chart showing their findings for their six source choices based on the above criteria. Students will conclude with an overall explanation of what qualities to look for in a source to best defend one's position on a topic.

Examination of First Amendment Freedoms

The right to freedom of speech means that you can voice your own opinion. This includes speaking out against the government as a basic right. The government cannot suppress different political viewpoints.

The right to freely assemble means that groups of people can gather peaceably for reasons of their choice. The government cannot limit this as a form of protest or meeting.

Many would argue that the events that took place on May 4th at Kent State University demonstrated a clear violation of students' First Amendment freedoms, particularly their freedoms of speech and assembly. Write an explanation as to how these rights limit the power of government in order to protect the rights of individuals. Then think about the following two questions:

When do individual rights conflict with the rights of the community or the nation?

What might happen when a government starts to restrict the rights of its citizens?

Research a country that does NOT allow its citizens individual freedoms. Imagine you live in a country such as the one you researched and write a short story depicting a time when your freedom(s) were grossly violated by American standards.

Sources:

"Teaching American History: Ohio as America," Summit County Educational Service Center, 2009.