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

Name of Educator: Candace Hisey

Educator's Teaching Plan Number & Title: Project 1, "2021 NEH Project"

Level of Students for Educator's Teaching Plan: Grades 9-12

Subject Area for Educator's Teaching Plan: English/Language Arts

Educator's State: Ohio

Description of Educator's Teaching Plan: Students study types of social movements, stances on protest and injustice, and May 4. Employing a *decision tree*, they answer, "Where is that line for me? At what point should action be taken, if at all?"

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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INTRODUCTION OVERVIEW/RATIONALE

Nobel Prize-winner John Boyd Orr said that “when the fabric of society is so rigid that it cannot change quickly enough, adjustments are achieved by social unrest and revolutions.”

How quickly is quickly enough? The answer to this question varies widely from person to person. Is protest ever justified? At what point is that “line” crossed, and what should be the appropriate response when it is?

While learning about May 4th and other protests in this workshop, something I noticed was the differences between people who see an injustice and want to fight it no matter what, people who see an injustice and want to fight it but only under certain conditions, people who see an injustice and don’t want to fight it, and people who don’t see injustice. This unit and its culminating project will help students probe these differences as they pertain to May 4 and other protest movements. Students will be asking themselves, “Where is that line for me? At what point should action be taken, if it should be taken at all?”

UNIT GOALS

By the end of this unit, students will be able to:

- Write a letter in response to a protest-related quote from a notable speaker, exploring and reflecting on their feelings towards social justice movements and protest activity.
- Differentiate between various terms used when describing protests and write their own definitions for those terms.
- Listen carefully to oral histories from May 4 and identify the similarities and differences between participants’ motivations that day.
- Use Aberle’s “Types of Social Movements” to categorize social movements into groups. Are some types more worthy of protest than others?
- Read and discuss The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (1948) before proposing their own changes.
- Complete the final decision tree project and participate in classroom discussions post-unit.

CONNECTION TO STANDARDS

The Common Core Standards for ELA contain guidelines for reading, writing, and speaking and/or discussion skills. I have labeled each lesson in the slides (see slide *THREE*) according to those skills. While many of the standards apply, I have chosen one from each category to list here:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone (e.g., how the language of a court opinion differs from that of a newspaper).

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.9-10.1.A

Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.9-10.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

DETAILED DESCRIPTION OF WHAT WILL HAPPEN EACH DAY:

To Whom It May Concern: Students will choose from a list of quotes from notable people regarding protests and activism. They will choose one of these quotes and write a letter in response to its speaker. (1-2 days)

What's in a Word?: will examine the language of protest used in media. Working in small groups and then as a class, we will write our own classroom definitions for these terms and set guidelines for when to use them. (1 day)

Finding the "Why": Students will choose *three* oral histories of May 4 participants from the archives and identify details of their story that explain the "why" behind their decisions that day, making note of any similarities and differences in their motivations. (2-3 days)

The Way You Move: Students will analyze Aberle's "Types of Social Movements," identifying where on the spectrum the Kent State protests would fall and finding additional examples of each type. (1 day)

Fight for the Right: Students will be assigned one item from the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They will complete a quick write on two questions: **If this right was denied to you, do you feel protest would be an appropriate response? Why or why not? If this right was denied to others, do you feel protest would be an appropriate response? Why or why not?** We will then discuss whether the document is realistic and whether or not they would like to add or remove any rights from the list. (1-2 days)

FORMAL AND INFORMAL ASSESSMENTS

See detailed descriptions of informal assessments above in the daily activity guide.

FINAL PROJECT CRITERIA (see slides for more details) :

After learning more about the world of protest and revolution, students will be creating protest decision trees that can be consulted in the event of a rights violation. The decision trees must contain the following:

At least four protest activities that have been used in social movements. (Ex. sit-ins, marches, boycotts, etc.)

What to do when these activities do not achieve the desired result.

Labeled "start" and "stop" points for each item on the decision tree.

TECHNOLOGICAL AND MATERIAL NEEDS

- Computers to access the May 4 archives
- Headphones to listen to the oral histories
- Access to design programs such as Canva, Slides, Powerpoint, Zingtree, SmartDraw, etc.
- Paper and drawing supplies if students choose to complete their trees by hand

2021 NEH Project



Unit Plan



Resources



Timeline



Final Product

[Image: Three figures holding protest signs comprising the phrase "WHERE'S THE LINE?"]

“Critics often point to the only poll taken in the aftermath of the killings that revealed 58 percent of Americans blamed the students for the killings rather than the guardsmen that fired the fatal rounds...when black students, dressed in their Sunday best, were attacked by white toughs for doing nothing more than seeking service at Woolworth lunch counters, 57 percent of the public believed the sit-ins wrong and indicated that ‘such demonstrations and acts of civil disobedience had hurt chances of integration’... 61 percent disapproved of John Lewis and his fellow Freedom Riders. ***Most respondents seemed to be condemning protest regardless of its form.***”

- Dr. Thomas Grace

Project Statement:

Nobel Peace Prize-winner John Boyd Orr said that “when the fabric of society is so rigid that it cannot change quickly enough, adjustments are achieved by social unrest and revolutions.”

How quickly is quickly *enough*? The answer to this question varies widely from person to person. Is protest ever justified? At what point is that “line” crossed, and what should be the appropriate response when it is?

While learning about May 4th and other protests in this workshop, something I noticed was the differences between people who see an injustice and want to fight it no matter what, people who see an injustice and want to fight it but only under certain conditions, people who see an injustice and don’t want to fight it, and people who don’t see injustice. This unit and its culminating project will help students probe these differences as they pertain to May 4 and other protest movements.

Students will be asking themselves, “Where is that line for me? At what point should action be taken, if it should be taken at all?”

Unit Overview

LESSON ONE WRITING

To Whom It May Concern: Students will choose from a list of quotes from notable people regarding protests and activism. They will choose one of these quotes and write a letter in response to its speaker. (1-2 days)

LESSON TWO DISCUSSION

What's in a Word?: Students will examine the language of protest used in media. Working in small groups and then as a class, we will write our own classroom definitions for these terms and set guidelines for when to use them. (1 day)

LESSON THREE LISTENING

Finding the "Why": Students will choose *three* oral histories of May 4 participants from the archives and identify details of their story that explain the "why" behind their decisions that day, making note of any similarities and differences in their motivations. (2-3 days)

LESSON FOUR ANALYSIS

The Way You Move: Students will analyze Aberle's "Types of Social Movements," identifying where on the spectrum the Kent State protests would fall and finding additional examples of each type. (1 day)

LESSON FIVE ALL OF THE ABOVE

Fight for the Right: Students will be assigned one item from the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights. They will complete a quick write on two questions: **If this right was denied to you, do you feel protest would be an appropriate response? Why or why not? If this right was denied to others, do you feel protest would be an appropriate response? Why or why not?** Think back to May 4 at Kent State. Which of these rights did protesters feel were being violated? Which of their rights were violated on May 4? (1-2 days)

To Whom It May Concern

“It is a strength when protesters, protected by responsible law enforcement, march for a better future.” - President George W. Bush

“A riot is the voice of the unheard.” - Dr MLK Jr.

“Those who make peaceful revolution impossible, make violent revolution inevitable.” - President JFK

“I was once asked why I don’t participate in anti-war demonstrations. I said that I will never do that, but as soon as you have a pro-peace rally, I’ll be there.” - Mother Teresa

“Any difficulty and we will assume control. When the looting starts, the shooting starts.” - President Donald Trump

“If you have revolutionary potential then you have a moral imperative to make the world a better place.” - Lady Gaga

“I love America more than any other country in the world and, exactly for this reason, I insist on the right to criticize her perpetually.” - James Baldwin

“I am for violence if non-violence means we continue postponing a solution to the American black man's problem just to avoid violence.” - Malcolm X

“The duty of youth is to challenge corruption.” - Kurt Cobain

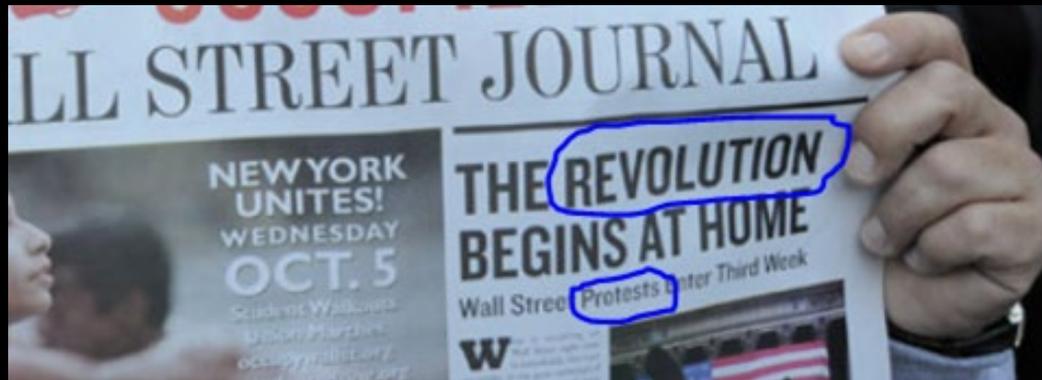
Martin Luther (1483-1546)	MLK Jr. (1929-1968)
Peace is more important than all justice; and peace was not made for the sake of justice, but justice for the sake of peace.	Peace is not merely the absence of tension, but the presence of justice.

What's In a Word?

What are some connotations we have with each of these words?

Can they be used interchangeably?

How can we *define* each of these words to encourage language precision?



Finding the “Why”

Using the Kent State Shootings: May 4 Collection of oral histories, choose at LEAST three of the following narratives and fill out the organizer:

	How would you describe this person’s role? (<i>guardsman, professor, civilian, student, etc.</i>)	What did this person <i>do</i> on May 4? <i>Did they march? Throw a rock? Protect someone injured? Point a gun?</i>	Using evidence from the narrative , what was this person’s motivation for their behavior that day? <i>Were they scared? Angry? Emboldened? Frustrated? Explain.</i>
Oral History #1			
Oral History #2			
Oral History #3			
Oral History #4 (<i>optional</i>)			
Where do you see similarities between these participants’ motivations? Where do you see differences?			

The Way You Move

Sociologist David Aberle (1966) wrote that there are four basic types of social movements, and he categorized them by a.) how *many* people will be impacted by the desired change and b.) how *much* would need to change in order to make their desires a reality.

[Image: Grid of David Aberle's types and stages of social movements – see <https://courses.lumenlearning.com/>]

Step One: Where on [Aberle's] grid would the Kent State protest movements fall?

Step Two: Find one additional protest movement, past or present, for each of the four types.

Fight for the Right

In December of 1948, the United Nations drafted a Universal Declaration of Human Rights. It outlined, for the first time, “fundamental human rights to be universally protected.”

Each student will be given one article of the UDHR. They will complete a quick write answering the following questions:

1. If this right was denied to you, do you feel protest would be an appropriate response? Why or why not?
2. If this right was denied to others, do you feel protest would be an appropriate response? Why or why not?
3. Think back to May 4 at Kent State. Which of these rights did protesters feel were being violated? Which of their rights were violated on MAY 4?

Article 1

All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood.

Article 2

Everyone is entitled to all the rights and freedoms set forth in this Declaration, without distinction of any kind, such as race, colour, sex, language, religion, political or other opinion, national or social origin, property, birth or other status. Furthermore, no distinction shall be made on the basis of the political, jurisdictional or international status of the country or territory to which a person belongs, whether it be independent, trust, non-self-governing or under any other limitation of sovereignty.

Article 3

Everyone has the right to life, liberty and security of person.

Article 5

No one shall be subjected to torture or to cruel, inhuman or degrading treatment or punishment.

Article 6

Everyone has the right to recognition everywhere as a person before the law.

Article 7

All are equal before the law and are entitled without any discrimination to equal protection of the law. All are entitled to equal protection against any discrimination in violation of this Declaration and against any incitement to such discrimination.

Article 8

Everyone has the right to an effective remedy by the competent national tribunals for acts violating the fundamental rights granted him by the constitution or by law.

Article 9

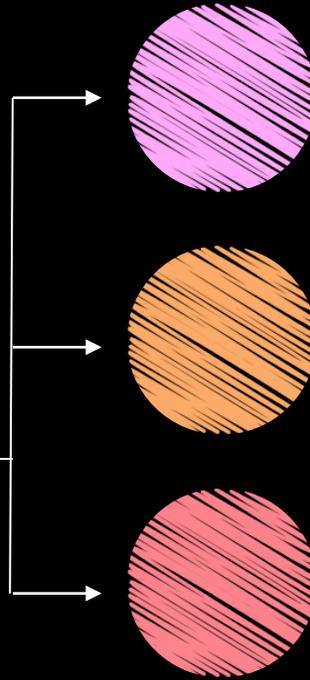
No one shall be subjected to arbitrary arrest, detention or exile.

Article 10

Everyone is entitled in full equality to a fair and public hearing by an independent and impartial tribunal, in the determination of his rights and obligations and of any criminal charge against him.

FINAL PROJECT

[Image: "WHERE'S THE LINE?" graphic]



After learning more about the world of protest and revolution, students will be creating protest decision trees that can be consulted in the event of a rights violation. The decision trees must contain the following:

At least four protest activities that have been used in social movements. (Ex. sit-ins, marches, boycotts, etc.)

What to do when these activities do *not* achieve the desired result.

Labeled "start" and "stop" points for each item on the decision tree.

[Image: Sample decision tree]

[Images: Four sample decision trees]



Questions to Consider



Would I protest if *my* rights
are being directly affected?
Those of my loved ones?
Those of a *stranger*?



What would make me
pause, regroup, or stop
a protest effort?



If peaceful measures don't work,
what comes next? Do I repeat
former methods, try something
new, or admit defeat?



What are the relationships
between peace, security,
order, justice, and progress?
How do I rank them in
importance?