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

Name of Educator: Adam Randau

Educator's Teaching Plan Number & Title: Project 2, "American History Unit"

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

Subject Area for Educator's Teaching Plan: American History

Educator's State: Ohio

Description of Educator's Teaching Plan: Multiple perspectives on the causes and consequences of May 4, so as to truly make each student able to connect events of the past to their lives today. Considerations include: invisibility of minorities, inflammatory rhetoric, media responsibilities, humanizing victims, power of youth movements. Interactions promoting historical thinking include the Stanford Lunchroom Fight simulation and students sharing exhibits created in the spirit of one of the 3 themes of the May 4 Visitors Center: Social Justice, Generation Gap, Vietnam War.

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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Intro/Rationale: The causes and consequences surrounding May 4 are so varied, complex, and so crucially connected to the story of American history, that having a deeper understanding of these events can only result in a greater understanding of the entire era following WWII. Furthermore, the parallels that exist between the events of this historic era and the events playing out today are so eerily similar, examining the causes and consequences of May 4 can only lead to a greater understanding of where we are currently in our society, and where we are heading.

In addition to simply creating this project, I intend to use this work as a framework to rework my entire approach to teaching history. For years I have felt that the way we study history in schools was wrong, but I didn't know what the answer was. I struggled with being able to present historical events from as many perspectives as possible - - at first because I was afraid of leaving out an ever-growing number of important perspectives, and more recently, I now worry in the back of my mind about conservative students tuning me out. While I'm not looking to validate any sort of bigoted or narrow-minded perceptions, I do worry that appearing "too liberal" could have the effect of causing those students to seek their "learning" from dangerous places.

My ultimate goal is to truly make every single student in my room feel represented in the story of American History. That their story and their experience is represented in the curriculum, and that they truly are able make connections between the events of the past and their lives today.

Goals: In this unit, students will:

- Gain an increased understanding surrounding the causes and consequences of the tragic events at Kent State on May 4, 1970
- Develop historical research skills such as inquiry, corroboration, archive research
- Conclude with a presentation that focuses on one of the 3 themes of the May 4 Exhibit
 - Social Justice
 - Generation Gap
 - Vietnam War

and connects the theme they selected to their own lives.

Students will be allowed to present through the use of a choice board and will be encouraged to present in an innovative and creative way, with the goal of creating our own mini May 4 Exhibit at ----- High School (Hopefully with the collaboration from other subject areas). Some of examples to guide students on personal connections that will be provided are:

- Invisibility of minorities (Jackson State, Orangeburg)
- Inflammatory rhetoric from leaders/politicians
- Media responsibility
- Personal bias
- Recording/capturing events (photographs, cellphones)

- Lawful vs unlawful gatherings
- First Amendment in practice
- Monolith Myth – (not all of the victims were protestors, not all of the protestors were radicals, etc)
- Power of youth movements
- Pushback/backlash against social change
- The importance of personal stories – humanizing victims

Connection to State Standards:

- Historical Thinking and Skills
 - 1. The use of primary and secondary sources of information includes an examination of the credibility of each source
 - 2. Historians develop theses and use evidence to support or refute positions
 - 3. Historians analyze cause, effect, sequence and correlation in historical events, including multiple causation and long- and short-term causal relations
- The Cold War (1945-1991)
 - 23. The US followed a policy of containment during the Cold War in response to the spread of communism
 - 24. The Second Red Scare and McCarthyism reflected Cold War fears in American society
 - 25. The Cold War and conflicts in Korea and Vietnam influenced domestic and international politics
- Social Transformations in the United States (1945-1991)
 - 27. Following WWII, the US experienced a struggle for racial and gender equality and the extension of civil rights.
 - 30. Political debates focused on the extent of the role of gov't in the economy, environmental protection, social welfare and national security

Daily Lessons (Formal/Informal Assessments): Block Schedule – Students are seen 3 times a week (duration of classes 1 and 2 are 80 minutes, class 3 is ~45 min)

Preceding this unit, students will have just completed a unit covering:

Promise and Turmoil, The 1960s

- Kennedy's New Frontier
- Bay of Pigs, Cuban Missile Crisis
- Early Vietnam
- Assassination
- LBJ Great Society
- Civil Rights Acts '64, '65
- MLK, Malcolm X, Black Power, Black Panthers
- Warren Court
- New Left, Counterculture
- Women's Movement
- Escalation of Vietnam
- Hawks and Doves
- Nixon – Law and Order
- White Backlash

Limits of A Superpower 1969-1980

Opening paragraph includes this single sentence: "A nationwide protest on college campuses against this action resulted in the killing of four youths by National Guard troops at Kent State in Ohio and two students at Jackson State in Mississippi."

Day 1 – Lunch Room Fight Simulation (Stanford History Education Group)
First Amendment and students Supreme Court cases Presentation and classroom discussion

Day 2 – 1st Amendment Students Supreme Court Cases presentation and Fieldtrip prep discussion – students will be asked to create a presentation based off one of the themes of the exhibit

– Social Justice, Generation Gap, Vietnam War

Day 3 – May 4 Exhibit Tour

Day 4 – Debrief from field trip, **Confrontation at Kent State** vid (May 4 resources) – students can see what immediate news coverage looked like – examining perspectives of the community

Day 5, 6, 7 - work days – students will have time and access to materials to add to their project –Examples of materials:

<https://www.kent.edu/may-4-historical-accuracy>, Kent State Archives (Oral Histories Project), Chestnut Burr 1971, readings, videos, music (USA Today series of articles, Fire in the Heartland and other May 4 materials, Hard Hat Riots, etc)

Day 8 and 9 – Presentations

Technical needs and materials:

1. Stanford Lunchroom fight simulation:
<https://sheg.stanford.edu/history-lessons/lunchroom-fight-i>
2. The Day the 60s Died, PBS video
 - a. Video guide
3. Internet, Google Classroom
4. Kent State Archives - <https://www.library.kent.edu/special-collections-and-archives>
 - a. Oral Histories Project
 - b. Daily Kent Stater
 - c. Chestnut Burr (1971)
5. Articles
 - a. <https://www.kent.edu/may-4-historical-accuracy>
 - b. <https://stories.usatodaynetwork.com/kentstate50yearslater/kent-state-shooting-riot-led-mayor-leroy-satrom-national-guard/site/gannett.com/>
 - c. <https://stories.usatodaynetwork.com/kentstate50yearslater/may-4-a-50-year-journey-of-remembrance-controversy-and-pain/site/gannett.com/>
 - d. <https://stories.usatodaynetwork.com/kentstate50yearslater/william-schroeder-loved-kent-state-life-in-spring-of-70-embraced-rotc/site/gannett.com/>
 - e. <https://stories.usatodaynetwork.com/kentstate50yearslater/kent-state-shootings-allison-krause-killed-national-guard/site/gannett.com/>
 - f. <https://stories.usatodaynetwork.com/kentstate50yearslater/sandy-scheuer-a-charmer-who-had-need-to-help-others-before-may-4/site/gannett.com/>
6. Protest music sound files