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

**Name of Educator:** Marianne Richardson

**Educator's Teaching Plan Number & Title:** Project 3, "American Literature Unit"

**Level of Students for Educator's Teaching Plan:** 9th grade

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

**Educator's State:** Ohio

**Description of Educator's Teaching Plan:** As part of a Black history and culture curriculum, students consider "*law and order* yesterday and today." They study manifestations of *law and order* in the Civil Rights era; the Orangeburg, Kent State & Jackson State shootings; contemporary police shootings; and presidential policy. Students conclude work with thoughts about ways to bridge the underlying divides.

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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# American Literature Unit

# Overview of Curriculum Framework



First Quarter: Ancient  
Africa & Antiquity

Second Quarter: African  
Colonization, Maafa, &  
Reconstruction

Third Quarter: Great Migration &  
Harlem Renaissance

Fourth Quarter: Civil Rights  
& Black Lives Matter

# SOCIAL JUSTICE BOOK CLUBS

## Potential New Titles:

*I'm Not Dying With You Tonight*  
*This is My America*  
*Dear Justyce*  
*Punching the Air*  
*Anger is a Gift*  
*The Black Kids*



# Implementation of Teaching & Learning Model that Uses 19<sup>th</sup> Century Black Literary Societies as a Framework

- Reading rooms, debating societies, reading clubs, literary institutions, lyceums, literary salons
- For mathematics, science, history and language
- Developed in the early 1800s in Northeast urban cities by Black males (teenagers, young, older adults)
- Membership 10 — 100+
- Gathered to read, think, debate, engage in lectures, and writing toward the goal of a better humanity and social conditions
- They met in classrooms, basements, churches, halls, & homes

[Photo - Meeting of a nineteenth-century Black literary society]

A BRIEF HISTORY OF BLACK LITERARY SOCIETIES

“Historically African American people did not just want to accumulate knowledge to hold in their minds, but they sought to do something with the knowledge they gained—and put knowledge into action through their public addresses, writings and learning, which were then passed on to future generations.” —Dr. Ghoddy Muhammad Cultivating Genius: An Equity Framework for Culturally and Historically Responsive Literacy

Slide from presentation for  
Stanford University, 1/28/21  
Rile Speaker Series

# Building Prior Knowledge

[Image - Title frame of Al Jazeera's *Four Dead in Ohio* video documentary]

Debrief video prior to next slide.



**Al Jazeera English**  
7.72M subscribers

# DISCUSS THE TWO STATEMENTS

General Del Corso quote AFTER students were killed and wounded by his National Guard units

“They’re going to have to find out what law & order is all about.”

Scranton Commission President’s Commission on Campus Unrest Conclusion

“The **indiscriminate** firing of rifles into a crowd of students and the deaths that followed were unnecessary, unwarranted, and inexcusable . . . Even if the guardsmen faced danger, it was not a danger that called for lethal force. The 61 shots by 28 guardsmen certainly cannot be justified.”

# WHAT IS “LAW & ORDER” ALL ABOUT?

Students will read an article and compare the information they've gathered with other students to determine whether there is agreement or discrepancies in the reporting. A discussion about the history of the phrase will be included.

## COMPARING ACCOUNTS OF THE HISTORY OF THE PHRASE “LAW & ORDER”

[The Bitter History of Law and Order in America](#)

[Trump Declared Himself the 'President of Law and Order.' Here's What People Get Wrong About the Origins of That Idea](#)

[The long, dark history of Donald Trump's pledge to be a 'law and order' president](#)

[What Trump Really Means When He Tweets "Law & Order!!!"](#)



# Research Assignments

## Topics

During their research, pairs of students will focus on:

- ❖ What happened
- ❖ Protestor/student actions
- ❖ Military/Police actions
- ❖ Media/Public reactions

- Jackson State
- Orangeburg
- Police Raid that killed Black Panther Leader Fred Hampton
- Other events during Civil Rights era involving police or military including “Bloody Sunday”, rioting related to James Meredith’s admission to UM, Freedom Riders, etc.
- Current events including police shooting of individuals like Tamir Rice, Philando Castile, etc.



## Final Reflection/Commentary

For their final reflection, students will do a multi-modal project in which they provide commentary on “law & order” yesterday and today including thoughts about how we can and should move forward.


# Extensions

## Profiles4Change

Website in which students share what they want us to know about who they are as well as encounters that they have had with law enforcement.

## Conversations with Cops

Regular meetings with Columbus Police Department members so that our students can establish dialogue between the students and the department.



“Not everything that is faced  
can be changed, but nothing  
can be changed until it is  
faced.” —James Baldwin

# Snapshot of Standards Tied to Unit Work

RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

SL.11-12.2 Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to make informed decisions and solve problems, evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

## CCS Overarching Learning Standards:

*Read, write, and discuss every day!*

SL.11-12.1 Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11–12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

W.11-12.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

THANK YOU