



NATIONAL
ENDOWMENT
FOR THE
HUMANITIES



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

Name of Educator: Lisa Liverio, Nancy Spagnola

Educator's Teaching Plan Number & Title: Project 9, "Do Something: Fanning the Flames of Teen Activism"

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

Subject Area for Educator's Teaching Plan: Social studies/English

Educator's State: New York

Description of Educator's Teaching Plan: "If you think you're too little to have an *impact*, try going to bed with a *mosquito*!" This African proverb inspires students to overcome their uncertainty about *how* to make change through learning what activism *is*; motivating examples; and developing a *action plan* for social change.

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.

You have permission to use this project for educational purposes. **Commercial use is prohibited.**

Acknowledge use of this teaching plan with the following citation:

Liverio, Lisa, and Spagnola, Nancy, Project 9, "Do Something: Fanning the Flames of Teen Activism," Making Meaning of May 4. Kent State University, accessed [add date], www.kent.edu/ehhs/making-meaning-may-4/sample-teaching-plans.

Terms of Use

By using the web site www.kent.edu/ehhs/making-meaning-may-4 (the Site), the user agrees to accept the 'Terms of Use' stated here. Any copyrighted content in the Site is made available for personal use only. For any commercial purpose, users are responsible for obtaining the copyright holder's permission.

The digital content contained in the Site is not available for re-sale, re-use, incorporation, or copying into any databases or commercial product without express, written permission from Kent State University [www.kent.edu/ehhs/making-meaning-may-4/About] and when applicable the copyright holder. No unauthorized mass downloading or scraping into any format is permitted from this website.

Kent State University requests that citation be provided for use of all material on this Site.

Introduction/overview/unit rationale:

Unit Title: Do Something: Fanning the Flames of Teen Activism

[Illustrated quote: "If you think you're too small to have an impact, try going to bed with a mosquito! - African Proverb"]

This unit will be used for a co-taught (social studies/English) high school Female Activism elective class which meets every day for a 42 minute class period. We are fortunate to have students in this class who, for the most part, are passionate about making changes in society but are not really sure how to go about making this change. We have also been surprised about the lack of passion and civil outrage from some students at the injustices in society today. It is our hope that these students will find that if they simply “do something” it can make a difference.

We will drive home the fact that effective political/ social activism HAS to come from a fearless thirst to make equitable and meaningful change which finds its roots in education. Change cannot come from a place of ignorance or anger. In this unit we plan to expose the students to many avenues that lead to effective change, ways to find their voice and develop solutions to become a young leader to whom others will listen.

Unit goals

- Understanding “activism” (define/describe)
- Examples of activism throughout history
- Inspire the desire for students to STAND for SOMETHING
- Complete research on a particular activist/advocacy group which will culminate in an individual project to share with the class (Google slides/artwork/poetry/collage or any other creative medium)

Connection to state standards

NYS ELA Standards:

11-12R1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly/implicitly and make logical inferences, including determining where the text is ambiguous; develop questions for deeper understanding and for further exploration. (RI&RL)

11-12R3: In literary texts, analyze the impact of author’s choices. (RL) In informational texts, analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop. (RI)

11-12R4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings. Analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning, tone, and mood, including words with multiple meanings. Analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of technical or key term(s) over the course of a text. (RI&RL)

11-12R6: Analyze how authors employ point of view, perspective, and purpose, to shape explicit and implicit messages (e.g., persuasiveness, aesthetic quality, satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement). (RI&RL)

11-12R7: In literary texts, analyze multiple adaptations of a source text as presented in different formats (e.g., works of art, graphic novels, music, film, etc.), specifically evaluating how each version interprets the source. (RL) In informational texts, integrate and evaluate sources on the same topic or argument in order to address a question, or solve a problem. (RI)

11-12R8: Delineate and evaluate an argument in applicable texts, applying a lens (e.g. constitutional principles, logical fallacy, legal reasoning, belief systems, codes of ethics, philosophies, etc.) to assess the validity or fallacy of key arguments, determining whether the supporting evidence is relevant and sufficient. (RI&RL)

11-12W2: Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

11-12W2a: Introduce and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole.

11-12W2b: Develop a topic thoroughly by selecting the most significant and relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, direct quotations and paraphrased information or other examples, appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic. Include formatting, graphics, and multimedia when useful to aid comprehension.

11-12W2c: Use precise language, content-specific vocabulary and literary techniques to express the appropriate complexity of a topic.

11-12W2d: Use appropriate and varied transitions and syntax to make insightful connections and distinctions, create cohesion, and clarify relationships among complex ideas and concepts.

11-12W2e: Provide a concluding statement or section that explains the significance of the information presented. 11-12W2f: Establish and maintain a style appropriate to the writing task.

11-12W4: Create a poem, story, play, artwork, or other response to a text, author, theme or personal experience; demonstrate knowledge and understanding of a variety of techniques and genres. Explain connections between the original and the created work

11-12W5: Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. Apply the grade 11/12 Reading Standards to both literary and informational text, where applicable.

11-12W6: Conduct research through self-generated questions, or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate. Synthesize multiple sources, demonstrating understanding and analysis of the subject under investigation.

11-12W7: Gather relevant information from multiple sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas; avoid plagiarism, overreliance on one source, and follow a standard format for citation

11-12SL1: Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on complex topics, texts, and issues; express ideas clearly and persuasively, and build on those of others.

11-12SL1a: Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; draw on that preparation by referring to evidence to stimulate a thoughtful, well reasoned exchange of ideas.

11-12SL1b: Work with peers to set norms for collegial discussions and decision-making, establish clear goals, deadlines, and individual roles as needed.

11-12SL1c: Pose and respond to questions that probe reasoning and evidence; address a full range of positions; clarify, verify, or challenge ideas and conclusions; and promote divergent and creative perspectives.

11-12SL1d: Respond thoughtfully to diverse perspectives; synthesize comments, claims, and evidence made on all sides of an issue; resolve contradictions when possible; and determine what additional information or research is required to deepen the investigation or complete the task.

11-12SL2: Integrate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats (e.g., including visual, quantitative, and oral). Evaluate the credibility and accuracy of each source, and note any discrepancies among the data to make informed decisions and solve problems.

11-12SL3: Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric; assess the premises and connections among ideas, diction, and tone.

11-12SL4: Present claims, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective; alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed; organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

11-12SL5: Make strategic use of digital media and/or visual displays in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence, and to add elements of interest to engage the audience.

11-12SL6: Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.

NYS Social Studies Standards:

Learning Standard 1: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of major ideas, eras, themes, developments, and turning points in the history of the United States and New York.

1-4.0 The skills of historical analysis include the ability to: explain the significance of historical evidence; weigh the importance, reliability, and validity of evidence; understand the concept of multiple causation; understand the importance of changing and competing interpretations of different historical developments.

1-4.1 analyze historical narratives about key events in New York State and United States history to identify the facts and evaluate the authors' perspectives

1-4.2 consider different historians' analyses of the same event or development in United States history to understand how different viewpoints and/or frames of reference influence historical interpretations

1-4.3 evaluate the validity and credibility of historical interpretations of important events or issues in New York State or United States history, revising these interpretations as new information is learned and other interpretations are developed.

Learning Standard 5: Students will use a variety of intellectual skills to demonstrate their understanding of the necessity for establishing governments; the governmental system of the U.S. and other nations; the U.S. Constitution; the basic civic values of American constitutional democracy; and the roles, rights, and responsibilities of citizenship, including avenues of participation.

5-1.0 The study of civics, citizenship, and government involves learning about political systems; the purposes of government and civic life; and the differing assumptions held by people across time and place regarding power, authority, governance, and law.

5-1.1 know the meaning of key terms and concepts related to government, including democracy, power, citizenship, nation-state, and justice

5-1.3 describe the basic purposes of government and the importance of civic life

5-1.4 understand that social and political systems are based upon people's beliefs

5-3.0 Central to civics and citizenship is an understanding of the roles of the citizen within American constitutional democracy and the scope of a citizen's rights and responsibilities.

5-3.2 examine what it means to be a good citizen in the classroom, school, home, and community

5-3.4 examine the basic principles of the Declaration of Independence and the Constitutions of the United States and New York State

5-3.5 understand that effective, informed citizenship is a duty of each citizen, demonstrated by jury service, voting, and community service

5-3.6 identify basic rights that students have and those that they will acquire as they age.

5-4.0 The study of civics and citizenship requires the ability to probe ideas and assumptions, ask and answer analytical questions, take a skeptical attitude toward questionable arguments, evaluate evidence, formulate rational conclusions, and develop and refine participatory skills.

5-4.1 show a willingness to consider other points of view before drawing conclusions or making judgments

5-4.2 participate in activities that focus on a classroom, school, or community issue or problem

5-4.3 suggest alternative solutions or courses of action to hypothetical or historic problems

5-4.4 evaluate the consequences for each alternative solution or course of action

5-4.5 prioritize the solutions based on established criteria

5-4.6 propose an action plan to address the issue of how to solve the problem.

Detailed description of what will happen each day

Day 1: ACTIVISM

Essential Questions: What is activism?

Why does activism happen?

1. Students will complete an activism self assessment (Google Forms)
2. Students will view and complete a viewing guide for the following Ted Talk:

[https://www.ted.com/talks/](https://www.ted.com/talks/john_lewis_and_bryan_stevenson_the_fight_for_civil_rights_and_freedom/transcript#t-17051)

[john_lewis_and_bryan_stevenson_the_fight_for_civil_rights_and_freedom/transcript#t-17051](https://www.ted.com/talks/john_lewis_and_bryan_stevenson_the_fight_for_civil_rights_and_freedom/transcript#t-17051)

3. Students will brainstorm a working definition for “activism” which will guide the lessons for the unit
4. Students will, for homework, research teen activists and bring their example to class. They will answer specific questions about their activist: see below

Day 2: ACTIVISTS IN ACTION

Essential Questions: Who or what determines the need for activism?

How does that play a role in predicting the success of the activist?

1. Students will debrief their homework. They will share their specifics about the activist they researched by sharing the following information:
 - a. Name, age, location
 - b. What event spurred their activist into action?
 - c. What steps did their activist take to fight for their cause?
 - d. What resulted from their activism?
2. Direct instruction using the following Google Slides:
May 4, 1970.pptx
3. Students will complete guided notes on the Google Slides presentation - focusing on the above essential questions.

Day 3: MAY 4, 1970

Essential Questions: Can social change occur without activism?

Who was ultimately responsible for the events of May 4, 1970?

1. Students will participate in a station activity about May 4, 1970
 - a. STATION 1:
 - b. STATION 2:
 - c. STATION 3:
 - d. STATION 4:

(WE NEED TO TAKE THE TIME TO SEARCH THE ARCHIVES FOR THE SPECIFIC STATION ACTIVITIES)

Day 4 FIND YOUR PASSION

Essential question: What do you feel passionately about?

1. Short direct instruction about the Suffragists
2. Students will view short video clip from the movie “Iron Jawed Angels”
3. Students will discuss, with a partner, the question:

What do you feel so strongly about that you would put yourself through what Alice Paul and the other Suffragists endured to secure the right to vote?

Day 5: DO SOMETHING/STAND FOR SOMETHING

Essential Question: How can you become involved as an activist in your own or surrounding community?

1. We will watch the clip from “On the Basis of Sex” from :38
 - a. Class discussion about what “radical social change” is.
2. We will watch the clip <https://www.flocabulary.com/unit/activism/>
 - a. Students will respond to the video by answering questions on a corresponding worksheet.
 - b. Students discuss in pairs their answers including their answer to the question “How can YOU become an activist.”
 - c. Students will brainstorm to come up with an idea and a plan for a reform movement that they can either start or one that they can add to.

Use of both informal and formal assessments

- Informal: Surveys
- Informal: oral questions and answers
- Informal: Think, Pair, Share
- Formal: written responses
- Formal: Activist Research Project
- Formal: action plan for individual activism

Technological needs

- Internet
- Clear Touch Panels
- Individual student laptops

Materials needed to complete the unit

- Writing utensils
- Paper
- Poster boards
- Any supplies used for artistic creations (paint, colored pencils etc...)

Postscript:

----- School has a student population around 1,200. It is a rural high school with an urban population. We are two teachers who embrace diversity and are known for our inability to keep our mouths shut when we witness injustice - actually when we witness anything we don't agree with! We are also known as teachers who wear our hearts on our sleeves and make valuable connections with many of our students.

We are not telling you this to toot our own horns, trust us - we have been admonished over our long careers for being who we are! We are telling you this to let you know that we are foreseeing a challenge with this unit. What if a student has a strong belief in a cause that goes against our philosophies and the rationale of this class?

We will squash any racist, homophobic, offensive causes in a half second but case in point- a student last year who took a stand against mask wearing. He rallied some friends and walked out with support from his conservative, conspiracy theorists parents and then he began a profanity laced social media blitz about our mask-wearing policy. His father did as well on his social media.

An anticipated conflict like the one mentioned above is what steadies our resolve to be educators determined to inspire our students to think critically, ask questions and develop informed, educated opinions.