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

Name of Educator: Ann Krois

Educator's Teaching Plan Number & Title: Project 20, "Kent State Lesson Plans"

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

Subject Area for Educator's Teaching Plan: US History

Educator's State: Iowa

Description of Educator's Teaching Plan: Perspectives of US personnel who served in Vietnam; repercussions of the war & May 4 in Iowa; civil rights; student speech rights; antiwar protest; Orangeburg/Kent State/Jackson State.

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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Lesson #1 Title: Oral History of the Warfront

Essential questions:

1. What is the benefit of studying oral histories?
2. What challenges do historians experience when studying oral histories?

Standards:

- SS-US.9-12.15. Assess the impact of individuals and reform movements on changes to civil rights and liberties.
- SS-US.9-12.27. Evaluate how individuals or groups of individuals who have influenced U.S. History.

Activities:

1. Begin the lesson by giving an overview of the tactics used in Vietnam. Be sure to explain napalm, search and destroy, and agent orange.
2. Follow up this overview by showing oral histories from veterans about a variety of topics of the warfront. Here are several options:
 - a. Enemy Tactics of the Enemy [Video](#) (2 minutes)
 - b. Fighting in Vietnam [Video](#) (4 minutes)
 - c. Nursing During Vietnam [Video](#) (4 minutes)
 - d. Helicopter Pilot [Video](#) (3 minutes)
 - e. Discrimination on the Battlefield and at Home [Video](#) (2 minutes)
3. As you watch the videos, you can stop and discuss content. Ask the students the following questions as you watch:
 - a. What are the benefits of hearing first hand accounts of the events of the Vietnam War?
 - b. What are the possible historical dangers of relying solely on oral histories?
 - c. Did you hear any possible bias when you listened to these oral histories?
 - d. What questions do you have when it comes to oral histories?
4. Conclude class with this video [Opposition to the War Video](#) (5 minutes)--end with this video. This video will give a preview to the week about the opposition and protests surrounding the war and draft.

Lesson #2-3 Title: Letters Home from Vietnam or Fire in the Heartland Documentary

Essential Questions:

1. How did the attitudes of the Vietnam War change or stay the same throughout the video?
2. What different perspectives or opinions did Americans develop during the Vietnam War?
3. What groups of people were affected by the Vietnam War?

Standards:

- SS-US.9-12.15. Assess the impact of individuals and reform movements on changes to civil rights and liberties.
- SS-US.9-12.27. Evaluate lowans or groups of lowans who have influenced U.S. History.

Activities:

1. Show either the Letters Home from Vietnam Documentary or the Fire in the Heartland Documentary.
 2. After watching the documentary, ask students to reflect on the following questions:
 - a. What type of music did the documentary feature? Was this music choice purposeful?
 - b. What different perspectives did the documentary feature about the Vietnam War?
 - c. What groups of people were affected by the Vietnam War?
 - d. How did the tone of the documentary change (or stay the same) as it progressed?
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Lesson #4 Title: The Evolution of Student Speech Rights**Essential Questions:**

1. How have student speech rights changed within the last 100 years?
2. What rights do students have when they enter school? What rights do they lack?

Standards:

- SS-US.9-12.15. Assess the impact of individuals and reform movements on changes to civil rights and liberties.
- SS-US.9-12.27. Evaluate lowans or groups of lowans who have influenced U.S. History.

Activities:

1. Provide an overview of the different Supreme Court cases that address the expansion (or restriction) of student speech.

West Virginia State Board of Education v. Barnette (1943)

- 2 minute [video](#)
- Students had to do the Pledge of Allegiance
- A group of families (Jevoah's witnesses refuse)
- SCOTUS ruled that this violated the students' First Amendment rights (even during this height of patriotism during WWII)
- First case to establish the idea that students have some First Amendment rights

Tinker v. Des Moines (1969)

- 3 minute [video](#)
- First Amendment protects students initiated speech

- Students and teachers do not “Shed their constitutional rights to freedom of expression or speech at the schoolhouse gate”---SCOTUS majority opinion
 - But courts since then have whittled down the rights of teachers
- TinkerTest
 - Speech can be censored if it invades the rights of others (obscenity, libel, privacy invasion)
 - Or if it disrupts the learning environment
 - Fights, vandalism, show that physical disruption is going to occur (can be difficult to prove)

Bethel School District v. Fraser (1985)

- 2 minute [video](#)
- Vulgar, indecent, profane speech not protected by the First Amendment
- Students simulated masturbation during the assembly (but one teacher said that this happened at every assembly)

Morse v. Frederick (2007) (Bong Hits 4 Jesus)

- 3 minute [video](#)
- Student speech that advocates illegal drug use not protected by First Amendment
- Students in Alaska hold up sign that says Bong Hits 4 Jesus when all of the kids go out to watch the Olympic Torch Relay
- He was technically across the street, but the court rules that this was essentially a school sponsored time
- Principal rips down the poster
- Political speech about legalizing drugs would have been okay but this was just saying that the banner encouraged the use of illegal drugs

Hazelwood School District v. Kuhlmeier (1988)

- 2 minute [video](#)
- School newspaper was censored after it tried to publish two pages about problems that teenagers face (pregnancy, divorce)
- Principal did not like the story about three pregnant teenagers at the school who talked about their experiences
- The stories were not explicit
- The principal didn't like that the article wasn't negative enough to discourage pregnancy
- Also said that the teenagers could be identified even with pseudonym
- Newspaper said that the pregnant teenagers willingly volunteered to be interviewed
- Principal took out article when it was at the printer
- Principal said worried about privacy and the message
- Students try to invoke Tinker
- SCOTUS sides with the school
- This is different from Tinker because this is school-sponsored speech (curricular, school-funded, faculty adviser)
- Tink was non-school sponsored speech and was independent student expression

- Censorship needs a reasonable education justification---makes it easier for schools to get by
 - Schools can censor if it is school-sponsored speech
 - Easier to censor than with Tinker
2. After providing an overview of the cases, provide students with different scenarios on whether or not they believe that a student's free speech is protected. These scenarios can offer really good discussion. Some of them are based on real events.
 - a. Scenario 1: A student wears a shirt that says, "F--k Mrs. Smith" to school.
 - b. Scenario 2: A student wears a shirt with a marijuana leaf picture on it.
 - c. Scenario 3: A student turns in an assignment with cuss words written on it.
 - d. Scenario 4: A student wears a hat with the Confederate flag on it.
 - e. Scenario 5: A group of students decide to wear all white on Cinco de Mayo.
 3. Conclude class with a small group discussion on what rights students have (and don't have) when they are at school.
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Lesson #5 Title: Stations

Essential Questions:

1. How can artistic expression contribute to our understanding of history?
2. How did Americans protest the war in Vietnam?
3. Why did Americans protest the war in Vietnam?
4. What effects did the Vietnam War have on the homefront? During and after the war?

Standards:

- SS-US.9-12.15. Assess the impact of individuals and reform movements on changes to civil rights and liberties.
- SS-US.9-12.27. Evaluate how individuals or groups of individuals who have influenced U.S. History.

Activities:

Station #1 Vietnam War Poetry

- In this station, students will read a poem by Bill Ehrhart ["For Mrs. Na"]. After they read the poem, the students will create their own poem based on what they have learned about student protest and the Vietnam War this week.

Station #2 Protest Music

- Listen to 2 or 3 songs on this list. You can find the songs and lyrics on YouTube.
 - Battle Hymn of Lt. Calley (1966)
 - Ohio (1970)
 - The Unknown Soldier (1968)
 - I Don't Wanna Be a Soldier, Mama (1971)

- Leaving on a Jet Plane (1967)
- Ball of Confusion (1970)
- What's Going On (1971)
- Where Have all the Flowers Gone?
- Draft Morning (1968)
- I Feel Like I'm Fixin' to Die Rag (1965)
- After you listen, answer the following questions:
 - What was the purpose of this song?
 - Who do you think is the intended audience for this song?
 - What role does music have in protest movements?
 - What specific lyrics resonate with you? Explain why.

Station #3 The Draft

- Ask students to find their birthday on this [chart](#). What was your lottery number? The United States government called up to #195.
- Read the transcripts or listen to the oral histories of students at Kent State and their reaction to the draft by visiting the Kent State Special Collections [archive](#).
- Read this [article](#) about University of Iowa student Steve Smith, who was the first student in the US to burn his draft card on a college campus.

Why did students feel compelled to burn their draft cards? Why did they resist the draft?

What were the consequences of refusing to comply with the draft?

Station #4 When the War Came Home

Kent State

- Watch this Al Jazeera [documentary](#) about the Kent State shootings.
- What do the victims of the shooting remember?
- Why were the students at Kent State protesting?
- Read this official document issued by the National Guard shooters that was signed after the shooting.
- What do you notice about the document? What did the National Guard soldiers admit? What do they not admit?
- Look at this picture from the University of Iowa. What do you think is happening in this picture?

[Photo - Student strike following Kent State shootings, University of Iowa. Sign in window of padlocked door reads, "Solidarity with Kent, Wisconsin, MIT, Kansas, California, Harvard, Nebraska, Bowling Green, LSU..."]

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Station #5 The Killings Before and After Kent State

Orangeburg Massacre of 1968

- Police officers confronted students who were protesting against segregation in 1968. This confrontation left 3 students dead. Watch this 4 minute [video](#) for more information.
 - Why do you think this event is called a “massacre”?

Jackson State Shootings

- 10 days after the killings at Kent State, two students were killed at Jackson State by police officers after protesting against the war. Watch this 2 minute [video](#) where Jackson State drama students perform spoken word about the events of May 14, 1970 at Jackson State.
 - Why do many Americans know about Kent State but not Jackson State?

In what ways were the Orangeburg Massacre and Jackson State Shootings similar to the tragedy at Kent State? How were they different?

Station #6 The Aftermath of War

Refugee Crisis

- Ask students to read this [article](#) about the Iowa governor’s response to the Vietnamese refugee crisis.

- After they read the article, ask students about Iowa's role in the refugee crisis. Why did Governor Ray open Iowa to Vietnamese refugees? Why were so many people leaving Vietnam during the 1970s?

PTSD

- Ask students to watch this video told from the perspective of an Iowa veteran. Post-Traumatic Stress Disorder [Video](#) (2 minutes)

Death Toll

- Ask students to view this article, "[Iowa's Fallen Vietnam Soldiers.](#)" As they click through the collection, ask the students to tally the years of when the soldiers died. What possible conclusion can you make about the height/escalation of the war?

1960	1966	1967	1968	1969	1970	1971	1972