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

Name of Educator: Kailey Uhl

Educator's Teaching Plan Number & Title: Project 27, "Language Arts Choice Board Options"
[Note: Created as collaboration with projects 40 and 50]

Level of Students for Educator's Teaching Plan: Grade 8

Subject Area for Educator's Teaching Plan: Language Arts

Educator's State: Ohio

Description of Educator's Teaching Plan: The ELA component of a collaborative, cross-disciplinary approach, this plan offers students a choice of 3 activities: a dramatic irony creative piece incorporating historical facts/events; analysis of 3 multimedia pieces treating the same topic; new activism plan featuring 3 strategies employed in the past by Kent State students. Students also learn the May 4 history, visit the site, and write a final reflection read by teachers of 4 subject areas.

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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Language Arts Choice Board Options

Students will be provided with exemplars for each option to assist them in developing quality work. Because students will receive an overall grade for their work in the choice board, the criteria for grading their language arts choice will be simplified compared to traditional assignments that are not cross-curricular in nature. Grading criteria for each choice board option are listed below using a single-point rubric. The teacher will provide feedback to students in the columns labeled “Areas for Growth” and “Areas of Strength.”

Creative Writing

- For this option, students can compose a 2-page “flash fiction” or a short poem (3 stanzas or less). They will be encouraged to write to the length needed to show their understanding of historical facts and events, and their understanding of dramatic irony.
- Students will be encouraged to be respectful in their writing. The teacher will explain in detail what this looks and does not look like. Students will be discouraged from writing with an unnecessary focus on weapons, violence, or gore. Teachers will monitor students as they work on their choice board projects to hopefully intervene if a student’s writing is unintentionally insensitive.
- Students will be encouraged to compose their writing in a Google Doc and share it with their language arts teacher.
- Grading criteria:

Areas for Growth:	Criteria:	Areas of Strength:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Student writes using historical facts according to the material presented in class and the sources available to them.● Student demonstrates an understanding of dramatic irony by developing a narrative thread in which the reader knows something that one/more character(s) don’t know.● Writing is complete and is ready for publishing (free of major errors).	

Multimedia Analysis

- For this option, students will use the May 4th archives available on the Kent State University Library’s website to search by subject area and locate one audio/video, one photo, and one text document related to the same topic (subject area).
- Students will then analyze the three multimedia items and their ability to communicate information by answering the following questions:
 - Identify which media was **best** at conveying information and why.
 - Identify which media was **worst** at conveying information and why.
 - Explain the situations and contexts in which each type of media would be best to use.
- Students can use a variety of formats for this project choice. They may choose to place the multimedia in a short Google Docs presentation and add captions that answer the above questions (or record and embed narration). They may also choose to create a video (either YouTube or FlipGrid) to present the multimedia and answer the above questions.
- Grading criteria:

Areas for Growth:	Criteria:	Areas of Strength:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none">● Student chooses three related multimedia materials appropriately.● Student answers the guiding questions and demonstrates depth of thought in their analysis and comparison.● Student expresses their ideas clearly (written or spoken).	

Activism Plan

- For this option, students will consider a current political issue that they feel strongly about and create an “activism plan” that describes how they would mobilize a movement for change. Students who want to pursue this option but are less politically aware may want to do some preliminary research to choose an appropriate political issue.
- Students will be required to use at least 3 activism ideas used by students at Kent State. This can be walkouts like BUS did in protest of disciplinary action (Grace, 2016, 140), shock and awe like Bill Arthrell’s threat to napalm a dog on campus (Grace, 2016, 195), or symbolic gestures like the burying of the Constitution at the Victory Bell (Grace, 2016,

219). Students will be encouraged to think beyond the activism that occurred strictly on May 4th.

- Students will be required to cite the primary or secondary sources where they found their three activism ideas. We will require students to cite in MLA format, as that is a building-wide requirement when writing about research.
- Students should state their audience by identifying who holds the power to make the change they're advocating for (school principal, town mayor, President of the United States, etc.) They should explain in their plan how they will appeal to this audience (and may choose to discuss ethos, pathos, and logos here).
- Students should include a timeline that chronologically outlines what activism they will engage in, who will be involved in these events, and what the intended outcome will be.
- Students can compose their activism plan in a Google Doc, or create a Google Slides presentation and include related media.
- Grading criteria:

Areas for Growth:	Criteria:	Areas of Strength:
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ● Student correctly identifies three activism ideas utilized by students at Kent State. ● Student correctly cites the sources of the three activism ideas in MLA format. ● Student identifies their intended audience and how they plan to appeal to this audience. ● Student outlines what activism they will engage in, who will be involved, and what the intended outcome will be. 	

Reflection Paper

The culminating summative assessment for this unit is the student reflection paper. Students will compose a minimum of two typed pages of reflection that address the following question: “You have spent a large amount of time studying the events of May 4, 1970. You have also learned about the social and political environment before and after this historical turning point. Knowing what you know now, in your own words, why is it important for young people to

learn about May 4th?” Students will be encouraged to “connect facts to feelings.” As they expound on their personal opinions about the significance of May 4th, they should support these opinions with facts learned during the unit. When appropriate, students should cite their sources in MLA format. If students choose to draw comparisons to modern events and issues, they should engage in supplementary research and cite the evidence used in their reflection paper.

For students who struggle with extended writing pieces, teachers may choose to provide an outline or sentence starters. The reflection paper will be assessed using the Brown Middle School common writing rubric. Our hope is to share some of the especially well-written, poignant reflections with our workshop leaders at Kent State to show them how their efforts in designing the NEH workshop has impacted the next generation.

Bibliography

Grace, T. M. (2016). *Kent State: Death and Dissent in the Long Sixties*. University of Massachusetts Press. 978-1-62534-111-2