



LESSON PLAN

8,000 MILES FROM HOME: A TEXAS PERSPECTIVE ON THE VIETNAM WAR ERA

Social Studies, Grades 7 and 9

OBJECTIVE

Home movies provide a different kind of moving image history of the first “television war,” than that found in Hollywood features and documentaries. Using TAMI's curated collection Texas and Texans During the Vietnam War Years, <https://texasarchive.org/node/78348>, students will explore the Vietnam War and its relationship to Texas and presenting the materials to their classmates in the form of a newscast. This lesson targets TEKS curriculum objectives in 7th Grade Social Studies and US History Since Reconstruction.

PROCESS

Prior Knowledge

The following activity assumes that students have some knowledge of the Vietnam War.

Students should be familiar with “moving images” as a source of both fact and fiction, as well as the idea of bias and propaganda as elements of media.

Hook

As a group, determine students’ prior knowledge of the Vietnam War. Go around the room and ask students to explain their immediate thoughts associated with the phrase “The Vietnam War.” (Take notes using a blackboard or dry-erase board.)

Go around the room again and ask students to describe their main sources of information about the Vietnam War. Also, have them explore representations of the Vietnam War they may have experience in popular culture (like music, film, television). Questions to stimulate discussion: Does anyone have a relative who fought in the Vietnam War? Has anyone read a book or article on the war? Has anyone ever seen a feature film depicting the Vietnam War or veterans? Has anyone ever seen a documentary, news footage, etc. about it? (Take notes on students responses on the board.)

Now circle all of the responses that involve moving images. Let students know that Vietnam was considered the first televised war. Ask them why this occurred to and think about the emergence of television as a media source. How might that have differed from information people received about previous wars (e.g. newspapers, newsreels, etc.)? How might this affect views of the war?

(Optional) Watch the [Vietnam Protest Compilation \(1965-1969\)](#) as a class. Share with students these opinions on the Vietnam War protest movement captured by local television news in



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Houston, Texas. Discuss each speaker's description and opinion. Potential discussion questions include: Why did the local news capture these people? How do the first and last interviews differ? Who's story might not be represented by this coverage? Would these interviews be considered primary or secondary sources?

Lesson

For this lesson, students will be looking at several different types of moving images from the Vietnam War era, all of which have Texas connections. Use the TAMI Guide to Moving Image Genres, <https://texasarchive.org/guide-to-moving-image>, to introduce students to home movies, newsreels, and outtakes, the three types of footage featured in the collection.

Divide students into groups of 2-4. Assign each group two clips from the collection to watch and then present to the class in the form of a newscast. Have each groups choose or assign each group one newsreel or television outtake and one home movie (see Videos).

Students will watch the films and then create a news segment using the film footage. Students should try to imagine they are presenting the footage during the late 1960s or early 1970s at a local Texas television station. Working together, students should select 30-60 seconds of each film to feature and create introductions, outlines and voiceovers describing the footage and explaining its relevance to the Vietnam War Era. Each group should have a 5 minute presentation in the style of a newscast. This will require students to conduct some research, but to also be creative by putting themselves into the era. With the newsreels and outtakes, they can identify the people, locations, dates, and relate it to other events happening in the same time period. This presentation should be based in research. With the home movies, students should use their creativity to present the story of fictional Texans and their interaction with the war based upon the footage. With both pieces, they should describe the footage's relevance to the Vietnam War era and also to Texas in general.

For an additional challenge, have students present their pieces with bias for or against the war in Vietnam.

Students present their films to the class. After the presentations, students should write a one-page response paper examining the differences between the home movie footage and the newsreels and outtakes used in the activity.

Independent Practice

Have students choose a piece of music that addresses the subject of the Vietnam War to accompany one of the home movies presented.

Some examples can be found here:



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List of songs about the Vietnam War,

https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/List_of_songs_about_the_Vietnam_War

Students should write an explanation for their choice of song and film. They should also describe how accompanying music enhances or affects the viewing or meaning of the footage.

Videos

Protest



Vietnam Protest Compilation (1965-1969)

7:06

https://texasarchive.org/2023_01017

Newsreels and television outtakes



Ray Miller in Vietnam (1966)

29:51

https://texasarchive.org/2014_00075



Brigadier General Desobry on Vietnam War (1968)

00:58

https://texasarchive.org/2018_00381



LBJ visits Guam

00:50

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00174



Peace Offer - LBJ to Halt Bombing If Talks Follow

00:57

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00192

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TEXAS ARCHIVE
OF THE MOVING IMAGE



Cassius Clay Guilty

00:37

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00185



Mrs. LBJ Receives Honorary Degree

00:36

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00195



Cactus Pryor Interviews Injured Vietnam Veterans

07:01

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00115



Reactions to Vietnam Bombing Halt (1968)

02:32

https://texasarchive.org/2018_00405

Home Movies



The Marcellus Hartman Collection, no. 1 - Leisure Time at Camp Evans

03:21

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00694



The Marcellus Hartman Collection, no. 2 - Carrying the Injured to a Helicopter

03:22

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00454

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TEXAS ARCHIVE
OF THE MOVING IMAGE



The Marcellus Hartman Collection, no. 3 - Aerial Footage near Huế, South Vietnam

03:21

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00603



The Marcellus Hartman Collection, no. 4 - Da Nang Air Base

03:22

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00535



The Marcellus Hartman Collection, no. 5 - The Streets of Saigon

03:21

https://texasarchive.org/2008_00630



The Ludeke Family Collection, no. 8 - Wedding in Burkburnett

03:22

https://texasarchive.org/2008_01009



D'Ascenzo Family Memories, no. 1 – Scenes From Vietnam

03:50

https://texasarchive.org/2011_03206



The Sharon Wolf Family – Flying Over Vietnam

03:56

https://texasarchive.org/2015_02101



Bell Family, 1963-1966

13:33

https://texasarchive.org/2007_00025



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RESOURCES

The Vietnam Center and Sam Johnson Vietnam Archive

<https://www.vietnam.ttu.edu/>

The Vietnam War Timeline

<https://www.history.com/topics/vietnam-war/vietnam-war-timeline>

NARA's Teaching With Documents Lesson Plan: The War in Vietnam - A Story in Photographs

<https://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/vietnam-photos>

The Presidential Timeline

A timeline featuring primary sources from the Lyndon Baines Johnson Library

<http://www.lbjlibrary.org/lyndon-baines-johnson/timeline/>

TEKS

Social Studies, Grade 7

7E - Analyze the political, economic, and social impact of major events, including World War I, the Great Depression, and World War II, on the history of Texas

21B - Analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing, contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations and predictions, and drawing inferences and conclusions

21E - Support a point of view on a social studies issue or event

US History Studies Since 1877

2B - Identify the major eras in U.S. history from 1877 to the present and describe their defining characteristics

29B - Analyze information by sequencing, categorizing, identifying cause-and-effect relationships, comparing and contrasting, finding the main idea, summarizing, making generalizations, making predictions, drawing inferences, and drawing conclusions

29G - Identify and support with historical evidence a point of view on a social studies issue or event

STAAR

U.S. History

8D - Explain reasons and outcomes for U.S. involvement in foreign countries and their relationship to the Domino Theory, including the Vietnam War

8E - Analyze the major issues and events of the Vietnam War such as the Tet Offensive, the escalation of forces, Vietnamization, and the fall of Saigon



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8F - Describe the responses to the Vietnam War such as the draft, the 26th Amendment, the role of the media, the credibility gap, the silent majority, and the anti-war movement

29A - Use a variety of both primary and secondary valid sources to acquire information and to analyze and answer historical questions

29D - Use the process of historical inquiry to research, interpret, and use multiple types of sources of evidence

29G - Identify and support with historical evidence a point of view on a social studies issue or event