



1960s AND 1970s LESSON PLANS

# The Vietnam Era 1967–71 War and Antiwar Sentiment Lesson One–Vietnam War Time Line

by Teresa Boruff-Young

## Introduction

These lessons are part of a U.S. Department of Education Teaching American History Grant to the Brown County Schools, Nashville, Indiana, in collaboration with the Department of History, Indiana University–Purdue University at Indianapolis and the Indiana Historical Society.

In this lesson, students will read about the Vietnam War in their textbook and watch a video about the war. Once students have an understanding of the time period, they will continue with research on the Internet and assemble a time line.

## Essential Question

How did the Vietnam War impact Americans?

## Grade Level

High School

## Academic Standards for the Social Studies

- Indiana Standards:
  - High School, U.S. History, Standard 7, The United States in Troubled Times: 1960 to 1980 (USH 7.3, 7.4, and 7.10)

- National Standards (National Council for Social Studies): II Time, Continuity, and Change; III People, Places, and Environments; V Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; VI Power, Authority, and Governance; and X Civic Ideals and Practices

## Social Studies/Historical Concepts

Vietnam War and antiwar protest

## Time Required

Two eighty-minute class periods

## Objectives

At the end of this lesson, students will be able to:

- Research key policy decisions and military actions during the Vietnam War.
- Identify, explain, and summarize dates of major foreign policy decisions and military actions in Vietnam between 1967 and 1971.
- Arrange and plot key dates and events on a Vietnam War-era time line.

## Materials Required

- Student textbooks, other printed materials, and Internet resources related to the Vietnam War. Refer to pages three and four of this lesson for a list of resources.

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- Digital clips of Vietnam War-era documentary films. Refer to page two of this lesson for a list of visual media resources.
- Copies of the “Lesson One Student Handout,” one set for each student. The handout is provided on pages five through eight of this lesson.
- Blank sheets of 11 x 17 newsprint or other plain paper, three sheets per student.
- Blank sheets of 8 1/2 x 11 paper, three or four sheets per student.
- Scissors and tape or glue.
- Have students sort their eight sets of cards according to the event date and attach the cards to the three sheets of 11 x 17 newsprint in the correct chronological order to form a time line.
  - Make sure that students space their entries across the time line sheet. They will be adding more information as they complete the other lessons in the unit.
  - An answer key for the time line is provided on pages nine of this lesson.

### Procedure

- Introduce the lesson by making a digital presentation to the class or showing clips from a Vietnam War-era documentary.
- Conduct a brief class discussion about the war.
- Distribute the student handout, sheets of paper, scissors, and tape or glue to each student.
- Explain that the students are to tape the three large sheets of newsprint together, end to end.
- Instruct the students to cut the printed hand-out sheets into individual pieces to create small cards for the time line. Each student will have eight date cards, eight event title cards, and eight information cards.
- Ask students to research each date or event on the cards and then match the date, event title, and event information cards to create eight events for their time line.
  - After matching the cards into sets, students should have eight sets of three cards, one of each card type—date, event title, and event information.
- Next, have each student research and create four additional sets of date, title, and information cards. Students should select events that they feel are important in the progression of the Vietnam War. These events may include military actions or foreign policy decisions.
- After students have created the three types of cards, one for each of the four new events, have them attach the cards to their time line in the correct chronological order.
- Students should save their time line for use in lesson three, when they conduct additional research on antiwar protests.
  - In lesson three, antiwar protest events will be plotted on the time lines to make connections between the events of the war and dates of significant protests.
- To conclude the lesson, conduct a class discussion where students explain the sequence of events that took place during the war and describe their selections of additional key events for their time line.
  - The Answer Key for the Time Line activity is provided on page nine of this lesson.

### Assessment

Completion of the time line activity will indicate successful research. The time line will be graded according to the rubric provided on the student handout.

## Suggested Resources

For more Vietnam War-era resources, go the IHS Web site at <http://www.indianahistory.org/teachers-students/teacher-resources/classroom-tools/1960s-and-1970s> (accessed October 7, 2011).

## Publications

Norton, Mary Beth, et al. *People and a Nation: A History of the United States, Brief Edition*. Seventh Edition. Boston, MA: Houghton Mifflin Co., 2006.

Starr, Jerold M., ed. *The Lessons of the Vietnam War*. Fourth Edition. Pittsburgh, Pa.: Center for Social Studies Education, c1996.

## Visual Media

Ayers, Billy, Kathleen Cleaver, Bernadine Dohrn, Mark Rudd, Brian Flanagan, Lily Taylor (narrator), et al. *The Weather Underground*, DVD. Directed by Sam Green II and Bill Siegel. New York: New Video Group, 2004.

Schlessinger Media. *The Vietnam War in the United States History—Origins to 2000* series. Vol. 23. DVD. Wynnewood, PA: Schlessinger Media, 2003.

Time Life Video. *Showdown in the Iron Triangle in the Battlefield Vietnam: From Diem Bien Phu to Peace with Honor* series. DVD. Time Life Video, 1998.

## Web Site Resources

American Rhetoric. “Cambodian Incursion Address” by Richard M. Nixon. <http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/richardnixoncambodia.htm> (accessed March 1, 2011).

Department of History and the Institute of Public History, University of Virginia, Charlottesville. The View From Here: Student Protest Web site. <http://cti.itc.virginia.edu/~hius316/protest/proB.html>

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- \_\_\_\_\_. “Shannon Bars Cancellation of October 15 Classes” *The Cavalier Daily*, October 7, 1969. <http://cti.itc.virginia.edu/~hius316/home.html> (accessed March 1, 2011).
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- \_\_\_\_\_. “Anonymous Note to Shannon.” *The Cavalier Daily*, September 28, 1969. <http://cti.itc.virginia.edu/~hius316/protest/sorensen.html> (accessed March 1, 2011).
- International Marxist Tendency. “The Tet Offensive: The Turning Point in the Vietnam War—Part One” by Alan Woods. <http://www.marxist.com/tet-offensive-part-one.htm> (accessed March 1, 2011).
- Live Actors Role Play Association. Tin Soldiers Web Site. “American Combat Troops Enter Cambodia.” *New York Times*, May 1, 1970. <http://www.vialarp.org/tinsoldiers/0430701.htm> (accessed March 1, 2011).
- National Archives and Records Administration. “Teaching with Documents: The War in Vietnam—A Story in Photographs.” <http://www.archives.gov/education/lessons/vietnam-photos/> (accessed March 1, 2011).

PBS American Experience, Vietnam Online.

“In the Trenches.” <http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/trenches/index.html>  
(accessed March 1, 2011).

\_\_\_\_\_. “Vietnam Veterans Against the War Statement.” [http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/psources/ps\\_against.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/amex/vietnam/psources/ps_against.html)  
(accessed March 1, 2011).

The Sixties Project. “A Veteran Speaks—Against the War.” [http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML\\_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/VVAW\\_Muller.html](http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/VVAW_Muller.html) (  
accessed March 1, 2011).

\_\_\_\_\_. “GIs United Against the War in Vietnam: Statement of Aims”  
[http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML\\_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/GIs\\_United\\_aims.html](http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/GIs_United_aims.html)  
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[http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML\\_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/PL\\_M2d\\_manifesto.html](http://www2.iath.virginia.edu/sixties/HTML_docs/Resources/Primary/Manifestos/PL_M2d_manifesto.html)  
(accessed March 1, 2011).

# LESSON ONE STUDENT HANDOUT

## Vietnam War Time Line

### Instructions

- Tape three sheets of eleven by 11 x 17 paper together, end to end.
- Cut the date, event title, and event information cards from the attached sheets into individual pieces to create small cards for the time line. (You will have eight date cards, eight event title cards, and eight information cards.)
- Research each date or event on the card using classroom resources provided by your teacher or search the Internet to find the information you need to match the date, title, and information cards for the eight events. Each of the eight events should contain three types of cards—a date card, title card, and an event information card.
- Sort the eight sets of cards according to the event date and attach the cards to the three pieces of 11 x 17 paper in the correct chronological order. Leave space between these events, you will be adding more information to the time line later.
- Next, research and create four additional sets of event date, title, and information cards. Select events that you feel are important in the progression of the Vietnam War. These events may include military actions or foreign policy decisions.
- Create new cards (an event date, title, and information card) for each of the four new events.
- Attach them to the time line in the correct chronological order. Save your time line, it will be used again later.

Criteria	5	4	3	2
<b>Dates</b>	Twelve key dates are accurately plotted	Ten to eleven key dates are accurately plotted	Eight to nine key dates are accurately plotted	Fewer than eight key dates are accurately plotted
<b>Events</b>	Events described are significant to the war as military actions or foreign policy decisions	Events described are somewhat significant to the war	Events described are not very significant to the war	Events described indicate the student did not understand the assignment

JUNE 1964	MARCH 1965	FEBRUARY 1967	JANUARY 1968
JULY 1969	APRIL 1970	MARCH 1968	JUNE 1971

<p>OPERATION JUNCTION CITY BEGINS</p>	<p>NIXON PROCLAIMS THE NIXON DOCTRINE</p>	<p>THE GULF OF TONKIN RESOLUTION PASSES</p>	<p>U.S. TROOPS INVADE CAMBODIA</p>
<p>OPERATION ROLLING THUNDER BEGINS</p>	<p>TET OFFENSIVE BEGINS</p>	<p>MANSFIELD AMENDMENT</p>	<p>MY LAI VILLAGE</p>

<p>THE VIETCONG INTEND FOR THIS MASSIVE STRIKE ON MILITARY AND CIVILIAN CENTERS TO CAUSE AN UPRISING AMONG THE SOUTH VIETNAMESE AND END THE WAR. THIS EVENT COINCIDES WITH THE VIETNAMESE LUNAR YEAR.</p>	<p>BECAUSE OF AN INCIDENT INVOLVING MINOR NAVAL ENGAGEMENT BETWEEN UNITED STATES AND NORTH VIETNAMESE SHIPS, PRESIDENT JOHNSON USES HIS AUTHORITY TO ESCALATE MILITARY FORCE IN THE AREA. THIS EVENT IS USED AS A LEGAL REASON FOR ESCALATION.</p>	<p>A THREE-YEAR BOMBING CAMPAIGN TO DISCOURAGE HO CHI MINH FROM OVERTAKING SOUTH VIETNAM. THIS EVENT PROVES THE UNITED STATES' SUPPORT FOR SOUTH VIETNAM, BUT IT IS NOT A WELL-PLANNED EFFORT.</p>	<p>THIS EVENT ALONG THE CAMBODIAN BORDER IS THE LARGEST AIRBORNE OPERATION SINCE WORLD WAR II. VIETCONG CASUALTIES, 2,728; UNITED STATES CASUALTIES, 282. THE VIETCONG REOCCUPY THE AREA AS SOON AS U.S. FORCES LEAVE.</p>
<p>UNITED STATES SOLDIERS KILL OVER 200 UNARMED VIETNAMESE CIVILIANS, INCLUDING WOMEN AND CHILDREN, IN A SMALL VILLAGE. THE EVENT RAISES QUESTIONS ABOUT THE CONDUCT OF AMERICAN SOLDIERS. LIEUTENANT WILLIAM CALLEY IS LATER CONVICTED OF MURDER.</p>	<p>A POLICY TO WITHDRAW TROOPS FROM SOUTHEAST ASIA NINE MONTHS AFTER ITS ENACTMENT. THIS MARKS THE FIRST TIME THE U.S. CONGRESS ASKS FOR AN END TO A WAR IN WHICH THE UNITED STATES IS STILL INVOLVED.</p>	<p>THIS ACTION STATES THAT THE UNITED STATES AND ITS ALLIES MAY DEFEND THEMSELVES AGAINST AGGRESSION AND THE UNITED STATES WILL HONOR ITS TREATIES. THIS EVENT IS USED AS A REASON TO LEAVE VIETNAM.</p>	<p>AFTER PRESIDENT NIXON ANNOUNCES THIS MILITARY ACTION TO THE NATION, IT IS DISCOVERED THAT IT HAS ALREADY BEEN GOING ON FOR MORE THAN A YEAR. WHILE THIS EVENT IS CONSIDERED A CONTROVERSIAL MOVE, IT WEAKENS THE VIETCONG.</p>

# LESSON ONE STUDENT HANDOUT ANSWER KEY

## Vietnam War Time Line

June 1964–Mansfield Amendment–This action states that the United States and its allies may defend themselves against aggression and the United States will honor its treaties. This event is used as a reason to leave Vietnam.

March 1965–Operation Rolling Thunder Begins–A three-year bombing campaign to discourage Ho Chi Minh from overtaking South Vietnam. This event proves the United States’ support for South Vietnam, but it is not a well-planned effort.

February 1967–Operation Junction City Begins–This event along the Cambodian border is the largest airborne operation since World War II. Vietcong casualties, 2,728; United States casualties, 282. The Vietcong reoccupy the area as soon as U.S. forces leave.

January 1968–Tet Offensive Begins–The Vietcong intend for this massive strike on military and civilian centers to cause an uprising among the South Vietnamese and end the war. This event coincides with the Vietnamese Lunar Year.

March 1968–My Lai Village–United States soldiers kill over 200 unarmed Vietnamese civilians, including women and children, in a small village. The event raises questions about the conduct of American soldiers. Lieutenant William Calley is later convicted of murder.

July 1969–Nixon Proclaims the Nixon Doctrine–A policy to withdraw troops from Southeast Asia nine months after its enactment. This marks the first time the U.S. Congress asks for an end to a war in which the United States is still involved.

April 1970–U.S. Troops Invade Cambodia–After President Nixon announces this military action to the nation, it is discovered that it has already been going on for more than a year. While this event is considered a controversial move, it weakens the Vietcong.

June 1971–The Gulf of Tonkin Resolution Passes–Because of a minor naval engagement between United States and North Vietnamese ships, President Johnson uses his authority to escalate military force in the area. This event is used as a legal reason for escalation.