

Lesson Title: Bob Begin Arrest Story
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Main Question: *How did the Vietnam War influence Nixon's presidency and Americans' desire to protest?*

American History #3: Historians develop theses and use evidence to support or refute positions.

American History #26: The Cold War and conflicts in Korea and Vietnam influenced domestic and international politics.

American Government #22: Individuals and organizations play a role within federal, state and local governments in helping to determine public (domestic and foreign) policy.

Required time for completion:

30-45 minutes flipped lesson and 1-2 *50-minute* class periods

Or 3 class periods with no at-home preparation period

Materials Needed:

Post-it notes (1 per student), classroom groups set-up, a whiteboard, speakers, copies of *The Plain Dealer* article for students, graphic organizers (1 per student), spare sheets of paper for each student group,

Activities the day before in-class lesson

1. **Before class:** Student interaction with “warm-up” questions, listen to clip, then complete graphic organizer. *30-45 minutes*
2. **Classroom set-up for next day:** groups of 4-5 desks with all corners of the room open and no desks in front of a post-it board wall. The corners will be used for “strongly disagree,” “disagree,” “agree”, and “strongly agree” and should be labeled as such. You may pre-select students by post-it note colors, at random, or have students pick their own groups for the day (after post-it note discussion).

Class Activities for Class Period #1:

Engagement Activities: (*11-19 minutes total*)

Activity #1: Hand each student a post-it note and instruct all students to take out their inquiry sheet from the prior night's work.

Instruct students to write a word or a three-word maximum phrase that describes their thoughts about Fr. Bob Begin's action in The Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist Cleveland, OH 1969. It may contain an emotion, a thought, or a phrase. *5-7 minutes*

Activity #2: Then, students and teacher will pick out the most common or most intriguing 4 post-it notes. *1-2 minutes*

Activity #3: Instruct students to get up and either stand at their seats or gather in the middle of the classroom. For each of the 4 post-it notes, read them and tell students to move to the corner of the room that they agree with for each post-it note. *5-10 minutes*

Classroom Background Knowledge Activities: (*About 20 minutes total*)

Activity #1 – Group Reading: Group students into groups of 4-5 students and hand them *The Plain Dealer* story. Students should read the news story within their groups, with each student reading a section. *10 minutes*

Activity #2 – Context Questions: After and during the reading of both pages, they should answer the following questions as a group: *10 minutes*

1. Why did Fr. Bob Begin and others protest the Vietnam War?
2. Why did they choose this method of protest?
3. What role do the “Christians Who Care” think the Catholic Church should play in the Vietnam War?
4. In what ways does Fr. Bob Begin’s protest illuminate aspects of American society in the 1960s and early 1970s? In other words, if a priest is willing to protest, what conclusions can we draw about American society during the 1960s and 1970s?

Classroom Discussion:

Meet as a class and instruct students from each group to say their answer to each question (1 student per question and 1 question at a time). After each question is answered, ask the entire class if anyone came to a different conclusion and have them explain themselves. Encourage student participation, and if necessary offer counter claims yourself. *15 minutes*

Class Period #2

Background Context Activities:

Activity #1 – Understanding America in 1969 KWL:

Before watching 4:30 clip on President Nixon, instruct students to create a “What I Know, Want to Know, and What I Learned” chart (KWL) on the Vietnam War and its protests. *5 minutes*

Activity #2 – Preparing for Video

Have students share some of their “want to learn more about section” and either show them the following questions on a smartboard or print out 1 copy per student prior to watching the video. *5-7 minutes*

Contextualization Questions:

1. When (year and month) did Fr. Bob Begin protest the Vietnam War in the Cathedral of St. John the Evangelist?
2. In what year did Nixon announce the first American troop withdrawals?

3. What tensions did Nixon experience from the public, his Cabinet (namely, Daniel Patrick Moynihan), and his conscience (keep in mind the *Patton* section)?
4. How did these tensions affect his handling of the Vietnam War?

Activity #3 – Watch Video:

Then, watch Nixon clip.

If deemed necessary, separate video into sections: 0:00-0:36, 0:36-2:30, 2:30-3:10, 3:10-4:30.

5-10 minutes

[“President Nixon, the Vietnam War, and the Protests – Part 12 of 28”](#)

Activity #4 – Answering Questions:

Revisit and answer contextualization questions, then complete KWL chart. *12 minutes*

Activity #5 – Revise Thesis:

Students should review their KWL chart, graphic organizer from homework two days before, and all classroom discussion materials to answer:

In what ways does Fr. Begin’s protest connect to the political climate, the state of the Vietnam War, and protest movements in 1969?

Students should construct a 1 page mini-essay answering the above question. They should also include at least 3 different events that demonstrate mastery of the different political events from 1968-1969.

15+ minutes

If time remains, encourage students to share with class.