

Peace

Lesson 3: Newscast from the Past

Focus Questions

What events and social conditions led to the eruption of violence at the 1968 protests?
What anti-war organizations protested in Chicago?
How did Mayor Daley justify the use of force against the protestors?
How did the public respond to the violence?

Core Understandings

Students will understand that in Chicago in August 1968, combustible social and political factors erupted in violence. They will understand the multifaceted motivations of the protestors and the police.

Knowledge

Students will know the key historical events culminating in the August 1968 demonstrations. They will know what factors made Chicago fertile ground for violence in 1968. They will recognize the historical figures involved in the events.

Skills

Students will use their language arts and research skills to uncover information about Chicago's political and social history. They will be able to compare and interpret primary and secondary source materials. They will use their writing and communication skills to summarize their interpretations.

Common Core ELA Standards

CCSSR3. Analyze how and why individuals, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text.
CCSSR7. Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.
CCSSW7. Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
CCSSW3. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
CCSS.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively

ISBE Social Science Standards

Goal 15: Understand economic systems, with an emphasis on the US.
Goal 16: Understand events, trends, individuals and movements shaping the history of Illinois, the US, and other nations.
Goal 17: Understand world geography and the effects of geography on society, with an emphasis on the US.
Goal 18: Understand social systems, with an emphasis on the US.

In This Lesson

By researching and writing a mock newscast of events surrounding the protests, students will become acquainted with the political and social backdrop of 1968 Chicago and national anti-war movement. The story elements of character and setting are addressed. This lesson was researched and written by Diane Shalda.



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Activity

Begin the lesson by telling students they will research and write a series of “in-depth news reports” that explore the 1968 protests and the various figures involved.

Break students into small groups of approximately three to six. Tell each group they will be focusing on one of the following: 1) Abbie Hoffman and the Yippies 2) Tom Hayden and MOBE 3) Mayor Daley 4) a protestor arrested for throwing a bottle 5) a Chicago police officer 6) a convention attendee 7) a bystander 8) other figures/groups assigned at your discretion.

Distribute copies of the “Welcome to Chicago” handout (at the end of this lesson). In their groups, have students read the article and highlight the information they can use as evidence for their report. Additional reference suggestions are listed under Materials & Resources.

Students should then begin writing and storyboarding their scripts. The roles of news anchor, field reporter, and at least one historical figure should be included. Students should be sure to touch upon the who, what, why, where, when, and how of events. Students can use printouts of the *Peace* artifact image set and the story itself as evidence for their storyboards.

Students should finish by acting out their mock newscasts.

Lesson 3 Home Connection

Have students interview a parent or grandparent about his or her memories of 1968, the anti-Vietnam War movement, and the Democratic National Convention protests. Students should record their findings and bring them in to share.

Materials & Resources

- **Printouts of the *Peace* narrative:**

http://www.GreatChicagoStories.org/pdf/story/Peace_by_Katherine_San_Fratello.pdf

- **Printouts of the *Peace* artifact image set:**

http://www.GreatChicagoStories.org/pdf/artifacts/artifacts_peace.pdf

- **Printouts of the *Peace* background information:**

http://www.GreatChicagoStories.org/pdf/background/Peace_Background_Information2.pdf

- **The *Peace* interactive history map:**

<http://www.chicagohistory.org/greatchicagostories/site/storymap/index.html?story=8>

- ***Electronic Encyclopedia of Chicago* entries:**

“Year Page 1968” <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/500008.html>

“Daley’s Chicago” <http://encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1722.html>

“Martin Luther King, Jr.” <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/1438.html>

“Antiwar Movements” <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/56.html>

“Chicago Conspiracy Trial” <http://www.encyclopedia.chicagohistory.org/pages/245.html>

- **Butcher-block paper and drawing supplies for storyboarding**

Instructional Notes

You might want to have students footnote sources in their scripts. Images can serve as visual evidence.

It's a good idea to model this activity for the class in a creative and enthusiastic way, perhaps including props.

Extension Activities

Have students read and discuss the *Chicago History* article from which the handout is excerpted: David Farber, "Welcome to Chicago" in *Chicago History*, volume XVII, number 1 and 2 (spring and summer 1988), 62-77.

Handout: "Welcome to Chicago"

Source: Editor's note, *Chicago History* magazine, volume XVII, number 1 and 2 (spring and summer 1988), pp. 62-63. ©1988 by the Chicago Historical Society.

To demonstrators, Chicago in 1968 was a symbol, a place from which to make their voices heard. To Mayor Daley, the city was home, where things had to work. When police and protestors clashed in the streets and parks, both sides struggled to use Chicago for their own ends.

The violence that marked the breakdown of America's social and political order in the late 1960s left its people shaken and confused. A small but highly vocal segment of young radicals had challenged the country's sacred values and morals, and they sought to restructure American democracy. They saw American involvement in the Vietnam War as the most visible sign that the people had lost control of their political system; hence, they threw much of their energy into protesting the war. Some of the protestors were "Yippies," members of the playfully conceived Youth International Party; others belonged to the more serious-minded National Mobilization to End the War in Vietnam (MOBE). Many, not tied to any particular organization, joined the national movement against the establishment. They chose Chicago, host city of the 1968 Democratic National Convention, as the place to convey their message to the American public, knowing they could count on extensive media coverage.

No one knew exactly how many protestors would converge on Chicago in August 1968. MOBE leaders warned that the convention and related activities might attract two or three hundred thousand people. Although only about 10,000 actually took part in the demonstrations, Mayor Richard Daley took no chances in mobilizing forces to keep order during convention week. On hand were 11,500 policemen, 5,600 National Guardsmen, and 1,000 federal agents. An additional 7,500 soldiers trained in riot control stood by at Fort Hood, Texas, should Daley decide to call in additional troops. At the Amphitheatre on the Near South Side, where the convention would take place, city workers installed barbed wire around the parking lot and secured every manhole cover in the area. Inside the hall, nearly 450 ushers and security guards patrolled the floor.

But these elaborate preparations failed to insure a peaceful convention. On Sunday, August 25, the night before the convention opened, a crowd of several thousand young people clashed with about 200 police in Lincoln Park just northeast of the Chicago History Museum. Many demonstrators

Handout: "Welcome to Chicago" (continued)

were maced, clubbed, and tear-gassed as they fled into the surrounding side streets of the Old Town neighborhood. This was the first in a series of four separate confrontations, each worse than the previous, that climaxed Wednesday night with what became known as the "Battle on Michigan Avenue." As delegates watched from hotel windows, fighting broke out when police ordered 7,000 protesters at the intersection of Michigan Avenue and Balbo Drive to leave the streets. The demonstrators chanted obscene slogans; some threw bottles, rocks, and garbage at the officers and taunted them. In response, some of the police began clubbing people and spraying Mace at the crowd. By midnight the National Guard had cleared the streets of protestors and contained them in Grant Park but not before hundreds of people, some innocent bystanders, had been injured. Almost 700 were arrested in connection with the convention week riots; nearly half of them were from Chicago.

The violence ended on August 28, but the debate over who and what had caused it continued for months afterward. Daley claimed he and the police acted correctly in preventing a "lawless, violent group of terrorists ... [from taking] over the streets of Chicago." Most Americans and most Chicagoans supported Daley's actions, but the coalition of protest movements viewed the events as a victory for freedom of speech and for their antiwar cause. For them, the convention had been a chance to directly confront what they saw as an ineffective and unjust political system. Daley saw only a very real threat to the safety and well-being of his city and its residents by what he termed "outside agitators."