1968: The Year That Changed the World
by Ted D.R. Green, Ph.D.

Introduction/Background: One of America’s most dramatic years in recent memory was towards the end of the 1960’s...1968. People and activist groups changed the boundaries to expand our notion of freedom. Highlights included popular culture: musician Jimi Hendrix, comedy show Laugh In and every teenagers favorite game, Twister; technology: the Space Program, Apollo 8, lava lamps and plastics; politics: elections, assassinations and the “generation gap”; Vietnam War: Tet Offensive, the common mans “Living room war” and the draft; and Civil Rights: Black Power, Women’s Lib and the Chicano movement. While the 1960’s were a turbulent time, it surely culminated in challenges to our culture and way of life via violence, protest, outrage and fear in 1968. The Vietnam War was in high gear, Dr. Martin Luther King and Robert Kennedy were assassinated, Apollo 8 was up in space and Black and Chicano activists were making their voices heard across America. Women were speaking up, protesting and demanding new rights as well.

Students should have already studied the early- to mid-1960’s including the JFK years, Civil Rights, the Vietnam War and the Nixon Vice Presidential years.

Grade Level & Academic Discipline: 11, 12 Social Studies and History

Learning Outcomes:

Students will be able to
1. Select three artifacts from one of the five domains of 1968—popular culture, technology, politics, Vietnam War, or civil rights—and describe the ways that they reflected or impacted said domain.
2. Craft a research report, a video, or other multimedia project to showcase the events that occurred, shaped, and changed American and world culture during 1968.

Time Required: 2 90-minute periods

Materials and Resources: Read the lesson plan for classroom setup.

- National Archives website http://www.archives.gov/education/special-topics.html

Activities:

Day One

1. As a class, brainstorm prior knowledge of 1968 in order to develop an Essential Question (EQ) to begin their research of the time period. (Students will have had previous experience developing EQs.)
2. Have the class draft an Essential Question for each of the five cultural areas--pop culture, technology, politics, Vietnam War, or civil rights) under study. Ex: What impact did music have on pop culture that may have influenced societal decisions during the end of the 1960’s?

3. Create three stations of primary sources from that period. The three stations include

- “Dance to the Music”, hit music of 1968 pop culture (original recordings by the artists)
- “And That’s the Way it is…”, archival footage from news organizations of events in 1968
- “That Incredible Year”, timeline of events according to each month (from events that have been recorded in history for each of the 12 months in 1968)

4. Rotate the class in groups (or individually) through 3 different “stations” to discover events that occurred during 1968. Stations will have Historical Inquiry questions for each of the artifacts/sources at each station. Students are examining the artifacts/primary sources in each station from the perspective of the cultural domain that they chose: How does music reflect the politics of 1968? Students may use the Material Culture Analysis Sheet to gather their information. **Note:** The teacher generates the Historical Inquiry questions that s/he would like to use for each station.

5. Change stations after 20 minutes. At the end of one hour, the class will have visited each of the three stations.

6. After they have completed all three stations, have students research and write about three specific artifacts that peaked their interest. They will write about the ways that these three artifacts related to one or more of the five key areas of the 1968 culture: popular culture, technology, politics, Vietnam War or civil rights.

**Day Two:**

1. Have students use the second class period to research using library, articles/journals, other primary source sites, and the Internet. Students then craft a three-page report or multimedia project that defines and explains the artifacts and the ways they impacted a particular part (or parts) of the 1968 culture.

2. After all reports/media projects are completed and shared (preferably posted in the class blog), have students comment on each other’s research and make conclusions about 1968, particularly its impact on life in America and the world.

**Follow-Up Activity:** Students who have a keen interest in this particular time period may choose to do more in-depth research focusing in on one specific event that occurred during 1968:

- Martin Luther King’s Assassination (Politics/Civil Rights)
- Bobby Kennedy’s Assassination (Politics)
- The Democratic Convention of 1968 (Politics)
- The Black Panthers (Civil Rights)
- Janis Joplin (Popular Culture)
- Apollo 8 mission (Technology)
- The Bell “Huey” Helicopter used in Vietnam (Politics/Technology/Vietnam)
- Other events/icons from 1968
**Assessment:** See Appendices

**Supplemental Information:**
For those students who might not be able to research 3 artifacts, modifications will be made so that they analyze only one to two artifacts. For students who may have visual or auditory needs, the assignment will be modified to best meet their individual needs. (For example, students may need photos of artifacts increased in size, black and white instead of color, or a grid placed over the photo to analyze specific sections.)

**Standards:**

**Common Core Standards:**

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2](#) Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.3](#) Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4](#) Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6](#) Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.7](#) Integrate quantitative or technical analysis (e.g., charts, research data) with qualitative analysis in print or digital text.

[CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9](#) Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

**North Carolina: History**

[USH.H.1](#) Apply the four interconnected dimensions of historical thinking to the United States History Essential Standards in order to understand the creation and development of the United States over time.

[USH.H.1.1](#) Use Chronological thinking to:
- Identify the structure of a historical narrative or story: (its beginning, middle and end)
- Interpret data presented in time lines and create time lines

[USH.H.1.2](#) Use Historical Comprehension to:
- Reconstruc the literal meaning of a historical passage
- Differentiate between historical facts and historical interpretations
- Analyze visual, literary and musical sources

[USH.H.1.3](#) Use Historical Analysis and Interpretation to:
- Identify issues and problems in the past
- Consider multiple perspectives of various peoples in the past
- Analyze cause-and-effect relationships and multiple causation.
Evaluate competing historical narratives and debates among historians.
Evaluate the influence of the past on contemporary issues

USH.H.1.4 Use Historical Research to:
Formulate historical questions
Obtain historical data from a variety of sources
Support interpretations with historical evidence
Construct analytical essays using historical evidence to support arguments.

USH.H.2 Analyze key political, economic and social turning points in United States History using historical thinking.

USH.H.3.3 Explain the roles of various racial and ethnic groups in settlement and expansion since Reconstruction and the consequences for those groups (e.g., American Indians, African Americans, Chinese, Irish, Hispanics and Latino Americans, Asian Americans, etc.).

USH.H.4 Analyze how conflict and compromise have shaped politics, economics and culture in the United States. Find aligned resources

USH.H.4.1 Analyze the political issues and conflicts that impacted the United States since Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted (e.g., Populism, Progressivism, working conditions and labor unrest, New Deal, Wilmington Race Riots, Eugenics, Civil Rights Movement, Anti-War protests, Watergate, etc.).

USH.H.4.2 Analyze the economic issues and conflicts that impacted the United States since Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted (e.g., currency policy, industrialization, urbanization, laissez-faire, labor unrest, New Deal, Great Society, supply-side economics, etc.).

USH.H.4.3 Analyze the social and religious conflicts, movements and reforms that impacted the United States since Reconstruction in terms of participants, strategies, opposition, and results (e.g., Prohibition, Social Darwinism, Eugenics, civil rights, anti-war protest, etc.).

USH.H.4.4 Analyze the cultural conflicts that impacted the United States since Reconstruction and the compromises that resulted (e.g., nativism, Back to Africa movement, modernism, fundamentalism, black power movement, women’s movement, counterculture, Wilmington Race Riots, etc.).

USH.H.5 Understand how tensions between freedom, equality and power have shaped the political, economic and social development of the United States.

USH.H.5.1 Summarize how the philosophical, ideological and/or religious views on freedom and equality contributed to the development of American political and economic systems since Reconstruction (e.g., “separate but equal”, Social Darwinism, social gospel, civil service system, suffrage, Harlem Renaissance, the Warren Court, Great Society programs, American Indian Movement, etc.).
USH.H.5.2 Explain how judicial, legislative and executive actions have affected the distribution of power between levels of government since Reconstruction (e.g., New Deal, Great Society, Civil Rights, etc.).


USH.H.6.2 Explain the reasons for United States involvement in global wars and the influence each involvement had on international affairs (e.g., Spanish-American War, WWI, WWII, Cold War, Korea, Vietnam, Gulf War, Iraqi War, etc.).

USH.H.7 Understand the impact of war on American politics, economics, society and culture. Find aligned resources

USH.H.7.1 Explain the impact of wars on American politics since Reconstruction (e.g., spheres of influence, isolationist practices, containment policies, first and second Red Scare movements, patriotism, terrorist policies, etc.).

USH.H.7.2 Explain the impact of wars on the American economy since Reconstruction (e.g., mobilizing for war, war industries, rationing, women in the workforce, lend-lease policy, WWII farming gains, GI Bill, etc.).

USH.H.8 Analyze the relationship between progress, crisis and the “American Dream” within the United States. Find aligned resources

USH.H.8.1 Analyze the relationship between innovation, economic development, progress and various perceptions of the “American Dream” since Reconstruction (e.g., Gilded Age, assembly line, transcontinental railroad, highway system, credit, etc.).

USH.H.8.2 Explain how opportunity and mobility impacted various groups within American society since Reconstruction (e.g., Americanization movement, settlement house movement, Dust Bowl, the Great Migration, suburbia, etc.).

USH.H.8.3 Analyze the extent to which a variety of groups and individuals have had opportunity to attain their perception of the “American Dream” since Reconstruction (e.g., immigrants, Flappers, Rosie the Riveter, GIs, blue collar worker, white collar worker, etc.).
**Material Culture Analysis Worksheet Key: Object 1: Vietnam War Artifact**

**Image or URL:** [http://research.archives.gov:description/530617](http://research.archives.gov:description/530617)

**Image description:** OPERATION "YELLOWSTONE" VIETNAM: Following a hard day, a few members of Company "A," 3rd Battalion, 22nd Infantry (Mechanized), 25th Infantry Division, gather around a guitar player and sing a few songs., 01/18/1968

### Characteristics:

What can you tell about this object’s:
- Materials?
- Design?
- Age?
- Value?

**Interpretations:**

Objects: Military uniform and guitar. Green military fabric clothing; Guitar. Both artifacts probably about 45+ years old or more. Very valuable for survival, physical and mental.

### Function:

What do you think is its intended purpose?
How would one use it?

**Interpretations:**

Military Uniform to protect one’s body and camouflage in the jungle as soldiers march through jungle, swampy areas and mud. Helmet to wear on head to protect against gunfire and bombs. Guitar used to create music and for relaxation.

### Context:

What does it tell you about the people who made it?
What does it tell you about those people who used it?
In what time period would this object be used?
Under what circumstances was it used?

**Interpretations:**

Probably mass produced in a factory. Used by soldiers in the Vietnam War. 1950’s through the early 1970’s. Used by soldiers during the war.

### Comparison:

Do we use something similar today? If so, what?

**Interpretations:**

Yes, we still have military unfirms to signify rank, helmets to protect heads and guitars to create music.
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Thoughts:</th>
<th>Interpretations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What else would you like to know about this object?</td>
<td>Was the uniform heavy? Waterproof? How heavy were the helmets and were they very comfortable?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Is there anything else you observe?</td>
<td>Perhaps they might have been worn by all of soldiers pictured with the guitar playing soldier?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>What did the guitar sound like in the jungle?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
**Material Culture Analysis Worksheet Key: Object 2: Popular Culture Artifact**

Image or URL as needed: [http://www.skooldays.com/blog/toys-in-the-60s/](http://www.skooldays.com/blog/toys-in-the-60s/)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics: What can you tell about these object’s:</th>
<th>Interpretations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Materials? Design? Age? Value?</td>
<td>Items from popular culture, (focus on toys...Etch a sketch, Slinky, Gi Joe, Slide Projector) Made of plastic, metal, cloth. Modern design, with bright colors. 45 years old. Valued for the joy and memories they represent.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function: What do you think is its intended purpose? How would one use it?</th>
<th>Interpretations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>TO entertain and to educate children and adults. Children would play with slinky, Gi Joe, Etch-A-Sketch and Slide Projector.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context: What does it tell you about the people who made it? What does it tell you about those people who used it? In what time period would this object be used? Under what circumstances was it used?</th>
<th>Interpretations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Made by commercial companies and/or inventors. Perhaps used by younger people who liked the toys. For skills, for art, for role play with war, for comprehension and exploration.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison: Do we use something similar today? If so, what?</th>
<th>Interpretations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>We still have toys today that children and teens play with for pleasure, educational purposes and to role play to understand cultural conflicts.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Thoughts: What else would you like to know about this object? Is there anything else you observe?</th>
<th>Interpretations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How many different designs were made before the designers agreed on the toy? Why were some toys more popular than others? Did girls want to play with Gi Joe’s and did boys feel that it was okay to play with dolls?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Material Culture Analysis Worksheet Key: Object 3: Politics Artifact
Image or URL as needed: [http://www.45cat.com/record/444650](http://www.45cat.com/record/444650)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Characteristics:</th>
<th>Interpretations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What can you tell about this object’s:</td>
<td>Album cover for a memorial.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Materials?</td>
<td>Cardboard. A very likeable image of Bobby Kennedy. 45 years old or more. Some people might value it more than others depending on the generation they grew up in and if they were a fan of Bobby Kennedy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Design?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Age?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Value?</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Function:</th>
<th>Interpretations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What do you think is its intended purpose?</td>
<td>I believe it might be a memorial album to honor the slain Robert Kennedy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How would one use it?</td>
<td>People who listened to this were fans of his and were probably grief stricken upon learning of his assassination.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Context:</th>
<th>Interpretations:</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What does it tell you about the people who made it?</td>
<td>The people were supportive of Robert Kennedy and his heroic status.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What does it tell you about those people who used it?</td>
<td>People who listened to this were fans of his and were probably grief stricken upon learning of his assassination.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>In what time period would this object be used?</td>
<td>Used in the 1960’s as a tribute.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Under what circumstances was it used?</td>
<td>This was probably used to grieve Bobby Kennedy and to reflect upon his life’s</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
accomplishments. It may have also been used to heal a nation in chaos.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Comparison: Do we use something similar today? If so, what?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpretations: Today we have tributes on Facebook, send Tweets on Twitter, have candlelight vigils in public places and post memories on YOU Tube.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Additional Thoughts: What else would you like to know about this object? Is there anything else you observe?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interpretations: Who was in charge of crafting this memorial album? How many albums were sold? What was the price? How did they select the musician? I see where Andy Williams is on the cover. It appears to be a Catholic service.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Material Culture Analysis Worksheet

## Characteristics:
- What materials is this object made of?
- What marks, inscriptions or decorations do you observe on it?
- What is its approximate age?

## Conclusions:

## Function:
- What do you think is its intended purpose?
- How would one use it?

## Conclusions:

## Context:
- Does it look professionally made? Is it one-of-a-kind, or were many made like it?
- What does it tell you about those people who used it?
- Are there marks or inscriptions identifying who used it?
- In what time period would this object be used?
- Under what circumstances was it used?

## Conclusions:

## Comparison:
- Do we use something similar today? If so, what?
- Do we use an object that looks like this for a different purpose today?

## Conclusions:

## Additional Thoughts:
- What else would you like to know about this object?
- Is there anything else you observe?

## Conclusions:
Researching and Writing About 3 Artifacts

Assignment for Day One:

Directions:

1. After you have completed all three of the stations, research and write about three artifacts you discovered.
   Stations:
   1. “Dance to the Music”, listening to popular music and paying attention to lyrics;
   2. “And That’s the Way it is…”, watching archival footage of news events; and
   3. “That Incredible Year”, reading about events and viewing images from the National Archives.
2. Write about the ways that these three artifacts related to one or more of the five key areas of 1968 culture: popular culture, technology, politics, Vietnam War or Civil Rights. You and your classmates may be particularly interested in one or two areas. Make connections between the artifacts and the conclusions that can be drawn about an aspect of 1968 culture. Use additional research to support your conclusions.
**1968 History Paper/Multimedia Project**  
**SCORING GUIDE 1.14.14 Dr. Ted D. R. Green**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Topic</th>
<th>Exceeds Proficiency</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Nearing Proficiency</th>
<th>Unsatisfactory</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Government/Civics, Economics, Geography or History Content</td>
<td>Outstanding Government/Civics, Economics, Geography and/or History Content that is clear, concise and adds to the overall understanding of the 1968 project.</td>
<td>Government/Civics, Economics, Geography and/or History Content that is clear, concise and adds to the overall understanding of the 1968 project.</td>
<td>Government/Civics, Economics, Geography or History Content that adds somewhat to the overall understanding of the 1968 project.</td>
<td>Government/Civics, Economics, Geography or History Content for 1968 project is missing or inaccurate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Research Paper/Media Project Format</td>
<td>Research Paper/Media Project uses the given format including specific objectives and detailed scripting of 1968 activities.</td>
<td>Research Paper/Media Project uses most of the given format including specific objectives and detailed scripting of 1968 activities.</td>
<td>Research Paper/Media Project uses some but not all of the given format including specific objectives and detailed scripting of 1968 activities.</td>
<td>Research Paper/Media Project includes inadequate content.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Outcomes</td>
<td>Research Paper/Media Project includes all outcomes and how information will be shared with the audience. Impact on culture is clearly articulated.</td>
<td>Research Paper/Media Project includes most outcomes, how information will be shared with the audience. Impact on culture is articulated.</td>
<td>The Research Paper/Media Project makes a serious attempt to include all outcomes, but the means is vague. Impact on culture is addressed.</td>
<td>The Research Paper/Media Project does not address most of the outcomes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Artifacts/ Materials</td>
<td>Resources in each category are provided (people, print, and media) and demonstrate a breadth of information used.</td>
<td>Resources in each category are provided (people, print, and media,)</td>
<td>Resources in most categories are provided (people, print, and media,)</td>
<td>An inadequate attempt to search out resources.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>