THE VIETNAM WAR
LESSON PLAN
Robert M Pobjecky

Objectives

1) The United States involvement in Vietnam stretched over three decades.
2) President Johnson continued to ratcheted up our troop commitment until we had over one half million Americans fighting in Vietnam.
3) President Nixon relied on “the silent majority” to reinforce his views on his Vietnamization policy.
4) The opponents to the war were not only long haired hippies but also included politicians, war veterans, and nationally known conservatives.

Materials

1) A computer with internet access
2) Pens and paper
3) Copies of analysis worksheets

Procedures

1) Classroom activity: View clips from the TimeLife series, Vietnam: An American History, for the first day. It is easy to assume that the students know enough about the war to participate in a discussion, but I have found that this war is not as relevant to our students as it is to many of us.
2) Classroom activity: Students will spend part of the second day with a partner generating questions about the film clips which they saw the previous day.
3) Before class is over, pairs will team up in order to cull from their collected questions the best five questions that the four students have written.
4) Classroom activity: On the third day, students will use the computer lab to research the following terms: Vietnamization, DMZ, hippies, Ho Chi Minh Trail, Vietcong, Tet, the Hanoi Hilton, napalm, Highway 13, and the Gulf of Tonkin.
5) Homework assignment: Since many of the young men who served in Vietnam were only 18 or 19 years old, this assignment places the students into the jungles and swamps of Vietnam during a fire fight. Each student will view at least two You Tube clips about a soldier’s experience in an actual battle. The students will then attempt to write a letter home to a loved one exploring his or her feelings about that experience. Alternative assignment: For students who do not want to watch actual war footage, they will write a two page research paper on one of the major battles that occurred in Vietnam.
6) Classroom activity: On the following day in class, we will attempt to answer some of the questions written by the students on the second day in order to deepen their understanding of this war.
7) Classroom activity: After completing all of the above, students will complete the DBQ on the Vietnam War.
8) Classroom activity: Students will pair up with a new partner and will analyze the photos and the cartoon on the DBQ with the activity sheets. Before class is over, we will discuss these as a whole class.
9) Classroom activity: Students will spend the class examining the Doonesbury cartoons using the cartoon analysis activity sheet. Each student will work on one strip. By using a document camera, we will be able to project each strip, and then each student will be able to share his or her insights with the class. Also, the student will attempt to clarify America’s different viewpoints on the war through the particular strip.
10) Classroom activity: Finally, we will attempt to answer why the Vietnam War has haunted America for over four decades, and how this war has affected certain foreign policy decision during this time.
Define Terms

1) Vietnamization:

2) DMZ

3) hippies:

4) Ho Chi Minh Trail:

5) Vietcong:

6) Tet:

7) The Hanoi Hilton:

8) Napalm:

9) Highway 13:

10) Gulf of Tonkin
Doonesbury

... "SURE... MY NAME'S D.D. I VOLUNTEERED! MY NAME'S GEORGE. I WAS DRAFTED..."

... "WELL, DON'T FEEL BAD, THE IMPORTANT THING IS THAT YOU'RE ON YOUR WAY TO VIETNAM!!"

... "BOY, AM I EXCITED! I HAVEN'T BEEN THIS EXCITED ABOUT A TRIP SINCE LAST YEAR WHEN I FLEW TO FORT LAUDERDALE!!"

... "LOOK! RICE PADIES!!"

Dear Mom and Dad,

While I'm waiting for the plane, want of contact is attack. I thought I'd drop you a quick line.

I arrived in Vietnam yesterday and I must say, I love it! I'm stationed at Firebase Bunyan in the Delta and I've got my own bunker and machine gun! Can you imagine?

YOU KNOW WHAT BOTHERS ME BEST? IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO SEE THE ENEMY.

AS A MATTER OF FACT, THERE'S CHARLIE NOW! BETTER GET DOWN, MAN...

THAT'S ANOTHER THING! WHY DO WE ALWAYS CALL THE ENEMY "CHARLIE"? IS SUCH A BORING NAME!

WAY NOT "ARNOLD" OR "SEYMOUR" OR "PEABODY"? MEATHERED..."
Hey, ya little creep! What's the big deal? I was eating dinner! Why don't you show some respect for the American fighting man?

Keep it up, Charlie. Just keep it up!

Sir, we have met Charlie and he is ours.

Private, what day is it?

Ah, February 16th, sir.

Fifteen enemy dead, sir.

I can't believe it! I'm lost!

My first week in Vietnam, and I'm already missing in action! I'll probably starve or get eaten, even!

However!! Even if I'm destined to die in this cursed jungle, I still believe this war is right. Honorable and a credit to America!

Very nice. How do you feel about the POW issue?

Whadda ya lowering your gun for Charlie? Scared of me?

Lost? You're joking.

No, I'm not. We're lost. Lend me your jungle map and I'll see if I can figure out where we are.

Aha! What?

You said that.

We're lost.
Hey, Charlie. How do you come to learn English?

What do you mean? English is practically the national language in Vietnam.

In case you didn't know, you running dogs have been occupying our country for fifteen years. And by the way, my name's hired not Charlie.

I'm a V.C. terrorist and it's a good one. Too! Ain't nobody in these parts who ain't heard of 'hired the terrorist.'

'Phred the terrorist.'

'Phred, I can play a Hamlet in thirty seconds flat!

Phred. I've been thinking. Big deal.

I've decided to face the facts. We're both lost and hungry. So we might as well be friends and try to make it together.

Even though you're a commie, I think it would be worthwhile and inspiring to really get to know you.

Also, I couldn't help noticing your can of rice.

Phred, how come you decided to become a terrorist?

I probably because my father was one. He used to do quite a job on the local French outposts. Dad taught me everything I know.

But what will you do when the war ends? We terrorists have the most secure jobs in Vietnam.

I've even got a ten-year contract.

Sleep on Charlie. You may be lost, but at least you're in the right country.

Sigh.

Me, I'm millions of miles from home, hungry, tired, disgraced and humiliated. How could things possibly get any worse for me?

Dear John...
PENNY: I UNDERSTAND YOU INJURED YOUR HAND WHILE LOST OUT IN THE TEEMING VIETNAMESE JUNGLES.

TO HONOR SHERIFF INTOR, I AWARD YOU THE PURPLE HEART! CONGRATULATIONS!

AH: YESSIR.

I STILL DO IT WITH A PASSION, BUT YOU CAN'T JUST IGNORE THE FACT HE SAVED MY LIFE. BESIDES,

UNLIKE OTHER COMMIES,

HE HAPPENS TO BE AN ORAY GUY.

B.D.: I CAN'T UNDERSTAND HOW YOU OF ALL PEOPLE BECAME FRIENDS WITH PHRED? I THOUGHT YOU HATED COMMUNISTS.

B.D.: THEY DROP BOMBS IN BOTH CASES THERE'S NO DIFFERENCE, FELLAH!

A PROTECTIVE REACTION STRIKE MEANS NOT HAVING TO SAY YOU'RE SORRY.

JEEVES: HEAR ABOUT THE BOMBS RAID LAST NIGHT? 3,000 TONS!

THAT WASN'T A BOMBING RAID! IT WAS A PROTECTIVE REACTION STRIKE!

B.D.: BUT IF HE'S SUCH A NICE GUY, WHY'D HE BECOME A TERRORIST?

WELL, IT WASN'T REALLY HIS FAULT.

HIS FAMILY PRESSURED HIM INTO IT.

NOW DON'T BLOW THIS INTERVIEW CAPPY, IT TOOK A LOT OF ARSE TO INTERVIEW THESE TV GID'S IN}

THIS IS ZONKER HARRIS, SPECIAL STUDENT WAR CORRESPONDENT IN SAIGON. TODAY I'M RAPPING WITH A FAMOUS EX-FOOL'S QUARTERBACK WHO ATE 51 WEBS IN VIETNAM. HE HAS A VERY UNUSUAL OPINION ABOUT THE WAR.

I LOVE IT.

ZONKER HARRIS, SAIGON.
B.D.: How is it that youAnalyzing this maybe a little civil war from.

You do suppose you would have cared it if during your civil war, 40,000.

Viet Cong Suddenly occupied Pennsylvania and New York?

Yeah, that is a weird thought. You bet it is!

Can you imagine me giving chewing gun and chalkeries to the children of Gettysburg?

George, would you please explain this crazy war to me? I don't get it! A bunch of Harvard graduates thought up this whole war.

But they send a bunch of drafted high school graduates to fight! Finally they get a guy me, who wants to stay, and they withdraw him! It's just not fair.

Well, sure, it's unfair, but we are unfair, know.

But this war had such promise!!

So long. Now, they send you to Germany. Write me.

Me, too. Thanks for bringing me down to the nurses, George.

Blam! Boom!

Raid! Let's get out of here!

Hey George, don't worry! It's just phoned saying goodbye.

A twenty-one mortar salute.
# Cartoon Analysis Worksheet

## Level 1

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<th>Words (not all cartoons include words)</th>
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<td>1. Identify the cartoon caption and/or title.</td>
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<td>2. Locate three words or phrases used by the cartoonist to identify objects or people within the cartoon.</td>
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<td>4. Which words or phrases in the cartoon appear to be the most significant? Why do you think so?</td>
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<td>3. What do you think each symbol means?</td>
<td>5. List adjectives that describe the emotions portrayed in the cartoon.</td>
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## Level 3

| A. Describe the action taking place in the cartoon. | |
| B. Explain how the words in the cartoon clarify the symbols. | |
| C. Explain the message of the cartoon. | |
| D. What special interest groups would agree/disagree with the cartoon's message? Why? | |
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Photo Analysis Worksheet

**Step 1. Observation**

Study the photograph for 2 minutes. Form an overall impression of the photograph and then examine individual items. Next, divide the photo into quadrants and study each section to see what new details become visible.

B.

Use the chart below to list people, objects, and activities in the photograph.

- Activities
- People
- Objects

**Step 2. Inference**

Based on what you have observed above, list three things you might infer from this photograph.

**Step 3. Questions**

A.

What questions does this photograph raise in your mind?

Where could you find answers to them?

B.

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