

Module 4: Post 1989

Activity 1: The Legacy of 1968

Compelling question: How does a society make sense of past trauma?

Overview: Teachers might use and adapt this activity as a stand alone exercise or in conjunction with other Module 4 activities. Also, we encourage you to explore Modules 1, 2, and 3 to design a comprehensive exploration of the 68, 77, 89 project.

As you design your students' learning experiences we suggest:

- Utilize the background resources for Module 4
- Previewing the selected primary and secondary resources
- Explore the instructional supports and selected vocabulary
- Adapt the lesson plans and performance assessments we provided for this activity

Focus: In this activity, students will explore the legacy of 1968 on national memory and identity.

Secondary Resources for this Activity

1. [Prague Spring Ignored in Post-Communist Society](#) - In this 8 minute piece, NPR's Sylvia Poggioli reports on how people in Prague view that tumultuous period, 1968, now.
2. [Radio Prague piece on Soviet occupiers](#) - This 12 minute program looks at August 1968 from another perspective: that of the occupiers.

Support Resources

[Graphic Organizers](#): Create free, custom made graphic organizers including T-Charts, Venn Diagrams, Frayer Models and much more.

[Historical Thinking Prompts](#): The chart helps demonstrate historical thinking and has sentence frames to support the development of these skills.

[Document Analysis Organizers](#): Use these worksheets — for photos, written documents, artifacts, posters, maps, cartoons, videos, and sound recordings — to teach your students the process of document analysis.

[Harvard's Project Zero Thinking Routines](#): A routine can be thought of as any procedure, process, or pattern of action that is used facilitate the accomplishment of specific goals or tasks. Explore this collection and use them with the activities.

[Socratic Seminar/Discussion Stems](#): A handout of prompts and scaffolds for students.

[Rubric Maker](#): Easy to use, quick and free rubric tool maker.

Key Vocabulary for this activity:

1. **Tumultuous**: Very loud, or full of confusion, change, or uncertainty.
2. **Irrelevant**: Something that is unrelated, unimportant, or useless.
3. **Deviation**: A departure from an accepted norm or standard, as of behavior.
4. **Urban Legend**: A story or anecdote that is based on hearsay and widely circulated as true.
5. **Internationalism**: Cooperation among nations, for the promotion of their common good.

Suggested strategies and assessments for this activity

Compelling question: How does a society make sense of past trauma?

Instructional Strategy A: [Big Paper - Building a Silent Conversation](#)

This discussion strategy uses writing and silence as tools to help students explore a topic in depth. In a Big Paper discussion,

students write out their responses to a stimulus, such as a quotation or historical document. This process slows down students' thinking and gives them an opportunity to focus on the views of others. It also creates a visual record of students' thoughts and questions that you can refer to later in a course. ([Full details can be found here](#)).

Class 1: Big Paper - Building a Silent Conversation - This activity works best when students are working in pairs or triads. Each group also needs a sheet of big poster paper that can fit a written conversation and added comments. In the middle of each of these, tape or write the "stimulus" (image, quotation, excerpt, etc.) that will be used to spark the students' discussion. In this case, the stimulus can be the compelling question for this unit.

After completing the steps in this protocol, debrief the process with the large group. The conversation can begin with a simple prompt such as, "What did you learn from doing this activity?" This is the time to delve deeper into the content and use ideas on the Big Papers to draw out students' thoughts. The discussion can also touch upon the importance and difficulty of staying silent and students' level of comfort with this activity.

Class 2: Performance Assessment - This class invites students to present their understanding from the previous class and present it in the assessment format you use (suggestions below). By giving them class time to work on the assessment, you can troubleshoot, check in with students, and they can collaborate.

Instructional Strategy B: Human Timeline

A Human Timeline activity requires students to learn about a particular event and then line up with peers according to their events' chronology. This strategy uses movement to help students understand and remember the order of events. ([Full details can be found here](#)).

Class 1: Human Timeline - Situate the events of 1968 in a larger Cold War context. Assign each student one event from the period that you are highlighting. Each event should be described along with the date it occurred. Whether students work individually or in pairs, here is an example of instructions you can provide. Have students research their event including the main outcomes of it.

When completed, invite students to line up in the order of their events. Then, have students present their events. After each event is presented, students can suggest possible causes of the event and can pose questions about what happened and why.

These questions can be posted on the board for students to answer later but should always reconnect to the compelling question.

Class 2: Engage with resources - Now that students have developed a broader context, have students engage with the activity's resources. Students should record their main take aways from each resource using a strategy like "one minute sentence" that has students record all observations and questions from each resource. Once completed, students should share their notes with classmates using the strategy ["Give one, get one"](#) or a similar processing activity.

Suggested Performance Assessments: Now that students have engaged with the documents and have shared their insights with their classmates, it is time for them to collect their thoughts and answer the compelling question. It is important to connect the historical content to the present. In this sense, the historical content informs students about the past and apply that knowledge to the present.

Your decision on what students should produce will relate to the skills you think they should develop to succeed in the future.

- 1) Create an infographic that demonstrates their conclusion about the compelling question and their own identity.
- 2) Write an essay that answers the compelling question.

Explore 1968 through one or more historical thinking strategy. 1968 should be used as a template and then compared with another event of their choice. [Students select which Historical Thinking Strategy to use from these templates.](#)