

**APPLYING
COMMON
CORE**

U.S. HISTORY / 1963 – 1971

VIETNAM WAR

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Contents

1	Introduction
2	Common Core Standards
3	Tracking Common Core Standards
5	CHAPTER 1: KEY IDEAS AND DETAILS
6	ACTIVITY 1: Whistleblowers—Ellsberg and Snowden
19	ACTIVITY 2: Important Events in the History of Vietnam
25	CHAPTER 2: CRAFT AND STRUCTURE
26	ACTIVITY 3: History of Protest in America
33	ACTIVITY 4: Arguments For and Against the Vietnam War
43	CHAPTER 3: INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS
44	ACTIVITY 5: Vietnam War versus Afghanistan War
49	ACTIVITY 6: Fighting in Vietnam
59	CHAPTER 4: WRITING STANDARDS
60	ARGUMENTATIVE WRITING: Requiring National Service
65	INFORMATIVE WRITING: Comparing Wars
70	NARRATIVE WRITING: Green Beret Perspective Piece
79	Selected Answers
84	Bibliography



Introduction

Goals

The main goal of this book is to help students develop skills outlined in the Common Core Standards by clarifying what the standards are asking for and by giving teachers specific activities they can use to address the standards.

Organization

The book is mostly organized by the categories into which Common Core places its standards. The first three chapters are “Key Ideas and Details,” “Craft and Structure,” and “Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.” Because “Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity” is addressed every time students read, it does not have its own chapter. Also, because it is common for many writing categories to overlap on a paper, the fourth chapter covers all the writing standards and is divided into the three main paper types: argumentative, informative, and narrative.

Activities open with an introductory page that includes every standard covered by the activities, directions, estimated lesson length, and additional teaching ideas. At the back of the book are selected answers for the reading activities.

Tracking Common Core Standards

On the next page, there is a chart that can help you track which Common Core Standards you have addressed and with which activities.

Narrative Writing

Narrative writing is not required for social studies teachers, which is why there is no WHST.6-8.3. However, this form of writing was included in this book (W.6-W.8.3) because numerous social studies teachers also teach language arts, for the many educators who find creative writing a valuable way to explore history, and because other required writing standards can be covered with narrative writing.

Common Core Standards

If a teacher covers the six reading activities and three papers outlined in this book, he or she will have addressed every 6–8 History/Social Studies Common Core Standard at least once. Although it is not expected that teachers cover every standard in each unit of study, this gives teachers a great way to see examples of every standard and have numerous assignments to choose from.

Common Core Standards

READING

Key Ideas and Details

RH.6-8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

RH.6-8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

» *Summarize primary or secondary sources.*

RH.6-8.3

Identify key steps in a text's description of a process related to history/social studies (e.g., how a bill becomes law, how interest rates are raised or lowered).

» *Summarize the steps of a process or historical event.*

Craft and Structure

RH.6-8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary specific to domains related to history/social studies.

» *Use context to decipher the meanings of difficult words.*

RH.6-8.5

Describe how a text presents information (e.g., sequentially, comparatively, causally).

» *Determine how the author has ordered the information.*

RH.6-8.6

Identify aspects of a text that reveal an author's point of view or purpose (e.g., loaded language, inclusion or avoidance of particular facts).

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

RH.6-8.7

Integrate visual information (e.g., in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

» *Interpret a reading with a visual.*

RH.6-8.8

Distinguish among fact, opinion, and reasoned judgment in a text.

RH.6-8.9

Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

RH.6-8.10

By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

SL.6.1–SL.8.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6–8 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

WRITING

Text Types and Purposes

WHST.6-8.1

Write arguments focused on discipline-specific content.

» *Argumentative writing.*

WHST.6-8.2

Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/experiments, or technical processes.

» *Informative writing.*

W.6.3–W.8.3

Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

» *Creative writing. (This is not required for social studies teachers.)*

Production and Distribution of Writing

WHST.6-8.4

Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization,

and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

» *Write for a specific audience.*

WHST.6-8.5

With some guidance and support from peers and adults, develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on how well purpose and audience have been addressed.

» *Use writing process.*

WHST.6-8.6

Use technology, including the Internet, to produce and publish writing and present the relationships between information and ideas clearly and efficiently.

» *Publish writing for an audience.*

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

WHST.6-8.7

Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.

» *Research to answer a question.*

WHST.6-8.8

Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.

» *Use multiple credible sources when researching and summarize findings in own words.*

WHST.6-8.9

Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

» *Support essays with information or quotes from texts.*

Range of Writing

WHST.6-8.10

Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

ACTIVITY 1

CHAPTER
Key Ideas and Details

DURATION
2 class periods

Whistleblowers— Ellsberg and Snowden

COMMON CORE STANDARDS

RH.6–8.1

Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources.

RH.6–8.2

Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of the source distinct from prior knowledge or opinions.

RH.6–8.10

By the end of grade 8, read and comprehend history/social studies texts in the grades 6–8 text complexity band independently and proficiently.

SL.6–8.1

Engage effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 6 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly.

DIRECTIONS

- Students read the background section of “The Pentagon Papers” independently, summarizing each paragraph in the margins. Students share their summaries with a partner, then the class.
- Students read the “Excerpts from the Pentagon Papers” section with a partner, highlighting controversial sections and underlining parts they have a question about. Together, they use what they highlighted and underlined to complete “Understanding the Pentagon Papers.”
- Students read “The Snowden Files” independently, summarizing each paragraph in the margins. Students share their summaries with a partner, then the class.
- Students read the “The Verizon Court Order” with a partner, highlighting controversial sections and underlining parts they have a question about. Together, they use what they highlighted and underlined to complete “Understanding the Snowden Files.”
- Students independently complete “Ellsberg and Snowden Questions.”
- Teachers may also want to have students investigate what the Pentagon Papers said about the Gulf of Tonkin Incident (located in IV.C.2b: Evolution of the War).

IMPORTANT/DIFFICULT VOCABULARY

There are many ways to review vocabulary. Below are some words from which you may choose to create a review activity.

- | | | |
|---------------|--|----------------------------------|
| ▪ Asylum | ▪ Democratic Republic of Vietnam (DRV) | ▪ Joint Chief of Staffs (JCS) |
| ▪ Clandestine | ▪ Foreign Intelligence Surveillance Act (FISA) | ▪ Metadata |
| ▪ Classified | ▪ Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ) | ▪ National Security Agency (NSA) |
| ▪ Coup d'état | ▪ Guarantor | ▪ Nondisclosure |
| ▪ Court order | | ▪ Sanctioned |
| ▪ Covert | | ▪ South Vietnam (SVN) |

THE PENTAGON PAPERS ^{1/2}

Background

Daniel Ellsberg was working for the Department of Defense when he had a change of heart about American involvement in the Vietnam War. He thought if people knew more details about the conflict, public dissatisfaction might force the Nixon administration to pull out of the war. Beginning in late 1969 he photocopied thousands of pages of classified documents despite knowing this could land him in jail. He leaked these to the *New York Times*, which started to publish them in 1971. These came to be called the Pentagon Papers.

The Nixon administration was initially conflicted on what to do, but ultimately got a court order issued that stopped the *New York Times* from publishing of any more of the papers. The *New York Times* appealed this decision, saying it infringed on the “freedom of the press” and that they had made sure not to publish any information that could influence the actual war. The case made its way to the Supreme Court, which decided in favor of the *New York Times*. The court argued that even though newspapers could not print all government documents, in this case, what was published would not endanger national security. Justice Hugo Black added, “In revealing the workings of government that led to the Vietnam War, the newspapers nobly did precisely that which the Founders hoped and trusted they would do.”

The Pentagon Papers also played a significant role in the Watergate Scandals. A year before the “plumbers” were arrested attempting to bug the Democratic National Committee’s headquarters in the Watergate Hotel, they had broken into Ellsberg’s psychiatrist’s office apparently looking for documents that could make Ellsberg look bad. The case against Ellsberg for leaking classified documents was dropped due to this governmental misconduct against him.

Excerpts from the Pentagon Papers

How the United States Was Involved before 1964

Finally, in this review of factors that would affect policy-making on Vietnam, we must note that South Vietnam, (unlike any of the other countries in Southeast Asia) was essentially the creation of the United States.

Without U.S. support Diem almost certainly could not have consolidated his hold on the South during 1955 and 1956.

Without the threat of U.S. intervention, South Vietnam could not have refused to even discuss the elections called for in 1956 under the Geneva settlement without being immediately overrun by the Viet Minh armies.

Without U.S. aid in the years following, the Diem regime certainly, and an independent South Vietnam almost as certainly, could not have survived.

The Coup D'état against Diem

In 1963 South Vietnam's leader, Ngo Dinh Diem, was overthrown and murdered by his generals.

For the military coup d'état against Ngo Dinh Diem, the U.S. must accept its full share of responsibility. Beginning in August 1963 we variously authorized, sanctioned and encouraged the coup efforts of the Vietnamese generals and offered full support for a successor government. In October we cut off aid to Diem in a direct rebuff, giving a green light to the generals. We maintained clandestine contact with them throughout the planning and execution of the coup and sought to review their operational plans and proposed new government. Thus, as the nine-year rule of Diem came to a bloody end, our complicity in his overthrow heightened our responsibilities and our commitment in an essentially leaderless Vietnam.

Source: Vietnam Task Force. "The Overthrow of Ngo Dinh Diem: May–November 1963." In *Counterinsurgency: The Kennedy Commitments*. Vol. 4 of *Evolution of the War*. Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1961. <http://media.nara.gov/research/pentagon-papers/Pentagon-Papers-Part-IV-B-5.pdf>.

Provoking Vietnam

The following was part of America's strategy in 1964.

In response to State's Aug 14 analysis, the JCS proposed a continuous and escalating air campaign against the North designed to [test] both the physical resources and the psychological will to support the insurgency in the South. It called for deliberate attempts to provoke the DRV into actions which could then be answered by a systematic air campaign. . . .

In anticipation of the 7 September strategy meeting, McNaughton prepared a paper calling for actions that would provoke a DRV response that could be used as grounds for a U.S. escalation.

Source: Vietnam Task Force. "Military Pressures Against NVN: July–October 1964." In *Direct Action: The Johnson Commitments*. Vol. 7 of *Evolution of the War*. Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1961. <http://media.nara.gov/research/pentagon-papers/Pentagon-Papers-Part-IV-C-2b.pdf>.

Objectives in Vietnam

Although Americans were often told the goal in Vietnam was to help South Vietnam remain a democratic nation, the government's actual priorities appear to be different, as summarized in the below excerpt.

"Humiliation" was much on the minds of those involved in the making of American policy for Vietnam during the spring and summer of 1965. The word, or phrases meaning the same thing, appears in countless memoranda. No one put it as starkly as Assistant Secretary of Defense John McNaughton, who in late March assigned relative weights to various American objectives in Vietnam. In McNaughton's view the principal U.S. aim was "to avoid a humiliating US defeat (to our reputation as a guarantor)." To this he assigned the weight of 70%. Second, but far less important at only 20% was "to keep SVN (and then adjacent) territory from Chinese hands." And a minor third, at but 10%, was "to permit the people of SVN to enjoy a better, freer way of life."

Source: Vietnam Task Force. "The Air War in North Vietnam: July 1965 to the Year-End Bombing Phase." In *Direct Action: The Johnson Commitments*. Vol. 7 of *Evolution of the War*. Office of the Secretary of Defense, 1961. <http://media.nara.gov/research/pentagon-papers/Pentagon-Papers-Part-IV-C-7-a.pdf>.

THE SNOWDEN FILES ^{1/2}

On March 12, 2013, Senator Ron Wyden asked James Clapper, the Director of Intelligence, “Does the NSA collect any type of data at all on millions or hundreds of millions of Americans?” Clapper responded, “No, sir.”

The United States soon discovered this was untrue due to Edward Snowden, a computer specialist for the CIA who had grown increasingly uncomfortable with how much information the National Security Agency (NSA) was collecting on civilians. Snowden downloaded an enormous number of files (by one estimate, 1.7 million files) and gave as many as 200,000 to the British newspaper, *The Guardian*. The first blockbuster focused on the enormous amounts of metadata Verizon was handing over to the government. Metadata does not include actual conversations, but it does provide a person’s location, the phone numbers called, and when they were called.

Many more realizations were to follow. It was discovered that major tech companies (such as Facebook, Google, and Yahoo) had also given data to the government and that the NSA had bugged the phones of various world leaders. Additionally, the NSA, with help from its British equivalent the Government Communication Headquarters (GCHQ), collected millions of data files that flowed across their borders through their fiber optic cables. And, although most of this information was encrypted (a code that made the information intelligible), both intelligence groups worked to break the codes (and at times had been successful). According to Snowden, “They are intent on making every conversation and every form of behavior in the world known to them.”

President Obama responded, saying, “My assessment and my team’s assessment was that they help us prevent terrorist attacks.” Keith Alexander, the director of the NSA, agreed, testifying, “The information gathered from these programs provided the U.S. government with critical leads to help prevent over 50 potential terrorist events in more than 20 countries around the world.” The NSA also used this data to collect information on drug cartels, worldwide criminal gangs, and groups involved with credit card theft. Obama later added that, “This is not a situation in which we are rifling through the ordinary emails of German citizens or American citizens or French citizens, or anyone else. This is a circumscribed, narrow system, directed at us being able to protect our people.”

The NSA originated from a small code-breaking unit during World War I called *Cipher Bureau and Military Intelligence Branch, Section 8*. After the war the group worked to decode foreign government messages. Western Union, a telegram corporation, provided the govern-



Edward Snowden

REQUIRING NATIONAL SERVICE

Overall

Many Americans think citizens should do more for their country than simply paying taxes and voting. Although many citizens do volunteer, there is no government requirement to do so, and there has not been a military draft since the Vietnam War. Lately, there has been a call for young adults to devote a year or more to national service. This could include military service, working in schools, hospice care, a job that improves the environment, and so on. Your assignment is to write a paper about what you think the policy should be for Americans after they graduate high school (or for those who have dropped out and are 18 years of age). Seniors at your local high school will read your paper.

Requirements

- Contains two to three supported arguments and a disputed counterclaim
- Audience is a high school senior
- Length should be 1 to 2 pages.

Positions

- At eighteen, or after finishing high school, all Americans (men and women) should be required to devote one year to the armed forces.
- At eighteen, or after finishing high school, all Americans (men and women) should be required to devote one year either to the armed forces or to bettering the country.
- At eighteen, or after finishing high school, students should be able to do what they want. If they'd like to volunteer to be in the armed forces, they can and should get help paying for college in return (as it is now).

Rubric

	Exceeding	Proficient	Developing	Beginning
Argument	Uses logical reasoning and solid support to write highly convincing arguments and dispute a counterclaim.	Uses logical reasoning and solid support to write convincing arguments. Brings up a counterclaim but may struggle to successfully dispute it.	At times arguments are solid, but needs to improve reasoning, support, and/or counterclaim.	Arguments are weak because of issues with reasoning, support, and/or counterclaim.
Conventions	No convention errors. <i>or</i> Uses high-level conventions with few to no errors.	Convention errors in one area. <i>or</i> A single error in a few areas.	Convention errors in two or more areas.	Too short to assess conventions. <i>or</i> Major issues with conventions.

