

## Teaching Guide

### SEGMENT 7, WEBISODE 15

Please note: Each segment in this Webisode has its own Teaching Guide



#### Segment Overview

By the mid-1960s, both the country and the civil rights movement were fracturing. President Johnson's escalation of the Vietnam War spawned paroxysms of protest, and the Tet Offensive mocked American claims of impending victory. Martin Luther King, Jr., struggled for the soul of the civil rights movement, which in spite of earlier successes in the courts and Congress, teetered between conflicting philosophies of nonviolence and more militant resistance. The movement had evolved from an exclusive concern with civil rights for African Americans to a broader goal of economic justice for all. In the south, civil rights activists sought to outlaw legal segregation and ensure voting rights for blacks, whereas in the north, activists sought to eliminate poverty through jobs and education. The former required legal and legislative solutions, but the latter required more complex economic and educational changes. King would not see these long-term changes; while leading his Poor People's Campaign, he was shot by an assassin at age thirty-nine.

The Vietnam quagmire scuttled President Johnson's hopes for a second term; stung by criticism of his war policies, he announced he would not seek reelection. Senator Robert Kennedy, campaigning in Indianapolis, urged Americans to "replace that violence, that stain of bloodshed that has spread across our land, with an effort to understand with compassion and love." In a troubled decade, it was a message badly needed, but not always heeded.

#### Teacher Directions

1. Discuss the following questions with students.

- What two issues consumed the nation during the mid 1960s?
- What were the goals of Dr. King's Poor People's Campaign?
- Why was King in Memphis? What happened there?
- How did the Tet Offensive affect President Johnson's hopes for reelection?
- How did Robert Kennedy respond to the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.?

2. Make sure students understand the following points.

During the mid to late 1960s, the nation agonized over the Vietnam War and the struggle for civil rights and economic justice. Dr. King's Poor People's Campaign sought economic justice for all. He wanted to eliminate



#### Let's Discuss

Let's Discuss, Cont.



poverty through jobs and education. King traveled to Memphis to support a garbage workers' strike. During a march in Memphis, violence broke out, many people were injured, and a young man was killed. While King prepared to lead another march, an assassin killed him.

The Tet offensive, a strong push by North Vietnam, made it clear to America that we could not win the war in Vietnam. Johnson, stung by criticism of his handling of the war, decided to pursue a peaceful settlement in Vietnam and not to seek reelection.

### Teacher Directions

#### Activity One

1. Distribute the Student Sheet: *How to Do Oral History*. Explain that for homework, each student will interview someone to find out about his or her experiences during the civil rights movement. The interviewee could be a relative, neighbor, community leader, or other older adult.
2. Review with students the steps outlined on the Student Sheet for preparing for an interview, conducting the interview, and what to do after the interview. Students work with their team members to develop questions for an interview. Direct students to use the five Ws and H (who, what, where, when, why, and how) or use the following questions to help students get started.
  - Did you participate in the civil rights movement?
  - What do you remember most about those years?
  - How did the civil rights movement affect you?
  - How did you feel when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., was shot?
3. Students share the results of their interview by writing a one-page summary of the interview. Students also share their results with teammates during the next class period.

**Note to the Teacher:** Rather than having students conduct oral history interviews as homework, the teacher could invite one or two former participants in the civil rights movement to speak to the class. Students work with teammates to prepare questions to ask the visitors.

#### Activity Two

1. Distribute the Student Sheets: *A Vietnam Timeline*. Cut apart and distribute the Student Sheet: *Vietnam!* cards, one to each cooperative learning team.
2. Working with teammates, students read the card and write a one-sentence general summary of the information. Students should also be prepared to report the date, amount of money spent, and number of men involved in the war during the period depicted on their card.
3. Using **Numbered Heads**, record the responses of the students on the Transparency: *Graphing United States Involvement in Vietnam*.

History Sleuth, Cont.



What do you  
Think?



Moving Toward  
Freedom

4. Ask students the following questions.

- According to this graph, when did the United States first get involved in Vietnam?
- During what year did United States involvement peak?
- Based on information learned during this lesson, what events might have led to the increased United States role in Vietnam?

### Teacher Directions

Students respond to the following writing prompt.

- What was King's Promised Land? Have we reached it? What needs to happen for America to be more of a Promised Land?

### Teacher Directions

1. Using the Brief Bios and other resources, students research the lives of President Lyndon Johnson, Martin Luther King, Jr., Malcolm X, and Robert Kennedy to answer the following questions.

**Note to the Teacher:** One member of each student learning team researches one of the civil rights leaders. Students report their research to teammates before engaging in a class discussion.

- How did President Lyndon Johnson move America toward freedom?
- How did Martin Luther King, Jr., move America toward freedom?
- How did Malcolm X move America toward freedom?
- How did Robert Kennedy move America toward freedom?

2. Students share their answers in a class discussion. Make sure that the discussion includes the following points.

President Johnson championed the cause of civil rights. He sent to Congress the Civil Rights Act, which outlawed discrimination, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, which eliminated restrictions on voting.

Martin Luther King, Jr., a Christian minister, gained national and international prominence as he led the civil rights movement from the early 1960s. He championed nonviolent civil disobedience and led peaceful protests in Birmingham, Montgomery, Selma, and other cities until his death in 1968.

Moving Toward Freedom,  
Continued.



Connections

Malcolm X, a Black Muslim spokesman, was a major voice for Black Nationalism in the 1960s. Because he believed that African Americans would not receive justice or equality from white Americans, he advocated separation and Black Nationalism. He believed African Americans should use violence to reach their civil rights goals. After a pilgrimage to Mecca, his views softened; he no longer believed that violence and separation were the only options for African Americans.

Robert Kennedy advocated civil rights for all Americans and wanted the nation to address problems of inequality and poverty. His campaign for the presidency united young people, minorities, and others to pursue these goals.

### Teacher Directions

Use the following activities with students.

**Visual/Dramatic Arts** — Using the knowledge gained in this lesson, students create a soliloquy that expresses the speaker's view of some aspect of the life, death, or beliefs of either Malcolm X, Robert Kennedy, or Martin Luther King, Jr.

**Science/Library** — Why do some forensic experts believe that Sirhan Sirhan was not the lone gunman in the assassination of Robert Kennedy? Students use library resources and web sites to research the assassination of Kennedy and the science of forensics.

**Language Arts** — Students read Harper Lee's enduring classic, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, which deals with issues of racial prejudice and injustice in a small southern town. A Partner Discussion Guide is available from the Johns Hopkins University Talent Development Middle School Program.

**Math** — In 1963, the federal minimum wage was raised to \$1.40 per hour. Students compare that figure to the current federal minimum wage. How much would a worker take home after a 40-hour work week in 1963? Today?

**Science/Library** — In 1967, the Department of the Interior issued its first list of endangered species. The list included seventy-eight birds and animals that were threatened with extinction. Students research how many species are presently considered endangered. What species are no longer on the list? Why? What species have been added?

**Language Arts** — Students read one of the following books, which were Newbery winners from the 1960s: *I, Juan de Pareja* by Elizabeth de Trevino; *From the Mixed-Up Files of Mrs. Basil E. Frankweiler* by E.L. Konigsburg; *A Wrinkle in Time* by Madeline L'Engle; *Island of the Blue Dolphins* by Scott O'Dell; *Bronze Bow* by Elizabeth Speare; or *Shadow of a Bull* by Maria Wojciechowska.

# How to Do Oral History

## Preparing for the Interview

1. Learn some background information about your topic.
2. Write three questions to ask your interviewee. Ask about the first-hand experiences of your interviewee. Ask questions that require more than a *Yes* or *No* answer. For example, ask “How did you feel about U.S. involvement in the war?” rather than “Were you against the war?”
3. Exchange questions with your partner and role play to make sure your questions are clear and easy to understand.

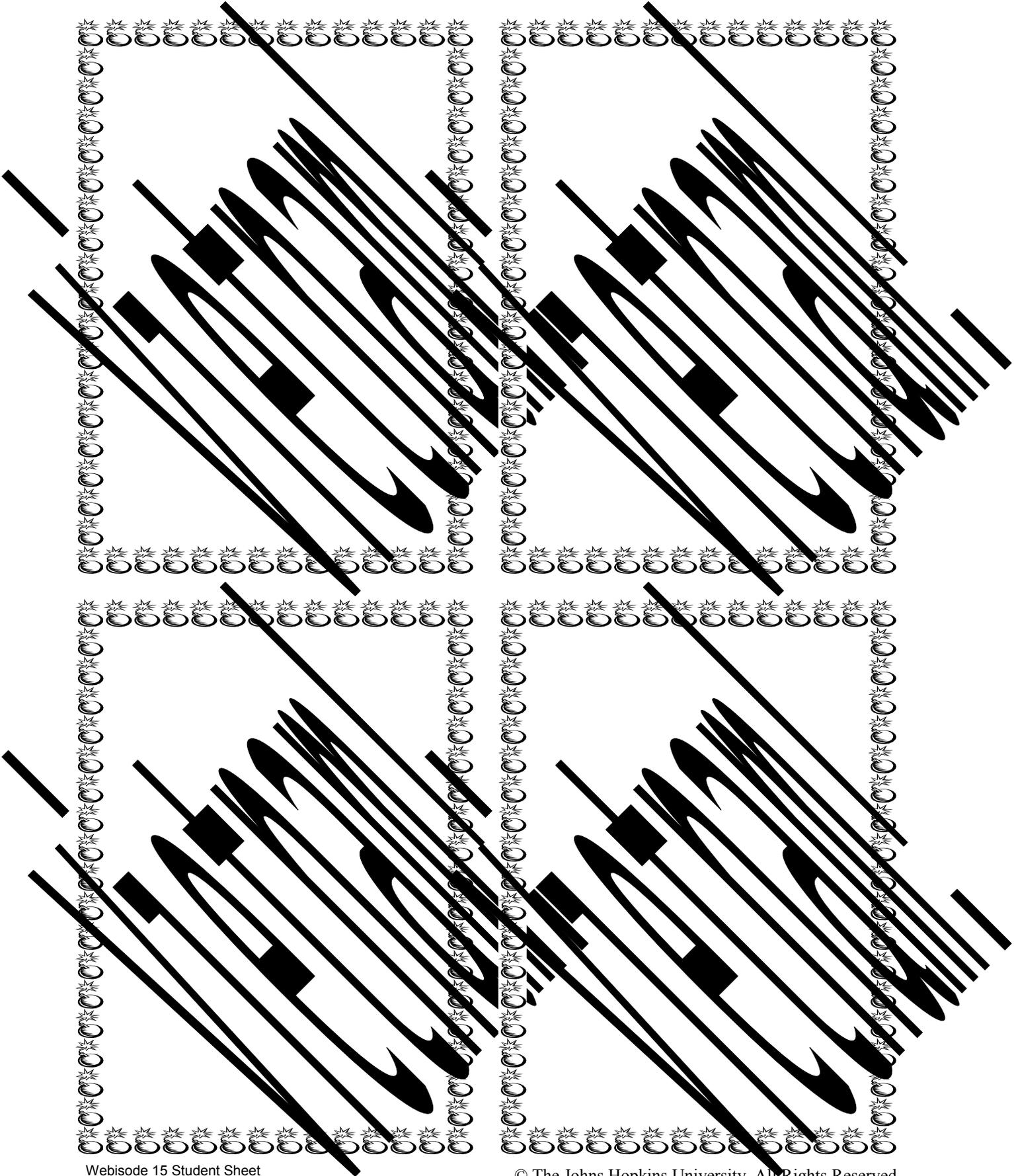
## Conducting the Interview

1. If you have a tape recorder, use it to record your subject’s interview. This will enable you to take a few notes and concentrate on your interviewee.
2. Bring your list of questions.
3. Bring extra paper to record your notes or write ideas for follow-up questions as the person is talking.
4. Use good manners: be on time; be prepared; be polite (say *please* and *thank you* and address people formally using Mr., Mrs., Ms., or Miss; introduce yourself and give your name, age, and the class and school you attend); be patient and allow the person time to answer questions; do not argue with or correct the person.
5. Jot down any follow up questions you want to ask as your interviewee speaks.

## After the Interview

1. Listen to your tape and write down the most important parts of the person’s response. You may need to listen to the tape many times to transcribe (write down) what is said.
2. Analyze: Think about the accuracy of what your subject said. Did you hear contradictory information or indications that the person did not remember an event well? Did the person have a clear bias that might have influenced the way events were remembered?
3. Write a few sentences summarizing what your interviewee said.

Adapted from *Using Oral History: Student Lesson* from the Library of Congress



1950—Truman sends military aid to France to fight Communist rebels in Indochina.

1954—French withdraw from Indochina. Vietnam is partitioned until free elections can be held. These elections never take place.

—U.S. sends \$100 million to aid anti-Communist government in Saigon led by Prime Minister Diem.

1955—\$200 million in U.S. aid sent to Vietnam, Laos, and Cambodia.

1959—First two American soldiers killed. Less than 800 U.S. military personnel in Vietnam

1961 —3,200 U.S. military personnel or “advisors” in Vietnam

1962—12,000 U.S. military personnel (“advisors”) in Vietnam

1963—\$500 million to Vietnam  
—16,000 military “advisors” in Vietnam

1964 —Gulf of Tonkin Resolution gives Johnson power to “take all necessary measures” against Vietnam.  
—First American prisoner of war captured. He is held for more than eight years.  
—23,000 American military personnel

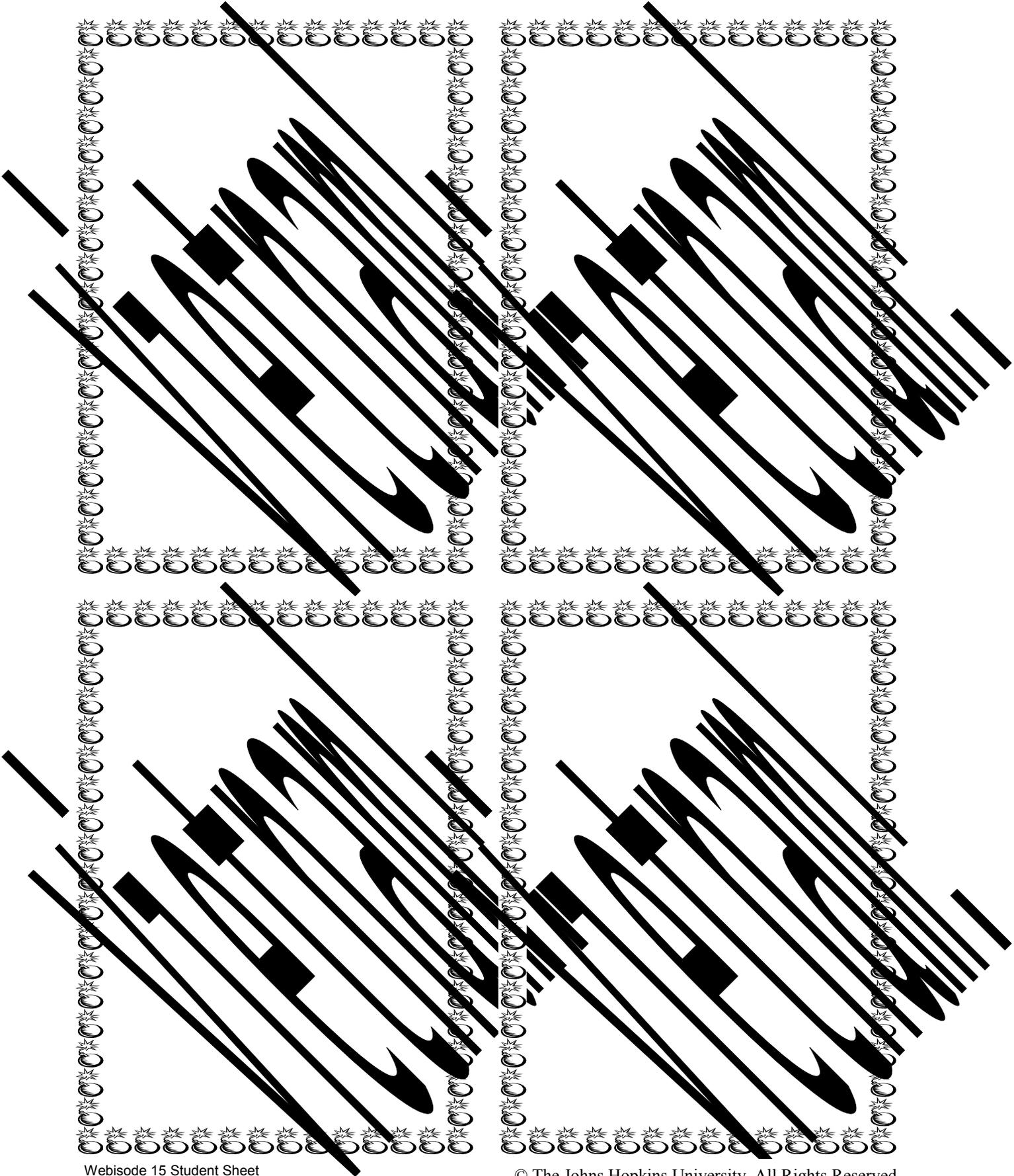
1965—Extensive air raids against North Vietnam begin

—200,000 American troops in Vietnam

—6,664 killed, 37,738 wounded since 1961

1966—Extensive bombing, use of Agent Orange and other chemical defoliants

— 400,000 American troops



1967—Antiwar protests grow  
—500,000 American troops

1968—Johnson announces he will not seek re-election  
—Peace talks begin in Paris between U.S. and North Vietnam  
—540,000 American troops in Vietnam

1969—Secret bombing of Cambodia  
—540,000 troops in Vietnam  
—Nixon withdraws 25,000 troops

1970—Nixon promises to withdraw another 150,000 troops  
—Six student protesters killed at Kent State and Jackson State College  
—280,000 U.S. troops

1971—Pentagon Papers published which reveal that government has repeatedly lied to the nation about the war  
—140,000 U.S. troops

1972—70,000 U.S. troops in Vietnam

1973—Cease-fire agreement  
—Last American ground troops leave Vietnam; American POWs released

1975—Last Americans evacuated from Saigon  
—Last two American casualties  
—Communist forces take control of Saigon

# Graphing United States Involvement in Vietnam

