

EXPLORE THE '60s

LEARNING UNIT: HISTORICAL EVENTS (TEACHER USE ONLY)

Timeline extracted from The Museum at Bethel Woods Center for the Arts

1960 Kennedy Elected President:

- February 1, 1960: Sit-in at Woolworth's in Greensboro, North Carolina
- March 2, 1960: Elvis leaves the US Army and returns to music.
- April 14, 1960: Bye Bye Birdie opens in New York
- May 5, 1960: U-2 spy plane incident
- July 11, 1960: Harper Lee's To Kill a Mockingbird published
- September 5, 1960: Muhammed Ali (then known as Cassius Clay) wins the light heavyweight boxing gold medal in the 1960 Olympics
- November 8, 1960: John F. Kennedy elected president
- December 31, 1960: The Kingston Trio's folk record Here We Go Again is the fifth best-selling album of 1960

1961 Berlin Wall Constructed:

- February 12, 1961: "Shop Around" by the Miracles becomes Motown's first million selling single.
- March 1961: Peace Corps founded
- April 17, 1961: Bay of Pigs invasion
- May 25, 1961: President Kennedy announces America will march the moon by the end of the decade.
- August 12, 1961: Berlin Wall built in the middle of the night
- October 18, 1961: West Side Story sound track released

1962 Cuban Missile Crisis:

- January 13, 1962: "The Twist" by Chubby checker becomes the top selling single in America
- February 20, 1962: John Glenn is first American to orbit the earth
- February 22, 1962: Kennedy speaks at the Berlin Wall
- June 1, 1962: Ray Charles releases Modern Sounds in Country and Western Music
- July 10, 1962: Telstar, the world's first communications satellite, launches into orbit, inspiring the instrumental hit Telstar
- September 1962: Rachel Carson's Silent Spring published
- September 1962: James Meredith became the first African American to attend the University of Mississippi

1963 Kennedy Assassinated:

- April 6, 1963: First broadcast of Hootenanny, ABC's folk music variety show
- May 11, 1963: Peter, Paul and Mary's "Puff the Magic Dragon" releases #2 on the charts. They also released "Blowin' in the Wind" later in the year.
- August 28, 1963: 200,000 March on Washington in support of Civil Rights
- September 15, 1963: The 16th Street Baptist Church in Birmingham, Alabama, is bombed, killing four young African American girls
- October 10, 1963: Limited Test Ban Treaty restricts above ground nuclear testing
- November 22, 1963: John F. Kennedy assassinated in Texas

1964 British Invasion:

- February 10, 1964: Dylan releases The Times They Are A-Changin'
- February 9, 16, and 23, 1964: The Beatles appear on The Ed Sullivan Show 3X in a row, launching the British Invasion
- April 4, 1964: The top five singles in America are all songs by The Beatles; the group has seven other in the top 100
- June 11, 1964: The Civil Rights Act passed by Congress
- June 22, 1964: Three young civil rights workers are reported missing in Mississippi; their bodies found six weeks later

- July 25, 1964: Congress passes landmark anti-poverty bill as President Johnson's Great Society program.
- August 7, 1964: Gulf of Tonkin Resolution passed in Congress.
- October 14, 1964: Martin Luther King win Nobel Peace Prize

1965 Johnson Signs Voting Rights Act:

- April 12, 1965: The Byrds release "Mr. Tambourine Man"
- June 1965: James Brown releases "Papa's Got a Brand New Bag"
- July 26, 1965: President Johnson announces a troop buildup in Vietnam and doubles draft quotas. Number of US troops in South Vietnam is 125,000
- July 30, 1965: President Johnson signs the bill establishing Medicare and Medicaid
- August 6, 1965: President Johnson signs Voting Rights Act
- August 11, 1965: Race riots break out in Watts.
- August 1965: Bob Dylan releases "Like a Rolling Stone"
- November 1965: The Mamas and the Papas release "California Dreamin'"

1966 Vietnam War Escalates:

- March 5, 1966: "Ballad of the Green Berets" by Sgt. Barry Sadler becomes the best-selling single in America.
- April 1966: Beach Boys release Pet Sounds
- June 1966: National Organization for Women (NOW) founded to lobby for women's rights.
- August 8, 1966: Beatles release Revolver
- September 12, 1966: The Monkees TV show goes on the air

1967 Summer of Love:

- January 14, 1967: The Human Be-In takes place in Golden Gate Park
- May 8, 1967: Muhammed Ali indicted for refusing to report for his draft board as a protest against Vietnam
- June 1, 1967: Beatles release Sgt. Pepper's Lonely Hearts Club Band
- June 18, 1967: Jimi Hendrix burns his guitar at the Monterey International Pop Festival
- Summer 1967: Summer of Love festivals held in San Francisco and spread throughout the country
- August 30, 1967: Thurgood Marshall confirmed as first African American on the Supreme Court
- November 9, 1967: First issue of Rolling Stone magazine released
- December 21, 1967: The Graduate opens in movie theaters

1968 DNC Chicago Riots:

- January 30, 1968: Tet Offensive begins in Vietnam
- April 4, 1968: Martin Luther King Jr. assassinated in Tennessee
- April 23, 1968: Student protestors take over buildings at Columbia University
- April 29, 1968: HAIR opens on Broadway
- June 5, 1968: Robert F. Kennedy assassinated in California
- July 1968: The Band releases Music from Big Pink
- August 21, 1968: Soviet invasion of Czechoslovakia ends the Prague Spring
- August 26, 1968: Democratic National Convention in Chicago marred by clashes between protestors and police
- November 5, 1968: Nixon elected president

1969 Woodstock Festival:

- May 23, 1969: The Who release the rock opera album Tommy
- June 8, 1969: Nixon announces the withdrawal of 25,000 troops from Vietnam
- June 28, 1969: Stonewall Inn riots mark beginning of Gay Rights Movement
- July 14, 1969: Easy Rider opens in US movie theaters
- July 20, 1969: Neil Armstrong walks on the moon
- August 9-10, 1969: Charles Manson's "family" murders seven people in Los Angeles
- August 15-18, 1969: Woodstock Music and Art Festival
- October 16, 1969: New York Mets win the World Series
- November 10, 1969: First broadcast of Sesame Street
- December 6, 1969: Four fans are killed during the Altamont Music Festival

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STUDENT PRE-ACTIVITY

INTRODUCTION:

In this learning unit, we explore the transformative events of the 1960s, the decade that changed the nation. The social, political, cultural, and global events that took place within this period inspired a generation of young people to set a course for change. Let's consider some questions that will help us connect the historical events of the 1960s to today. Write and discuss with others your answers to the questions below.

- 1 What do you know about the historical events of the 1960s?
- 2 Can you name any historical figures from the 1960s?
Who are these people and how are their efforts relevant?
- 3 What social and political issues from the 1960s are still present today?
- 4 What are some similarities and differences of the 1960s and today?

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STUDENT ACTIVITY 1: **TIMELINE PENNANTS**

In the following activity, you will create a timeline of events representing each year of the decade.

Individually or in groups, pick one pennant which represents a year from the 1960s decade...but don't tell the anyone which year you've selected! Use your creativity to depict a key historical event of that year.

This depiction can be portrayed through words (poetry, detailed prose, lists) and/or visuals (drawings, symbols, pictures). Present your completed pennant to your peers and see if they can guess which year of the 1960s you selected based on the visual and verbal clues you have provided for them.

After all pennants are presented, try hanging them up (like the below image) in chronological order to create a decorated banner of the most influential events and people from 1960 through 1969.



