

Vietnamese American Experiences Model Curriculum
California Department of Education
Anti-Communism and Diasporic Nationalism
Grades: 11–12

Author: Joseph Nguyễn

Area of Study: Vietnamese Resettlement and Community Building

Compelling Question: What is Vietnamese America?

Lesson Question (Supporting Question):

- What is anti-communism and diasporic nationalism and how is it important to understanding Vietnamese American identity?
- How is nationalism and anti-communism expressed as both a political and cultural phenomenon in the Vietnamese American community?

Lesson Materials:

- Supplies:
 - Access to laptop device
 - Poster Paper
 - Markers
- Videos:
 - Anticommunism Hitek Incident
 - USA: Video Store Ordered to Remove Portrait of Hồ Chí Minh
 - Có Những Người Anh (There are Men)
- Handouts:
 - Diasporic Nationalism and Anti-Communism Definition Worksheet Activity
 - Carousel Activity Sources
 - Carousel Activity Notetaker
 - Link to handouts:
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/28phksyy1p306qws31f6b97u90kz536u>

Lesson Objective: Students will be able to define anti-communism and diaspora nationalism and describe its influence on the Vietnamese American community as a political ideology as well as a cultural phenomenon, by creating a poster presentation.

Historical Thinking Skills: This lesson will facilitate student proficiency in *historical significance*, one of Seixas' historical thinking skills (Seixas & Morton, 2013). Students make

personal decisions about what is historically significant, and then consider the criteria they use to make those decisions. Students consider how historical significance varies over time and from group to group.

Standards Addressed:

HSS-11.11 Students analyze the major social problems and domestic policy issues in contemporary American society.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Lesson Assessment: Students will create a poster about one of the following: Black April Commemoration or Tết Celebrations/Saigon Nationalism.

Suggested Amount of Time: 70–100 minutes

Lesson Background:

The Hi-Tek incident in 1999 in Westminster, California, ignited a firestorm within the Vietnamese community in the US when a store owner displayed the flag of the Socialist Republic of Vietnam and a poster of Hồ Chí Minh. This act led to protests and legal battles, exposing deep-seated anti-communist and nationalist sentiments within the Vietnamese diaspora.

The incident is a small case study of two concepts that have strong relevance in the Vietnamese American community: anti-communism and diasporic nationalism. Anti-communism and diasporic nationalism help characterize the strong nationalist feelings that members of the Vietnamese diaspora maintain towards their homeland that help build a political and cultural identity. Various community events including Black April commemorations, Tết celebrations, monument building, the continuation of Republic of Vietnam-era national holidays, and political campaigns to make Little Saigon a distinct, recognizable entity using symbols such as the South Vietnamese flag and South Vietnamese heroes are some of many examples that help create this unique cultural community.

Why is anti-communism and diasporic nationalism so powerful in the Vietnamese American community? These strong emotions that pervade the community are not merely a reflection of refugees' unique hardships and individual political ideologies based on experience, but are also part of a shared culture, transmitted through various events, art, music, and literature in the community. Today, while most people in the Vietnamese American community are not old enough to have ever lived or matured in the Republic of Vietnam, anti-communism and the

sharing of nationalist themes have interlaced together to create a political and cultural community that recognizes an antagonistic relationship as victims of communism as central themes in unifying the community, while diasporic nationalism in relation to the Republic of Vietnam gives the community a tangible past, present, and future for the community to orient themselves towards that is not solely defined by opposition to communism.

Lesson Procedures:

- a. Warm Up (five minutes)
 - i. Ask students to think about ways people show patriotism and/or nationalism. Examples may include: displaying flags, serving in the military, community service, voting, etc.
 - ii. Allow students to share and have a whole class discussion.
- b. Interaction with first source: Show Hi-Tek Clip (10 minutes)
 - i. The teacher will show the students one of two clips of the Hi-tek incident.
 1. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=D5bK2hbzm3w> (with subtitles)
 2. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjIHe5VSHc4&t=3s>
 - ii. After watching the video, students will have one to two minutes write their answer to this question:
 1. What was the Hi-tek incident and why do you think the Vietnamese American community reacted so strongly to it? In addition to what was mentioned in the video, feel free to draw from personal experiences to support your response.
- c. Brief introduction of discussion into Vietnamese American politics (15 minutes)
 - i. The teacher will have students share their answers to the class to start the discussion (5 minutes).
 - ii. Discussion questions to ask:
 1. Do you think it was right for Trần Trương to display the flag of Vietnam today and a picture of Hồ Chí Minh in Little Saigon?
 - Do you think he had a right to do so?
 2. Do you think it was right for the Vietnamese American refugee community to protest Trần Trương, prevent him from conducting business, and eventually getting him evicted?

- Do you think they had a right to do so?
3. What do you think anti-communism is? Diasporic nationalism?
- In order to help students guess the term based on the video, it may be helpful for the teacher to write the terms on the board and define each word: anti-communism, diaspora, and nationalism.
 - Anti-Communism (*Chống Cộng*): Opposition to Communist ideology, significant in South Vietnamese and Vietnamese American communities
 - Diaspora: The dispersion of Vietnamese people outside their homeland. Vietnamese refugees in the diaspora who fled communism after 1975 mainly resettled in the US, Australia, Canada, France, Japan, and West Germany.
 - Diasporic nationalism: refers to the phenomenon where members of a dispersed ethnic or national community (a diaspora) maintain strong nationalist feelings, connections, and allegiances to their homeland, even though they may be living far from it. This sense of identity and loyalty can manifest in various ways, including cultural practices, political activism, economic support, and social networks that connect the diaspora community with their place of origin.
 - Nationalism: Identification with one's own nation and support for its interests, especially to the exclusion or detriment of the interests of other nations.
- iii. Option 2: The teacher could have a two-sides debate.
1. The teacher would ask the same question above, but instead of just having students answer, the teacher can have students move to one side or the other (or stand up or stay seated) if they agree or disagree with the statements. After the students move, the teacher can call on specific students to share their opinion.
- d. Diasporic Nationalism and Anti-Communism Definition Worksheet Activity (15 minutes)
- i. Note: this activity assumes some prior knowledge of the Vietnamese refugee community for this lesson to run smoothly.

- ii. The teacher will distribute the worksheet, see handouts section
 - iii. The teacher will read the instructions of the handout.
 - iv. The teacher will divide the class into groups of three to four to collaborate with each other and fill out the worksheet.
 - v. During the 10 minutes, the teacher will walk around the groups and help out any groups that need help.
 - vi. In the last five minutes, students will share the answers they wrote, and if needed, the teacher will use the answer key provided in the handout in order for students to fill in any gaps they were unable to fill.
- e. Music Analysis (20 minutes)
- i. The teacher will transition the discussion from diasporic nationalism and anti-communism to have students think about (but not answer) the following question:
 1. Why is diasporic nationalism and anti-communism so powerful? Are they a result of the political ideology and personal hardships of refugees, or is it a shared culture?
 2. The intent of this question is to prime students of diasporic nationalism and anti-communism as a culture.
 - In the discussion after the video, the teacher should note that anyone under 50 was not born in the Republic of Vietnam (or RVN), and anyone under 65 was likely not old enough to fully appreciate the RVN society that they lived in.
 - How did the love for the Republic of Vietnam and the shared commitment to anti-communism become so prevalent as a community? Answers may be found in the videos.
 - ii. The teacher will have the students watch a video. (10 minutes)
 1. Có Những Người Anh (There are Men):
 - Link (with subtitles):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mRf3gPXczL4>
 - Link (without subtitles):
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U64U1YBeoE4>

- iii. While watching the video, the teacher will ask the students to write down what emotions were evoked by the video, any imagery used, symbolism (ex: all-men in one video and all-women in another), lyrics that stood out to them, and the main idea of each song.
- iv. The teacher will spend the remaining time going back to the question above:
 1. Why is diasporic nationalism and anti-communism so powerful? Are they a result of the political ideology and personal hardships of refugees, or is it a shared culture?
 2. Students will have a reflection of diasporic nationalism and anti-communism as both an ideology developed from personal hardships and refugee experiences as well as a shared musical and artistic culture among those who experienced and did not experience hardship.
 - Musical culture as helping foster a refugee identity under the themes of diasporic nationalism and anti-communism.
 - Refugee experiences, nationalism, and anti-communism passed onto generations through cultural practices, art, and music.
- f. Cultural Anti-Communism in the Community (Class Carousel Activity) (25–35 minutes)
 - i. The teacher will divide the class into six groups. The teacher will pass out the “Carousel Activity Sources”, see handouts
 1. Two groups will be assigned the same source worksheet about Little Saigon Tét Parades and Tét Festivals (Sources 3a and 3b). Two groups will be assigned the same source worksheet about Black April/Day of National Resentment Commemorations (Sources 4a and 4b). Two groups will be assigned the same source worksheet with ARVN Forces Day, Quảng Trị Victory Monument, and the Saigon Nationalism Timeline (Sources 5a and 5b).
 2. The teacher will give each group 10 minutes to silently read the sources and watch the videos together as a group. When finished, the students will be able to get together in groups and discuss.
 - ii. The teacher will instruct the students that for the next 20 minutes, the students will make a poster in their groups. There will be more than one product per topic. Alternatively, this can be created as a digital slide deck. The final product can be open to a written, visual, or audio narrative.
 - iii. Requirements for the poster are as follows:
 1. Title: Name of event(s)

2. Drawing: A drawing of the assigned event that helps other students capture the imagery of the event and the symbols used to reflect anti-communism or diasporic nationalism.
 3. Bullet Points: These notes should effectively explain the following points:
 - How is diasporic nationalism or anti-communism expressed in the Vietnamese American community?
 - How is diasporic nationalism or anti-communism expressed as both political and cultural?
 - What important symbols, imagery, or practices are found in the videos of the celebrations?
 - Unique details and facts about the celebration
- iv. Class Carousel (20 minutes)
1. The class carousel is a method for each of the six groups to make three presentations with other groups.
 2. Each round will have two presentations between the groups, with a total of six presentations for three rounds.
 - Each presentation should be three minutes long. The teacher will tell students to switch after each three minutes.
 3. The teacher will swap the groups so each group means another group of each source once. Keep in mind that two groups have Black April, two groups have Tết Celebrations, and two groups have diasporic nationalism events.
 4. Here is an example of how the groups would be paired. 1a and 1b would represent the two groups that have Black April, 2a and 2b would represent the two groups that have Tết Celebrations, and 3a and 3b would represent the two groups the have diasporic nationalism events:
 - Round 1
 - a. 1a and 3b
 - b. 2a and 2b
 - c. 3a and 1b
 - Round 2
 - a. 3b and 2b
 - b. 1a and 1b
 - c. 2a and 3a
 - Round 3
 - a. 2b and 1b
 - b. 3b and 3a

c. 1a and 2a

5. During the presentations, each student will use the “Carousel Activity Notetaker”, found in the handouts section, to take notes on the connections to anti-communism and diasporic nationalism.

v. Critical Circular Exchange (10–15 minutes)

1. Allow students to do a gallery walk of each poster.
2. Reflection Questions for students:
 - What is anti-communism and diasporic nationalism and how is it important to understanding Vietnamese American identity?
 - How is nationalism and anti-communism expressed as both a political and cultural phenomenon in the Vietnamese American community?

Scaffolding:

- **Engagement:** Consider the following method to support with lesson engagement:
 - Use prompts or scaffolds for visualizing desired outcome
 - Create cooperative learning groups with clear goals, roles, and responsibilities
- **Representation:** Consider the following method to support with multiple means of representation:
 - Provide descriptions (text or spoken) for all images, graphics, video, or animations
 - Display information in a flexible format so that the following perceptual features can be varied:
 - The size of text, images, graphs, tables, or other visual content
 - The contrast between background and text or image
 - The color used for information or emphasis
 - The volume or rate of speech or sound
 - The speed or timing of video, animation, sound, simulations, etc.
 - The layout of visual or other elements
 - The font used for print materials
- **Action and Expression:** Consider the following method to support in presenting their learning in multiple ways:
 - Embed prompts to “stop and think” before acting as well as adequate space

- Ask questions to guide self-monitoring and reflection

For additional ideas to support your students, check out the UDL Guidelines at CAST, 2018 <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>.

Multilingual Learner Supports:

- **Emerging:** Consider the following method to support with emerging students:
 - Speaking: Provide wall charts with illustrated academic vocabulary
 - Students use a Frayer graphic organizer to support understanding of a key word or concept. Place the target word in the center amid four surrounding quadrants to support different facets of word meaning.
- **Expanding:** Consider the following method to support with expanding students:
 - Speaking: Repeat and expand student responses in a collaborative dialogue
 - In partner and group discussions, students use conversation moves to extend academic talk. Conversation moves help students add to or challenge what a partner says, question, clarify, paraphrase, support thinking with examples, synthesize conversation points, etc.
- **Bridging:** Consider the following method to support with bridging students:
 - Speaking: Require the use of academic language
 - In response to a prompt, the teacher offers a sentence frame orally and/or in writing to support expression of student thinking. Frames are adjusted based upon specific grammatical structure, key vocabulary, content learning, and language proficiency level descriptors, etc. Frames are a temporary scaffold that require modification.

For additional guidance around scaffolding for multilingual learners, please consult the following resources:

- *English Learner Toolkit of Strategies*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/ujkdc2xp1dqjzrlq55czph50c3sq1ngu>
- *Providing Appropriate Scaffolding*
<https://www.sdcoe.net/educators/multilingual-education-and-global-achievement/oracy-to-olkit/providing-appropriate-scaffolding#scaffolding>
- *Strategies for ELD*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/dcp15ymah51uwizpmmt2vys5zr2r5reu>
- *ELA / ELD Framework*
<https://www.caeducatorstogether.org/resources/6537/ela-eld-framework>

- *California ELD Standards*
<https://ucdavis.box.com/s/vqn43cd632z22p8mfzn2h7pntc71kb02>

Enrichment Opportunities:

1. Têt - Have students explore how Têt is traditionally celebrated. They can explore rituals, activities, and events that are typically practiced. Students can also learn about the common symbols (lanterns, dragons, the color red, flowers). If students are in a community nearby Little Saigon, students can be encouraged to visit the Têt parades and/or festivals.
2. Local Monuments - Have students explore monuments in Vietnamese hubs or communities that pay special homage to Black April/Fall of Saigon. They can create a digital art exhibit or google maps tours of these monuments and statues.
3. “Terror in Little Saigon” Frontline PBS Documentary - This 2015 documentary investigates a series of unsolved murders and attacks that targeted Vietnamese-American journalists. Teachers can watch this with students or assign it as an optional homework assignment.

Works Cited:

Note: This lesson contains Youtube videos in Vietnamese that do not have subtitles. If the links below do not work, please refer to the bottom of the lesson plan for instructions on how to embed the subtitles into the Youtube video using a Chrome extension.

Britt, K. 2020, May 11. *English learner toolkit of strategies*. California County Superintendents.
<https://cacountysupts.org/english-learner-toolkit-of-strategies/>

Bui, D. 2023. DIASPORIC NATIONALISM. *Toward a Framework for Vietnamese American Studies: History, Community, and Memory*, 222.

California Department of Education & English Learner Support Division. 2012. *California English Language Development standards (Electronic Edition) kindergarten through grade 12 (F. Ong & J. McLean, Eds.)*. California Department of Education.
<https://www.cde.ca.gov/sp/el/er/documents/eldstndpublication14.pdf>

California Educators Together. (n.d.). *ELA / ELD framework*.
<https://www.caeducatorstogether.org/resources/6537/ela-eld-framework>

CAST. 2018. *The UDL guidelines*. <http://udlguidelines.cast.org>

Dang, T. V. 2005. The cultural work of anticommunism in the San Diego Vietnamese American community. *Amerasia Journal*, 31(2), 64–86.

<https://doi.org/10.17953/amer.31.2.t80283284556j378>

SBTNOFFICIAL. 2013, June 9. *Hải Lục Không Quân Việt Nam Cộng Hoà* [Video; includes the song "Có Những Người Anh" by Võ Đức Hảo]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=U64U1YBeoE4>

Jang, L. (Director), & Winn, R.C. (Director). 2004. Saigon, USA. [Film].

“*Little Saigon Commemorates South Vietnamese Armed Forces Day with Exhibit.*”

www.youtube.com, www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PSucSUqV88. Accessed 13 Dec. 2023.

KPIX | CBS NEWS BAY AREA. Nov 13, 2021. *San Jose Monument Dedicated to Vietnamese Who Fought at Quang Tri* [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=J340vVi58NA>

Người Việt Daily News. Jun 23, 2015. *Little Saigon commemorates South Vietnamese Armed Forces Day with exhibit* [Video]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9PSucSUqV88>

Nguyễn Khang, Đoàn Phi, Quốc Khanh, & Mai Thanh Sơn (Performers). March 27 2022 . *Trả Lại Cho Dân* [Video; composed by Việt Khang]. YouTube.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Pmg2Y9aM48c>

Nguyen, Y. T. 2018. (Re) making the South Vietnamese Past in America. *Journal of Asian American Studies*, 21(1), 65-103.

Overseas Vietnamese community commemorates “Black April.” (n.d.). www.youtube.com.

Retrieved December 13, 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=l2Kylrixjc0>

San Diego County Office of Education. (n.d.). *Providing appropriate scaffolding.*

<https://www.sdcoe.net/educators/multilingual-education-and-global-achievement/oracy-to-olkit/providing-appropriate-scaffolding#scaffolding>

Sexias, P. & Morton, T. 2013. *The big six: Historical thinking concepts*. Nelson Education.

“*San Jose Monument Dedicated to Vietnamese Who Fought at Quang Tri.*” www.youtube.com,

www.youtube.com/watch?v=J340vVi58NA. Accessed 13 Dec. 2023.

Tết Parade, Firecrackers crackle in Little Saigon. (n.d.). www.youtube.com. Retrieved

December 13, 2023. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ykY8OI8Ixy4>

Tulare County Office of Education. (n.d.). *Strategies for ELD*.

<https://commoncore.tcoe.org/Content/Public/doc/Alpha-CollectionofELDStrategies.pdf>

VOA Tiếng Việt. Jan 23, 2023. *Diễn hành Tết, pháo nổ tung bùng ở Little Saigon* | VOA Tiếng Việt [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=cQuiiRUsj7w>

VOA Tiếng Việt. May 2, 2022. Người Việt hải ngoại tưởng niệm ‘Tháng tư đen’ (VOA Tiếng Việt) [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pEdJ6muMLRI>

USA: VIDEO STORE ORDERED TO REMOVE PORTRAIT OF HỒ Chí Minh. (n.d.).

Www.youtube.com. Retrieved September 18, 2023, from

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=pjIHe5VSHc4&t=3s>

Supplementary Sources:

Frontline PBS | Official. 2021. *Terror in Little Saigon* (full documentary) | FRONTLINE.

YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Fjlo4cZEXeY>