Lesson Outline

- Pass out to students the document titled "Watergate Background" along with the student worksheet. Have students read the document and answer the 5 questions. – 20 minutes
- Go through the first nine slides on the powerpoint which discusses some of the basics of Watergate.
- Give to the students the U.S. vs Nixon handout and the Smoking Gun transcript. Keys to the court case are that the court did agree with Nixon that executive privilege does exist, but that it is not absolute and he had to turn over some of the tapes. Have them read and answer the questions for each reading.
- Hand out the story about “Deepthroat” (Mark Felt). Make sure that they understand that had it not been for Felt the Washington Post reporters would not have been able to continue their investigation, and in all likelihood Nixon would have gotten away with all of his stuff.
- This video is 45 minutes long. It is a made for tv program. It is certainly not the best, but does tell most of the story and is shorter than anything else that I have found.
  - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFID6Qkwh88
- Use your own discretion as to when to show the video. I am thinking at the end of Day 1 and the beginning of Day 2 in order to break things up a bit.
Background

- Read the “Watergate Background” Doc
- Answer the five questions under the “Watergate background” section on your handout
- Be prepared to share information

What happened?

- June 17, 1972
- Five men arrested for breaking into the DNC (Democratic National Committee) headquarters
- DNC headquarters was in the Watergate Complex in Washington DC
- They had wiretapping equipment when arrested
Who were the burglars?

Left to right: James McCord, Jr., Virgilio Gonzalez, Frank Sturgis, Eugenio Martinez, and Bernard Baker

Who else was involved?

• Gordon Liddy and Howard Hunt
  • Former FBI and CIA agents
  • Working for CREEP (Nixon’s Committee to Re-Election the President)
  • Their job: protect Nixon administration, anyway necessary (legal or not)
What else?

• Watergate Break-in was not an isolated event
  • Part of a pattern of illegal actions and misuse of power by a paranoid White House
• Nixon could have distanced himself by dismissing the guilty parties
  • But it was election time and Nixon was worried about his image

And also...

• Carl Bernstein and Bob Woodward
  • Reporters for the *Washington Post* uncovered CREEPs illegal “slush fund” and its links to key White House officials
  • The information was published
The Tapes...

- In 1971, Nixon had a taping system installed in several areas
  - Oval Office – 7 mics
  - Cabinet Room – 2 mics
  - Old Executive Office Building – 4 mics
  - Camp David – in his study – 1 mic and phones tapped
- All mics, except Cabinet Room, were voice activated
  - Nixon didn’t have to think about starting them
- Secret Service managed all recordings
- Only a few people knew about the taping system
- During interviews, the special investigator learns that about the taping system

The Tapes, again...

- Nixon refuses to surrender the tapes
  - Claims executive privilege
  - But gives in and releases a few tapes
  - The American people are blown away by his language and the way he speaks about people
US v. Nixon

• Read the article and answer the two questions

US v. Nixon

• Supreme Court forces him to release the unaltered tapes
  • Nixon arranged for “hush money” to be paid to the burglars
  • Nixon instructed the CIA to stop the FBI investigation
  • Investigators find solid evidence that Nixon had ordered the cover-up of the Watergate break-in
The Smoking Gun

- Transcript
- Audio Recording
- As you read and listen, answer the five questions in your handout under “Transcript of White House Recording”

National Geographic

- Documentary - https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=nFID6Qkwh88
- As you watch find details on:
  - Nixon as a person
  - Nixon as president
  - Nixon’s downfall
Overview – Videos

- [http://www.history.com/topics/watergate](http://www.history.com/topics/watergate)
- [https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lHnmriyXYeg](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lHnmriyXYeg)

Impeachment Process

- Impeachment is formal accusation of wrong doing against a public official
- The House Judiciary approved the first of three articles of impeachment against Nixon on July 27, 1974
  - This would then be presented to the full House to vote on, if majority agree then Nixon would’ve been impeached
  - It would then go to the Senate, they would hear the articles of impeachment, investigate and vote, it would take 2/3 of the Senate to remove Nixon from office
- Nixon Resigns on August 8, 1974
  - He was never impeached
Nixon Resigns

- http://www.history.com/topics/watergate/videos/nixon-announces-his-resignation

Ford Pardons Nixon

- http://www.history.com/topics/watergate/videos/ford-defends-nixon-pardon?m=528e394da93ae&s=undefined&f=1&free=false
Mark Felt as “Deep Throat”

- Read the article titled, “Source was Conflicted on his Role” from the Washington Post
- Complete the four questions on the back of the handout

Analysis

- What happened at the Watergate Complex?
- What did Nixon know about?
- Why did Nixon resign?
- Should Ford have pardoned Nixon?