

THE VIETNAM WAR

A FILM BY KEN BURNS & LYNN NOVICK

Media Coverage of the Tet Offensive Graphic Organizer

Directions: Watch the video segments from **THE VIETNAM WAR** and answer the following questions.

Video Segment: “Attack on the US Embassy”

1. Why do you think that early television footage of the embassy attack would have concerned many Americans?

Video Segment: “Press Coverage of the Tet Offensive”

1. Why was President Johnson so upset about press coverage during Tet? What examples of this “unfair coverage” does he give?

2. How might the statement, “It became necessary to destroy the town to save it” have influenced public opinion about military goals and the Tet Offensive?

Video Segment: “Execution of a Viet Cong Soldier”

1. Do you think the execution of the Viet Cong agent should have been televised? Why or why not?

2. How might the photo of the execution of the Viet Cong agent have affected the American public watching at home?

3. How might the execution photo have influenced American public opinion about the South Vietnamese Army and its support for the American war effort?

Video Segment: “The Tet Offensive”

1. What evidence does the clip give to prove that the Tet Offensive was a defeat for the North Vietnamese and the Viet Cong?

2. What factors mentioned in the clip might have convinced some Americans that Tet was a defeat for the US and South Vietnamese forces? Do you think these were genuine concerns, or did many of these factors play on many average Americans' fears? If so, how?

3. What was Walter Cronkite's conclusion about American involvement in Vietnam? How might Cronkite's status as a nationally known news anchor have influenced the average American viewing his broadcast?