



# Remember

Remembrance is Continuing the Resistance  
NEW JERSEY COMMISSION ON HOLOCAUST EDUCATION

## 9/11 Lessons for the Classroom

### 6 – 8 Lesson Plans

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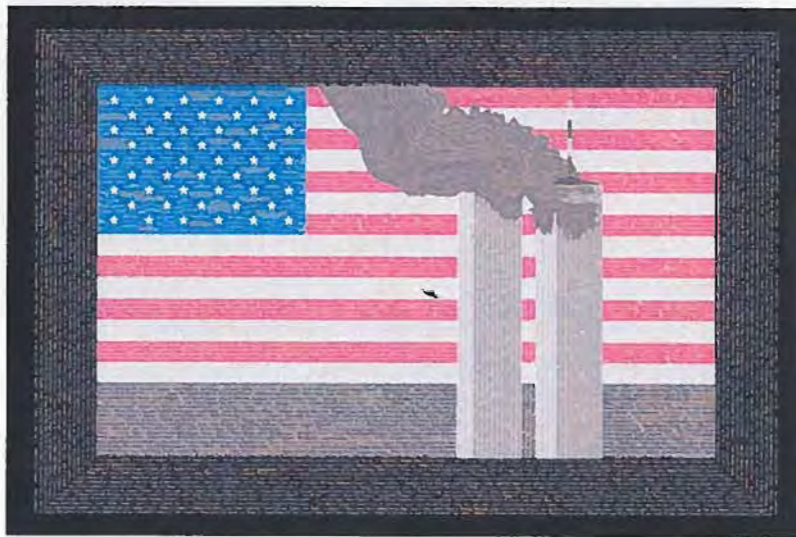
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Collapsed section of Pentagon western wall



One year anniversary wreath laying ceremony in Shanksville where UAL Flight 93 crashed on 9/11



9/11 Victimmicrograph . The image contains all the names of those who perished at the World Trade Center on 9/11



Boston College Memorial Labyrinth in memory of Boston College Alumni who died in the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001  
Photo by Widosu.



The Navy Band and Sea Chanters Chorus close the public opening of the Pentagon Memorial dedicated to the victims of the September 11, 2001 attack with "Stars and Stripes Forever". The Pentagon Memorial is the first national memorial dedicated to the events that took place on September 11, 2001.

## 6 – 8 Lesson Plans

### **Why Terrorism?**

examining and researching different incidents of violence  
for possibility of terrorism and applying definition as a check –  
short reading for 5 events include in plan Grades 7-8 \_\_\_\_\_ 1

### **What Is the Face of Terrorism?**

3 forms (lone, state-sponsored, group) terrorism; handouts  
for 3 case studies; identifying a terrorist – Grades 6-8 \_\_\_\_\_ 9

### **The Museum Project**

group work on instances of terrorism; defining type,  
selecting materials and information, etc. to create  
museum-type exhibits – Grades 6-8 \_\_\_\_\_ 14

### **The Sudanese Genocide: A Case Study in State-Sponsored Terrorism**

investigating events in Darfur, possible actions the United  
States could take, world response, etc. – Grade 7+ \_\_\_\_\_ 17

### **9/11 - A Day In Infamy**

events before, during, and after the attacks on 9/11/2001 –  
looking for signs of hope and courage – timeline Grade 6+ \_\_\_\_\_ 20

### **102 Minutes**

video of this title accessed via computer; eyewitness  
accounts, photos and film, etc.; Grades 7-8 \_\_\_\_\_ 23

### **Symbols of America**

exploring the significance & symbolism of the targets  
of 9/11 and what those symbols represent – fear of further  
attacks and why; how fear of terrorism has changed life in America –  
Grades 6-8 \_\_\_\_\_ 25

### **Fear: A Reaction to Terrorism**

use Pyramid of Hate as found in Unit I, Lesson 5 ;  
identify acts of bias, prejudice, discrimination, and violence  
from history and present to illustrate steps of the Pyramid;  
how can escalation of these acts be prevented? Grades 6+ \_\_\_\_\_ 26

### **Firefighter as Hero: Seen Through Artwork of Children**

examine the examples of children's artwork reflecting  
firemen and 9/11 to see how different mediums  
of art were used to express emotions, viewpoints, etc. ;  
use of symbols in art and life; power of art. Grades 6-8 \_\_\_\_\_ 28

**Let's Be Grateful for the Lessons Learned**

photo and newspaper article that addresses what nation and individuals learned as a result of the tragedy of 9/11; literary tools used to express thoughts, views, etc. in the article and photo; seeing 9/11 in the perspective of other great tragedies in history. Grades 7+ \_\_\_\_\_

30

**Grade Level:** 7-8

**Time:** 2-3 days (80 minutes)

## Why Terrorism?

### **Objectives:**

Students will be able to list reasons why terrorism is used.

Students will review historical and present day cases of terrorism and analyze the causes and effects.

### **Key Terms:**

#### **Terrorism Definitions:**

##### **Encyclopedia Britannica**

"The systematic use of terror (such as bombings, killings, and kidnappings) as a means of forcing some political objective. When used by a government, it may signal efforts to stifle dissent; used by insurrectionists or guerillas, it may be part of an overall effort to effect desired political change."

##### **Websters II New Riverside Dictionary**

"Systematic use of violence, terror and intimidation to achieve an end."

##### **U.S. Department of State**

"...terrorism is premeditated, politically motivated violence perpetrated against noncombatant targets by subnational groups or clandestine state agents usually to influence an audience."

##### **League of Nations Convention (1937)**

"All criminal acts directed against a State and calculated to create a state of terror in the minds of particular persons or groups of persons or the general public."

##### **United Nations**

"An anxiety-inspiring method of repeated violent activity...whereby...in contrast to assassination, the direct targets of violence are not the main targets."

**Cult** – a group or sect bound together by veneration of the same thing, person, ideal, etc.

**Warlords** - a military commander who has seized power, esp. in one section of a country

**Extremists** – people who go the farthest from the general view, especially in politics

**Intimidation** - to make timid; fill with fear

**Note to teacher:** these words are in the individual case studies but it would be helpful to review them prior to beginning the lesson.

After going over the definitions of terror, you could go directly to this part of the lesson.

### **Materials:**

Information on current and past instances of terrorism or access to the internet, worksheet on why terror, world map

### **Activities/Procedures:**

1. Ask students: "Now that we have a definition of terror, can you name instances of terror in the world?" List some possible answers on the board and discuss.

- II. Break students into groups. Give each of the groups one (1) of the articles about terror. The group should discuss (see worksheet):
  1. When did this happen?
  2. Where did it take place?
  3. Who were the groups (or group) involved?
  4. What was their goal?
  5. What methods were used?
- III. After groups finish, write the results on the board. This can be done by a chart so all students can see the similarities/differences.

**Evidence of Understanding:**

Students should discuss whether or not all of these terrorist events were based on the definition that they are using. Why or why not? What similarities are there in these cases? What differences? Using these, construct your own definition of terrorism including causes/techniques and targets.

**Extension Activities:**

- I. Students can be assigned research on the violence in various parts of the world.
- II. Students can research America's reaction to these acts.

## **Pirates in Somalia**

The pirates off the coast of Somalia are mainly fighters from the many warlord factions that formed in that country after the fall of the Siad Barre government in 1991.

At least initially the motive of the pirates was survival since armed extortion was one of the few ways of making money in Somalia. Now, however, it is a highly organized activity that makes millions of dollars a year.

Most of the pirates come from Puntland, a region off the coast of Somalia that broke away from the country soon after 1991. There are reports of Somalis living in other countries who give information about ships to the pirates.

More than 90 ships have been attacked off the coast of Somalia this year and seventeen remain in the hands of the pirates. They typically hold the ships and people for ransom.



## NORTHERN IRELAND

In 1948, the Irish free state (now the Republic of Ireland) was granted independence by Great Britain. However, the six northern counties remained part of the United Kingdom. The government of Northern Ireland was dominated by the Unionist party (Protestant) which enforced anti-Catholic laws that had been on the record since the 19<sup>th</sup> century. Civil rights marches protesting these laws were forbidden by the government which claimed they were a front for Irish Republican Army (IRA) activities. Violence broke out and the British army was called in during the 1969 riots to stop the violence. Since 1969, terrorists have killed over 3000 and been involved in over 800 bombings.

During a march in 1972, the British opened fire on the Catholics killing 14 and wounding 13 others. This led to an increase in bombings by the IRA. The British countered by a law that allowed bombing suspects to be held in prison for any length of time. IRA prisoners responded by hunger strikes. Bombings continued.

In 1998 a peace accord was reached. Since that time there have been a few bombings but recently the IRA has started disposing of their arms.

## OKLAHOMA CITY BOMBING

Date – April 19, 1995

On April 19, 1993 the FBI and the Branch Davidian Cult, a religious group in Waco, Texas, were involved in a standoff. When the FBI decided to end the standoff by throwing tear gas at the compound, it went up in flames killing 75 people, including many young children.

Timothy McVeigh was among many people who blamed the government for these deaths. McVeigh decided to avenge these deaths by bombing the Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City on the second anniversary of the Waco incident. McVeigh and Terry Nichols purchased a large amount of ammonium nitrate to make explosive material. This was put in a rented truck that was left in front of the federal building.

On the morning of April 19, 1995 at 9:02 a.m., the bomb was detonated. The front of the building was ripped off by the explosion. One hundred sixty eight people were killed including 19 children who were in a child care facility in the building.

McVeigh was captured, tried, convicted and put to death. Nichols received a life sentence. Until 9/11/01, the Oklahoma City bombing was the largest case of domestic terrorism.

## **RAPE AS A WEAPON OF TERROR IN ZIMBABWE AND DARFUR**

Inflation in Zimbabwe has reached an all time high along with an unemployment rate of 85%. After a close election in 2008, there was supposed to be a run-off election between Zimbabwe's President Robert Mugabe and the candidate from the Movement for Democratic Change (MDC). Instead, Mugabe started attacks on the opposition killing 163 and torturing or beating 5000.

Attacks on the opposition party have continued and women are being singled out for brutal rapes. The women are told that they are being raped because they are 'selling out their country'. Younger girls are often targeted in order to intimidate their parents. Many women are slow to speak out about this because of fears of being ostracized or punished for bringing shame to their families. The police do nothing about these assaults.

In the Darfur region of Sudan, rape is also being used as a weapon of violence. Men who leave their villages will be slaughtered so there is a conscious decision to send women out to get the firewood necessary for cooking. These women are often attacked and raped by the Janjaweed (literally devils on horseback), an Arab group supported and encouraged by the government who want the land for themselves. The goal of these men is to drive black ethnic Darfurians out of the region. A woman who is raped is often shunned by her husband and family for the shame she has brought to the family according to the traditional viewpoint. As a result, some women will say they were 'beaten up' instead of raped.

**TREATMENT OF GIRLS IN AFGHANISTAN**  
**(Based on a report on CNN from January 22, 2009)**

In Kabul, Afghanistan, there are reports of women being targeted by Taliban extremists. In one example, two girls, aged 16 and 19, were going to school when two men on a motorcycle blocked their path. One took out what appeared to be a water pistol asked, 'Will you be going to school anymore?'. He then threw acid in the girl's face. She was burned so badly that her scarf melted into her hair. On the same day, several other girls and teachers also were attacked in the same way.

The Taliban have been responsible for a number of attacks on girls and their teachers for the 'crime' of attending school.

During the five years of Taliban rule in Afghanistan, girls were forbidden to attend school. If they made any attempts at getting an education, they would be punished by beatings ...or worse... administered by the religious police. Parents and family members were threatened and sometimes killed for allowing their girls to be educated.

Since the fall of the Taliban in 2001, the Afghan government has made attempts to extend education with some success.

Ten men were arrested and confessed for attacks on women and girls. One of the men claimed that a Pakistani Intelligence unit had approached him and offered him \$2000 for an attack. He said he would also be "rewarded" for killing teachers or burning schools. He said that he had gotten a letter that he was to bring to the Pakistani consulate in order to get his money. Pakistan's government denied this and called the charge "hogwash".

### **Worksheet for Lesson: Why Terrorism?**

Answer these questions based on the article that your group read;

1. Who were the terrorists?
2. What do the terrorists see as their purpose? What do you consider as their goal?
3. What methods did the terrorists use? What was their justification for using these methods?
4. Did the acts of the terrorists instill fear in certain groups? Which ones?
5. What impact did the terrorists have ?
6. Did the acts of terrorism achieve the goals they wanted? Explain.
7. What goals did their actions achieve?

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Time:** 90 minutes

## What is the Face of Terrorism?

### Objective:

The students will be able to demonstrate their ability to identify ideological viewpoints of specific groups in today's society.

The students will be able to explain how appearances can be deceptive.

The students will be able to give examples of the diversity in appearances of terrorists.

### Key Terms:

**Lone terrorist** – a person acting alone who uses violence or the threat of violence against civilians in order to reach goals that are political, religious, or ideological in nature; sometimes acting in support of the aims of a terrorist group, but acting on own outside of the group

**Terrorist group** – a number of people banded together with the intent of achieving their political, religious, or ideological goals through the use of fear, intimidation or coercion against civilians

**State sponsored terrorism** – terrorism practiced, encouraged, and/or supported by a government against its own citizens or in the interest of international terrorism

### Materials:

Case studies of lone, group, and state sponsored terrorists

Photographs to be used in lesson. (See Teacher's Resources below)

3 Case studies handout page(s)

### Activities/Procedures:

- I. Show students a series of photos and ask the following questions:
  1. What do you think each of these individuals have in common?
  2. Do any of these individuals look like anyone you know (in appearance, etc.)?
  3. Explain to students that all of the people in these photos are terrorists. Ask: Is this surprising to you? Why or why not?
- II. Distribute handout pages containing 3 case studies:
  1. Oklahoma bombing
  2. Founder of a gang
  3. State sponsored (child soldier)
- III. Students will meet in small groups to decide who they think matches up to each case study and explain why.
- IV. One representative of each group will present the group's findings to the class.
- V. After the conclusion of the presentations, the teacher will remove all photos that are not associated with the three case studies.
- VI. After removing the photos, the teacher will display and reveal the identities of the remaining three persons:
  1. Timothy McVeigh
  2. Stanley Toookie Williams
  3. A child soldier
- VII. Did you have any predisposed viewpoints about terrorists? Did this lesson change your viewpoint? Explain.

### **Evidence of Understanding:**

- I. What does a terrorist look like? Can ordinary people be terrorists? Who can be a terrorist? What are some of the difficulties involved in trying to create a reliable description (physical and other characteristics) of a terrorist? Is it possible to create a definite and reliable physical profile of a terrorist? Explain your response.
- II. Does this lesson explain or challenge some activities of Homeland Security, such as checking travelers in airports or vehicular checks at bridges or tunnels? What suggestions would you make to improve Homeland Security?

### **Extension Activities:**

- I. Identify one individual or group that would be viewed as terrorist for each of the categories listed below and explain why the person or groups is considered terrorist. **(Your list should not include any of the persons or groups already identified in the preceding lesson.)**
  1. Lone terrorist
  2. Terrorist group
  3. State-sponsored terrorists

### **Teacher's Resources:**

**(An excellent source for searching for photographs and images is:**  
**<http://images.google.com/imghp>**)

- I. Mata "Chata" Leon –  
<http://blogs.laweekly.com/ladaily/city-news/federal-indictment-targets-dre/>
- II. Colin Duffy –  
[http://img.thesun.co.uk/multimedia/archive/00764.Colin\\_Duffy\\_280\\_764429a.jpg](http://img.thesun.co.uk/multimedia/archive/00764.Colin_Duffy_280_764429a.jpg)  
[http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk\\_news/northern\\_ireland/7967680.stm](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/uk_news/northern_ireland/7967680.stm)
- III. Timothy McVeigh – (Oklahoma City bomber) –  
<http://www.prisonplanet.com/articles/december2006/181206mcveighvideo.htm>  
<http://bombing.newsok.com/bombingmcveigh>  
[http://bombing.newsok.com/bombing/gallery\\_convicted](http://bombing.newsok.com/bombing/gallery_convicted)
- IV. Child Soldier – photo number 3 in slide show –  
<http://www.slideshare.net/guest24214f/child-soldiers-photo-exhibit>
- V. Stanley Tookie Williams – <http://www.streetgangs.com/gallery/tookie>  
<http://images.google.com/images?hl=en&q=stanley+tookie+williams&gbv=2&aq=f&oq=Stanley+>
- VI. Theodore Kaczynski – (Unabomber) –  
[http://www.allserialkillers.com/the\\_unabomber.htm](http://www.allserialkillers.com/the_unabomber.htm)  
<http://images.google.com/images?hl=en&Q=Theodore+Kaczynski&bbv=2&aq=f&oq>

Refer to lesson on State Sponsorship of Terrorism in Unit III of **Learning From The Challenges of Our Times: Global Security, Terrorism, and 9/11 in the Classroom**

(<https://sites.google.com/site/the4actioninitiative/> and/or on the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education web site (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/911/>)



## **Three Case Studies**

### **Oklahoma City Bombing**

The Oklahoma City bombing, April 19, 1995, was the destruction of the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building, a government office complex in downtown Oklahoma City. In this tragedy, 168 people were killed and over 800 were injured. Besides federal employees, children who were attending a nursery school within the complex also perished. It was the largest terrorist attack on American soil in history before the 9/11/2001 attacks. It remains the deadliest act of domestic terrorism in American history. Within days, Timothy McVeigh and Terry Nichols were arrested for the bombings. As sympathizers of a militia movement, their motive was to retaliate against the government's handling of the Waco and Ruby Ridge incidents. McVeigh was executed by lethal injection on 6/11/2001; Nichols was sentenced to life in prison; a third defendant, Michael Fortier, after testifying against McVeigh and Nichols, was sentenced to twelve years in prison for failing to warn the U.S. government. Today, a memorial stands at the footprint of the federal building, and symbolically, chairs represent each victim of this terrorism.

### **Stanley Tookie Williams**

Raymond "Truck" Washington organized the "Crips" in December 1969. Two years later in 1971, Stanley "Tookie" Williams joined Washington in organizing what would become the West Side Crips. By 1972, the Crips name was beginning to appear in the newspapers in relation to incidents of violence. The division in the Crips grew more intense and violent as the gangs grew in size and the use of guns became increasingly common.

In 1979, Raymond Washington, the original founder, was murdered in a crime that went unsolved. Earlier in that same year, Williams was arrested and charged with four murders that had been committed during robberies. Some of his co-conspirators supposedly claimed that he did not want to leave any witnesses. The four murders had occurred in a space of twelve days. In 1981, Williams was convicted of the four murders and sentenced to execution. During the years that followed, Williams was accused of being involved in a number of violent incidents in prison, acting in defiance of the guards, and threatening the guards. He also pursued a number of appeals to his conviction and sentence.

After one such reported violent episode, Williams was placed in solitary confinement where he remained for six years. Supposedly, during this time, Williams began a process of conversion from his belief in the use of violence to a renunciation of the gang behavior. He is credited with co-authoring a number of books directed at children to try to persuade them to stay away from street gangs. A domain name on the web was purchased on his behalf, and Williams also began to write for a web audience. His writings garnered him considerable attention and support for his ongoing appeals as well as a plea for clemency. However, despite the support he gathered from a prominent audience, many doubted the sincerity of his change of attitude and the authenticity of much of the writing as his work. It was pointed out that he never took responsibility for the crimes of which he was convicted. Despite some questions about his trials, Williams' conviction and the sentence were upheld. California Governor Arnold Schwarzenegger rejected the plea for clemency and Williams was executed on December 13, 2005.

## **Child Soldiers**

Child soldiers are under the age of 18 and are recruited by government and by armed opposition to the government. Methods of recruitment may vary but include a variety of forms of psychological and physical pressure including kidnapping. Drugs are frequently used to ensure the obedience of the child soldiers in combat situations. These child soldiers perform a whole range of duties including armed combat, laying of mines, spying, scouting, acting as decoys to lure the opposition into a trap, as couriers and guards, and a whole range of other camp duties. These include acting as porters, cooking and assorted other domestic duties, and sexual slavery. They are trained and drilled in the use of weapons and military action.

Although it is known that there are thousands of child soldiers around the globe, the exact number is unknown. Many die, are badly injured, or suffer illnesses so severe that they can no longer serve. Some move from one group to another, some are hidden from sight during negotiations, some manage to go home between military action, and others reach the age of 18 and are no longer counted.

Africa has the largest number of child soldiers but there are also thousands of child soldiers in Asian countries, in the Middle East, and in Latin America. While the number of child soldiers found in European countries is lower, they are being used in a few countries engaged in armed conflict.

(<http://www.child-soldiers.org/childsoldiers/questions-and-answers>)

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Time:** 1 week (part of this may be completed outside of class)

## The Museum Project

### Objectives:

Students will develop research skills.

Students will be able to identify and recount acts of terrorism.

Students will create displays to teach about the history of terror.

### Key Terms:

**Curator** - the person in charge of a museum, art collection

**Please note:** Since this is an independent learning project other terms might come up. Students should be encouraged to create their own vocabulary list to be shared in the "museum".

### Materials:

Information pages, computer access, construction paper or display materials, markers, crayons and other drawing materials

### Teachers Note:

For definitions and background of terrorism, see Unit II lesson MII-5 of **Learning From The Challenges of Our Times: Global Security, Terrorism, and 9/11 in the Classroom** (<https://sites.google.com/site/the4actioninitiative/> and/or on the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education web site (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/911/>))

If students are permitted to use the internet, sites should be monitored. You may wish to pre-select sites to use.

### Activities/Procedures:

- I. Ask students to list incidents of terrorism.
- II. After a list has been compiled (this might be difficult for many students), explain that, in addition to recent terrorist events, there have been many incidents of terror throughout history.
- III. Divide students into groups and hand out information sheets. Each group should get a different instance of terrorism. As the students read, they should identify terms and words that are unfamiliar to them. These should be defined by one person in the group or by the group as a whole.
- IV. Students should identify:
  1. When this took place.
  2. Where it took place.
  3. Who were the terrorists?
  4. Who were the victims?
  5. What was the goal of the terrorists?
  6. Do you believe they achieved their goal?
- V. This can reviewed as a class or individually.

**Evidence of Understanding:**

The teacher should explain that the job of a curator in the museum is to select appropriate materials and information to tell the story. Student groups will act as curators to create a museum display that incorporates pictures and information to tell the story of the terrorist group they researched.

**Extension Activities:**

Students should know that these are not the only instances of terror. They might want to research other terrorist acts throughout history. If the teacher has taught or intends to teach Unit III lesson MIII-6 of **Learning From The Challenges of Our Times: Global Security, Terrorism, and 9/11 in the Classroom** (<https://sites.google.com/site/the4actioninitiative/> and/or on the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education web site (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/911/>), students can use the six acts of terror discussed in this lesson and classify them as:

1. Governmental terrorism
2. Government sponsorship of terrorism
3. Non-governmental sponsored terrorism

1. **First World Trade Center bombing (1993)** - A car bomb was detonated below the North Tower of the World Trade Center in New York City. The car was parked under the building. The intent was to bring down the building. Although the plan failed, six people were killed and over one thousand were injured. The attack was planned and carried out by a group of Islamic extremists.
2. **Iranian Hostage Crisis (1979)** - In Teheran, Iran, a group of Iranian student militants stormed the United States embassy and captured at least 70 Americans. They remained prisoners of the militants for 444 days. In April, 1980 there was a failed attempt to rescue the prisoners by America. The hostages were finally released in January, 1981.
3. **Oklahoma City Bombing (1995)** - An American, Timothy McVeigh, sought revenge on the US government for their handling of a situation in Waco, Texas. On April 19, McVeigh used a truck filled with explosives to destroy the Alfred P. Murrah Federal Building in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. This is the deadliest act of domestic terrorism in the United States.
4. **The Lockerbie Bombing (1988)** – In December, a bomb destroyed Pan Am flight 10 over Lockerbie, Scotland. Two hundred fifty nine passengers and crew as well as eleven people on the ground were killed. Two Libyans were blamed for the crime but it was believed that the leader of Libya, Colonel Moammar Qaddafi, was supporting this terrorist activity. This was believed to be an example of state sponsored terrorism.
5. **The Ku Klux Klan** – This organization was formed in America after the Civil War in order to keep African Americans from gaining their rights and to keep them suppressed.
6. **The assassination of Archduke Franz Ferdinand and his wife (1914)**-The Archduke, who was next in line to the throne of Austria, and his wife were visiting Bosnia. Members of the Black Hand, a secret terrorist organization that wanted freedom from Austria, planned and carried out their murder. This event helped to bring about World War I.

**Grade Level:** 7+  
**Time:** 80 minutes

## **The Sudanese Genocide: A Case Study in State Sponsored Terrorism**

**Objectives:**

The students will analyze the current situation in Darfur, Sudan.  
The students will decide what they think the United States should do about the situation in Sudan.

**Key Terms:**

**Genocide** – the systematic destruction or attempted destruction of a race, religion or ethnic group

**UN** – The United Nations - an international organization whose stated aims are to facilitate cooperation in international law, international security, economic development, social progress and human rights.

**State sponsored terrorism** – When governments provide supplies, training and other forms of support to non-governmental terrorist organizations; also known as government sponsorship of terrorism.

**Economic sanctions** - domestic penalties applied by one country (or group of countries) upon another for a variety of reasons. These include, but are not limited to, high taxes on imports, refusal to trade or purchase and sanctioned boycotts.

**Intervention** – To involve oneself in a situation in order to change the outcome.

**Materials:**

[www.ushmm.org/conscience/alert/sudan/](http://www.ushmm.org/conscience/alert/sudan/)  
Map of Africa

**Activities/Procedures:**

- I. The teacher should discuss the terms *genocide* and *state sponsored genocide*. Students should compare and contrast these terms.
- II. Students should brainstorm why a government would want to destroy people within their own country. Make a list of the reasons suggested by the students.
- III. The teacher should locate Sudan on a map. Students, in small groups, should read information on Sudan from the web site and answer the following:
  1. Where is Darfur?
  2. What is happening there?
  3. What evidence is there that this is state sponsored terrorism?
  4. What is being done to end the genocide in Darfur?
  5. What is the United Nations doing?
  6. What is the United States doing?
- IV. Ask students to brainstorm what they think the United States should do about the genocide. List the options on the board. Possibilities may include but are not limited to:
  1. Military intervention
  2. Economic sanctions
  3. Working with other countries in the United Nations for a solution
  4. Doing nothing
  5. Other options

- V. Students should be placed in groups and assigned one of the possibilities from the previous question (question IV). After completing research, each group should plan a one to two minute oral presentation/ defense of their assigned plan.
- VI. After all presentations are completed, the groups can question each other about their plans.
- VII. Students should then discuss and decide what they think is the appropriate action after hearing all of the plans.

**Evidence of Understanding:**

- I. Students should write a letter to one of the following explaining what they think should be done in Sudan and why:
  1. School newspaper
  2. Local newspaper
  3. State officials
  4. US Senator or Congressional Representative
  5. Secretary of State
  6. President of the United States
  7. Secretary-General of the United Nations

**Extension Activities:**

The documentary film *The Devil Came on Horseback* is an excellent resource for teaching about the genocide in Sudan. There is a teacher's guide available at <http://www.thedevilcameonhorseback.com/action/tools.html> .

## What Should the US Do In Sudan?

	<b>Beginning 1</b>	<b>Developing 2</b>	<b>Accomplished 3</b>	<b>Exemplary 4</b>	<b>Score</b>
Use of Facts/Statistics	Lacks sufficient support or information was not factual.	Every major point was supported but some facts were not relevant.	Every major point was adequately supported with factual information.	Every major point was well supported with factual information.	
Information	Information was inaccurate or not clear.	Most information was clear and accurate but insufficient.	Most information was clear, accurate and thorough	All information was clear, accurate and thorough.	
Understanding of Topic	The team did not seem to understand the topic	The team seemed to understand the main topic but were not clear on all points.	The team clearly understood the topic in depth and presented it clearly.	The team clearly understood the topic in-depth and presented the information very convincingly.	



**Grade Level:** 6+

**Time:** Two 45 minute class periods

## 9/11- A Day in Infamy

**Objective:**

Students will be able to state the basic sequence of events of 9/11/01.

**Key Terms:**

**The Koran** - the sacred text of Islam, divided into 114 suras, also known as the Qur'an

**Suras** – chapters in the Koran (Qur'an)

**Activities Procedures:**

- I. The teacher will ask students to respond to the following prompt:
  1. What do you know about the WTC attack of 9/11/01, before, during and after?
- II. Students will go to the board and fill in their responses under "before," "during," and "after."
- III. The teacher will reflect on their answers, clarifying and expanding on the information the students have provided.
- IV. Key for teachers:
  1. Before/Events Prior to:
    - a. First attack on WTC, 2/26/93. A 1,000 pound bomb was driven into the second level parking level. Six people were killed; 1,000 injured; 50,000 WTC employees evacuated. Authorities later said the plan was to topple one tower, as it fell into the other tower. Later, it was believed the February attack led up to the planning of the 9/11 attack. Ramzi Yousef was believed to be the mastermind. Authorities had him deported from Pakistan, confiscated his computer, and discovered incriminating evidence; he was tried in the USA, found guilty and sentenced to 240 years in prison.
    - b. On 8/7/1998, Al-Qaeda terrorists bombed US Embassy Compounds in Nairobi, Kenya, and Dares Salaam, Tanzania. The attacks were four minutes apart. At least 212 people died, and thousands were injured.
    - c. On 10/12/2000, the USS Cole, an American guided missile destroyer was on its way to Bahrain, an oil rich nation in the Middle East. It made a refueling stop at the Port of Aden in Yemen. A small boat exploded alongside the destroyer, causing a 40 X 40 foot hole amidship on the port side. Seventeen sailors died; 39 were injured. Al-Qaeda terrorists claimed responsibility for this unprovoked attack.
  2. During:
    - a. It should be noted that this was a beautiful fall day, crisp and brilliant with autumn colors. People in NYC were voting in the NY State Primary. People in Washington, D.C., were enjoying the beauty of September.
    - b. Four airplanes were scheduled to leave U.S. airports within twelve minutes of each other. Aboard each aircraft were terrorists who were part of a coordinated attack plan.

- c. American Airlines Flight 11 left Boston for Los Angeles at 7:59 Eastern time. Mohamed Atta, along with other hijackers, commandeered the plane and crashed it into the North Tower of the WTC (between the 95<sup>th</sup> and 103<sup>rd</sup> floors) at 8:49 Eastern time. All 92 passengers, including crew, died. Air traffic controllers could hear part of the conversation in the cockpit before the crash. At 8:28, one of the hijackers said, "Don't do anything foolish. You are not going to get hurt. We have more planes. We have other planes."
- d. Another airplane, United Flight 175, also left Boston at 8:14 Eastern time bound for Los Angeles. Terrorists also took control of this airplane and rammed it into the South Tower, 80<sup>th</sup> floor, at 9:03 Eastern time. All 65 people aboard the airplane died. One passenger, Peter Hanson, called his parents, "It's getting bad, Dad. A stewardess was stabbed. They seem to have knives and Mace. They said they have a bomb. It's getting very bad on the plane. Passengers are throwing up and getting sick. The plane is making jerky motions. I don't think the pilot is flying the plane. I think we are going down. I think they intend to go to Chicago or someplace and fly into a building. Don't worry, Dad. If it happens, it will be fast. My God, my God."
- e. At 8:20 Eastern time, American Airlines Flight 77 left Dulles Airport in Washington, D.C. Terrorists took control and flew into the Pentagon, causing a five-story section to collapse. Sixty-four crew/passengers died; 190 people in the Pentagon died.
- f. United 93 left Newark bound for San Francisco at 8:42 Eastern time. Armed with knife-like instruments and a box they said was a bomb, terrorists took control 46 minutes after take-off. Later, it was discovered that passengers tried to avert a catastrophe. Unfortunately, the airplane crashed in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Investigators believe this airplane was scheduled to hit a target in Washington, D.C., perhaps the White House or the Capitol Building. This hijacking, however, met opposition. Many of the passengers, including Todd Beamer, known for his command, "Let's roll," tried to overcome the terrorists. According to Flight Recorder Data, the terrorists knew their plan was foiled and decided to end the ordeal. The plane crashed in a remote Pennsylvania field, leaving 44 passengers/crew dead.
- g. The large amount of fuel aboard the airplanes ignited in fire.
- h. Everyone aboard the airplanes was killed. In the WTC, people tried to escape from the roof, as planned in fire drills, but the fire was too strong, and helicopters could not land safely on the roof. Some safely escaped by going down staircases. Many jumped, knowing they would not survive the great fire within the buildings. Two thousand five hundred ninety-five people in the WTC died.
- i. At 10:05 Eastern time, the South Tower collapsed; at 10:29 eastern time, the North Tower collapsed. Many attribute the building collapse to the temperature and heat. By 12/2001, MIT professor Dr. Thomas Edgar theorized that when the jets crashed, they blew off the insulation that protected the steel infrastructure. The unprotected steel could not stand up to the intense fire and collapsed. With remarkable speed, the fire caused a free fall. Despite the collapse, Dr. Edgar states, the building, by its design and structure, remained intact long enough to allow thousands of people to escape.

- j. This was not the end to the deaths. In the aftermath, it was initially confirmed that the air quality at the WTC destruction site was safe for rescuers and workers. Subsequent evidence shows that many developed lung ailments directly attributed to exposure to contaminants at the site. Some died from their ailments.
  - 3. After:
    - a. In the suitcase of Mohamed Atta, investigators discovered a video on flying airplanes, a fuel consumption calculator, and a Koran.
    - b. It is estimated that by May 2002, 1.8 million tons of debris was removed from the disaster site.
    - c. This was the worst attack on U.S soil since the bombing of Pearl Harbor, and it is the most destructive on the contiguous U.S.A.
    - d. Some have questioned the accuracy of the 9/11 report. Further investigation continues.
- V. Class discussion:
1. Although this is a tragic story, are there glimpses of courage/hope/heroism in the story of 9/11?
  2. Why did the terrorists select the World Trade Center and Pentagon as targets? See Unit IV. Lesson MIV-10 of **Learning From The Challenges of Our Times: Global Security, Terrorism, and 9/11 in the Classroom** (<https://sites.google.com/site/the4actioninitiative/> and/or on the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education web site (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/911/>)

**Evidence of Understanding:**

Through class discussion

**Extension Activity:**

- I. Ask an older family member, friend about this event. Why was it so important/tragic for the American people?
- II. Research one of the following men of 9/11:
  1. Todd Beamer
  2. Jeremy Glick
  3. Wells Crowther and the Red Bandana
  4. Father Micah Judge
  5. Firehouse #10 in New York City
- III. Draw a timeline of events from 1993 leading up to the destruction of 9/11/2001, the series of events that date, and the events of the following years up to 2010. Include related events in places throughout the world during this time period.

**Grade Level:** 7-8

**Time:** 1-3 42 Minute Periods

## 102 Minutes

### Objectives:

Students will be able to describe the affect 9/11 had on people after viewing eyewitness accounts.

Students will be able to comprehend that each person's perspective of 9/11 was shaped by their experiences on that day.

### Materials:

<http://www.history.com/genericContent.do?id=60326>

web site for interactive map of 9/11. Click on the building on the map to activate a video with the eyewitness account. Due to the sensitive nature of the lesson material, the teacher should preview the clips before showing them to the students. These short clips contain many viewpoints and much information.

### Background:

Students should have an understanding of what happened on 9/11/01. Refer to Unit IV, Lesson MIV-8 of **Learning From The Challenges of Our Times: Global Security, Terrorism, and 9/11 in the Classroom** (<https://sites.google.com/site/the4actioninitiative/> and/or on the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education web site (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/911/>)

### Activities/Procedure:

- I. Explain to students that they will be watching short clips of eyewitness accounts of 9/11 as well as interviews of the people that filmed that day. These clips are taken from a movie *102 minutes*. (The video is located at the website listed above.)
- II. Prior to showing the video clips, distribute the worksheet and review the questions.
- III. Video clips should be viewed in this order
  1. NYU dorm
  2. Times Square
  3. West St. Chambers
  4. Spring St. and W. Broadway
  5. Gateway Plaza
  6. WTC 5
  7. Trinity Church
  8. River Terrace
  9. City Hall Park
  10. 14 Maiden LaneTeacher note: If you do not have enough time to watch all 10 video clips, select clips appropriate for your grade and time available. Care should be taken to maintain the sequential order of those you select.
- IV. First view the Biography and read it to the class.

- V. Next view the interview of the videographer.
- VI. Then the video
- VII. After each clip, have the students answer the questions for that clip.
- VIII. Review the questions and responses with the class.
- IX. Repeat steps 5-9 for each clip
- X. After you view the clips and go over the questions, have a general discussion of the videos seen.

**Evidence of Understanding:**

- I. Describe some of the differences reflected in the eyewitness testimonies. Explain why there are so many viewpoints of the same event.
- II. Make a list of the common threads that run through all or most of the testimonial accounts of 9/11.

**Extension Activities:**

- I. Research the events that occurred at the Pentagon on 9/11. Find eyewitness testimonies of the events at the Pentagon. Identify the common threads that run through this testimony. Compare and contrast them with the threads that run through the testimony of eyewitnesses at the Twin Towers in New York City.

**Grade Level:** 6-8

**Time:** 1-2 class periods

## **Symbols of America**

### **Objectives:**

The student will identify the significance/symbolism of the targets of 9/11.

The students will identify other buildings used as targets of tragedy.

### **Activities/Procedures:**

- I. Class questions:
  1. What are some famous buildings that represent specific countries or ideas? (Examples: Pyramids in Egypt, Eiffel Tower in Paris, Coliseum in Rome, Golden Arches of McDonald's)
  2. Why are these places or buildings symbolic? What do they represent?
- II. Background Information:
  1. First WTC bombing 2/26/93; a van loaded with explosive devices ignited in a parking garage; 6 killed, 1,000 injured.
  2. Oklahoma City 4/19/95, federal building in Oklahoma City; a van loaded with explosives, killed 168, including 19 children, Timothy McVeigh, part of an extremist anti-government group was convicted and executed as the perpetrator.
- III. Explain that on 9/11/01, the targets were the World Trade Center (Twin Towers), the Pentagon, and the White House/ Capitol Building. These buildings are symbolic of America. How? See possible answers:
  1. WTC: represented American & International Capitalism
  2. Pentagon: represented American Intelligence & Military Forces
  3. Capitol Building/White House: represented the US Government; Democracy; Home of the President
- IV. After this tragic event, the American public feared more attacks on the United States, such as the Golden Gate Bridge, Disney World, major athletic centers, Chicago Sears Tower, etc.
  1. Why would there be fear concerning such targets?
  2. What do these targets symbolize?
  3. What could terrorists gain by destroying these targets?
  4. How did fear affect the choices Americans and visitors made about traveling to famous places in the USA?
  5. How did the government/religious buildings, public arenas, airline carriers, and tourist sites change their rules and regulations for admission, participation and departure?
  6. This tragedy had an impact on American economics. How?

### **Evidence of Understanding:**

Homework: Speak to an adult and ask how his/her experiences at tourist and recreational places have changed since 9/11. Write one paragraph about his/her travels.

### **Extension Activities:**

Interview two adults. Create a chart in which you list each person with a before and after (9/11) reaction. Students can then join together and make one master chart of their before/after reactions. Compare/contrast. In a one-two paragraph written entry, what lasting impact has 9/11 had on America?

**Grade Level:** 6+  
**Time:** 90 minutes

## **Fear: A Reaction to Terrorism**

Please consult Unit I LESSON MI-4 (Pyramid of Hate) of **Learning From The Challenges of Our Times: Global Security, Terrorism, and 9/11 in the Classroom** (<https://sites.google.com/site/the4actioninitiative/> and/or on the New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education web site (<http://www.state.nj.us/education/holocaust/911/>)

### **Objectives:**

- I. The student will be able to explain how an event fueled by hatred can split/fracture a diverse community.
- II. The student will understand how the fear cultivated after 9/11 created prejudice against many ethnic communities and how they were targeted and profiled.
- III. By showing parallel historical events, the student will understand that, unless individuals are conscious of their actions, fear can breed hatred and violence.
- IV. Using the Pyramid of Hate, the student will be able to illustrate how acts of bias, prejudice, and discrimination can lead to acts of violence and genocide.
- V. The student will consider ways to unite communities in their differences.

### **Materials:**

Pyramid of Hate Outline [www.sdb.k12.wi.us/mcneel/holocaust/pyramid\\_of\\_hate.htm](http://www.sdb.k12.wi.us/mcneel/holocaust/pyramid_of_hate.htm)  
9/11 Book Project\_by Michael Feldschuh  
*Shadow of Hate* (film) available free from [teachingtolerance.org](http://teachingtolerance.org)  
Christmas Menorahs\_by Dr. Janice Cohn & Bill Farnsworth

### **Activities/Procedures:**

- I. The teacher will present the Pyramid of Hate, going from the bottom of the hierarchy to the top of the hierarchy, explaining vocabulary. (See glossary.)
- II. Starting at the bottom of the pyramid, the teacher will present acts of bias throughout history as well as post 9/11.
  1. Acts of bias:
    - a. Polish jokes/dumb blondes/ stereotypes students know
    - b. Post 9/11 – political cartoons
    - c. Students brainstorm for other examples
- III. The teacher will discuss/show acts of prejudice throughout history as well as post 9/11.
  1. Acts of prejudice:
    - a. Homosexuals – name calling (Matthew Shepherd)(*Shadow of Hate*)
    - b. 9/11 Book Project by Michael Feldschuh, p. 189- 9/16/2001, Merrivale, Indiana; House with Cans spelling out "Kill 'em."
    - c. Students brainstorm for other examples.
- IV. The teacher will discuss/show acts of discrimination throughout history as well as post 9/11.
  1. Acts of discrimination:

- a. Post 9/11 Harassment based on physical appearance photo available by Mechelle Giroux  
<http://www.julietdavis.com/photography1.html>  
(Scroll to photographer's image titled *Prejudice*)
  - b. Racism- Slavery
  - c. Japanese internment on West Coast
  - d. Students will brainstorm for other examples
- V. The class will discuss/show acts of violence throughout history as well as post 9/11. Are there other examples the students know?
  - 1. Acts of Violence
    - a. Lynching – *Shadow of Hate*
    - b. Burning of crosses
    - c. Swastikas on gravestones
- VI. Questions: Can we stop this escalation? Is this escalation an inevitable chain of events? What are some choices individuals/groups can make to stop this escalation? Can a violent act unite a community?
- VII. The teacher will introduce the example of Billings, Montana, The Christmas Menorahs. An entire community responds to anti-Semitism.

**Evidence of Understanding:**

- I. Students will write a response to one of the following in the prompt:
  - 1. Explain another time when an individual, group of people, or community joined together in supporting someone who faced prejudice or discrimination.

**Extension Activities:**

- I. Research the post 9/11 hate crime committed in Mesa, Arizona. Balbir Singh Sodhi (1949-2001) was shot and killed at his convenience store. A gentleman well respected in his community, he was murdered simply because he wore a turban. <http://fateh.sikhnet.com/s/BalbirSodhi>  
"The Memorial Service will emphasize the simple messages of protecting innocent lives, of how both Sikhism and the US Bill of Rights promote tolerance of diverse religious beliefs, and how, through Unity, all people of consciousness can overcome the hatred that gave birth to the tragedies of the last two weeks."  
(Teachers can visit the website and order a free poster.
- II. Students will research the growth of US nationalism post 9/11. There was a united effort to help victims/surviving family members and to wear red, white and blue.



**Grade Level:** 6-8  
**Time:** 90 minutes

## **The Firefighter as Hero: Seen Through the Artwork of Children**

**Objectives:**

Students will demonstrate their comprehension of art as a vehicle of self-expression. Students will demonstrate their comprehension of the role that art serves in the time of tragedy.

**Key Terms:**

**Symbolism** - something used to represent something else; a material object representing something, often something immaterial; emblem, token, or sign.

**Materials:**

*The Day Our World Changed- children's art of 9/11* by Robin F. Goodman

<http://japandailyphoto.com/106/art-mimics-life/>

<http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/911/images/01739r.jpg>

**Activities/Procedures:**

- I. Journal prompt/pair share/discuss- "It is often said that art mimics/copies life." Teachers should use the photo found at the website as a visual prompt.  
(<http://japandailyphoto.com/106/art-mimics-life/>)
  1. What does the saying mean?
  2. Can you think of examples supporting this statement?
  3. Look at the photo prompt. How does this photo support or disclaim this statement?
- II. Students share their writing and discuss if it is true that art mimics life.
- III. Students discuss what symbolism means. What symbolism can be found in the photo? Brainstorm for other familiar symbols. (heart, shamrock, pink/yellow ribbon, peace sign, golden arches, etc)
- IV. Students discuss how people use self-expression to help them cope with tragic/difficult times. Have students ever used artwork as a vehicle to express their emotions? Encourage students to share examples.
- V. Students view artwork entitled "Tears of a Nation" (Robin F. Goodman's book- page 66). Discuss the various symbols used by the 16-year-old artist whose father was a firefighter on 9/11.
- VI. Students view the artwork "Fireman" (Robin F. Goodman's book- page 80). Discuss the fireman as a symbol of pride. Have students guess the age of the artist (8 years old).
- VII. Students will view the artwork entitled "Firefighters Standing Strong" (Robin F. Goodman's book- page 91). How is the fireman portrayed in this work of art?
- VIII. Students view the artwork on pages 92 and 93 (untitled). What symbols are used to portray the firefighters of FDNY?
- IX. Students will view drawing <http://www.loc.gov/exhibits/911/images/01739r.jpg> How are the firefighters portrayed as heroes in this work?
- X. Students will compare and contrast the images of the firefighter as a hero as seen through the various artists (can be done individually or in groups). Students may use a graphic organizer. The students will share their findings and make a class compare/contrast list. Discuss results.

**Evidence of Understanding:**

- I. Students will discuss the power of children's artistic responses to September 11, 2001.
- II. For homework, students will find a photo, either from the newspaper, a magazine, the internet or personal collection, which supports the quotation, "It is often said that art mimics/copies life." Write one paragraph supporting the example.

**Extension Activity:**

Students illustrate symbols used to express remembrance and pride.

**Grade Level:** 7+  
**Time:** 90 minutes

## Let's Be Grateful for the Lessons Learned

### Objective:

The student will be able to see how, after the initial grief, a terrorist event can begin to be analyzed in its place in history.

### Key Terms:

**Allegory** - n. figurative treatment of one subject under the false appearance of another

**Apocalypse** - n. a prophetic disclosure; a revelation

**Extremis** - n. in severe trouble or facing disaster

**Devastation** - n. destruction, desolation

**Proverb** - n. a short saying in common use that strikingly expresses some obvious truth or familiar maxim

**Symbolism** - n. something that stands for or represents something else

**Transformation** - n. a change

### Materials:

Editorial written by Amy Ellis Nutt titled *Let's Be Grateful for the Lessons Learned*, Thanksgiving 2001, Star-Ledger

### Activities/Procedures:

- I. Before reading article, explain to students that this was written Thanksgiving 2001, two and one-half months after 9/11.
- II. What do you think the author means by her title, *Let's Be Grateful for the Lessons Learned*?
- III. Study the photo.
  1. Identify the evidence of tragedy.
  2. Think about the predictions for the future.
  3. What do you think the people are saying to one another?
  4. Look at the symmetry. It looks like they are walking towards the smoke & debris. Why might they be going in that direction?
- IV. Read the article.
- V. The author speaks in metaphors and contrasts: light/dark, birth/death, chaos/order, survival/renewal, heroism/tragedy. Do you think the photo shows any of these contrasts? Give examples
- VI. How do these abstract symbols become concrete in the aftermath of a tragedy?
- VII. Why does Nutt say this tragedy is a "great gift?"
- VIII. Terrence Des Pres, after studying the psychology of the Holocaust, said, "The transformation of the world into symbol is perpetual." What did he mean in the context of the Holocaust? How can it be applied to 9/11?
- IX. Although 9/11 has its own identity and place in history, why does Nutt compare it to "the world's great literature" like *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, *War and Peace* and *Moby Dick*? 9/11 was a real event; why does it share similarities with classic literature?
- X. Like classic literature that endures many generations, why is 9/11 also timeless?

- XI. Look at the Keats' quote – "A man's life of any worth is a continual allegory- and very few eyes can see the mystery of his life."
1. What did Keats' mean? How is man's life an allegory? Who are the "few eyes" that can see the worth?
  2. How could Keats' 1821 quotation refer to 9-11?

**Evidence of Understanding:**

- I. Journal entry or essay:
  1. What are some examples of history repeating itself?
  2. How can we be thankful after a tragedy such as 9/11?
  3. How can a tragedy transform us?
  4. How can the world, specifically after a tragic event, be transformed into a symbol?

**Extension Activities:**

- I. Read Terrence Des Pres' *The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life & Death in the Camps*, a psychological study of survivors during the Holocaust.
- II. Read/discuss the four pieces of literature referred to in the article: *The Iliad*, *The Odyssey*, *War & Peace* and *Moby Dick*.

# Let's be grateful for lessons learned

BY AMY ELLIS HUFF

In 1818, at the age of 23, the English poet John Keats wrote in a letter to his brother and sister, "Nothing ever becomes real till it is experienced — Even a proverb is no proverb to you till your life has illustrated it."

It is difficult to imagine anything more real — or more terrifying — than the experiences of Americans on Sept. 11 or the vertiginous experiences illustrated. It is even more difficult to imagine being thankful for anything even remotely connected to the tragedies that took place that day.

We are grateful to have survived them or to have been far enough away so that survival wasn't a question for us. But mostly we have been sorrowful and angry and perplexed. Some of us have tried hard to understand Sept. 11, others even harder to move beyond it. But in some real way, we all have been transformed by it. Against our will and against all reason, the attacks of Sept. 11 made us aware of the power of events to reconnect us with our most primal experiences.

If Thanksgiving is both a remembrance of the past and a hope for the future, then today of all days we can look to Sept. 11 with a terrible gratitude, as a kind of second chance at understanding the meaning of our lives.

When we are in extremis, as we were during the attacks on the World Trade Center and the Pentagon, when we are at the point of death or we are watching others at the point of theirs, our metaphors are made suddenly real — light and dark, birth and death, chaos and order. They aren't ideas or images; they are realities. Violence forces us to become intimate with our own intellectual symbols, and in the midst of our terror these symbols, normally abstract and detached from the world, re-enter our experience vividly and concretely.

When that happens — when we see and feel the light and the dark, birth and death, order and chaos — we retrieve meaning from the devastation. It is a gift we never ask for, but it is a gift we cannot — we should not — refuse. By embracing or actualizing our own metaphors, wrote the late educator Terrence Des Pres, we invest "each act and moment" of our lives "with urgent depth."

In "The Survivor: An Anatomy of Life in the Death Camps," a now out-of-print book about the psychology of survival during the Holocaust, Des Pres wrote about the "oddy literary character" of extreme experiences. It is eerie, 20 years later, to read Des Pres' words through the lens of Sept. 11:

"It is as if amid the smoke of burning bodies the great metaphors of world literature were being 'acted out' in terrible fact — death and resurrection, damnation and salvation, the whole of spiritual pain and exultation in passage through the soul's dark night."

It is hardly coincidental that much of the world's great literature unfolds in places and times of personal peril and social apocalypse. From "The Illiad" and "The Odyssey" to "War and Peace" and "Moby-Dick," we look to literature for the myths, images and symbols that can explain us to ourselves. Our hunger for stories of heroism and tragedy, for survival and renewal, has been made more acute by Sept. 11, and our literary abstractions have found voices and faces in the terrible facts of that day — in at least 3,000 souls missing and presumed dead, in 19 murderous hijackers and in 400 firefighters, police and emergency workers lost in the line of duty.

Transformation of the world into

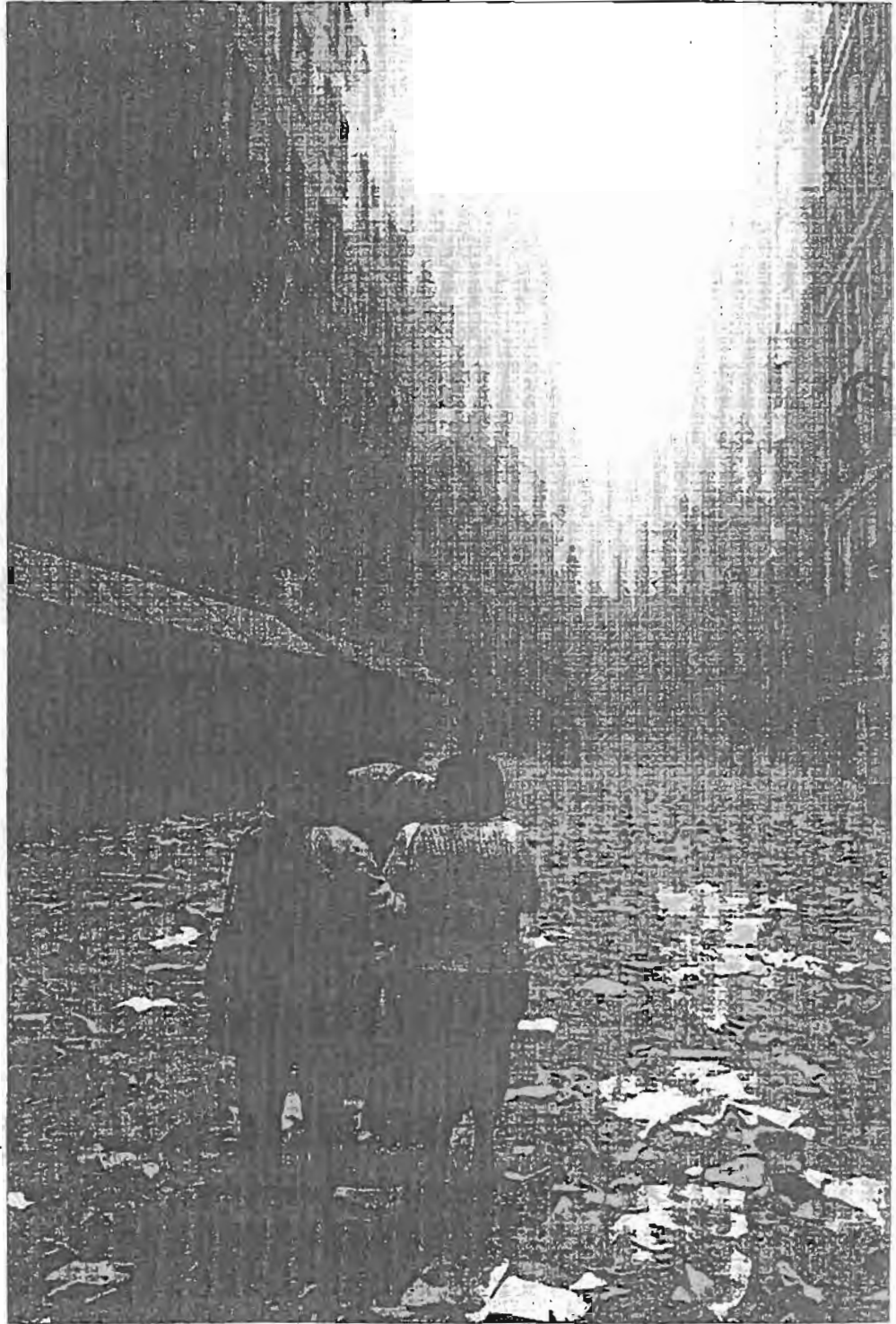


PHOTO COURTESY OF THE STAR-LEDGER

Office workers Gene Mondo, left, and Tino Esposito follow Frank Garone down John Street in Manhattan after the fall of the Twin Towers on Sept. 11, a day of death and chaos that provides an opportunity for Americans to learn about themselves.

symbol," wrote Des Pres, "is perpetual." To that extent, we are all survivors of Sept. 11, and we are all storytellers of our own survival, looking for refuge, relief and perhaps even restitution in the symbolic images of our experience.

There is nothing good, nothing redeeming, nothing meaningful in the

actual events of Sept. 11. What there is, what we can be thankful for, is the opportunity to learn about ourselves in the way we tell and the way we read the stories of our experience.

In another letter to his family, Keats, who would die in 1821 at 25 and at the height of his creative powers, wrote:

"A man's life of any worth is a continual allegory — and very few eyes can see the mystery of his life."

Because tragedy can lift the veil of mystery, we must keep telling the story.

Amy Ellis Huff is a feature writer for *The Star-Ledger*.