

Teacher Fact Sheet

What happened on 9/11?

Note: When discussing this with students, be aware that it is a sensitive topic - students may well have relatives living in the region, or family members who are in the military and this will cause a lot of anxiety.

- A multi-incident, coordinated attack on targets in the USA happened on the morning of 11th September, 2001.
- In the USA, dates are written Month; Day; Year - so this is why it's known as 9/11.
- Four planes were hijacked - two crashed into each of the Twin Towers of the World Trade Centre in New York. One crashed into the Pentagon, and another crashed into a field in Pennsylvania.
- 2976 people lost their lives on this day.
- Because the World Trade Centre had a multinational workforce, 372 of the victims were foreign nationals from 77 other countries.
- Many thousands of people were injured, including police, fire personnel, paramedics and others helping to evacuate the victims.
- The 19 men who hijacked and crashed the four planes were all trained by Al-Qaeda.
- Three of the suspected pilots were part of an Al-Qaeda cell based in Hamburg, Germany. All four pilots took flying lessons in the United States.
- The hijackers began entering the United States in January 2000. All 19 were in the country by early July 2001.
- Fifteen of the hijackers came from Saudi Arabia, two from the United Arab Emirates, one from Egypt, and one from Lebanon. The oldest was 33; the rest were between 20 and 29.
- Less than a month after the attacks, President George W Bush led an invasion of Afghanistan - supported by an international coalition - to eradicate Al-Qaeda and hunt down Bin Laden.
- UK Prime minister Tony Blair supported the USA in their decision to track down the terrorists and their supporters.
- However, it was not until 2011 that US troops finally located and killed Bin Laden in neighbouring Pakistan.
- The alleged planner of the 9/11 attacks, Khalid Sheikh Mohammad, was arrested in Pakistan in 2003. He has been held in US custody at Guantanamo Bay since then, and is still awaiting trial.
- Al-Qaeda still exists. It is strongest in Sub-Saharan Africa but even now has members inside Afghanistan.
- US troops left Afghanistan this year after nearly 20 years, stoking fears from many that the Islamist network could make a comeback.

Note: the video contains some footage of terror attacks and is included for teacher information.

What is the legacy of 9/11? Sky News



The Flights

The attack was swift, well-executed, and deadly. In just two hours, terrorists hijacked and crashed four commercial airlines. The 19 terrorists killed 33 crew members, 213 passengers and 2,730 people on the ground in New York and Virginia. Thousands more were injured.

American Airlines Flight 11
Left Boston's Logan Airport with a crew of 11 and 76 passengers, not including five hijackers. The hijackers flew the plane into the North Tower of the World Trade Center.

United Airlines Flight 175
Left Logan with a crew of nine and 51 passengers, not including five hijackers. The hijackers flew the plane into the South Tower of the World Trade Center.

American Airlines Flight 77
Left Washington Dulles International Airport in Northern Virginia with a crew of six and 53 passengers, not including five hijackers. The hijackers flew the plane into the Pentagon.

United Airlines Flight 93
Left Newark, New Jersey, with a crew of seven and 33 passengers, not including four hijackers. The hijackers crashed the plane into the ground near Shanksville, Pennsylvania, after the passengers revolted.

- 7:59 a.m.** American Airlines Flight 11, a Boeing 767, departs Boston's Logan Airport bound for Los Angeles with 81 passengers and crew of 11.
- 8:14 a.m.** United Airlines Flight 175, a Boeing 767, also departs Boston for Los Angeles with 56 passengers and crew of nine.
- 8:20 a.m.** American Airlines Flight 77, a Boeing 757, departs Washington's Dulles Airport for Los Angeles with 58 passengers and crew of six.
- 8:42 a.m.** United Airlines Flight 93, a Boeing 757, leaves Newark for San Francisco with 37 passengers and crew of seven.
- 8:46 a.m.** American Airlines Flight 11 crashes into the North Tower of the World Trade Center.
- 9:03 a.m.** United Airlines Flight 175 slams into the South Tower of the World Trade Center.
- 9:37 a.m.** American Airlines Flight 77 hits the Pentagon. Hijacked from Dulles, Flight 77 slams into the West side of the Pentagon.
- 9:59 a.m.** The South Tower collapses.
- 10:03 a.m.** United Airlines Flight 93 crashes in Shanksville, Pennsylvania, 80 miles southeast of Pittsburgh.
- 10:28 a.m.** The North Tower collapses.

<https://www.fbi.gov/image-repository/911-plane-path-map.jpg>

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What connects 9/11 to life today?

As tutors, we will regularly be asked questions by our students about current affairs and issues they are concerned about. To be able to answer them, and make clear connections between topical events, it's helpful to have a range of materials available. Helping students to understand the world around them and engage with the changing political landscape enables them to become informed and active citizens.

Recent news events have uncovered the re-emergence of the Taliban in Afghanistan, and it's important to understand how these events link with actions taken 20 years ago. However, many people are unaware that the events of 9/11 still have a lasting impact on our society today through changes in law, international relationships, and politics.

If students understand that actions have long-lasting effects on their future, we can build a legacy of hope - the more informed, the better they are able to exercise their agency and voice their opinions to those in society who orchestrate change.

What impact has 9/11 had on our lives?

Sixty seven British lives were lost in the 9/11 attacks, but since then, many more lives have been lost. On 7th October, 2001, US and UK forces attacked Afghanistan, aided by the anti-Taliban Afghans who were called the Northern Alliance. 457 British service personnel have been killed in Afghanistan.

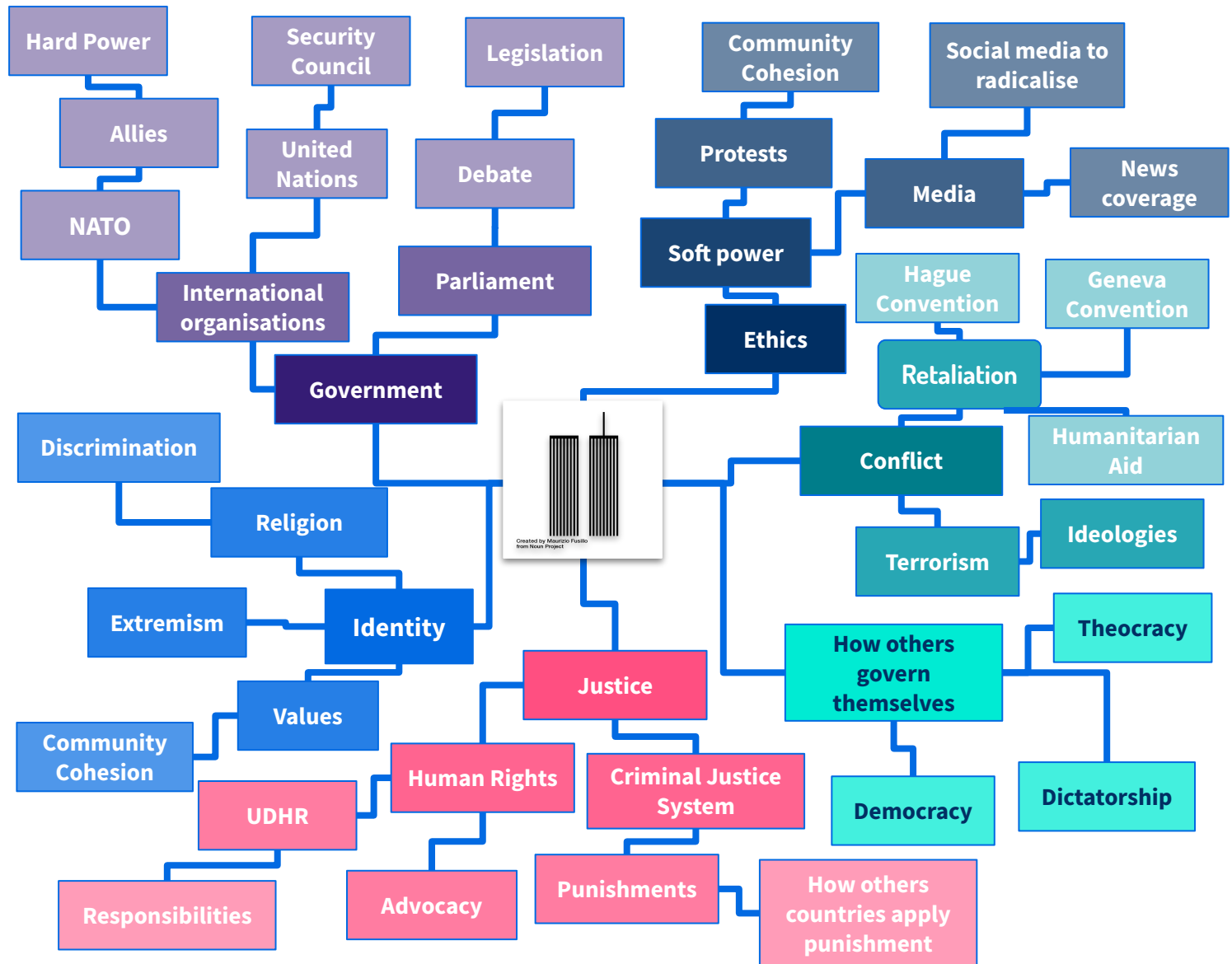
In March 2003, the UK joined an invasion of Iraq along with the USA. It was believed Iraq were supporting Al Qaeda and that weapons of mass destruction were being amassed. The president, Saddam Hussein, was found and tried by the Iraqi people. There were 179 British service personnel killed in Iraq during this process. The elimination of the government left a void that allowed in supporters of Al Qaeda. No weapons of mass destruction were found and this has led to a formal inquiry into the government decisions of that time. In addition, this has led to protests including a coordinated world wide day of protest 'Stop the War', held on 15 February 2003. These were the biggest protests ever seen in the UK. [Find out more here.](#)

One action taken has been to pass tougher anti-terror laws. These laws include some of the following measures:

- The initial Anti-terrorism, crime and security act was passed in November 2001.
- The right of the Home Secretary to impose 'control orders' on people suspected of involvement in terrorism – The Prevention of Terrorism Act 2005 which includes actions such as Control orders that may impose a variety of conditions including restrictions on employment, residence, travel, communication and association with others when someone is accused of terrorism.
- The right of the police to detain suspected terrorists for up to 14 days – The Terrorism Act 2006. In other circumstances, a suspect can only be held without evidence for a maximum of 24 hours before they are charged with a crime or released. (gov.uk).
- A new criminal offence where anyone taking a photograph of a police officer could face a fine or a prison sentence of up to 10 years, if a link to terrorism is proved – The Counter-Terrorism Act 2008.
- Increased policing and intelligence funding.
- Nationwide Counter-Terrorism Strategy (Contest) including Prevent – preventing people becoming involved in terrorism this has an impact on schools and colleges too as teachers need to be aware of warning signs of radicalised behaviour under the Prevent Guidance.
- Snooper's Charter - The Investigatory Powers Act – also known as the Snoopers' Charter – allows State authorities to collect information about everything we do and say online and order private companies to store it. It has been suggested this is the most intrusive regime of any democratic country.
- Serious changes to travel - e.g. the amount of liquid in hand luggage (100ml), removing shoes and belts, more thorough searches of bags.
- An increase of refugees from the Middle East who have been displaced by conflict following 9/11.
- Discrimination against a wide variety of people living in our society fuelled by media headlines such as the 'War on Terror', including racial profiling, which is the use of race or ethnicity as grounds for suspecting someone of having committed an offence.

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How does 9/11 link with our curriculum?



What is terrorism?

The Crown Prosecution Service definition (what an accused person would be charged with) of terrorism is the following: Terrorism is the use or threat of action, both in and outside of the UK, designed to influence any international government organisation or to intimidate the public. It must also be for the purpose of advancing a political, religious, racial or ideological cause. Examples include:

- serious violence against a person or damage to property,
- endangering a person's life (other than that of the person committing the action),
- creating a serious risk to the health or safety of the public or a section of the public,
- action designed to seriously interfere with or seriously to disrupt an electronic system.

It is important to note that in order to be convicted of a terrorism offence a person doesn't actually have to commit what could be considered a terrorist attack. Planning, assisting and even collecting information on how to commit terrorist acts are all crimes under British terrorism legislation.

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A note about Teaching controversial and sensitive issues - When teaching citizenship, you will naturally cover topics that are classified as controversial. Controversial issues are those about which individuals and groups disagree and hold strong opinions, issues that can divide society and arouse strong feelings and/or deal with fundamental questions of value and belief – for example, war, immigration, abortion, gay rights. While some teachers may feel anxious about introducing them, such social and political issues are central to effective citizenship teaching. Learning to manage differences of opinion in an appropriate and reasoned way in a democratic society is one of the main aims of citizenship education. You will need to prepare for this and make sure your students understand that views on topics will differ as the issues are controversial. Where possible, ensure that a range of views are heard and be ready to challenge those who try to dominate the discussion. In addition, you need to be aware of views that step over the line which may become offensive to others, lay ground rules clearly so you establish a safe learning environment for discussion. You will also need to consider the kinds of material you use with students in particular where graphic or disturbing images are used. Further advice on teaching sensitive and controversial issues can be found here: [How to teach sensitive and controversial issues](#) as well as on the ACT website www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk

Discussion questions

Q: If the UK government is prepared to take military action in a country, should we be prepared to grant refugee status to civilian victims of this action?

Q: If you were seeking to persuade decision-makers, what alternatives would you suggest to deter attacks instead of military action?

Q: Is it ok for our privacy to be infringed by laws to prevent possible terrorist activity? [SNOOPERS' CHARTER - Liberty](#)

Q: Should terror suspects, where the police have no evidence to press charges, be detained longer than other suspected criminals? [Facial recognition technology and predictive policing algorithms out-pacing the law](#)

Glossary

Insurgency

An active revolt or uprising.
"rebels are waging an armed insurgency to topple the monarchy"

Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda is a militant Sunni Islamist multi-national organization, which is widely regarded as a terrorist group. Founded 1988 by Osama bin Laden, Abdullah Azzam, and several other Arab volunteers during the Soviet–Afghan War. Al-Qaeda operates as a network of Islamic extremists and Salafist jihadists.

Weapons of mass destruction

A weapon of mass destruction is a nuclear, radiological, chemical, biological, or any other weapon that can kill and bring significant harm to numerous humans or cause great damage to human-made structures, natural structures, or the biosphere.

Invasion

An occasion when an army or country uses force to enter and take control of another country.

Links to useful resources

[Education Programme | since911.com](#)

[September 11 attacks: What happened on 9/11?](#)

[I Don't Get It Season 2 Episode 8 – Terrorism: Why does it happen?](#)

[I Don't Get It – 9/11 – On 11 September 2001, America became the victim of a large-scale terrorist attack. It has become known as 9/11.](#)

Get involved - join ACT here <https://www.teachingcitizenship.org.uk/membership>