



The September 11th Education Program: A National Interdisciplinary Curriculum

Prepared by
The September 11th Educational Trust, Anthony Gardner, Executive Director
In partnership with the Taft Institute for Government
Professors Jack Zevin and Michael Krasner, Co-Directors

Greg Timmons and Lanore Larson, Editors
Justin Coffey, Copy Editor
Sherie Stark, Layout and Design
Dr. Aaron Willis, Project Coordinator

Social Studies School Service
10200 Jefferson Blvd., P.O. Box 802
Culver City, CA 90232

<http://socialstudies.com>
access@socialstudies.com
(800) 421-4246



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www.socialstudies.com
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How to Use this Curriculum

The lessons in this curriculum are designed to develop students' critical thinking skills. With an interdisciplinary approach, the lessons draw upon questions of history, government and citizenship, economics, and artistic interpretation. The accompanying DVDs contain interviews with family members and survivors of the September 11th attacks. These help to lend a human dimension to a historic event difficult to wholly appreciate in terms of raw numbers of persons killed or property destroyed. The print lessons build upon the DVD sources as a way of incorporating these personal stories as students grapple with a range of issues associated with 9/11. Although designed for secondary students, DVD content should be previewed before class to ensure that students can handle the serious and sometimes emotional nature of these interviews.

The lessons can be implemented in a single class session or over the course of an entire week. The individual educator has the freedom to decide how much content to include. The curriculum also works with a diverse array of students, including those with limited reading comprehension, visual learners, and gifted students. You can decide how much print or video information to use, creating a flexible mix of content to suit the abilities of students in your classroom.

We encourage you to begin with the "Remembrance" presentation on DVD Disc 1. This ten-minute memorial to the victims, family members whose lives were shattered, and the survivors struggling to go on, is an appropriate introduction to the complex human issues that the September 11th tragedy brings to light. Use the discussion questions to engage students in a deeper analysis of the issues that this short, compelling documentary raises.

You may implement the other lessons in any order and may use them at different times throughout the school year. "Visualizing 9/11" provides a fascinating look into the images that have come to symbolize the event for many; the "Historian's Craft" asks students to reflect on how historians use primary and secondary sources to construct a narrative and organize information into timelines; "The Post-9/11 Recovery Process" deals with the challenges of gathering human remains in the

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aftermath of a tragedy; “Designing a 9/11 Memorial” looks at the controversies surrounding different plans for an appropriate tribute to 9/11 victims, encouraging students to design their own memorials; “Honoring Heroes” raises questions about how to define heroism; “Advocacy” addresses how citizens can shape the government’s response to a disaster; and the “U.S. National Security and 9/11” lesson examines the range of options that countries may use to protect their citizens and challenges students to think critically about difficult issues.

We have also created a Web site to accompany this program. Please encourage your students to visit www.LearnAbout9-11.org to post their work, access additional information, and interact with family members and survivors in this special virtual space. You can also use this site to provide us with feedback and share implementation strategies with other teachers. We look forward to seeing you online.