



The U.S. & The World SS.7.CG.4.4
The Significance of September 11th, 2001
VIDEO SCRIPT



Benchmark Clarification Two: Global Response to Terrorism

1. On September 11, 2001, members of the Islamic fundamentalist terror group al Qaeda hijacked a number of planes and flew them into the World Trade Center of New York City, the Pentagon in Arlington, Virginia, and into a field in Pennsylvania. The atrocities committed by al Qaeda on that day drew the attention of the world. This attack on American soil was an act of global terrorism, and while it wasn't the first act, it also hasn't been the last, which makes it important to understand what terrorism is and how it has looked.
2. After watching this video, you will be able to
 - recognize the historical context of global terrorism over time.

So let's get started.

3. What exactly IS terrorism? Well, terrorism uses extreme fear and violence to try to achieve a political or ideological goal. This is often against civilian targets. For this discussion, a civilian would be someone who does not represent or work for a government or military in some way.
4. Terrorism has been practiced by political organizations with both rightist and leftist objectives, by nationalistic and religious groups, by revolutionaries, and even by state institutions such as armies, intelligence services, and police.
5. Global terrorism often involves some sort of network that allows different groups of people in different countries or regions to work together to instill violence and fear in target populations. And remember that terrorism is NOT a new thing.
6. During the Cold War, countries like the Soviet Union and East Germany sponsored, or supported, terror groups like the Red Army Faction that launched attacks on pro-capitalist Western targets. This is called 'state sponsored terrorism'.
7. State sponsored terrorism allows countries to use terror groups when they cannot use their own militaries. Keep in mind that state sponsored terrorism, or any sort of terrorism, is considered to be an international crime.

Let's check in. Try to answer the following in your own words.

Q: What is terrorism?

ANSWER

Q: What is meant by the term 'state-sponsored terrorism'?

ANSWER

Great job. Let's look now at more recent history.

8. Near the end of the 20th century, countries like Iran started sponsoring Islamic terror groups that would target the United States and Israel. Researchers suspect, for example, that Iran was behind a truck bombing in 1983 in Beirut, Lebanon that killed 307 people at a military barracks in that city. This included more than 241 US Marines who were there on a peacekeeping mission.

9. By the late 20th and early 21st century, terror groups like al-Qaeda launched attacks on countries all over the world. That includes a truck bomb that was used on the World Trade Center in 1993 and the horrific use of planes that led to the events of September 11th, 2001 in the United States.

10. It's important to remember that there are many other examples of terrorism both in the United States and globally. The Ku Klux Klan, for example, is an American terrorist organization that has used violence against African Americans and others who support civil rights. At one point, the KK had many political leaders and officials as members, but they're much weaker today.

11. The Irish Republican Army in Ireland has used violence, especially bombings of both civilian and military targets, to try and force the British out of Northern Ireland.

12. In the Middle East, groups like the Palestine Liberation Front and related organizations have used acts of terror against Israel and other nations to try and force Israel and its allies out of the region. The PLF, for example, hijacked the cruise liner the Achille Lauro in 1985. They killed a Jewish American, Leon Klinghoffer.

13. Many of these networks work together even though they have little in common and are truly global. The Provisional Irish Republican Army, for example, provided training to terrorists in both Latin America and the Middle East, with completely different objectives.

14. Despite coordinated efforts by these groups, the nations of the world have attempted to thwart their actions through the collection of intelligence and use of military force as efforts to keep their people as safe as possible from the threat of global terrorism. Even today, though, organizations like HAMAS and ISIS and offshoots of the Irish Republican Army continue to threaten global peace and security.

Let's check in:

Q: List two examples of global terrorism.

ANSWER

Let's recap what we learned:

15. Terrorism is the use of extreme fear and violence to try to achieve a goal.

16. Global terrorism involves a network of people in different countries working together.

17. State-sponsored terrorism is organized and supported by specific countries to avoid using their own militaries.

18. Some significant terrorist groups through history are the Ku Klux Klan in the United States, Irish Republican Army in Ireland and Great Britain, and al Qaeda and the Palestine Liberation Front in the Middle East.

19. You've learned something about the historical context of global terrorism over time. Be sure to watch the other videos in this series to get a better understanding of the meaning and significance of the events of September 11th, 2001. 1. After terrorists from al Qaeda's global terror network crashed hijacked planes into the World Trade Center, the Pentagon, and a field in Pennsylvania on September 11th, 2001, the United States and the world took several steps in response.

2. These steps included military action, domestic security reforms, and diplomatic efforts, among others. In this video, we will spend some time exploring those steps.

3. After watching this video, you will be able to Describe the global response to terrorism following the events of September 11th, 2001.

So let's get started.

4. As a reminder, let's look again at our definition of terrorism. Terrorism uses extreme fear and violence to try to achieve a political or ideological goal. This is often against civilian targets. And global terrorism often involves some sort of network that allows different groups of people in different countries or regions to work together to instill violence and fear in target populations.

5. One of the most important responses to the events of 9/11 was the creation of a global coalition against terrorism. Following the horrific attacks on that day, US President George W. Bush said that "The attack took place on American soil, but it was an attack on the heart and soul of the civilized world. And the world has come together to fight a new and different war, the first, and we hope the only one, of the 21st century. A war against all those who seek to export terror, and a war against those governments that support or shelter them." This was, at its heart, a call for unity in the face of terror, a coalition that would find ways to ensure the security of citizens across the world as much as possible.

6. This coalition, made up of countries from all over the world, works to combat terrorism across the globe. It was this coalition that worked to bring justice to al Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden.

7. In October of 2001, the United States, with the support of Australia, New Zealand, the United Kingdom, Canada, Italy, Germany, and local Afghan forces launched Operation Enduring Freedom and invaded the country of Afghanistan.

8. Afghanistan, led by a fundamentalist Islamic organization known as the Taliban, had provided a safe haven for al Qaeda and refused to turn bin Laden and other leaders over for justice. Ultimately, the United States would spend 20 years in Afghanistan, working to stabilize the country and suppress terrorist organizations. This was unfortunately not always successful.

9. On the positive side, however, justice was served to Osama bin Laden. On May 2, 2011, Osama bin Laden was killed in his compound in the country of Pakistan. This was a military and intelligence effort primarily led by the US' Central Intelligence Agency and units of the United States' special forces. However, while bin Laden was killed, al Qaeda continues to exist to this day.

Let's check in. Try to answer the following questions in your own words.

Q: What was Operation Enduring Freedom?

ANSWER

Q: What was the relationship between the Taliban and al Qaeda?

ANSWER

10. As the threat of terror grew, the global coalition also worked together to try and disrupt terror networks across the globe through military action, secret intelligence, and diplomacy.

11. In March of 2003, for example, the US and its coalition partners invaded the country of Iraq to overthrow Saddam Hussein, who was an important state sponsor of terrorism.

12. The diplomacy used by the coalition was very comprehensive, and worked to try and address some of the root causes of terrorism by providing financial aid to address poverty, support education, and limit political and religious extremism. This was done for countries in Asia, Africa, and the Middle East in an effort to try and reduce the chance that people would find the promises of terror groups appealing.

13. But how could people find these groups appealing? Well, many of them would function as governments in areas where the national or local government was weak and the people were desperate. Al Qaeda, for example, would provide food and jobs to people where it operated. The Islamic terrorist organization Hezbollah would do the same in the Palestinian territories it controlled in its fight against Israel. Of course, they also imposed terror on those same people! Governments opposed to terrorism seek ways to ensure that no one has a reason to turn to these groups.

14. Diplomatic measures were also taken by countries around the world to try and cut off funding for terror networks by implementing new regulations on banks and freezing the assets of supporters of terror groups so that they could not access their funds. At the same time, the United Nations Security Council passed resolutions supporting the fight against terrorism.

15. Outside of directly challenging al Qaeda and other terrorist networks, many countries also responded to the threat of global terrorism by implementing new security measures at airports. If you have ever flown on a plane, you are likely familiar with some of these measures. This includes better screening of passengers and new screening requirements to get on a plane.

16. For example, before 9/11, you sometimes did not have to show your id to fly, and you could keep your shoes on and large bottles of liquid when you went through security.

17. Because the terrorists who seized the planes on 9/11 learned to fly in the United States, the government also imposed new requirements to even go to flight school! This includes such things as proving your citizenship and undergoing a deep background check to make sure that you aren't a terrorist.

18. National governments also passed laws that increased surveillance on citizens and made it easier to arrest and prosecute terrorists and limit their funding. For example, in the United States, we passed the PATRIOT Act, which you will learn more about later.

Let's check in. Try to answer the following questions in your own words.

Q: What was the goal of diplomacy used by the global coalition against terrorism?

ANSWER

Q: What are at least two diplomatic measures the countries took to fight against terrorism?

ANSWER

19. Ultimately, the global response to terrorism following the events of September 11th, 2001 took a variety of forms. This includes changes in domestic and foreign policies to try and limit terrorist funding and improve security, military action to bring members of al Qaeda to justice and break up its terror network, and diplomatic action to develop coalitions against terror and work to limit political and religious extremism.

Be sure to watch the other videos in this series to learn more about the significance and impact of the events of September 11th, 2001.