



*The U.S. & The World SS.7.CG.4.4*  
***The Significance of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001***  
**VIDEO SCRIPT**



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## **Benchmark Clarification Five: First Responders, Civilians, and the Common Good**

1. Please be aware that this video may contain graphic imagery. Effort has been made to respect those that lost their lives on 9/11, and their families. If the imagery in this video disturbs you, please note that you should use the script or reading for this video instead.
2. One of the most important parts of being a good citizen is understanding the **common good**. The common good involves putting aside your own individual needs and wants in order to help others and the broader community. In the immediate aftermath of the events of September 11th, 2001, **first responders** and regular citizens both focused on that common good.
3. After watching this video, you will be able to explain the ways in which first responders (including but not limited to, police officers, firefighters, and paramedics) and civilians were involved in the rescue and recovery of victims of the September 11, 2001 attacks.

So let's get started and talk about people who lived the idea of being a good citizen and supporting the common good.

4. When the first plane crashed into the **North Tower**, police, firefighters, and paramedics were on the scene to try and evacuate the building, support the injured, and battle the raging fire that was starting to engulf the tower. Almost immediately, these people jumped into action.
5. Many of these first responders and civilians rushed into the North Tower in an effort to find a way to rescue those trapped by the fire and structural damage. Office workers in the building helped guide others to the exits and supported people as they worked to escape. They understood the importance of working together, and the ways in which we as Americans are connected by the common good.
6. Even as a second plane crashed into the **South Tower**, these heroic citizens worked to rescue people trapped in each building.
7. The same thing can be said of the civilians and soldiers who worked to rescue the survivors and victims after a plane crashed into the Pentagon just outside Washington, DC.
8. And of course, there are those heroes on Flight 93 that fought back against the al-Qaeda hijackers in an effort to save the lives of so many on the ground, saving likely hundreds of people.
9. As the **Twin Towers** burned, men and women, firefighters, police officers, paramedics, office workers, and regular civilians with or without training, stayed to try to make a difference and save as many lives as they could. Hundreds of first responders and civilians worked at the base of the towers and in the

lower floors to save as many people as they could. Unfortunately, when the South and North Towers collapsed, many of them lost their lives while trying to save others. Let's take a minute and honor one of them, who cared so much about the common good and the needs of their fellow American.

10. Father Mychal Judge was a fire department chaplain and a Roman Catholic priest. He died while giving last rites to dead and dying victims of the crash inside the North Tower as it was struck by debris from the collapsing South Tower. Because his body was the first to be found, he is considered to be the first victim of 9/11. He died trying to help his fellow Americans. He died supporting the common good.
11. After the collapse of the Twin Towers, volunteer first responders and civilians with medical training or rescue experience returned to the destroyed buildings. They hoped that some survived in pockets of space under the rubble, and for a time, phone calls from those survivors reinforced that hope. Together, these volunteers worked for weeks to try and rescue those possible survivors trapped under the rubble and to find and identify the remains of those killed at the World Trade Center. Sadly, there would be few found alive within the rubble.
12. **Genelle Guzman-McMillan** was the last person to be rescued alive from the rubble of the World Trade Center. She was found 27 hours after the North Tower collapsed. Guzman-McMillan, a young Black immigrant woman from Trinidad, was working as an assistant secretary for the Port Authority on the 64th floor of the North Tower when the first plane hit. She and her colleagues tried to escape down the stairs, but the tower collapsed on them when they reached the 13th floor. Guzman-McMillan was trapped under the rubble for over a day, buried under concrete and steel. When rescuers finally arrived, she had a crushed right leg, a swollen head, and a burned face.
13. In total, 2,603 died when the towers were hit and collapsed. 414 of these victims were first responders. These first responders died working to rescue their fellow citizens.
14. It's important to remember, too, that other civilians did play an important role in the aftermath of September 11<sup>th</sup>. They helped move rubble from the collapsed buildings, provided meals and support to many of the first responders involved in rescue and recovery efforts, and gave the families of victims a shoulder to cry on.
15. Even politicians were involved in rescue and recovery efforts. New York City Mayor Rudy Giuliani, as well as President George W. Bush offered comfort and support to survivors and to the families of victims. They also ensured that these efforts had the financial backing and anything else necessary to make the work easier.
16. Ultimately, these heroic citizens worked together to try and help as many people as they could after the events of September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001.
17. All together, 2,996 people in the buildings and planes were killed by 19 hijackers. Most were killed in the collapse of the North and South Towers (The Twin Towers) of the World Trade Center. Many of these were first responders who rushed in before the towers collapsed to try and save people. We recall these events to remember the importance of our freedoms and liberties and why they matter, and how we can support the common good. VISIT THE NATIONAL 9/11 MEMORIAL AND MUSEUM <https://www.911memorial.org/visit/museum>
18. And view the other videos in this module to understand the importance of 9/11.