

SPECIAL REPORT

MARKING 20 YEARS SINCE 9/11

TOMORROW (Saturday 11 September) is the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks in America. Here, we take a closer look at what happened and how the events have affected the world since.

THE FACTS

WHEN: 11 September 2001 (the 11th day of the 9th month. Americans write the month first, which is why the attacks became known as 9/11).

WHERE: New York City, Washington, DC and Pennsylvania.

WHAT HAPPENED: Four passenger jets were hijacked by terrorists. Two of the planes were flown deliberately into the twin towers of the World Trade Center. The third plane crashed into the Pentagon, the headquarters of the United States Armed Forces, and the fourth plane crashed into a field after a struggle between passengers and the terrorists.

CASUALTIES: Nearly 3,000 people were killed, and thousands more were injured.

WHO WAS RESPONSIBLE: A terrorist group from the Middle East called al-Qaeda. They said they were responding to America's treatment of Islamic countries, and they used violence to enforce their extreme beliefs.

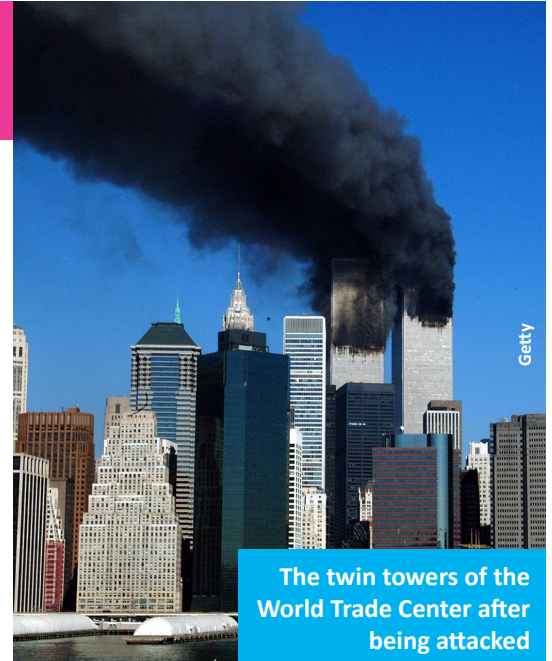
REMEMBERING THE VICTIMS

Following the attacks, the towers of the World Trade Center collapsed. Now, in their place, stands a memorial and museum dedicated to all those who lost their lives that day. The site is often referred to as Ground Zero.

To mark the 20th anniversary, family members of 9/11 victims will gather on the Memorial Plaza to read aloud the names of those killed in the attacks. Six separate moments of silence will also be observed.



Ground Zero, where the 9/11 memorial now stands



The twin towers of the World Trade Center after being attacked



John's dad worked in a special unit called Rescue Five

few other cops who he was working with. He remembers having to dig debris out of his mouth to be able to breathe and really climb his way out of the building... He would end up in the hospital that night and find out that he was the only one out of 12 guys from his firehouse to survive."

You can watch the full interview with John on FYI.

A HERO FIREFIGHTER

FYI spoke to John Spade about his dad Bill, who was a firefighter in New York City at the time of the attacks. John told us:

"He was dispatched to come in once the first plane struck the tower [of the World Trade Center]. He was heading across the Verrazano Bridge and he was able to watch the second plane hit into the South Tower. He asked where he should be assigned. He was told to aid in the evacuation of people from the North Tower. So as he began heading up, he was helping people get out of the lobby. He always described it as just a really great unified effort of these hundreds and thousands of people leaving the buildings in such an orderly fashion. He was exiting the North Tower, along with some other people who were able to make it out, and that's when the North Tower came down. So he was actually blown into surrounding buildings with a



In total, 343 firefighters died that day

If you're feeling nervous or scared about this issue, talk to a trusted adult about it, or speak to someone at Childline by going to [childline.org.uk](https://www.childline.org.uk) or calling 0800 1111



The annual Tribute in Light that will mark the 20th anniversary of 9/11. The two light beams represent the twin towers

THE events of 9/11 were felt across the world. But it also united many countries in the fight against terrorism and extreme views.

WHAT HAPPENED AFTER 9/11?

AMERICA RESPONDS



George W Bush addresses the nation following the attacks

On the evening of 11 September 2001, American President George W Bush gave a speech at the White House, saying: "Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America." He vowed to

combat terrorism and all those involved in the attacks.

On 7 October 2001, Operation Enduring Freedom was launched. It was known as the 'global war on terrorism'. The US aimed to find Osama bin Laden, the main al-Qaeda leader held responsible for the 9/11 attacks. The US also wanted to crush his terrorist network in Afghanistan and destroy the Taliban, the country's rulers.

Other countries, including Britain, joined the military operation in support.

Osama bin Laden was eventually found and killed in May 2011. This year, all American troops were removed from Afghanistan, bringing the 20-year war to an end.

THE RISE OF ISLAMOPHOBIA

In America and other Western countries, Islamophobia (hatred or fear of Muslims) grew worse after the attacks.

Even though most Muslims just want peace like everyone else, the fact that the terrorists came from Islamic countries meant some people adopted racism and violence to target all those who worshipped Islam.

Many Muslim people revealed that they were victims of abuse and felt scared of going out or using public transport.

Sadly, Islamophobia continues to be a problem to this day, and increased during the pandemic (along with hate crimes against other faiths and races) due to online conspiracies falsely blaming others for spreading COVID-19.



We spoke to Muslims Sadiya (aged 13), Salik (aged 12) and Mahid (aged 8) about their experiences of growing up in the UK and whether they'd encountered any Islamophobia themselves.

I have not faced any Islamophobia so far but I know one of my cousins, who is a bit older and in secondary school, said he sometimes faces some racism because he is a Muslim. Also, my mum wears a hijab and sometimes people stare at her, which makes her sad. I feel sad if anyone sees the news and thinks that Islam is bad, because actually Islam teaches us to be kind to everyone and to respect everyone. My dad has told me a bit about 9/11 and I just feel really sad what happened to the innocent people who died and how so many children lost their mothers and fathers.

Mahid

It has affected my mum and dad. For example, my dad was at a football match when he was racially abused. But luckily those around him reacted and told the guy that he was out of order. I think more should be done to educate people that Islam is a peaceful religion and the vast majority of Muslims are peaceful. The extremists are only a tiny minority and what they do is actually against everything that Islam stands for.

Salik

People need to know that Muslims are like everyone else and don't condone extremism. In fact Islam teaches its followers to live peacefully with others and serve them. Unfortunately that's not the image we see in the news. Perhaps the media can give coverage to the many, many positive things done by Muslims too. I have been fortunate enough to have never experienced Islamophobic comments or been in the presence of someone experiencing it. I have been wearing a head scarf throughout my school life, but my friends and teachers have always been supportive. I remember in primary school a non-Muslim friend even wanted to try the scarf for a day to support me, and her parents and teacher allowed her to do it. This shows how understanding and supportive some of them have been.

Sadiya

Share your own experiences with us at newsdesk@firstnews.co.uk

Find out more about 9/11 by watching the special episode of FYI at [first.news/fyi](https://www.firstnews.co.uk/fyi)

GLOSSARY

Memorial Plaza – The focal points of the memorial are two pools, nearly an acre in size, that sit in the footprints of the former North and South Towers. The names of the victims are written around the edges of the memorial pools

Verrazano Bridge – A suspension bridge in New York City connecting the boroughs of Staten Island and Brooklyn

Muslim – A person who follows the religion of Islam based on the Qur'an. The Qur'an is the central religious text of Islam, which Muslims believe to be a revelation from God

al-Qaeda – A network of Islamic extremists that is widely regarded as a terrorist group. The members of al-Qaeda believe that the United States and other non-Islamic countries have interfered in the affairs of Islamic countries and that violence against the citizens of such countries is justified

Taliban – An Islamic militant group. The Taliban governed Afghanistan at the time of the September 11 attacks in 2001. After the attacks, the United States invaded Afghanistan because the US government said that the Taliban had been giving Osama bin Laden and al-Qaeda a safe base from which to operate



Questions on: 'Marking 20 years since 9/11'

Part A: Finding the facts

A1. Fill the gaps in the sentences in order to complete the information about the 9/11 attacks.

The 9/11 attacks in America took place on September Four passenger jets were hijacked by terrorists. of the planes were flown deliberately into the twin towers of the The plane crashed into the, the headquarters of the United States Armed Forces, and the plane crashed into a after a struggle between passengers and the Nearly people were killed, and more were injured. This year marks the anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks.

A2. Why are the attacks known as 9/11?

A3. Who was responsible for the attacks?

A4. Following the attacks, the towers of the World Trade Center collapsed. What stands there now?

A5. How will the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks be marked?

A6. What should you do if you're feeling scared or have any questions about what you've read in this report?

Part B: Thinking things through

B1. On the evening of 11 September 2001, American President George W Bush gave a speech at the White House in which he said the following: "Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America." What message do you think he was trying to get across?

B2. John Spade is quoted talking about his dad Bill, who was a firefighter in New York City at the time of the attacks. What do we learn about the positive side of human nature from his account?

B3. Why was Operation Enduring Freedom launched?

B4. Why do you think that Operation Enduring Freedom was known as the 'global war on terrorism'?

B5. Why did Islamophobia grow worse after the attacks?

B6. Why is Islamophobia still a problem to this day?

Part C: Area for discussion

C1. What ideas do you have to address the rise of Islamophobia and hate crimes against other faiths and races?

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B4. Why do you think that Operation Enduring Freedom was known as the 'global war on terrorism'?

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● 10 – 16 September 2021

C1. What ideas do you have to address the rise of Islamophobia and hate crimes against other faiths and races?

This image shows a full page of white paper with horizontal dotted lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page, providing a guide for handwriting practice. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the page.

POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

NEWS ANALYSIS POINTS FOR DISCUSSION

This week, with the 20th anniversary of 9/11, the normal 'Article Analysis' is replaced with a 'News Analysis' resource. The focus of the activity is to support understanding of the events that happened at the time and to enable students to talk through misunderstandings and concerns they may have.

FYI FOR YOUR INFORMATION

First News has teamed up with Sky Kids show FYI and the BFI Young Audiences Content Fund to make programmes and videos about the news, which you can watch on First News Education TV. The plan is to explain stuff that can be complicated or difficult, and this week FYI has been looking at the anniversary of a terrorist attack known as 9/11. This special episode can be watched at first.news/EducationTV

Part A: Finding the facts

A1. Fill the gaps in the sentences in order to complete the information about the 9/11 attacks.

The 9/11 attacks in America took place on **11** September **2001**. Four passenger jets were hijacked by terrorists. **Two** of the planes were flown deliberately into the twin towers of the **World Trade Center**. The **third** plane crashed into the **Pentagon**, the headquarters of the United States Armed Forces, and the **fourth** plane crashed into a **field** after a struggle between passengers and the **terrorists**. Nearly **3,000** people were killed, and **thousands** more were injured. This year marks the **20th** anniversary of the 9/11 terror attacks.

A2. Why are the attacks known as 9/11?

- It's the date on which the attacks occurred. It refers to the 11th day of the 9th month, but Americans write the month first, which is why the attacks became known as 9/11.

A3. Who was responsible for the attacks?

- A terrorist group from the Middle East called al-Qaeda. They said they were responding to America's treatment of Islamic countries, and they used violence to enforce their extreme beliefs.

A4. Following the attacks, the towers of the World Trade Center collapsed. What stands there now?

- In the place of the towers stands a memorial and museum dedicated to all those who lost their lives. The focal points of the memorial are two pools where the towers once stood. The site is often referred to as Ground Zero.

A5. How will the 20th anniversary of the 9/11 attacks be marked?

- To mark the 20th anniversary, family members of 9/11 victims will gather on the Memorial Plaza to read aloud the names of those killed in the attacks. Six separate moments of silence will also be observed.

A6. What should you do if you're feeling scared or have any questions about what you've read in this report?

- You should talk to a trusted adult about it, or speak to someone at Childline by going to childline.org.uk or calling 0800 1111.

Part B: Thinking things through

B1. On the evening of 11 September 2001, American President George W Bush gave a speech at the White House in which he said the following: "Terrorist attacks can shake the foundations of our biggest buildings, but they cannot touch the foundation of America." What message do you think he was trying to get across?

- The American president was trying to convey the message that violence would not be allowed to shake the beliefs that make up the foundation of American society. He is showing defiance in the face of the terrorist attacks and is asserting that Americans would not be intimidated and would continue to advocate and fight for freedom and opportunity for all.

B2. John Spade is quoted talking about his dad Bill, who was a firefighter in New York City at the time of the attacks. What do we learn about the positive side of human nature from his account?

- John explains that his dad aided in the evacuation of people from the North Tower and that he "always described it as a great unified effort of... hundreds and thousands of people leaving the buildings in... an orderly fashion." This shows that in a crisis people stayed calm. The description of the effort as "unified" shows that people weren't selfish, they were trying to help each other. Furthermore, the mention of the police and firefighters who died shows how committed people were to the rescue effort and how so many made the ultimate sacrifice.

B3. Why was Operation Enduring Freedom launched?

- Operation Enduring Freedom was launched in response to 9/11 in order to prevent further terrorist attacks. The US wanted to find Osama bin Laden, the main al-Qaeda leader held responsible for the attacks. The US also wanted to crush his terrorist network in Afghanistan and destroy the Taliban, the country's rulers.

B4. Why do you think that Operation Enduring Freedom was known as the 'global war on terrorism'?

- It was known as the 'global war on terrorism' because the operation united many countries across the world in the fight against terrorism and extreme views. Other countries, including Britain, joined the military operation in support.

B5. Why did Islamophobia grow worse after the attacks?

- Islamophobia grew worse after the attacks because the terrorists came from Islamic countries. Therefore, some people became fearful of anyone who worshipped Islam even though most Muslims just want peace. The majority of Muslims, like everyone else, are totally opposed to the extremism and violence that terrorists commit in the name of Islam. Despite this, many Muslims revealed that they were victims of abuse and felt scared of going out or using public transport.

B6. Why is Islamophobia still a problem to this day?

- Islamophobia is still a problem to this day because there have been other terrorist attacks across the globe since 9/11. Some people continue to associate such acts with Muslims although there have also been terrorist attacks from people of other faiths (or no faith at all). Furthermore, some people mistakenly associate terrorist attacks with all Muslims, rather than just extremists. The COVID-19 pandemic has also made the problem worse and increased the number of hate crimes against other faiths and races as well. This is partly due to online conspiracies falsely blaming others for spreading the virus.

Part C: Area for discussion

C1. What ideas do you have to address the rise of Islamophobia and hate crimes against other faiths and races?**Suggestions:**

- Part of the problem seems to be a lack of understanding. Some people have limited or incorrect understanding of Islamic practices and don't know that Muslims promote peace. Mainstream ideas surrounding Islam and Muslims need to be reviewed and challenged so that they reflect reality.
- Muslims are not always represented accurately or positively in the media. There should be more regulation to ensure that the many positive, everyday roles that Muslims occupy in society are evident.
- People should be educated on how to challenge hate crimes. Community members need to stand together to show that they do not accept prejudice against groups and individuals because of their religion, race or any other characteristic. Therefore, if incidents are witnessed then witnesses should know how to report them to the authorities. Guidance on how to recognise and report hate crimes could be given through schools, churches or other social groups. This will show victims that they are not alone and they are supported.
- Communities could also work together to establish a programme of coffee mornings, youth clubs and community events which are actively promoted to all members of the community.