

Name _____ Date _____

9/11

"September 11, 2001"

Learn more about this topic! Each section gives more detail on one of the lyrics from the song. Read each section, and then respond by answering the question or taking notes on key ideas.

1.



b'

The Twin Towers were a famous part of the New York City skyline.

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The **Twin Towers** were a New York City landmark at 110 stories each. They were completed in 1973. The towers

were the centerpieces of the World Trade Center Complex. They were the tallest buildings in New York City and, for a brief time, the tallest buildings in the world. Every day, around 50,000 people went to work at companies with offices inside the towers. The seven underground levels included stores and a subway station. The South Tower had an observation deck on the 107th floor, while the North Tower's top floors were home to Windows on the World, a world-famous restaurant with views extending into New Jersey.

Notes

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b'

Welles Crowther is honored at the 9/11 Memorial.

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Seconds after the first plane hit the North Tower, New York City

firefighters and police officers were sent to the scene. By 9:10 AM, 2,000 police officers and 235 firefighters had been dispatched. Off-duty personnel responded to the attacks, as well. Hundreds of these first responders were killed when the South Tower collapsed just before 10 AM.

Many civilians (non-emergency personnel) also risked their lives to lead others to safety that day. Welles Crowther worked on the 104th floor of the South Tower. After the plane hit his building, he ran up and down flights of stairs, guiding strangers to safety. Welles Crowther died when the South Tower collapsed. Afterwards, many survivors said that a “man in a red bandana” saved their lives. Through this description, his mother recognized her son; he always carried a red bandana in his pocket.

3.



b'

The South Tower

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At first, it was unclear how or why a plane had crashed into the North Tower. Live news footage was broadcast across the country as

people waited for answers. Eighteen minutes after the hijacked plane hit, a second plane crashed into the South Tower. It hit at about the 77th-85th floors. Millions watching on TV saw this second crash as it happened. The media began reporting that it seemed the events were terrorist attacks.

After burning for almost an hour, the South Tower completely collapsed at 9:59 AM. At 10:30, the North Tower also collapsed. Both collapses were broadcast live to viewers around the world. Nearly 3,000 people died in the World Trade Center. The victims included 343 firefighters and paramedics, 23 New York City police officers and 37 Port Authority police officers.

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The Pentagon, US Department of Defense building

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At 9:37 AM, a third hijacked plane crashed into the Pentagon. The 59 passengers aboard the plane and 125 people inside the building were killed. Before 10 AM that morning, the Federal Aviation Administration issued a nationwide ground stop, forbidding any planes from leaving the ground. This order had never been issued since flying was invented in 1903. The FAA also ordered all planes in the air to land as soon as possible.

Notes

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The passengers of United 93 are remembered.

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When the FAA gave their order, a fourth hijacked plane was already in the air. United 93 left Newark, New Jersey, for San Francisco, California, at 8:42 AM. The flight had been delayed. As a result many passengers had learned of the attacks in New York and DC through cell phone calls from family members. When their own plane was hijacked, passengers realized it was part of a larger terrorist plot. They decided to fight back.

The hijackers' intended target was unknown. Many suspect they were headed for another US landmark, such as the Capitol or the White House. Several passengers aboard United 93 managed to take control of the plane. Knowing their flight was doomed, they crashed the plane into a field in western Pennsylvania to avoid further civilian deaths on the ground. All 45 people aboard the plane were killed.

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Flight paths of the hijacked planes

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The 19 **hijackers** were members of **Al**

Qaeda, a terrorist network founded in the late 1980s by **Osama bin Laden** and others. Al Qaeda aimed to instill fear in the American people and reduce the influence of the US abroad. The Twin Towers at the World Trade Center and the Pentagon were chosen as targets because they symbolized the United States and its influence and power. The World Trade Center symbolized America's wealth. The Pentagon was a symbol of its military power. 15 of the 19 hijackers were from Saudi Arabia, two were from the United Arab Emirates, one was from Lebanon and one was from Egypt.

Notes

7.



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Bin Laden had strong views.

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Osama bin Laden was a religious extremist. That means that he interpreted the teachings of his religion, Islam, in a way that was far more strict than the vast majority of Muslims. Most people

understand that everyone lives their life in

their own way. But bin Laden used extreme violence to try to force people to live their lives the way he believed they should.

Notes

8.



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Afghanistan is home to Al Qaeda.

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In 1988, Osama bin Laden created **Al Qaeda**, a terrorist network based in Afghanistan. Bin Laden organized

terrorists to embrace violent jihad, or holy war. Their aim was to create a single Islamic state. Al Qaeda claimed to be righting wrongs committed against Muslims for generations. US military policies were seen as one such "wrong." In particular, Al Qaeda saw the United States' support of Israel as a war against Islam itself. In the late 1990s, Al Qaeda took credit for a series of attacks. These attacks included an earlier bombings at the World Trade Center, the US embassies in Kenya and Tanzania and a US navy destroyer docked off the coast of Yemen. In 1998, bin Laden declared that every Muslim should "kill Americans wherever they are found."

Notes

9.



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President Bush addressing Congress and the nation post-9/11

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On September 20th, President Bush delivered a speech to a joint session of

Congress in which he outlined his plans for a **War on Terror**. By then, the world knew that Al Qaeda and Osama bin Laden were behind the 9/11 attacks.

The Taliban was the ruling group of Afghanistan at the time. President Bush called on them to hand over bin Laden and other members of Al Qaeda. President Bush stated that any country that continued to harbor or support terrorists would be regarded as an enemy.

The Taliban refused to cooperate with the US's demand. The United Arab Emirates and Saudi Arabia severed their ties to the Taliban. Airstrikes against the Taliban government and Al Qaeda began on October 7, 2001, and ground troops arrived later that month.

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The Obama administration awaiting news on bin Laden's death

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The American military and CIA found and killed bin Laden in a compound in

Pakistan on May 2, 2011. This was nearly 10 years after the 9/11 attacks. Bin Laden's body was buried at sea.

President Obama called the death the "most significant achievement to date in our nation's effort to defeat Al Qaeda." However, he stressed that the effort against Al Qaeda was not over. Upon hearing the news of bin Laden's death, crowds gathered at the White House, Times Square and Ground Zero, the former site of the Twin Towers. They waved American flags, chanted and sang "The Star-Spangled Banner."

Notes

11.



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One World Trade Center stands tall in lower Manhattan.

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In New York City, the 9/11 Memorial is located at the site of the former

World Trade Center Complex. It was dedicated on the 10th anniversary of the attacks. A waterfall and reflecting pool were built in the footprints of each original tower. The panels surrounding the pools are inscribed with the names of every person who died in the attacks. The new World Trade Center complex, which includes the memorial and a museum, also contains One World Trade Center. The tower, which opened in October 2014, is the tallest building in the Western Hemisphere. It is 1,776 feet tall, a number chosen to recall the founding of the United States.

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