

Title of Lesson Plan: Headlines on September 12, 2001

Lesson Overview:

This lesson will engage students in two specific tasks: building background information and analyzing newspaper front pages published on September 12, 2001. Students will focus on comparing headlines and images showing the attacks on the World Trade Center.

Lesson Objectives:

Students will be able to:

- explain what happened on September 11, 2001 and the aftermath
- understand how newspaper layouts emphasize the story
- understand how word choice indicates perspective
- understand how images are used to represent historical events

Grade Level: 9 - 12

Standards:

Historical Background:

This lesson is an introduction to the attacks on September 11, 2001. The lesson may fit within a unit on contemporary America or on specific subjects like civil liberties or media literacy. On September 11, 2001, four coordinated attacks took place and this lesson focuses on the destruction of the Twin Towers in lower Manhattan. American Airlines Flight 11 crashed into the North Tower at 8:46a and United Airlines flight 175 crashed into the South Tower at 9:03a. Within a couple hours, both towers fell and an estimated 1/3 of the world population watched the events live.

Materials:

- Laptop/tablet
- Graphic organizers
- [Library of Congress "Analyzing Newspapers" guide](https://www.loc.gov/teachers/usingprimarysources/resources/Analyzing_Newspapers.pdf)
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Procedures:

Part 1: Building Background Information:

1. To help students guide their own learning to build background information about the attacks on September 11, 2001, allow students to use the various resources to gather historical information. To frame their exploration, post the questions 1) *What happened on September 11, 2001?* and 2) *What happened in the aftermath of the attacks?* Students can use the graphic organizer provided, which will help for the discussion activity to follow.
2. After students complete their exploration, engage them in a [Conga Line discussion model](#) (or any other model that will get students out of their seats to reflect on their learning; <http://blog.discoveryeducation.com/blog/2016/01/04/sos-conga-line/>).
3. As students meet in pairs or triads, have them share one part of the 4-3-2-1

organizer. After four rounds, bring the class together for a whole-group debrief to collect questions as a class.

Part 2: Front Page Analysis

1. Explain to students that they will now take their background knowledge and explore how the event was represented in newspaper front pages on September 12, 2001. The Library of Congress has a teacher guide that will help plan this introductory activity to students.
2. As a class, analyze one newspaper front page together using the graphic organizer. Guide students in analyzing the editorial choices in layout, text, and imagery.
3. Students can work individually or in pairs to select two additional front pages to analyze.

Assessment and Extensions:

Exit Ticket: To help students reflect on their analysis, have them write a short response comparing two of the newspaper front pages. What is similar? What is different? What is the overall purpose/message of each front page with regards to the events of September 11, 2001?

Extension options:

The Newseum website also has newspaper front pages from the 10th anniversary. Students can analyze what has changed regarding the narrative about the events of September 11th.

Text of Document Excerpts/Source Materials with Citations:

- [9/11 Memorial Interactive Timeline](https://timeline.911memorial.org/#Timeline/2) (9/11 Memorial & Museum; <https://timeline.911memorial.org/#Timeline/2>)
- [September 11, 2001 Background Essay](https://ap.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/facing-new-millennium/essays/september-11-2001?period=9) (Gilder Lehrman; <https://ap.gilderlehrman.org/history-by-era/facing-new-millennium/essays/september-11-2001?period=9>)
- [9/11 Attacks Videos](https://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks/videos) (History Channel; <https://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks/videos>)
- [Terrorist Attacks of September 11, 2001 Archived Newspapers](https://newseumed.org/artifact/terrorist-attacks-of-sept-11-2001-archived-papers/) (Newseum; <https://newseumed.org/artifact/terrorist-attacks-of-sept-11-2001-archived-papers/>)

September 11, 2001 Background Information Organizer

<p>4 new concepts or facts I learned...</p>	
<p>3 new words I learned...</p>	
<p>2 questions I still have are...</p>	
<p>1 feeling I have is...</p>	

Front Page Analysis Graphic Organizer

	Newspaper #1	Newspaper #2	Newspaper #3
Newspaper Title Publication City, State			
Headline <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the lead story? • How does the text size compare to other titles? 			
Word Choice <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What words do you think might have the most impact on the readers? • What is the tone and/or connotation of the terms? 			
Images <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What is the most prominent image showing? • How does the size compare to text on the page? 			
Message <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What concept/stance is primarily emphasized based on word choice & image selection? 			