

The tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks brings us all back to the horrific events of that day in New York, Washington, DC, and Pennsylvania. Teachers across the country wonder how to teach about these events, their causes and their consequences to students who were so young at the time that their personal recollections may be quite limited. Further, there is some ambivalence about using the opportunity to teach about Muslims and Islam, since connecting 9/11 and Islam may reinforce the misperception that Muslims as a group bear responsibility for the attacks.

We think that with the renewed onslaught of media attention on this important anniversary, we cannot but take advantage of the opportunity to bring students to a richer understanding not only of the 9/11 events themselves, but of the communities of people in the United States and around the globe who were impacted by those events. We have compiled a list of organizations and teaching resources that take a broad variety of approaches to these issues, from looking at the activism of those who lost family in the attacks to understanding the diversity of American Muslims to researching issues of national security and Constitutional protections. If you discover other resources you think would be helpful to teachers on this issue, let us know!

Primary Source

Primary Source invites teachers to commemorate the 10th anniversary of the 9/11 terrorist attacks and the start of the war in Afghanistan by participating in [*Remembering 9/11: Moving Beyond Grief to Global Understanding*](#), a worldwide viewing and discussion of *Beyond Belief*, a documentary film that tells the story of Susan Retik and Patti Quigley. Widowed on 9/11, these two extraordinary women demonstrate the power of global understanding as they travel to Afghanistan and discover an unlikely kinship with widows halfway around the world. Teachers and students can join Beth Murphy, the filmmaker, for a special one-hour webinar on Wednesday, September 14, at 5 pm (Eastern time) after viewing the film free online. Register at <http://primarysource.kintera.org/beyondbeliefwebinar> – details about joining the live webinar will be sent to registrants. Can't make it on the 14th? Register anyway and Primary Source will send you the recorded webinar for viewing at your convenience.

Unity Productions Foundation

[*My Fellow American*](#) is an online film and social media project that seeks to change the narrative – from Muslims as the other, to Muslims as our fellow Americans. It asks people of other backgrounds to share a real-life story about a Muslim friend, neighbor, or colleague whom they admire. Check out the many fascinating stories being told.

Harvard University Center for Middle Eastern Studies

The Outreach Center offers a [range of on-campus and on-line resources](#) for responding to the 10th anniversary of September 11th, 2001. Lesson plans include “Art, Identity and September 11th” and “September 11th as History and Imagery: How Do We Determine Truth and Reality?” The Center also has two upcoming webinars:

September 26, 2011 7:30pm – 8:30pm [Impacts of 9/11: Teaching Global Engagement Through US Involvement in Afghanistan](#)

October 6, 2011 - 7:30pm - 8:30pm [Impacts of 9/11: Teaching Global Engagement Through US Involvement in Iraq](#)

A third webinar on the [State of Muslims in America](#) with Dr. Hussein Rashid was held on September 1. CMES also offers a variety of other resources, including a film guide for teaching September 11th, relevant graphic novels available in the lending library, and an article by Ali Asani on “[Muslim Understandings of Islam.](#)”

Prepare New York

Prepare New York is a coalition of New York-based interfaith organizations who have joined together to help create a city-wide climate that promotes healing and reconciliation in anticipation of the tenth anniversary of 9/11. They have brought together a number of different background and teaching resources [here](#).

The Choices Program at Brown University

[Oral History and 9/11 – Teaching with the News](#)

Students explore the human dimensions of the September 11 attacks by conducting an interview and sharing their interviewee’s experience in this free online lesson.

[Responding to Terrorism: Challenges for Democracy](#)

“Responding to Terrorism: Challenges for Democracy” helps students consider the issues surrounding the U.S. response to terrorism in a constructive context that promotes dialogue about future policy directions.

[A Global Controversy: The U.S. Invasion of Iraq](#)

Supplemented by Scholars Online videos featuring academics and policymakers such as U.S. Sen. Jack Reed, this lesson encourages students to recreate the national public debate that took place as the country stood on the brink of invasion in March 2003, and to explore four distinct options the U.S. public considered at the time. *[Watch a video preview here.](#)*

Smithsonian National Museum of American History

On August 3-4, 2011, the National Museum of American History, National September 11 Memorial & Museum, Pentagon Memorial Fund, and Flight 93 National Memorial offered a free online conference, *September 11: Teaching Contemporary History*. Designed to provide educators with resources and strategies for addressing the September 11 terrorist attacks, the conference included roundtable discussions with content experts and six workshop sessions. These sessions — all of which were [recorded](#) and are now available — highlight [resources available at each organization](#), provide [background](#)

[information on September 11](#), and encourage conversations on how to document, preserve, and interpret recent history and current events. Also see the blog posting by Joan Brodsky Schur on "[Essential questions for teaching September 11.](#)"

Teaching Tolerance

The Teaching Tolerance project of the Southern Poverty Law Center provides a number of resources for teaching about 9/11, focusing on creating a positive classroom environment for all students and confronting Islamophobia. See [Facilitating Constructive Conversations about 9/11](#) (developed by the Tanenbaum Center for Interreligious Understanding), [Commemorate 9/11 by Confronting Islamophobia](#), [Bringing 9/11 in the Classroom: Useful Lessons](#), [How Do You Bring Islam into the Classroom?](#), and more.

Change the Story

[Teaching 9/11 Guide for Educators](#)

Intersections, a multi-cultural, multi-faith, global initiative of the Collegiate Church of New York, created the site ChangeTheStory.net independently, but in cooperation and consultation with the staff and leadership of the U.S.–Muslim Engagement Project. Change the Story is an online resource aimed at transforming harmful stereotypes about Muslims that persist in society. The site offers four 40-minute lesson plans introducing Islam and Muslims, as well as a Meet Your Neighbors section with a number of videos featuring American Muslims.

WAMU American University Radio

[Joined By War: Ten Years of War](#) is a live international radio broadcast to be recorded on Thurs., Sept. 8 at 7 a.m. at American University's Katzen Arts Center. On the anniversary of September 11th, and with the U.S. troop drawdown in Afghanistan underway, America Abroad Media, WAMU 88.5 FM, and Radio Killid Afghanistan will bring together an American audience in Washington and an Afghan audience in Kabul for a candid conversation between Afghans and Americans about the impact of ten years of war. To RSVP for this live event, contact Paul Mozzocci at mozzocci@wamu.org. After the program is recorded, a link will be available on the WAMU website to listen to the podcast.

New Jersey Commission on Holocaust Education

[Global Security, Terrorism, and 9/11 in the Classroom: A New Curricular Initiative for Students in Grades K-12](#)

The lessons contained in this curriculum were developed, piloted in over 60 New Jersey school districts, revised and refined by curriculum developers and the 4 Action Initiative team. While there are lessons for all grade levels, teachers should adjust the lessons for their classes, always taking into account the ages of their students and the potentially

traumatic nature of the content of some lessons. Lesson plan themes include: *Human Behavior, From Playground to World Stage: Aggression, Hostility and Terrorism, The Historical Context of Terrorism, 9/11/01: A Contemporary Case Study, Consequences and Challenges in a Post-9/11 World, Remembrance and Public Memory, and Building Better Futures: Narrative, Recovery and Responsibility.*

The September 11th Education Program

[Teaching 9/11](#) - Organized by families of 9/11

The lessons in this curriculum are designed to develop students' critical thinking skills. With an interdisciplinary approach, the lessons draw upon questions of history, government and citizenship, economics, and artistic interpretation. For example, a sample lesson [called The Historian's Craft: Creating Timelines and Using Personal Narratives](#) asks students to analyze the different scope and limitations of long- and short-term timelines and personal narratives.

Facing History and Ourselves

[Confronting September 11](#): In the aftermath of September 11, 2001, many people began to explore the complex issues of identity and religion. Accepted democratic ideals have begun to collide with issues of national security, creating a tension between neighbors and nations. These readings examine important issues such as civil liberties, national loyalty, and religious identity in the wake of violence.

Tribute WTC Visitor Center

Tribute WTC has created a set of eight videos of [personal stories of transformation](#) along with discussion questions that guide students to connect the events of 9/11 to the choices they make in their own lives. They have also created a list of [suggested resources](#), including PDFs, books and films on topics ranging from: 9/11 History Facts, Why? Individual Experiences, The World Trade Center Past and Present, and The Impact of 9/11 in Local and Global Communities.

PBS News Hour Extra

[Remembering September 11](#): This lesson plan, by Laura Greenwald of the John Hopkins School of Advanced International Studies, served as a basis for discussion and reflection on the five-year anniversary of September 11, 2001. It consists of four parts which can be used separately or together:

- [How has America Changed?](#) presents discussion questions that encourage an exchange of views on the impact of 9-11 on America.
- [The Gettysburg Address](#): focuses on the symbolic and historic importance of the Gettysburg Address, which will be read during the anniversary ceremony.
- [Writing a letter to the future](#): allows students to express in writing their feelings about 9/11, the war on terrorism, and implications for future generations.

- [NewsHour with Jim Lehrer Conversations](#): Students will analyze The NewsHour with Jim Lehrer interviews related to the commemoration of 9-11. The goal of this lesson plan is to develop students' critical thinking skills with an emphasis on comparing and contrasting viewpoints, summarizing main ideas, understanding attitudes, note-taking, forming opinions, supporting an argument, and drawing inferences.