

9/11 MEMORIAL

UNIT: Heroes and Service

GRADE LEVEL/S: 5-6

TIME NEEDED: 2 sessions

TEACHER: Ann Garvey

LESSON TITLE:

THE HEROIC ACTIONS OF THE PASSENGERS OF FLIGHT 93

Common Core Standards

W 4 Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

SL 4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

L 3 Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Key Questions/ Issues Addressed

- What type of actions do people associate with superheroes?
- What heroic actions took place during 9/11 and its aftermath?

Lesson Goals/ Objectives

- Students understand that people are considered heroes because of their actions.
- Students compare and contrast the actions of superheroes and 9/11 heroes.

Key Terms

Hijackers**, Terrorists*

* Individuals who commit terrorism

**See [9/11 FAQ](#) for more information

Materials

- 9/11 Memorial Interactive Timeline: <http://timeline.national911memorial.org>
- Pencil and paper
- Books:
 - Lalley, Patrick. 9.11.01 Terrorists Attack the US. (Vaughn Publishers, 2002)
 - Hampton, Wilborn. September 11, 2001: Attack on New York City. (Candlewick Press, 2003)
 - Strasser, Steven (ed). The 9/11 Investigations: Staff Reports of the 9/11 Commission: Excerpts from the House-Senate Joint Inquiry Report on 9/11. (Public Affairs, 2004)

Background for lesson (if necessary)

Students are encouraged to examine the books identified above as well as other available materials selected by the teacher that discuss the events of 9/11.

Students locate the key terms on the designated pages and explain their meanings with the teacher's guidance as needed.

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Instructional Activity/ Procedures

1. Ask students to identify the actions usually associated with superheroes. Students can refer to popular superheroes from contemporary media or to superheroes portrayed in myths, legends, or other literary genres.

2. The teacher reviews the events of 9/11 focusing on the hijacking of United Airlines Flight 93.

“Thirteen of Flight 93’s 40 passengers and crew managed to alert loved ones and authorities to the plane’s hijacking. At least six learn about the attacks on the World Trade Center or the Pentagon.

In response, Flight 93’s passengers are believed to have collectively voted to mount a counterattack to the hijackers.” (From <http://timeline.national911memorial.org/#/Explore>)

3. The teacher reads pages 101–103 from September 11 2001: Attack on New York City and page 15 “Crash in Pennsylvania” from 9.11.01 Terrorists Attack the U.S. Both passages describe the known events concerning Flight 93.

In addition, the 9/11 Memorial Interactive Timeline has clips of voicemails left on a Flight 93 passenger’s cell phone. These clips, along with further information, can be found at: <http://timeline.national911memorial.org/#/Explore/2/AudioEntry/40> and <http://timeline.national911memorial.org/#/Explore/2/AudioEntry/400>

(Note: Due to the nature of events related to the Sept. 11 attacks, the timeline contains some graphic images and sensitive content. Teachers may want to first review the site before sharing it with students.)

4. Guided Listening:

- Encourage students to consider the cell phone communication between Flight 93 passengers and family members on the ground. *What can we learn from these messages?*
- Students are directed to listen carefully and identify the heroic actions of the passengers.

5. Students orally respond to comprehension questions:

- *What information/alerts did family members provide?*
- *What information did the passengers have before and after speaking to family members?*
- *How did the information from family members influence the actions of the passengers?*
- *Did passengers act alone as individuals? Did they coordinate their actions?*
- *What actions did the Flight 93 passengers initiate that could be described as heroic? Why would you characterize those actions as heroic?*

6. Based on the comprehension questions and subsequent discussion, students write individual essays comparing the actions of a superhero to the actions of the Flight 93 passengers.

Evidence of Understanding

Responses and analysis during discussion

Extension Activities

- A similar procedure may be used to consider the actions of others affected by the 9/11 attacks, such as the firefighters or police officers. Suggested publications include:
 - “A Fireman’s Story”, pp.32–33 from 9.11.01 Terrorists Attack the US;
 - The article “A Nation Challenged: Those Who Answered the Call Honoring the Rescuers” by Deane E. Murphy can be found at: www.nytimes.com/library/national/091101rescuers.html
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