UNIT: Heroic Rescue, Recovery, and Cleanup
GRADE LEVEL/S: 9-12
TIME NEEDED: 2-3 sessions
TEACHER: Jill McCracken

LESSON TITLE: THE FINAL RUN OF LADDER 3

Common Core Standards
R 1 Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.

RH 7 Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

W 1 Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

Key Questions/Issues Addressed
What is Ladder 3?
What happened to the firefighters of Ladder 3 on 9/11?
How does Ladder 3’s fire truck symbolize the story of first responders on 9/11?

Lesson Goals/Objectives
Students will familiarize themselves with the actions of the New York Fire Department (FDNY) on 9/11, especially those from Ladder 3, through a story and artifacts from the 9/11 Memorial Museum.

Students will discuss and interpret the actions of Ladder 3 on 9/11 by writing a journal entry or essay on this topic.

Key Terms
First Responder, Riding Heavy*, Run**
*A term used to describe a fire truck carrying extra men.
**The name given to the call to which firefighters are responding. Example: “Ladder 3 is responding; we’re on a run.”

Materials
Images of Ladder 3 from the collection of the 9/11 Memorial Museum: Appendix A.

Final Run of Ladder 3: Appendix B.

Press release noting the lowering of the Ladder 3 firetruck into the 9/11 Memorial Museum: www.911memorial.org/sites/all/files/FDNY%20Ladder%203%20Returns%20to%20WTC.pdf

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## Materials (continued)

- FDNY Memorial Wall: [www.fdnytenhouse.com/fdnywall/bravest.htm](http://www.fdnytenhouse.com/fdnywall/bravest.htm)
- Mickey Kross and Adrienne Walsh’s oral histories (scroll down page for both): [www.911memorial.org/911-events-day](http://www.911memorial.org/911-events-day)

## Background for lesson

Students should have a basic familiarity with what happened on 9/11. For background, see FAQ about 9/11: [www.911memorial.org/faq-about-911](http://www.911memorial.org/faq-about-911)

## Instructional Activity/Procedures

1. Introduce 9/11 to students and tell them that they will be examining an important artifact from the 9/11 Memorial Museum at the World Trade Center in New York City. Tell them that Ladder Company 3, a unit of the New York City Fire Department (FDNY), is located in New York City’s East Village neighborhood. Its fire truck, destroyed on 9/11, helps tell the story of the first responders on 9/11. Eleven of the Ladder 3 firefighters on duty that day were killed in the collapse of the North Tower.

2. Have students examine photos of Ladder 3 from the collection of the 9/11 Memorial Museum (see Appendix A).

3. Read the story, *The Final Run of Ladder 3* (See Appendix B). Discuss the following critical reading questions (or journal prompts, if the teacher prefers).
   - How did the firefighters and rescue personnel of the FDNY approach the situation at the World Trade Center on 9/11?
   - How did civilians respond to the presence of firefighters ascending the stairs of the North Tower?
   - Some firefighters who received evacuation orders stopped to assist civilians who needed help and were killed in the process. How would you describe these firefighters?
   - What did a 9/11 family member mean when she said she hoped visitors would realize that the “...fire engine was crushed in a heartbeat”?
   - Ladder 3’s crushed fire truck is an important part of the 9/11 Memorial Museum’s permanent exhibit. What does the artifact mean to you? What does it symbolize?
   - In your own words, describe the final run of Ladder 3.

4. Discuss the questions or journals in large or small groups.

5. Ask the students to explain the final run of Ladder 3 in their own words.

6. Explore the legacy of Ladder 3 and other first responders through the 9/11 Memorial Museum’s website.
   - Read the Museum’s press release about the emotional return of Ladder 3 to Ground Zero when it was lowered into the Museum in July 2011.
• Explore the bronze relief memorial to the FDNY victims in lower Manhattan. What does this sculpture communicate about those it commemorates?

• Listen to eyewitness accounts from Fire Lieutenant Mickey Kross and Firefighter Adrienne Walsh.

7. Independent Research: Direct students to independently read portions of the 9/11 Commission Report to learn about the actions of firefighters and rescue personnel on 9/11. Specifically, see chapter 9. Ask them to consider whether this information changes their perspective of 9/11. *If so, how? If not, why not? What are three things they learned from the report?*

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The journal prompts and independent research project will highlight students’ understanding of the key goals.

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Students investigate other memorials to first responders in their community, city, or state. *What events, acts, or individuals are being commemorated in those memorials?*
APPENDIX A

Photograph by Michael F. Collarone, from *Mikey Flowers 9/11, Dust to DNA*, ca. 2002 Kevin Clarke & Michael F. Collarone

Photograph by Amy Dreher
APPENDIX A
(continued)
The Final Run of Ladder 3

For those getting off shift on the morning of September 11, 2011, it had been a fairly normal night for Ladder Company 3 of the FDNY, the New York City Fire Department. Few realized that this normalcy would shatter abruptly, plunging the country into confusion, disbelief and fear. At 8:46 am, al-Qaeda terrorists crashed American Airlines Flight 11 into the North Tower of the World Trade Center. Within minutes, calls flooded in to the city’s 9-1-1 emergency system. Immediately, the members of the FDNY sprang into action and began deploying fire and rescue units to the North Tower. Witnesses reported seeing a jagged tear in its steel exterior, blazing fire, with thick, black smoke clogging the upper floors.

On arrival, senior fire officials surveyed the situation at the North Tower, calling for a fifth alarm that would bring more engines and ladder companies, plus elite rescue units to lower Manhattan. By 9:00 am, 235 members of the FDNY were in action at the North Tower, already abandoning a fire fighting mission for a rescue operation. The members of FDNY Ladder 3 of Manhattan’s East Village were “riding heavy” that day. As the tower had been hit during a shift change, some of the off-duty firefighters stayed on, riding with the rig to the disaster. Captain Patrick “Paddy” Brown, age 48, and Lieutenant Kevin W. Donnelly, age 43, were leading the men of Ladder 3, who were part of the flood of firefighters to arrive at the North Tower within minutes after Flight 11 crashed into the building.

According to The 9/11 Commission Report, command and control stations were set up, including one in the lobby of the North Tower, but FDNY personnel suffered from a lack of information as to what was happening “30, 60, 90 and 100 floors above.” Then, at 9:03 am, the FDNY’s already complex mission became much more complicated when United Airlines Flight 175 crashed into the South Tower between the 77th and 85th floors. It was now clear that these events were an act of terrorism, on a scale much larger than the 1993 bombing at the World Trade Center. That bomb, hidden in a van, had caused a 98-foot deep crater in the parking garage of the North Tower. It killed six people and injured more than 1,000.

Still, the increased difficulty of their rescue mission did not slow down the men of Ladder 3. They were tasked with heading up into the North Tower to find and evacuate burned and injured victims, a particularly strong skill of Captain Brown, according to a 60 Minutes news report. Laden with 100 pounds of protective gear and clothing, firefighters began to climb the stairs to the impact zone. By 9:21 am, Captain Brown reported that he and his men were approximately a third of the way up the North Tower. They were met with streams of descending civilians as they made their way higher up into the North Tower. Exiting civilians reported that the presence of the firefighters gave them a sense of calm and assured them that help had arrived.

Reports came that firefighters were periodically stopping and investigating floors to be certain that all civilians had evacuated, occasionally finding some who had not. By 10:00 am, some had reached the 54th floor, with two other units at the sky lobby on the 44th floor, and other companies of firefighters scattered throughout the North Tower.
The South Tower collapsed at 9:58 am in 10 seconds, killing hundreds of civilians and emergency personnel inside and people outside in the immediate area. All of the command posts in the North Tower lobby, Marriott Hotel lobby, and staging areas on West Street south of Liberty Street all ceased operating due to their close proximity to the South Tower.\(^{11}\) Although aware of a massive event outside the building, many inside the North Tower were unaware of the South Tower’s collapse. Fire chiefs who had fled to safety in a nearby underground parking garage were cut off from communicating orders for 10 minutes.\(^{12}\)

Within two minutes of the collapse, with uncertain information, a chief in the North Tower issued an order to all units in the North Tower to “evacuate the building.”\(^{13}\) At least two battalion chiefs on the upper floors of the North Tower heard the evacuation instructions and passed these orders along.\(^{14}\) However, some firefighters did not receive the evacuation orders. Others were determined not to leave until everyone had exited safely.\(^{15}\)

By 10:24 am, five FDNY companies had reached the bottom of stairwell B, then the lobby of the North Tower, exiting onto West Street. As they were doing so, at 10:28 am, the North Tower collapsed, killing 11 members of Ladder 3. In total, nearly 3,000 people were killed, including 346 active and retired members of the FDNY, the largest loss of life of any emergency response agency in history. The Port Authority Police Department (PAPD) suffered 37 fatalities. The New York City Police Department (NYPD) suffered the loss of 23 members.

Those killed from Ladder Company 3:

Patrick John Brown
Michael T. Carroll
James Raymond Coyle
Gerard P. Dewan
Kevin W. Donnelly
Jeffrey John Giordano
Joseph E. Maloney
John Kevin McAvoy
Timothy Patrick McSweeney
Joseph J. Ogren
Steven John Olson

In the collapse of the towers on that tragic day, Ladder 3’s fire truck was damaged beyond repair, the front sheared off entirely. During the recovery effort, it was removed from the site and stored in a climate-controlled environment in Hanger 17 at JFK International Airport.\(^{16}\)
In July 2011, the damaged rig was moved to its permanent home inside the 9/11 Memorial Museum in New York City. A huge crane lowered the 60,000-pound battered remains of the fire engine into its final resting place on July 20, 2011. Amid tears and the sorrowful sound of bagpipes, the event was attended by over 100 FDNY members and family members of firefighters who were killed on 9/11.

In his remarks about the firefighters, FDNY Commissioner Salvatore Cassano said, “They didn’t ask any questions. They went to those buildings, not knowing who they were going to rescue...They knew people were in trouble. Unselfishly, they gave their lives.”

Remembering the loss, he added, “The truck is a reminder of the condition the [FDNY] was in after 9/11.”

Family member Maureen Dewan-Gilligan spoke about what visitors to the 9/11 Memorial Museum would learn from the Ladder 3 artifact. She said, “I would like them to remember that the fire engine was crushed in a heartbeat.”

The men of Ladder 3 who died on 9/11 will always be a part of the history of what happened that day, teaching future generations about the events of 9/11 and its legacy.

Works Cited
2 ibid
7 9/11 Commission Report, 298.
10 ibid.
12 ibid.
15 ibid.
17 www.foxnews.com/us/2011/07/20/nyc-fire-truck-lowered-into-11-display/#ixzz1hlMVKp5s
19 ibid.