



Example assembly 2: What have we learnt from 9/11? What can we do to prevent this from happening again?

The anniversary of 9/11 is a chance to reflect on the events of that day and explore how the world has changed as a result. In particular, it is an important opportunity to help your students look forward and consider ways in which we might all make the world a better and safer place.

Start the assembly with a brief overview of the events of 9/11 and show why it is still remembered today. Refer to the [Factsheet about 9/11](#) (PDF) for details. Explain that extremism based on religion and beliefs has been used to justify violence against people throughout history, and emphasise that these acts are not the sole preserve of extremist Muslim groups. Illustrate this by referring briefly to other examples of violent extremist acts, including perhaps a recent example such as the twin terror attacks in Norway on 22 July 2011.

Go on to show that religion and beliefs can also be a powerful force for good in the world by looking at the personal stories of some of those most directly affected by the events of 9/11. Play extracts from the interviews of Susan Retik and Mohammad Razvi* (see the [Image & film bank](#)). These two individuals attempted to turn a tragedy into an opportunity to build bridges between very different communities.

Finish the assembly by reading the following extract from Radio 4's Thought for the day by Thomas McCarthy, OP:

"This world is a complex place, not really the world my parents hoped for. It's changed. And yet we mustn't lose the capacity to dream, to have hope. Not to mention faith, which enables us to look beyond our failures. Faith allows us to dream of a future: even on the darkest nights, people dream. When tragedy obscures the Manhattan sky, we need to imagine a new world. And not for the first time."

Ask the students to reflect on how this is being put into action by Susan Retik and Mohammad Razvi. Explain how their beliefs and values helped them to respond positively to times of great difficulty. What can we learn from this about our own responses to the events of 9/11 and what could we do to make the world a better and safer place?

Further ideas and resources about the day itself can be found in the following subject topics on this website:

- [History 3 – How has 9/11 shaped your world?](#)
- [RE – What really matters in relation to 9/11?](#)

*With thanks to the Tribute WTC Visitor Center for providing these videos; www.tributewtc.org.