



History

Enquiry 2: "Out of the blue": When did 9/11 begin?

This enquiry has two main stages under the question: "Out of the blue": When did 9/11 begin?

These are: **1.** Mindless terrorism? - Is this a fair summary of the 9/11 attacks on the USA?

2. Why? - What caused the 9/11 attacks on the USA?

Enquiry overview

The enquiry is introduced by a brief activity - "Out of the Blue" - which will enable teachers to show how the two stages of the enquiry are related:

- The first stage tackles the sequence of events in the two years leading up to the attack. Its focus is not really on causation but on characterisation.
- The second stage is directly about causation.

In each case, students must come up with short summaries that try to do justice to what they have learnt, and they must share and discuss and evaluate their suggestions. Teachers may wish to extend the second stage, as it would lend itself to a fully developed piece of extended writing if they so wish.

The enquiry is divided into different stages rather than individual lessons. This ensures greater flexibility for teachers and takes account of the significant differences that exist in the length of lessons from school to school.

National Curriculum links

History

This enquiry links to the KS3 history programme of study by helping students to know and understand:

- significant aspects of the wider world (beyond Britain)
- the changing nature of conflict and cooperation



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- diverse experiences and ideas, beliefs and attitudes and how these have shaped the world

This work will support students to gain historical perspective by understanding connections between:

- local, regional, national and international history
- cultural, economic, military, political, religious and social history and
- short and long term timescales.

This topic develops the students' ability to:

- identify and investigate specific historical questions or issues, making and testing hypotheses
- identify, select and use a range of historical sources, including textual, visual and oral sources, artefacts and the historic environment
- communicate their knowledge and understanding of history in a variety of ways, using chronological conventions and historical vocabulary.

Key Stage 4

Although this enquiry is designed for use in KS3, it is possible to adjust both the content and activities for use at GCSE (for example, as part of OCR's GCSE History A (9-1) Explaining the Modern World - International Relations: Changing International Order 1918-2001). Many of the activities in the enquiry are open-ended and could be used to elicit a wider and more sophisticated range of responses from the students.

The student resource booklet **What caused 9/11? (Version B)** is less structured than Version A and includes a more challenging overview of the causes of 9/11. This could be used to provide more able students with opportunities to work more independently on this aspect of the enquiry.



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Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales

These materials can easily be adapted to fit the different curriculum requirements for Northern Ireland, Scotland and Wales.

Northern Ireland Statutory Curriculum for Key Stage 3
www.ccea.org.uk/curriculum

Education Scotland - Curriculum for Excellence
www.educationscotland.gov.uk/learningandteaching/curriculumareas/socialstudies

Welsh Government school curriculum - history in the National Curriculum for Wales
<http://learning.gov.wales/docs/learningwales/publications/130424-history-in-the-nationalcurriculum-for-wales-en.pdf>

Cross-curricular links

There are opportunities through this topic to make links to some of the other subject topics, particularly the following:

- **Citizenship - How do we deal with terrorism?**

This aims to develop students' understanding of the causes and consequences of 9/11 by placing the events of 9/11 in the broader context of terrorism. There is the potential to make meaningful links to Stage 1 in this history enquiry:

Mindless Terrorism?

In addition, some of the proposed activities help to develop aspects of the following generic skills, previously defined as Personal Learning and Thinking Skills (PLTS):

- team workers and independent enquirers.



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Lessons

Stage 1: Mindless terrorism?

Recommended resources

On this website

Booklet: Mindless terrorism (PDF)

Worksheet: Mindless terrorism (Word)

Links to other websites

- **BBC News - America's Day of Terror**
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/in_depth/americas/2001/day_of_terror

After ensuring the class is fully settled, introduce the enquiry by simply showing the words "Out of the blue" on a screen.

If students have not completed History Enquiry 1, you may wish to show them the BBC News item ("**America's Day of Terror**") summarising the day (see **Recommended resources**).

Give students some time to discuss what they take the phrase to mean, e.g. unexpected; unpredictable; perhaps shocking; sudden...

After taking these responses, tell them that the phrase has been used as the title for all sorts of work on 9/11 - e.g. poems, magazine articles, TV documentaries and books. Why do they think this is? Point out that although the phrase captures the shock of the day itself, the attacks were planned over a period of about five years or more and had roots going back at least a hundred years! To understand 9/11 properly, we need to look back, well beyond the events that seemed to arrive "out of the blue".

Tell the students that they will do two tasks that require the same skill: coming up with short, memorable phrases or sentences that capture complex events in a concise but effective way.

Put another phrase on the screen: "Mindless terrorism".



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Establish that the attacks were clearly wicked and brutal, but ask what the students think of the term "mindless". From here you can give students **Booklet: Mindless terrorism** (PDF). Note: this is quite a challenging resource, and you may wish to adapt the text and/or the activities.

Ask them to complete the activity on the first page and record their findings on the accompanying **Worksheet: Mindless terrorism** (Word). It may help to add a bit of competition, challenging the students to see who can identify the greatest number of indicators of forward planning.

Round off this stage by doing the activity shown at the end of the **Booklet: Mindless terrorism**, i.e. devising a more fitting short summary for the 9/11 terrorist attacks that fits what they now know. Once they have completed their summaries, provide an opportunity for the students to share, discuss and evaluate each other's summaries.

Having finished this stage, link to the next by saying that the most important dimension is still missing: students know how the attacks were planned but they still do not really know WHY.

Stage 2: What caused the 9/11 attacks on the USA?

Recommended resources

On this website

Booklet: What caused 9/11? (Version A) (PDF)

Booklet: What caused 9/11? (Version B) (PDF)

(See information below on which one to use)

Tree roots diagram (PDF)

Teachers' guide: What caused 9/11? (PDF)

Flash cards: What caused 9/11? (PDF)

Images: Causes of 9/11 (PowerPoint)



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Links to other websites

- George W. Bush speaking on the evening of 11 September, 2001
www.youtube.com/watch?v=1hh0FzkSzm4

The following resources and websites are mentioned in **Teachers' guide: What caused 9/11?** (PDF):

On this website

- **British Empire trade routes map** (PowerPoint)
- **First World War Arab allies** (PowerPoint)
- **Arab lands role play** (PDF)
- **Palestine-Israel maps activity** (PDF)
- **Al-Qaeda motives** (PDF)

Links to other websites

- **Norman B. Leventhal Map Center: Imperial Federation, map of the world showing the extent of the British Empire in 1886**
http://maps.bpl.org/details_M8682
- **British Pathe film clip - Illegal Immigrants in Haifa**
www.britishpathe.com/record.php?id=58168
- **BBC News - Israel and the Palestinians key maps**
http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/english/static/in_depth/world/2001/israel_and_palestinians/key_maps/4.stm

The following resources are not mentioned in the teaching ideas below, but may be useful as teaching aids:

- **Prospect magazine - What were the causes of 9/11?**
www.prospectmagazine.co.uk/2006/09/whatwerethecausesof911



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- **The Guardian - bin Laden's "letter to America"**
www.guardian.co.uk/world/2002/nov/24/theobserver
 (This has an extended statement by bin Laden, in which he answers the question, "Why did you attack the USA?" It could be used as a source activity, in which students explore propaganda, bias, need for knowledge of context, etc.)
- **Frontline - Osama bin Laden vs. the US Edicts and Statements**
www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/binladen/who/edicts.html.
 (This has links to a range of statements against the USA made by bin Laden).
- **BBC News - Helicopter tour over West Bank and Israel**
www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-middle-east-11139865

This stage will last several lessons, e.g. up to one lesson for each section in the student **Booklet: What caused 9/11? (Version A)** (PDF)

- Introduction/early involvement
- Promises made... and broken
- Seeking refuge
- Violence breeding violence
- Suicide and murder
- Dreadful warnings/conclusion
- Support for writing/sharing of conclusions

Before going into the detail of what caused the 9/11 attacks, it will be important to try to establish through a class discussion what the students think caused them. It is an opportunity for you to acknowledge different theories - including conspiracy theories - and to explain that the purpose of these lessons is to find out exactly what happened and why. **Stage 3** of this enquiry looks at conspiracy theories in more detail. If you feel that it is appropriate, you could bring this session forward before proceeding with the rest of this enquiry.

Go on to show **George W. Bush speaking on the evening of 11 September, 2001** (see **Recommended resources**). Ask the students to listen for the one place where he tries to explain WHY 9/11 happened. Discuss their answers. Ask if they think the explanation



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helps them to understand the attacks. Why do they think he said so little about the reasons at that time?

Issue printed copies of the student **Booklet: What caused 9/11? (Version A)** (PDF) along with copies of the **Tree roots diagram** (PDF), which they will need to complete the exercises in the booklet. The booklet is divided up into short sections, each designed to help the students understand some of the causes of 9/11 before they attempt the final activity in which they have to provide a short summary of the reasons for the 9/11 attacks.

At the end of each section, the students are required to complete a simple exercise where they copy labels depicting some of the causes of 9/11 onto the **Tree roots diagram** (PDF); they then use what they have learnt to provide simple explanations for each cause. As they progress through each section, they begin to gather ideas about the way different causes developed over time, enabling them to build up an overall picture of the reasons for the 9/11 attacks.

You can approach this activity in different ways:


- Ask the students to work through the booklet individually.

Or...

- Organise the class into small groups and divide the sections between them, before getting each to feed back to the rest of the class.

Whichever approach you use, you will need to take the students very carefully through each section before they complete the exercises, to ensure that they have a firm grasp of the events covered. **The Teachers' guide: What caused 9/11?** (PDF) provides detailed advice on how to do this.

It is essential to keep reminding them that trying to **understand** the brutal events of 9/11 does not mean that you are **condoning** them.

The final activity in the booklet (where students have to provide a short summary of the reasons for the 9/11 attacks) is very challenging. The students are provided with some prompts at the end of the booklet to help them, but you may prefer to create a card sort from these using the **Flash cards: What caused 9/11?** (PDF). Challenge the students to make links between the cards or to group them by factors such as war; promises; communications; and religion. 

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If you wish, you could ask the students to consolidate their learning through completing an extended piece of writing using one or other of these questions:

- What caused the 9/11 attacks on the USA?
- Why is it so hard to say what caused the 9/11 attacks?
- Why is it misleading to say that the 9/11 attacks came "out of the blue"?

Alternative to using Version A of Booklet: What caused 9/11?

If you would prefer to devise your own lessons about the causes of the 9/11 attacks, there is a longer version of this booklet: Version B. This version includes text and images but no exercises, which you can adapt to suit your own needs. The images used in the booklet are also included in the PowerPoint entitled **Images: Causes of 9/11**, for you to use as you see fit. The PowerPoint also includes two maps that are not in the booklets, which can be used to reinforce the points about the old Arab Empire and the Jews' lands in Old Testament times.

Stage 3: "I've heard..." - What can we do when we hear conspiracy theories?**Recommended resources****On this website**

"I've heard..." (PDF)

Links to other websites

- **America.gov -The Top September 11 Conspiracy Theories**
www.america.gov/st/pubs-english/2006/September/20060828133846esnamfu_aK0.2676355.html

This stage is optional. The resource "I've heard..." (PDF) advises teachers on when/how they may wish to tackle conspiracy/alternative theories about 9/11. It includes a link to a US Government website that aims to answer the most common alternative explanations.

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