

9/11 MEMORIAL

9/11 FACT SHEET FOR EARLY CHILDHOOD STUDENTS

What was the World Trade Center?

View of lower Manhattan on the morning of September 11, 2001. Photograph by David Monderer

Collection of the New-York Historical Society



The World Trade Center was a group of seven buildings in lower Manhattan, a busy and crowded part of New York City. Many people worked and visited there. There was also a hotel and an underground mall where people shopped and stayed during visits.

What were the Twin Towers?

Two Towers.

Photo by Fernando Zaccaria



The centerpieces of the World Trade Center were the Twin Towers. They were called the Twin Towers because there were two of them and they looked nearly the same. They had 110 floors and were the tallest buildings in New York City. For a short time, they were the tallest buildings in the world. People came from all over the world to see them and enjoy the view from the observation deck in the South Tower. The buildings were filled with the offices of different companies. 35,000 people worked in the towers and 430 companies had their offices there.

What is 9/11?

Gift of Nicholas Kornfield



“9/11” is shorthand for a date, September 11, 2001. On that date, a group of nineteen men crashed two airplanes into the Twin Towers and one into the Pentagon outside of Washington DC. The men tried to crash a fourth plane into another building, but the passengers fought back and the plane crashed into an empty field in Pennsylvania.

The men were born in other countries and were part of a group called “al-Qaeda”. Al-Qaeda is a terrorist group and the men were terrorists – they hurt others and caused damage to help get what they want.

What happened to the Twin Towers and the World Trade Center?

Around 17,000 people were in the buildings when they were hit by the planes. Most of them left safely. As they rushed out, firemen, police officers, and other volunteers rushed in to help those still trapped. We call these heroes “first responders”. The buildings were very damaged, though, and before the first responders could help everyone, they collapsed. There was rubble everywhere and nearly 3,000 people were killed.

Why did the terrorists do this?

The men who hijacked the planes wanted to kill many people and hurt the United States. Afterwards, they thought that the United States would become weaker and would lose some of its freedoms. They thought they would continue making attacks and eventually become more powerful than the United States. Even though the hijackers did hurt the United States, they were wrong about what happened after the attacks. Many people, from New York, the United States and around the world, came to help at the World Trade Center and to support the United States.

What happened after the buildings fell?

World Trade Center, New York 9-29-2001

NY Fire Dept. paramedics at the site of the World Trade Center.



Immediately, people came from all over the world to help. Some came to help the injured. Some came to help clean up the site. Others brought food and cards for the workers. Many people worked around the clock to clear the rubble and the debris, and eight months later, the last of the steel was removed.

The World Trade Center complex is now being rebuilt. The 9/11 Memorial opened on the 10th anniversary of the attacks and a Museum will open in 2014. There will also be new office buildings and a new train station. One of the buildings will be even taller than the Twin Towers!

How can we remember what happened on September 11, 2001?

Photograph by Joe Woolhead,



When we don't have someone in our lives anymore, we can still remember them. Sometimes, people make artwork or look at photographs or tell stories to help remember a person or a favorite thing. As long as you remember someone or something, you still have a part of them with you.

To help us remember, a permanent 9/11 Memorial was opened on the 10th anniversary of the attacks. Millions of people from all over the world have come to see the Memorial since it opened. The 9/11 Memorial Museum will open in 2014. Both are located at the site of the original World Trade Center. Together, they remind us what happened that day and help us remember all the people who lost their lives. They also let us remember the importance of helping each other and making our community and world a better place.

This resource was developed for the National September 11 Memorial & Museum by Lynne Calman, as part of our New York City DOE curriculum writing group.

NATIONAL SEPTEMBER 11 MEMORIAL & MUSEUM

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