



9/11: STATE OF EMERGENCY Classroom Guide

INTRODUCTION:

9/11: STATE OF EMERGENCY tells the story of the shocking attacks of September 11th, 2001 from the vantage point of key political and military leaders who suddenly found themselves on the frontlines of a new kind of war. As news and images of the attacks on the United States spread rapidly, these leaders were faced with difficult decisions about tactics, communication, and emergency response. Crucial political figures such as National Security Advisor Condoleezza Rice, White House Chief of Staff Andrew Card, Chair of the Joint Chiefs of Staff Richard Myers, Secretary of Defense Donald Rumsfeld and a host of other top officials take viewers deep inside the corridors of power to see how these dramatic events unfolded.

Throughout the program, viewers also learn about the courageous actions of New York City firefighters, policemen, and other first responders who played critical roles in helping those who were directly affected by the attacks. 9/11 survivors who were in the Twin Towers at the time of the attacks also provide powerful narratives that run throughout the documentary. This program gives students insights into the events of 9/11 and the process through which leaders deal with the unexpected. Students can reflect upon the political process and the lessons learned in the wake of the 9/11 attacks.

Curriculum Links:

This program would be useful for U.S. History, Politics, Civics and Current Events courses. **Due to the intense nature of the content in this program, it is recommended only for mature high school students and college students.** Teachers and parents should view this program before recommending it to students or showing it in class. Running time:100 minutes.

Vocabulary:

Students should define or explain the significance of the following terms used in this program. Students can also write down their own list of words to define as they watch.

adrenaline
dilemma
erratic
logistical
pandemonium
protocol
rogue
surveillance
triage
vulnerability

Discussion Questions:

1. What were some of the reactions among Americans when the planes first hit the Twin Towers on 9/11/2001? How did responses change throughout that day?
2. After it became clear that the U.S. was under attack, what were some of the major decisions U.S. leaders needed to make in order to restore national security as much as possible?
3. U.S. leaders needed to decide where the President should go as the 9/11 attacks were unfolding. Where did they decide President Bush should go, and when did he return to Washington, D.C.?
4. As the 9/11 attacks happened, who were some of the key leaders and agencies that played a role in determining the U.S. response?
5. This program profiles the stories of several people who were inside the Twin Towers at the time of the attacks. What were some of the key decisions they had to make as they attempted to get out of the building alive?
6. What role did firefighters play in the rescue mission at the Twin Towers? How would you describe their response and actions?
7. How did Russian leaders respond right after the 9/11 attacks and why was their response significant, according to National Security Adviser Condoleezza Rice?
8. What is DEFCON 3?
9. Why did terrorists attack the U.S. on 9/11/2001? What were some of the ramifications of these attacks in terms of global politics?
10. How do you think the 9/11 attacks changed the United States? Discuss with your class or group.

Related Activities:

1. **Crisis Response.** Throughout this program, viewers learn about the decisions made by several key members of the U.S. Cabinet. Ask students to review the structure of the U.S. Cabinet and make a chart of Cabinet positions.
2. **Exploring the FAA.** The Federal Aviation Administration played an important role in responding to the 9/11 attacks. Ask students to research the roles and responsibilities of the FAA and write a short description of this agency's responsibilities.
3. **9/11 Memorials.** After the 9/11 attacks, Americans were determined to rebuild. At the site of each of the 9/11 attacks, memorials have been built or are planned as a way to honor those who lost their lives. Ask students to research the 9/11 memorials and discuss their design and significance.

4. **After 9/11.** Many people in this documentary discuss the ways the U.S. and the world changed forever after 9/11. Ask students to write a letter to a friend or an opinion piece for a newspaper about how they think the world changed after 9/11.

Related Websites:

Learn more about the 9/11 attacks on History.com:

<http://www.history.com/topics/9-11-attacks>

Learn more about the U.S. Cabinet:

<http://www.whitehouse.gov/administration/cabinet>

Learn more about the FAA:

<http://www.faa.gov/>

National September 11 Memorial & Museum:

<http://www.911memorial.org/>

Flight 93 Memorial:

<http://www.nps.gov/flni/index.htm>