



*"History happens every single day."*

**8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Studies Summer Reading 2017**



**Historical Background:** On September 11, 2001, **terrorists** attacked the United States. They **hijacked** four airplanes in mid-flight. The terrorists flew two of the planes into two skyscrapers at the World Trade Center in New York City. The impact caused the buildings to catch fire and collapse. Another plane destroyed part of the Pentagon (the U.S. military headquarters) in Arlington, Virginia. The fourth plane crashed in Shanksville, Pennsylvania. Officials believe that the terrorists on that plane intended to destroy either the White House or the U.S. Capitol. Passengers on the plane fought the terrorists and prevented them from reaching their goal. In all, nearly 3,000 people were killed in the 9/11 attacks.



A total of 19 terrorists hijacked the four planes on 9/11. All of the men were from nations in the Middle East. They belonged to a terrorist group called **Al Qaeda** (ahl KAY-dah), led by Osama bin Laden. Al Qaeda practiced an extreme version of the religion of Islam. The group was intensely opposed to the US and other Western, **democratic** nations. They are especially against U.S. military presence in Arab nations. Created in the late 1980s, Al Qaeda helped coordinate and fund numerous terrorist bombings worldwide. In October 2001, the U.S. and its allies invaded Afghanistan, where Al Qaeda was based. Since 2001, many Al Qaeda members have been captured or killed. On May 1, 2011, U.S. troops killed Bin Laden where he was hiding in Pakistan.



Following 9/11, the U.S. government took many steps to try to make the country safer. It tightened security at airports and in public buildings and passed new laws to monitor terrorist activity. A new **cabinet-level** department—the **Department of Homeland Security**—was created. These are just some of the many ways that the US has changed since the 911 attacks.



Today, ISIS and other extremist groups have taken the place of Al Qaeda. The war on terror is still very much alive.

**Directions:** There are 3 articles assigned on **NEWSLA**. These articles will help to provide background on our first unit of the new school year: US Response to Terrorism. As you read each article, annotate for the central idea, supporting details and new vocabulary words. When you are finished annotating, complete the article Quiz. This assignment will make up your first 3 grades for Social Studies when school starts in September and it will help me to get to know your reading comprehension level and ability to respond to text based questions.

- Join the **8<sup>th</sup> Grade Social Summer Reading** by logging on to **NEWSLA** and entering

Class Code: **6NJDTU**

**Article #1:** *An Introduction to Muhammad and the Faith of Islam*

**Article #2:** *Issue Overview: Jihad*

**Article #3:** *PRO/CON: How Should the U.S. Defeat Islamic State?*

