



# Current Affairs Assembly

KS3 Active Citizens – Global issues

Assembly



## That day in September

### Aim:

- To remember the events of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001
- To empathise with people living with fear or uncertainty
- To consider how we deal with fear and anxiety
- To reflect on the Christian belief in a God who comforts people's fears

### Introduction

#### Thinking Back

Ask pupils if they can remember what they were doing ten years ago. (Senior pupils would have been in primary or first school, younger pupils would have been toddlers.) What are their earliest memories?

Ask whether any remember hearing the news about the attack on the World Trade Centre's twin towers in New York. Where were they when they heard the news? What did they think at the time? How did they react?



<http://en.wikipedia.org>

If appropriate, ask one or two adults what they remember of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001 – where they were, what they thought, how they reacted, etc. Such a major atrocity had such an impact that many people around the world, although not personally affected, can remember where they were when they first heard the news.

### Looking Deeper

#### Tenth Anniversary

This week marks the tenth anniversary of the terrorist attack on the World Trade Centre, in which nearly 3,000 people died. The media has been full of reflections about the event, and stories of people – some witnesses or victims, some who lost close family members – affected by it. (If there is time, you could tell some of the stories found at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-us-canada-14439342>)

All the stories deal with strong emotions, but a wide range of emotions are described. Some people feel guilty that they survived when thousands did not; some helped others heroically, but still worry that they could have done more, could have saved another life. Some have struggled with depression and struggled to find a purpose in their continuing lives; others have been grateful to survive and have sought to offer their lives to help others. Some have not got over their sense of loss and grief; others made friendships with people they helped, friendships which continue ten years on. Some live with practical fears – afraid of travelling on an aeroplane, for example. Some are angry. Some are proud of the memories of their loved one. Some are bewildered and confused, still struggling to make sense of such a cataclysmic event.



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Airport security <http://en.wikipedia.org>

At the time, many people claimed that the world had changed forever, but, ten years on, we are left wondering whether it has really. There have been superficial changes, such as the major increase in airport security, or the crash barriers outside our parliament building. However many commentators suggest that there has been a shift in people's thinking generally in the western world. They suggest that people have become more anxious about the future, and that it is becoming normal to do things just because people think there might be a problem rather than because they believe that there actually is a problem. There seems to be an increased urgency – people feel that there is not time to consider a claim, they just react as if it is a dire warning. This is seen in global issues, such as climatic change, in international issues, such as going to war against Iraq because Saddam Hussein might have had weapons of mass destruction, before that was verified, and in personal issues in friendships and relationships. Frank Furedi, Professor of Sociology at the University of Kent and author of *Politics Of Fear: Beyond Left And Right*, stated, "I anticipate that for some time to come, the expectation of the worst possible outcome is only going to become more powerful."

<http://news.bbc.co.uk/1/hi/world/americas/5317612.stm#sardar>

## Reflection

### Dealing with fear and anxiety

Ask the pupils to reflect on what makes them anxious as they face the future.

Jesus gave his followers advice about worrying. He reminded them that God, as a loving father, was far more likely to provide for his children than for his pets (the birds) or his garden (the wild flowers):

Don't worry about tomorrow, for tomorrow will bring its own worries. Today's trouble is enough for today.

I tell you not to worry about everyday life—whether you have enough food and drink, or enough clothes to wear. Isn't life more than just food, and your body more than just clothes? Look at the birds. They don't have to plant or harvest or store food in barns, for your heavenly Father feeds them. And aren't you far more valuable to him than they are? Can all your worries add a single moment to your life?

And why worry about your clothes? Look at the wild flowers in the field and how they grow. They don't work or make their clothing, yet King Solomon in all his glory was not dressed as beautifully as they are. And if God cares so wonderfully for wild flowers that are here today and thrown into the fire tomorrow, he will certainly care for you.

So don't worry about these things, saying, "What will we eat? What will we drink? What will we wear?" Your heavenly Father already knows all your needs.

(Taken from Matthew 6:25-34 in the New Testament section of the Bible.)



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The book of Proverbs in the Old Testament adds more advice:

Worry weighs a person down;  
an encouraging word cheers a person up.  
(Proverbs 12:25)

Who could you cheer up with an encouraging word today?

## Prayer

Dear God

We pray for all people still affected by the events of 11<sup>th</sup> September 2001. We pray too that you would comfort us through times of fear, anxiety and uncertainty. We pray that people would work together to bring about a world free from intolerance, prejudice, hatred and fear.

Amen

## Keywords

fear,

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9/11