

About the Book

Text Type: Nonfiction/Informational Page Count: 24 Word Count: 2,029

Book Summary

9/11: A Dark Day informs readers of events of September 11, 2001, when the United States suffered terrorist attacks that led to thousands of deaths and changes in national security. The text explains that four hijacked planes were used as missiles that day to crash into American landmarks. It describes who was responsible and how they were caught, as well as heroic efforts by rescue workers and civilians alike. The book also informs readers about the massive cleanup that was required as well as plans for future memorials and on-site buildings.

About the Lesson

Targeted Reading Strategy

- Ask and answer questions

Objectives

- Use the reading strategy of asking and answering questions to understand text
- Identify the author's purpose
- Identify and use complex sentences
- Read and understand number words

Materials

Green text indicates resources available on the website

- Book—*9/11: A Dark Day* (copy for each student)
- Chalkboard or dry erase board
- Index cards
- KWLS, author's purpose, complex sentences, number words worksheets
- Discussion cards



Indicates an opportunity for students to mark in the book. (All activities may be demonstrated by projecting book on interactive whiteboard or completed with paper and pencil if books are reused.)

Vocabulary

*Bold vocabulary words also appear in a pre-made lesson for this title on Vocabulary a-z.com.

- Content words:

Story critical: *debris* (n.), *evacuating* (v.), *hijacked* (v.), *memorial* (n.), *sacrifice* (n.), *terrorists* (n.)

Enrichment: *chaos* (n.), *compound* (n.), *demolition* (n.), *fundamentalist* (adj.), *mastermind* (n.), *resolve* (n.)

Before Reading

Build Background

- Create a KWLS chart on the board and hand out the [KWLS worksheet](#). Review or explain that the *K* stands for knowledge we know, the *W* stands for information we want to know, the *L* stands for the knowledge we learned, and the *S* stands for what we still want to know about the topic.
- Write 9/11 on the board and ask students what they know about this date in American history. Ask leading questions if necessary, and as students share their prior knowledge, fill in the first

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column (K) on the board with information students already know about the topic. Have students complete the same section of their KWLS worksheet.

- Ask students what they would like to know about September 11, 2001. Have them fill in the second column (W) of their worksheet. Write their questions on the class chart.

Preview the Book

Introduce the Book

- Give students their copy of the book. Guide them to the front and back covers and read the title. Have students discuss what they see on the covers. Encourage them to offer ideas as to what type of book it is (genre, text type, fiction or nonfiction, and so on) and what it might be about.
- Show students the title page. Discuss the information on the page (title of book, author's name).
- Preview the table of contents on page 3. Remind students that the table of contents provides an overview of the book. Ask students what they expect to read about in the book, on the basis of what they see in the table of contents. (Accept all answers that students can justify.)

Introduce the Reading Strategy: **Ask and answer questions**

- Discuss with students how having prior knowledge about the topic, and asking and answering questions while reading, can help readers understand and remember the information in a book.
- Direct students to the table of contents. Remind them that the table of contents provides an overview of the information in a book and how it is organized. After previewing the table of contents, use it to model asking questions.
Think-aloud: I can use the table of contents to think of questions I would like to have answered about September 11, 2001. For example, the second section is titled "America Under Attack." Since I know that planes flew into buildings in New York City, this makes me think that this act was an attack on America, which I know is considered an act of war. I wonder if any other place in America was attacked that day and whether the president considered the country to be at war. I'll have to read the book to find out. I'll write my questions on the chart.
- Have students look at the other section titles. Have them write any questions they have, on the basis of the covers and table of contents, in the W section of their KWLS worksheet.
- Have students preview the rest of the book, looking at the photographs. Invite students to read through the glossary. Have them add any additional questions they might have to their KWLS worksheet. Invite students to share their questions aloud. Write shared questions on the class chart.
- As students read, encourage them to use other reading strategies in addition to the targeted strategy presented in this section.

Introduce the Comprehension Skill: **Author's purpose**

- Write the following terms on the board: *To inform*, *To entertain*, and *To persuade*. Invite students to define the terms in their own words. Define each of the terms as necessary (to *inform* means to give someone information about something; to *entertain* means to amuse someone; to *persuade* means to try to make someone think the same way you do). Encourage students to give examples of times they might have said or written something for the purpose of informing, entertaining, or persuading others. Point out that writers most often have one of these three purposes for writing, and sometimes even all of them. Writers provide readers with clues that will help them figure out the author's purpose.
- Create a three-column chart on the board using the terms already written as column labels: *To inform*, *To entertain*, and *To persuade*. Introduce and explain the **author's purpose worksheet**. Have students read the book to identify and record different examples in the book that illustrate these purposes. Instruct them to write the page number in one of the three boxes when they come across a strong example of evidence that supports one of the purposes.
- **Think-aloud:** *To understand and remember new information in a book, I can look at how the author is stating things to see what his or her purpose may be. I can decide if the author's focus*

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is to inform, to entertain, or to persuade. I know that good readers do this, so I'm going to identify the author's purpose as I read the book.

Introduce the Vocabulary

- As students preview the book, ask them to talk about what they see in the photographs. Reinforce the vocabulary words they will encounter in the text.
- Write the following story-critical words on the board: *evacuating*, *debris*, and *memorial*. Remind students that they can look for context clues in the text and photographs to help them define an unfamiliar word.
- Model how students can use the glossary or a dictionary to locate a word's meaning. Have a volunteer read the definition for *evacuating* in the glossary. Have students follow along on page 10 as you read the sentence in which the word *evacuating* is found to confirm the meaning of the word.
- Point to the word *evacuating* on the board and repeat the pronunciation. Have students look at the cover of the book and use the word *evacuating* in a sentence of their own to tell about what they see.
- Have a volunteer read the definition for *debris* in the glossary. Have students follow along on page 11 as you read the sentence in which the word *debris* is found to confirm the meaning of the word. Point to the word *debris* on the board and repeat the pronunciation. Have students look at the picture on page 12 and use the word *debris* in a sentence of their own to tell about what they see.
- Have a volunteer read the definition for *memorial* in the glossary. Have students follow along on page 17 as you read the sentence in which the word *memorial* is found to confirm the meaning of the word. Point to the word *memorial* on the board and repeat the pronunciation. Have students look at the picture on page 15 and use the word *memorial* in a sentence of their own to tell about what they see.

Set the Purpose

- Have students think about what they already know about September 11, 2001, as they read the book to find answers to their questions, and write what they learned in the *L* section of their KWLS worksheet. Remind them also to write the page number in one of the three boxes of their author's purpose worksheet when they come across a strong example of evidence supporting one of the purposes.

During Reading

Student Reading


- **Guide the reading:** Have students read to the end of page 9. Remind them to look for information about September 11, 2001 that will answer questions on their KWLS worksheet. Encourage students who finish before everyone else to go back and reread.
- When students have finished reading, have them circle any questions on their KWLS worksheet that were answered and write any new questions that were generated.
- Model answering a question and filling in the third section (*L*) of the KWLS chart.
Think-aloud: *I wanted to know if any other place in America was attacked that day besides the two buildings in New York and whether the president considered the country at war. I found out that the planes that crashed into the Twin Towers in New York had been hijacked and intentionally used as missiles to destroy American landmarks. As those two towers began to burn, another passenger jet crashed into the Pentagon (which houses offices of the U.S. military), and the building immediately caught fire. A fourth flight was taken over and aimed to destroy another American landmark, but the passengers counterattacked the hijackers and forced them to change course. That plane eventually crashed into the ground. I read that after the second plane crashed, President George W. Bush was hustled off to his special plane. I haven't read that he declared a state of war, but I will keep reading to find out if that happened or not. I see that another section of the book is titled "Who Was Responsible."*

Lesson Plan *(continued)*

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I wonder if a specific organization planned these attacks and where it was based. I will write these questions on my chart.

- Have students write answers to the questions they circled in the *L* section of their KWLS worksheet. Invite them to share the information they learned and the questions they generated as they read the book. Record shared responses on the class KWLS chart.
- **Check for understanding:** Have students read to the end of page 16. Have them write any answers they found while reading in the *L* section of their KWLS worksheet and additional questions they raised in the *W* section. Invite them to share the information they learned and the questions they generated as they read pages 10 through 16. Write shared responses on the class KWLS chart.
- Discuss the recent story events and ask students what information they recorded on their author's purpose worksheet. Ask volunteers to give examples of what they recorded. Write the examples on the chart on the board as students share (*to inform*: page 10: police evacuated over 14,000 workers from the two towers; page 12: 2,753 people, citizens of more than 75 countries, died; and so on). Point out to students that they do not need to write each example exactly as the book states it. Review the skill of paraphrasing when writing answers in a small area.
- Have students read the remainder of the book. Remind them to continue to look for and write answers to their KWLS worksheet questions and to think about examples that show the author's purpose. Encourage them to add new questions they might have to their KWLS worksheet as they read.

 Have students make a question mark in their book beside any word they do not understand or cannot pronounce. Encourage them to use the strategies they have learned to read each word and figure out its meaning.

After Reading

- Ask students what words, if any, they marked in their book. Use this opportunity to model how they can read these words using decoding strategies and context clues.

Reflect on the Reading Strategy

- **Think-aloud:** *I wanted to know if a specific organization planned these attacks and where it was based. I read that an organization in the Middle East called Al-Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden, were suspected immediately, but they denied any involvement for more than three years. In 2004, bin Laden publicly claimed responsibility, stating that the motive for the attacks was to punish the U.S. for its support of the country of Israel and for stationing troops in Middle Eastern countries during the 1991 Gulf War. I read that bin Laden was finally killed in eastern Afghanistan in 2011. I also wanted to know if the president declared a state of war, but I did not find that out in this book. I read that less than a month after 9/11, the U.S. and its allies began bombing suspected Al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan. Now that I'm finished reading this book, I would like to know more about the heroic actions of the passengers aboard United Airlines Flight 93. I will write that question on my chart.*
- Ask students to share questions they added to their KWLS worksheet while reading, and ask them what questions were answered (or not answered) in the text. Have students write answers they found while reading in the *L* column of their KWLS worksheet.
- Reinforce the awareness that asking questions before and during reading, and looking for the answers while reading, keeps readers interested in the topic. These practices also encourage them to keep reading to find answers to their questions and helps them understand and enjoy what they have read.
- Remind students that all of their questions may not have been answered in this text. Brainstorm other sources they might use to locate additional information to answer their questions. Invite students to fill in the final section (*S*) of their KWLS worksheet with information they would still like to know about the events of September 11, 2011.

Reflect on the Comprehension Skill

- Ask students to explain or show how identifying the author's purpose helped them understand and remember different parts of the book. Review the three different purposes from the chart on the board (to inform, to entertain, and to persuade). Ask volunteers to share what they recorded on their own author's purpose worksheet. Add examples to the board as students share them.
- Ask students if they were mostly informed, entertained, or persuaded by the facts in *9/11: A Dark Day*.
- Ask students to read examples of places in the text where they were informed (page 11: *The debris from the two towers damaged surrounding buildings and set fires, resulting in the complete destruction of two other buildings nearby*; page 19: *the U.S. and its allies began bombing suspected Al-Qaeda camps in Afghanistan*; page 22: *the new tower being built will be one of the tallest buildings in the world*; and so on).
- Ask students if they were persuaded by this story. Ask them to share the information in the book that they believe was meant to persuade (page 15: the author talks about the compelling heroism of the passengers of Flight 93; page 14: the author shares inspirational stories about heroes such as Rick Rescorla). Point out that even though there are a few examples of persuasion, the book is mostly written to inform, explain, and present information to the readers.
- **Check for understanding:** Ask students to think of a book they've read recently that taught them something (science book, biography, and so on). Ask them to think of something they've read that was funny, scary, silly, or mysterious (comics, fiction books, and so on). Ask students for an example of something they've read that attempted to get them to believe or do something (an advertisement or poster). Write students' responses on the board under the appropriate category.
- **Enduring understanding:** In this book, you learned about the tragic terrorist attacks of 9/11. You also learned about the heroic efforts of many citizens as they faced these horrific events. Now that you know this information, what does it make you think about the difference in the characteristics of people who carried out the terrorist attacks and those of people who carried out the heroic efforts?

Build Skills

Grammar and Mechanics: **Complex sentences**

- Write the following sentence (from page 7 in the text) on the board: *All planes in the air that morning were directed to land, _____ international flights to the United States were rerouted to airports in Canada and Mexico.*
- Have students read the sentence and suggest a word that belongs in the blank to complete the sentence (*while*).
- Review or explain that a *conjunction* is a word that joins two parts of a sentence together. Point to the word that students suggested to complete the sentence on the board. Explain that this conjunction joins parts of a sentence together to form a *complex sentence*. List examples of conjunctions on the board (*after, although, as, as if, because, before, for, it, once, since, so, than, that, though, unless, until, when, whenever, where, whereas, wherever, whether, while*).
- Reread the sentence on the board, this time including a conjunction. (*All planes in the air that morning were directed to land, while international flights to the United States were rerouted to airports in Canada and Mexico.*) Underline *All planes in the air that morning were directed to land*. Explain that this part of the sentence is called the *independent clause*. Circle *while international flights to the United States were rerouted to airports in Canada and Mexico*. Explain that the part of the sentence that follows the conjunction is called the *dependent clause*. Point out that even though both sentence parts contain a subject and verb, the dependent clause does not express a complete thought and is not a sentence on its own.

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- Ask students to turn to page 10. Write the following sentence from the book on the board: *After the first plane crashed into the North Tower, police and firefighters began evacuating more than 14,000 workers from both the North and the South Towers.*
- Have students identify the conjunction (*after*), the dependent clause (*After the first plane crashed into the North Tower*), and the independent clause (*police and firefighters began evacuating more than 14,000 workers from both the North and the South Towers*). Point out that in this example, the dependent clause comes at the beginning of the sentence.
- Have students read the sentence with the independent clause at the beginning (*Police and firefighters began evacuating more than 14,000 workers from both the North and the South Towers after the first plane crashed into the North Tower*). Explain that either sentence is correct. However, when the dependent clause is at the beginning of the sentence, a comma often separates the clauses.



Check for understanding: Have students highlight the following sentence from page 20 in their book: *For more than three years, Al-Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden, denied any involvement in the attacks.* Have students underline the dependent clause (*For more than three years*) and circle the independent clause (*Al-Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden, denied any involvement in the attacks*). Ask students to identify the conjunction (*for*).

- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [complex sentences worksheet](#). Discuss their answers aloud after they are finished.

Word Work: **Number words**

- Explain that when reading aloud, readers will sometimes encounter different symbols, numbers, and abbreviations within the text. Good readers read these parts of the text fluently, just as they read the words.
- Direct students to page 10. Ask them to find the numbers in the text (*14,000; 9:59; 10:28*). Review or explain that the numbers are called *cardinal numbers* and that they are used to describe an amount, a date, or a time. Point out that a cardinal number is read in the same manner as the written word for the number. Practice reading the numbers and symbols aloud. (*One thousand, seven hundred seventy-six feet; September eleventh, two thousand one; ten fifty-eight.*) Point out that the colon in *10:58* lets readers know that it shows the time of day.
- Write the numbers from page 20 on the board and have volunteers come to the board and write their word equivalents (*September eleventh, two thousand and four, one thousand nine hundred ninety-one*).
- **Check for understanding:** Have students turn to page 7. Ask them to find the numbers in the text, and have volunteers read them aloud. Write the numbers on the board and ask other volunteers to come up to the board to write their word equivalents (*ninety-three, ten oh three, forty*). Explain that when reading *10:03*, the zero is read as *oh*.
- **Independent practice:** Introduce, explain, and have students complete the [number words worksheet](#). Discuss their answers aloud after they have finished.

Build Fluency

Independent Reading

- Allow students to read their book independently. Additionally, partners can take turns reading parts of the book to each other.

Home Connection

- Give students their book to take home to read with parents, caregivers, siblings, or friends. Have students also take home their completed KWLS worksheet and explain what each column means to someone at home. Have them also share about the information they wrote on the chart.

Extend the Reading

Informational Writing Connection

Provide print and Internet sources for students to further research the many heroic acts of 9/11. Have them choose one specific story and write an informational report that includes at least three paragraphs and two illustrations or pictures. Require an error-free final copy to be read aloud to a partner of their choice. Display their work on a bulletin board titled *Heroes of September 11*.

Visit [Writing A–Z](#) for a lesson and leveled materials on expository writing.

Science Connection

Supply print and Internet resources for students work in groups to research how tall buildings are engineered to withstand fires and earthquakes. Give students index cards to write down the most important and interesting information they found out during their research. Facilitate a roundtable discussion in which they share their findings, and ask students to relate this information to the events that unfurled on 9/11. Ask students if they found information to suggest that these events have changed the way new buildings are engineered today. Also ask whether they think scientific research about what happened to the Twin Towers on 9/11 is important, and why or why not.

Skill Review

[Discussion cards](#) covering comprehension skills and strategies not explicitly taught with the book are provided as an extension activity. The following is a list of some ways these cards can be used with students:

- Use as discussion starters for literature circles.
- Have students choose one or more cards and write a response, either as an essay or as a journal entry.
- Distribute before reading the book and have students use one of the questions as a purpose for reading.
- Cut apart and use the cards as game cards with a board game.
- Conduct a class discussion as a review before the book quiz.

Assessment

Monitor students to determine if they can:

- consistently ask relevant questions about a topic prior to and during reading; locate answers to their questions and write them on a worksheet
- thoughtfully analyze the author's purpose during discussion and on a worksheet
- correctly identify the parts of complex sentences during discussion and on a worksheet
- fluently read number words within the text; accurately use number words in sentences on a worksheet

Comprehension Checks

- [Book Quiz](#)
- [Retelling Rubric](#)