



War on Terror Education Resources

What does it mean to be a terrorist, and how do you fight terrorism? These resources and lessons explore the historical context of terrorism, its origins, and America's longest war.

Introduction

- [The Changing Faces of Terrorism](#)
 - Summary: In this article, Oxford professor Adam Roberts explains the history of terrorism, from the French revolution to 9/11. The article supplies good background on the diverse origins and manifestations of terrorism.
- [Wordle](#) or [Text is Beautiful](#)
 - Summary: A program for generating word clouds from text the user provides, Wordle gives prominence to words that appear more frequently. A similar program, Text is Beautiful, creates word clouds with concept groupings.
 - Common Core: A great way to examine students' preexisting knowledge about terrorism, and to draw attention to misinformation or stereotyping. Students must evaluate an unusual format to address the question. RI. 7.

Using the Word "Terrorism" or "Terrorist"

- [Terrorism--What's in a Word?](#)
 - Summary: This three-part lesson plan from PBS, students work in groups to examine the diverse definitions of terrorism and the political ramifications of labeling an act as terrorism. Students discuss diverse historical scenarios and debate whether they were acts of terror.
- [Media and Perception](#)
 - Summary: This short classroom activity, part of PBS's larger [Roots of Terrorism](#) unit, has students examine the role media plays in our understanding of global issues related to terrorism. Students look at Al Jazeera coverage and school textbooks, among others.
 - Common Core: Strengthens students' skills in integrating information from diverse sources and noting discrepancies among sources. RH.9.

9/11 and the “War on Terror”

- [Text of George Bush's 9/11 Speech](#)
 - Summary: Full text of Bush’s response to the attacks on 9/11, including his announcement of a “war on terror” and his description of al Qaeda.
 - Common Core: Have students analyze an excerpt of the speech, noting key sentences, purpose, audience, and use of rhetoric. Strengthens reading informational text for language arts and history/social studies. RI.4, 5, 6, 8. RH.5.
- ["first writing since"](#)
 - Summary: Excerpt from a poem by Suheir Hammad written in response to 9/11. Describes the fear the author felt from the ensuing Islamophobia and racial profiling.
 - Common Core: Strengthen language arts skills by having students determine the purpose of Hammad’s text, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the poem. RI. 6.
- [Is it Time to End the War on Terror?](#)
 - Summary: A panel of experts, including CNN National Security Analyst Peter Bergen and former CIA Director Michael Hayden, debate the question: Is it time to end the war on terror? A 50 minute debate.
 - Common Core: Have a classroom vote on the question before and after listening to the debate. Have students explain which arguments they found most convincing and why that speaker or information was compelling. SL. 3.

Responding to Terrorism

- [John Yoo Interview](#)
 - Summary: In this PBS Frontline interview, John Yoo, the deputy assistant attorney general in the Justice Department's Office of Legal Counsel from 2001 to 2003, discusses the limitations of a police/criminal investigation approach to fighting terrorism. He explains the benefits of the Patriot Act, which he helped draft.
 - Common Core: Have students compare Yoo’s perspective to Howard’s in his article “What’s in a Name?” Evaluate authors’ differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors’ claims, reasoning, and evidence. RH 6 and 8.
- [What's in a Name? How to Fight Terrorism](#)
 - Summary: This article from Foreign Affairs discusses the repercussions of labeling the current fight against terrorism as a war.
- [Terrorism: How Should We Respond?](#)
 - Summary: This two-day lesson plan from the Choices Program has students role-play as members of the Senate Foreign Relations Committee to debate different policy responses to terrorism.

- Common Core: Strengthens speaking and listening skills as students present information and evidence on their perspectives, while addressing opposing views. SL. 4.
- [Drone Wars](#)
 - Summary: A transcript of the testimony of Farea Al-Muslimi, a Yemeni man, before the US Senate Judiciary Committee. Farea Al-Muslimi, educated in the US, speaks about a drone strike on his home village.
 - Common Core: Strengthens student understanding and analysis of primary sources. RH. 1, 2, 5.