September 11, 2001

On September 11, 2001, terrorists hijacked 4 airplanes and crashed them into the two towers of the World Trade Centre in New York and the Pentagon in Washington. The fourth jet crashed in Pennsylvania. About 3,000 people were killed and part of the Pentagon was destroyed. It was soon found out that Osama Bin Laden and his terrorist organization Al Qaeda had been behind the attacks.

The planes left the airports on the morning of September 11. Their original destination was California, so they had tons of fuel on board. Some time after take-off, the terrorists took over the planes. Some of them had pilot training.

At 8:45 a.m. the first plane crashed into the north tower of the World Trade Centre. 20 minutes later, the second plane hit the south tower. Flames and smoke came out of the towers and the people who were working there tried to escape. About an hour after the attack both towers collapsed.

At about 9:40 a.m. a plane with 58 people on board crashed into the west side of the Pentagon, the country’s military headquarters in Washington. A part of the building collapsed and about 200 people were killed.

A fourth plane probably intended to crash into the White House or the Capitol, but a few passengers wanted to try to overcome the terrorists. The pilots lost control of the plane and it crashed into a field in Pennsylvania.

**Words**

- **Capitol** = the building in Washington where Congress (all the Representatives and Senators) meet
- **collapse** = to fall down quickly
- **depart** = leave from, start from
- **destination** = the place where someone or something is going
- **destroy** = zerstören
- **flame** = the hot bright burning gas that you see when something is on fire
- **fuel** = gas or petrol that makes a motor run
- **headquarters** = the main building that is the centre of an organization or company
- **hijack** = to take control of a plane
- **intend** = plan to, was going to
- **overcome** = to defeat = überwältigen
- **Pentagon** = a building in Washington from which the American army is controlled

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1. American Airline Flight 11 to Los Angeles takes off from Boston at 8 a.m. At 8:45 a.m. it crashes into the north tower of the WTC.
2. United Airlines Flight 175 departs from Logan airport soon after and at 9:03 a.m. hits the south tower of the WTC.
3. United Flight 93 leaves Newark Airport in New Jersey and heads for San Francisco. Shortly after 10:00 a.m. the plane crashes in a field in southern Pennsylvania.
4. American Flight 77 departs from Washington at about 8:20 a.m. About one and a half hours later it crashes into the west side of the Pentagon building in Washington.
Words

**air traffic** = all the flights in the whole country

**baggage** = the bags and suitcases that someone has with him when he is travelling

**business** = Geschäftsvorgänge

**cause** = produce, to be the reason for..

**convince** = überzeugen

**design** = plans, drawings

**evacuate** = everybody had to get out

**FBI** = Federal Bureau of Investigation = the police department that is controlled by the American government

**fuel** = gas or petrol that makes a motor run

**furniture** = objects made of wood like chairs, tables, cupboards etc..

**likely** = probably = wahrscheinlich

**massive** = great, big

**memorial** = an object that reminds people of someone who has died

**remain** = stay

**safety** = Sicherheit

**spread** = expand, to get bigger

**sprinkler system** = machines that are used to pour water on a fire = Löschanlage

**steel construction** = Stahlgerippe

**stock exchange** = Börse

**surround** = umgeben

**took off** = start

**undamaged** = nothing happened to them

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**September 11, 2001**

**After the attack**

After the attack on the USA, there was panic all over the country. The White House was **evacuated** and all **air traffic** over the continent was stopped. The **stock exchange** in New York stopped **business** and many tourist sights were closed down.

A month after the attack, the government gave the police and the **FBI** more power to hunt terrorists. New **safety** checks at airports were introduced and airlines started checking the **baggage** of their passengers more carefully.

The United States were **convinced** that Osama Bin Laden and his Al-Qaeda terrorist group were behind the attacks. In October, the U.S. attacked terrorist training camps in Afghanistan.

**Why the Towers Collapsed**

The two Boeing 767s that **took off** from Boston had a lot of **fuel** with them because they were travelling to Los Angeles. Each jet had about 90,000 litres of fuel—about 2 tanker trucks full.

When the planes hit the towers they caused a **massive** fire that **spread** across many floors at the top of the buildings. Most **likely**, **furniture**, wood and paper in the offices began burning quickly, so that the fire could **spread** in a few seconds. The buildings did have an automatic **sprinkler system**, but this system was made to put out small fires.

The fire **caused** temperatures of over 1,000 °C, so that even the **steel constructions** in the buildings became weaker and weaker.

In the end, the top floors that **remained undamaged** were so heavy that the whole building **collapsed**. The World Trade Centre, however, **withstood** collapse long enough to save thousands of lives. About 99% of the people in the lower floors could get out of the buildings before they fell.

**Rebuilding Ground Zero**

In the months after September 11, 2001 thousands of workers helped to clean up the place where the World Trade Centre once stood - known as Ground Zero. Many architects all over the world were called to present designs for rebuilding the site. In the future, glass towers will **surround** a **memorial** of September 11.
The World Trade Centre

The World Trade Centre was built by the American architect Minoru Yamasaki in the late 1960s and early 1970s. At their opening in 1972 they were the world's tallest buildings. They were over 400 metres tall and were made of 200,000 tons of steel. Each tower had 110 floors and 97 elevators.

Skyscrapers of this size have to be built in solid bedrock. In New York the solid rock starts at about 15 to 20 metres below the surface. When the builders of the WTC started digging they found out that after a few metres, water from the nearby Hudson River started pouring in. So they dug out small boxes and put steel and concrete into them to give the building a firm stand.

When the World Trade Centre opened in 1973 the project was not very popular among New Yorkers. But as time went on and more and more companies started moving their offices to the twin towers they became more and more popular. The two towers also became famous through movies like "King Kong" and "Superman".

In 1993 the World Trade Centre was the target of an earlier terrorist attack. A truck with 600 kg of explosives drove into the basement garage of the building. When it exploded, a few stories were completely destroyed, but only 6 people were killed.
September 11, 2001

Osama Bin Laden

Osama Bin Laden is thought to be the world’s leading terrorist and the person in charge of the September 11 attacks on America.

Bin Laden was born in Saudi Arabia in 1957. His father, Mohammed, founded a construction company and became a billionaire. The company grew very famous and rebuilt mosques all over the world, including Mecca and Medina.

Osama was the 17th son, and within his family he ranked low. He studied engineering in Jeddah.

In the middle of the 1980s bin Laden went to Afghanistan to help the mujahideen, who were Muslims that fought against the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan. He collected a lot of money for this group. At the end of the 1980s, Bin Laden founded Al-Qaeda.

When the United States sent soldiers to Saudi Arabia in 1991 to throw Saddam Hussein out of Kuwait, Osama Bin Laden became an opponent of the Saudi government. He thought it was unwise to let Americans expand their influence in Muslim countries.

Bin Laden was thrown out of Saudi Arabia because of his terrorist activities. He went to Sudan for a few years and then to Afghanistan, where he was protected by the Taliban government.

He has been charged with many terrorist attacks in the past 15 years. In the worst attack, the United States embassies in Kenya and Tanzania were bombed in 1998 — 200 people were killed.

After almost ten years of intensive searching, bin Laden was found in a private house in Pakistan. On May 2, 2011 bin Laden was shot by American soldiers in a secret mission.

Al-Qaeda

Al-Qaeda is a network of extremists organized by Osama Bin Laden. It was founded in the 1980s and Bin Laden has become the main financial supporter.

Al-Qaeda thinks that all Westerners should be thrown out of Islamic states and that countries that do not follow Islamic law are bad. According to its founder, all Muslims around the world should fight a holy war against the United States and Israel. Al-Qaeda probably has contact with terrorist groups all over the world.

Although Osama Bin Laden is the leader and founder of the group, it is not run by him alone. Al-Qaeda does not have a central structure. It is a network of local groups in different countries who don’t know each other. Each group operates on its own and if one group is arrested, it does not know anything about the others.
True or false?

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Statement</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The fourth plane probably was planning to hit the White House or the Capitol in Washington.</td>
<td></td>
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<tr>
<td>The World Trade Centre collapsed when the first plane hit the building.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The two planes that hit the twin towers took off from Washington.</td>
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<td>After the attacks all air traffic over the USA and Canada was stopped.</td>
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<td>Many shops closed and only the tourist sights remained open.</td>
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<td>In October, the USA attacked terrorist training camps in Saudi Arabia.</td>
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<tr>
<td>All of the planes were full with fuel.</td>
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<tr>
<td>The place where the World Trade Centre once stood is called Ground Zero.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Architects plan to rebuild the twin towers exactly as they were before the attack.</td>
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Answer the following questions

Why did the towers collapse?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Why didn’t the sprinkler system work?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Who was behind the attacks?

______________________________________________________________________________

What happened at airports after the attacks?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Why didn’t the fourth plane reach its destination?

______________________________________________________________________________
______________________________________________________________________________

Which building was hit in Washington?

______________________________________________________________________________
The World Trade Centre was the world’s tallest _________________ when it opened in 1972. The _________________ were built by the American _________________ Yamasaki in the late 1960s. Each tower was made with 200,000 tons of _________________.

Tall buildings have to be built in _________________, but when building the WTC, construction workers found out that water from the _______________ Hudson River was pouring in. They had to make boxes out of _______________ so that the towers would stand firmly.

At first the buildings were not very _________________ among the people of New York. Things changed when more and more _________________ started to move in. The towers also became famous through _________________ like “King Kong” and “Superman”.

Athletes and stuntmen chose the WTC as the place to do crazy things. A French _________________ even walked between the two towers on a _________________.

Tourists could ride up to the top on one of the 97 _______________ and on clear days could see up to 60 km in all _________________. At the top, there was a _________________ called “Windows of the World”.

About 50,000 people worked in the twin towers every day. Banks, law firms and _________________ stations had their offices here.

In 1993 the World Trade Centre became the _________________ of a terrorist attack. A truck full of _________________ drove into the _________________ garages of the WTC. But, only 6 people were killed in the explosion.
September 11, 2001

Answer the following questions!

Describe Osama Bin Laden’s family background: __________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
What did he study? ____________________________________________________________
Who were the “mujahideen”? ____________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
When did bin Laden found the Al-Qaeda group? __________________________________________________________
Why did bin Laden become an enemy of his home country? __________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Why was he thrown out of Saudi Arabia? __________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Where did he go to and who protected him? __________________________________________________________
What other attacks has he been charged with? __________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
What is Al-Qaeda’s aim? __________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
What kind of structure does the group have? __________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
____________________________________________________________________________________________________
Put the names of the countries into boxes of the map on the right.
Across

1. very expensive and beautiful
5. the name of the place where the World Trade Centre once stood (two words)
7. material that you get by mixing cement, sand, stones and water
9. a house that belongs to a foreign country - a group of people represent this country in the house.
11. to take control of an airplane
12. to capture or catch a criminal
13. gas or petrol that makes a motor run
15. country that Osama bin Laden fled to
16. an object that reminds people of someone who has died

Down

2. something dangerous that is done to entertain people
3. building in Washington from which the American army is controlled
4. to start an organization or a company
6. the place where someone or something is going
7. to fall down quickly
8. to get everybody out of a house or building
10. objects that you have in your house and that are made mostly of wood - like tables or chairs
14. everything that is in a small area