

**U.S. Studies**  
***“America Under Attack”***  
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**Objectives**

Students will be able to summarize the events of the attack on Pearl Harbor on December 7, 1941 and the World Trade Center bombings on September 11, 2001 by conducting preliminary research prior to the beginning of the unit.

Students will be able to read and evaluate the human reaction of the attack on Pearl Harbor using primary and secondary documents involving the examination of photographs, newsreels, timelines and action reports as recorded aboard ships docked at Pearl Harbor, eyewitness accounts as well as newspaper headlines and news articles.

Students will be able to read and evaluate the human reaction of the attack of 9/11 using primary and secondary documents involving the examination of news videos, eyewitness accounts, newspaper headlines and news articles as well as conducting an interview with an adult who has a vivid memory of the event.

Students will be able to compare and contrast the actions taken by the government of the United States immediately following both events.

As a result of the collective research of both events as well as an examination of the national psyche of the American people from both December 7, 1941 and September 11, 2001, students will, through class discussion and written analysis, be able to understand and compare the similarities of the emotional trauma of different generations to similar catastrophic national events.

**Learning Activities**

Students will use individual lap-tops and work at their own pace.



***Learning Activities related to the attack on Pearl Harbor:***

*Length of Activity: Two class periods.*

Students will analyze selected eyewitness accounts of the events of December 7, 1941 by answering questions provided by the instructor that are designed to gauge the emotions of the individuals who witnessed the tragedy. Students can also, if possible, conduct personal interviews of individuals who were alive during the time of the attack on Pearl Harbor.

Using Google Earth, the students will view the landscape of Pearl Harbor described in eyewitness accounts and as seen in photographs such as Ford Island, Sand Island, Battleship Row, Barber’s Island, the entrance to Pearl Harbor and the routes taken by the attacking Japanese forces. Students will also use this computer program to view the location of Pearl Harbor and its proximity to downtown Honolulu, Waikiki Beach and Diamond Head volcano. Students will also compare the location of the island of Oahu to Midway Island, Guam and the Japanese Islands.

Students will read a newspaper account from the *New York Times* dated December 8, 1941 of the Pearl Harbor attack. In addition, students will view a newsreel account of actual footage of the attack that was narrated by an American press source. Students will cite words and phrases used in both the newspaper account and the footage that would have expressed the emotions and attitude of American citizens at the time.

Students will listen to and analyze the Declaration of War Speech (“Infamy Speech”) delivered by President Roosevelt. Students will cite words and phrases used by the President that were designed to both calm the immediate anxiety of the nation and foster intense patriotism.



***Learning Attacks related to the attack on 9/11:***

*Length of Activity: Two class periods.*

Students will analyze videotaped eyewitness accounts of the events of September 11, 2001 by answering questions provided by the instructor that are designed to gauge the emotions of the individuals who witnessed the accounts on live television broadcasts. In addition, students will conduct an interview of an adult who has a vivid memory of the event.

Using Google Earth, the students will view the landscape of Ground Zero in New York City and its location in relation to the rest of Manhattan Island and the surrounding New York metropolitan area.

Students will read a newspaper account from the *New York Times* dated September 12, 2001 of the 9/11 attack. In addition, students will view and analyze three network news reports as reported during the live broadcasts of the attack of 9/11. Students will be asked to cite words and phrases used in both the newspaper account and the videos that would have expressed the emotions and attitude of the American citizens at the time.

Students will listen to and analyze the speech of President Bush as he addressed the American public immediately following the 9/11 attack. Student will cite words and phrases used by the President that were designed to both calm the immediate anxiety of the nation and foster intense patriotism.

***Culminating Learning Activities***

After four days of intensive individual research using the laptops, students will reconvene as a class for a 40-minute teacher-directed discussion of their findings. Questions that were used throughout the research will now be addressed in the discussions. Students are also invited to share information learned from conducting personal interviews.

For the time remaining in day five of the activity, students will compose a thesis statement and begin work on a rough outline for the three- to four-page written informational research paper that will be completed outside of class time.

**Samples of Materials Used in this Unit**

Sources for Eyewitness Accounts:

Department of the Navy -- Naval Historical Center

“This is Not a Drill”

Captain John Lacotuse, USN

Lieutenant Commander S. G. Fugua, USN

Lieutenant Commander B. C. Nightingale, USMC

Lieutenant Commander T. T. Beattie, USN

Pay Clerk D. L. Westfall, USN

Action Report for Commander in Chief, Pacific Fleet, including other commands, and ships at Pearl Harbor

<http://www.history.navy.mil/branches/teach/pearl/real/realthing.htm>

Eyewitnesstohistory.com  
Eyewitness account from the USS Arizona  
<http://www.eyewitnesstohistory.com/pfpearl.htm>

National Geographic  
Pearl Harbor  
<http://plasma.nationalgeographic.com/pearlharbor/>

Pearl Harbor Newsreel available on YouTube  
9/11 Videos available on YouTube  
Presidential Speeches available on YouTube and Library of Congress Archives  
Newspaper Articles and newspaper front pages available in *Digital History*

### **Laptop Implications**

This activity requires students have access to individual laptop computers in order to complete the various activities at their own pace. In this five-day lesson, students will examine and take notes on various newspaper articles, videotape broadcasts and research, as well as utilize Google Earth, all of which require the aid of a computer. Students will access the Blackboard program in order to view the various documents provided by the instructor and the sites containing historic footage, videos, newspaper articles, and selected eyewitness accounts. Blackboard File Share also provides the vehicle students may use to share their personal interviews with classmates, which will be highly encouraged in order for students to gain a better understanding of the psyche of the American people during both events.

### **Role of the Instructor**

Prior to the beginning of this unit, the instructor's role is primarily focused on the collection of relevant research and the placement of that information in Blackboard for students' use. The instructor will also provide the thought-provoking questions associated with this assignment. Within the confines of the classroom, the instructor will assist students in the development of their interview questions for the personal interviews. The instructor will also guide students in the proper use of Google Earth, proper MLA documentation and citation format, and will answer questions as needed.

### **Student Reaction**

This unit has yet to be implemented, but promises a high rate of success because many components have already been incorporated within a classroom setting with positive results. For example, students have enthusiastically embraced the use of Google Earth as they are able to visualize real places in the world. By using this program, they have learned what a textbook cannot teach them: the proximity of strategic places in history to one another. The use of Blackboard offers the instructor an opportunity and vehicle to deliver materials to students more easily and efficiently. Blackboard also offers the students the opportunity to share their findings within their own academic community. Students also have enjoyed past experiences where they have had the opportunity to conduct interviews with parents, grandparents as well as people of the Illinois State University community.