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# How Do We Remember 9/11?

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**Overview:** On September 11, 2001, the United States was attacked. Terrorists used airplanes as weapons and crashed into the World Trade Center in New York City, the Pentagon in Washington, D.C., and a field in Pennsylvania. Almost 3,000 people from 90 different countries lost their lives. This Mini-Q looks at different ways we remember this tragedy.

## The Documents:

- Document A: Reflecting Absence
- Document B: Tower of Voices
- Document C: Survivor Tree
- Document D: Memorial Benches
- Document E: The Story of Gander

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A Mini Document Based Question (Mini-Q)

## Hook Exercise: Designing a 9/11 Memorial

In the years following the 9/11 attacks, plans began for the creation of a memorial at the site of the World Trade Center. A memorial committee was formed, and this committee came up with guidelines for the memorial designs. More than 5,000 ideas were submitted. The committee chose eight finalists before choosing the winning design.

### Part I: Ranking the Guidelines

With a partner, discuss the five 9/11 Memorial guidelines below and then rank them in order of importance. Put a 1 next to the guideline that you think is MOST important and a 5 next to the guideline that you think is LEAST important. Be ready to defend your thinking with the class.

### 9/11 Memorial Guidelines

**The 9/11 Memorial should:**

- \_\_\_ recognize each individual who died
- \_\_\_ recognize all those who helped in rescue, recovery, and healing
- \_\_\_ create a space for remembering and reflection
- \_\_\_ educate visitors about 9/11 and encourage people to learn more
- \_\_\_ change over time (e.g. trees that grow or flowers that bloom in spring)

### Part II: Light and Water

In addition to following the guidelines above, the eight finalists included two other features in their designs: **light** and **water**. Discuss these questions with your partner:

- Why do you think light was used in so many of the 9/11 Memorial designs?
- Why do you think water was used in so many of the designs?

## How Do We Remember 9/11?

### What Happened?

It was a beautiful Tuesday morning in New York City. For many children, it was the first day of school. New Yorkers remember the sunshine and cloudless blue sky, and how the streets buzzed with activity. However, this day—September 11, 2001—is also now remembered as the day of the deadliest **terrorist** attacks in US history.

On September 11, at 8:45 a.m., a plane crashed into the north tower of the **World Trade Center** in New York City. Many thought it was an accident. Eighteen minutes later, a second plane crashed into the south tower, and people realized that America was under attack. Then a third plane struck the **Pentagon** in Washington, D.C. A fourth plane crashed in a field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. The “Twin Towers,” the largest buildings in New York and the workplace for thousands of people, soon collapsed. In the span of three hours, nearly 3,000 people lost their lives.

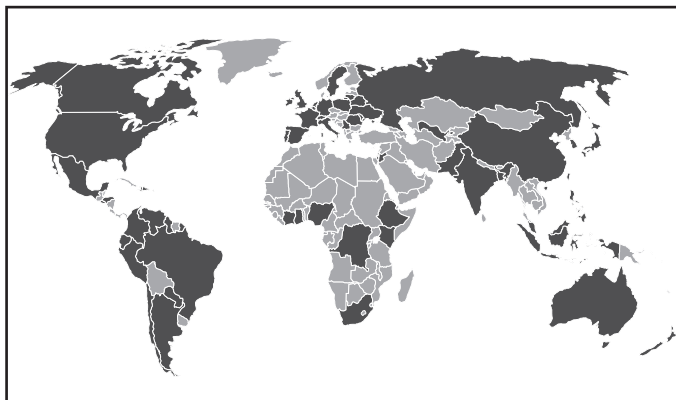
### How Did People React?

In the days, weeks, and months that followed, Americans and people all over the world were filled with many different emotions: shock, horror, sadness. Some people grieved for loved ones who had died. Some were angry at the 19 terrorists who had **hijacked** the planes. Other people were afraid of more attacks.

However, there were positive emotions, too. Many were concerned for the survivors and wanted to help. Many were inspired by the brave heroes of the day: firefighters, police officers, and regular people who risked their lives to save others. From around the world, many sent messages of love and concern to those affected by the attacks. In New York City, signs were hung on firehouse doors, reminding people to “Never Forget.”

### Where Are 9/11 Memorials?

On the tenth anniversary of the 9/11 attacks, a **memorial** opened in New York City. Other



Dark shading indicates the countries with 9/11 victims.

memorials stand at the Pentagon and the site in Pennsylvania where Flight 93 crashed. In fact, almost a thousand 9/11 memorials have arisen around the United States and throughout the world. People from 90 different countries lost their lives, including 67

people from the United Kingdom, 47 from the Dominican Republic, and 41 from India. The effects of 9/11 were felt around the globe.

While many people were angry and afraid after 9/11, memorials are not places of anger and fear. Instead, they are places of healing and honoring, of remembrance and **resilience**. As you read through the documents that follow, think of the ways that three particular groups have been remembered: the victims, the survivors, and the helpers. Then answer the question: *How do we remember 9/11?*

## Background Essay Questions and Check for Understanding

1. On what date did the 9/11 attacks occur? (Be sure to include the year.)
2. Where did the four hijacked planes crash?
3. What were some of the *negative* emotions and *positive* emotions that people felt after the attacks?
4. The victims of the 9/11 attacks came from how many different countries?

5. Define these terms:

terrorist

World Trade Center

Pentagon

hijack

memorial

resilience

- ✓ Write a two- to three-sentence summary of the Background Essay, describing time, place, and story.

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### Timeline

- 1968** — Construction begins on the World Trade Center in New York City
- 1974** — Philippe Petit walks a high wire strung between the Twin Towers
- 1993** — Bombing at World Trade Center kills six
- 2001** — Terrorist attacks of 9/11 kill 2,996 people
- 2011** — Memorial at World Trade Center site opens in New York City
- 2017** — *Come from Away*, a musical about passengers stranded in Newfoundland on 9/11, opens on Broadway

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## Understanding the Question and Pre-Bucketing

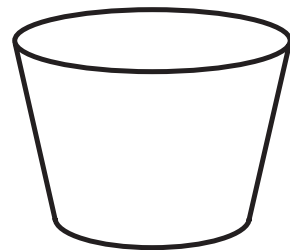
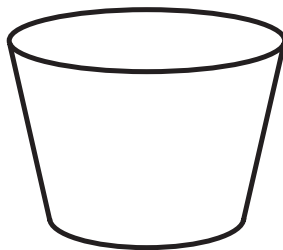
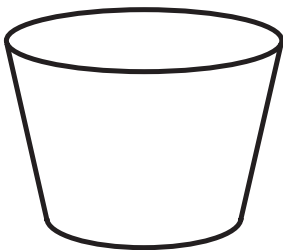
### Understanding the Question

1. What is the Mini-Q question?
2. Which terms in the question need to be defined?
3. Rewrite the question in your own words.

### Pre-Bucketing

*You don't want to write an essay from a big pile of jumbled evidence! Bucketing will help you sort your evidence into groups or categories.*

**Directions:** Label the buckets below with the three groups of people mentioned in the last paragraph of the Background Essay.

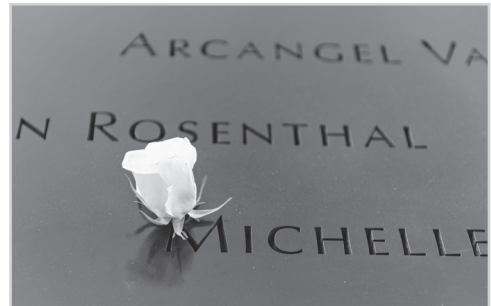
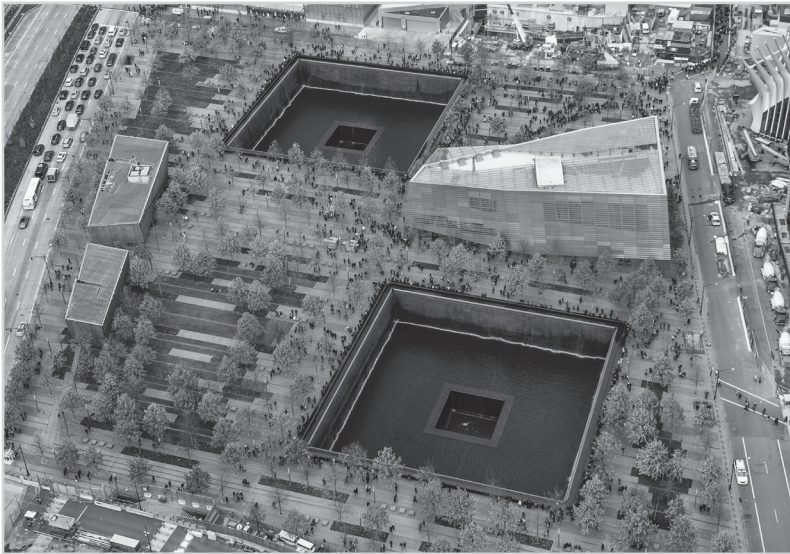


## Document A: Reflecting Absence

**Source:** Photos of 9/11 Memorial Plaza (left) and bronze panels honoring victims of the attacks (right).

**Note:** These three pictures show the 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center in New York City. The memorial is called “Reflecting Absence.” It is designed to help visitors think about those who are missing. The memorial includes two large pools with waterfalls in the exact spots where the north and south towers once stood. The names of the nearly 3,000 people who died in the attacks are engraved on bronze panels. These names include the first responders who gave their lives to help others: 343 firefighters and 71 police officers. A white rose is placed on a name on the person’s birthday. The sound of the waterfalls blocks out traffic and construction noise.

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### Document Analysis

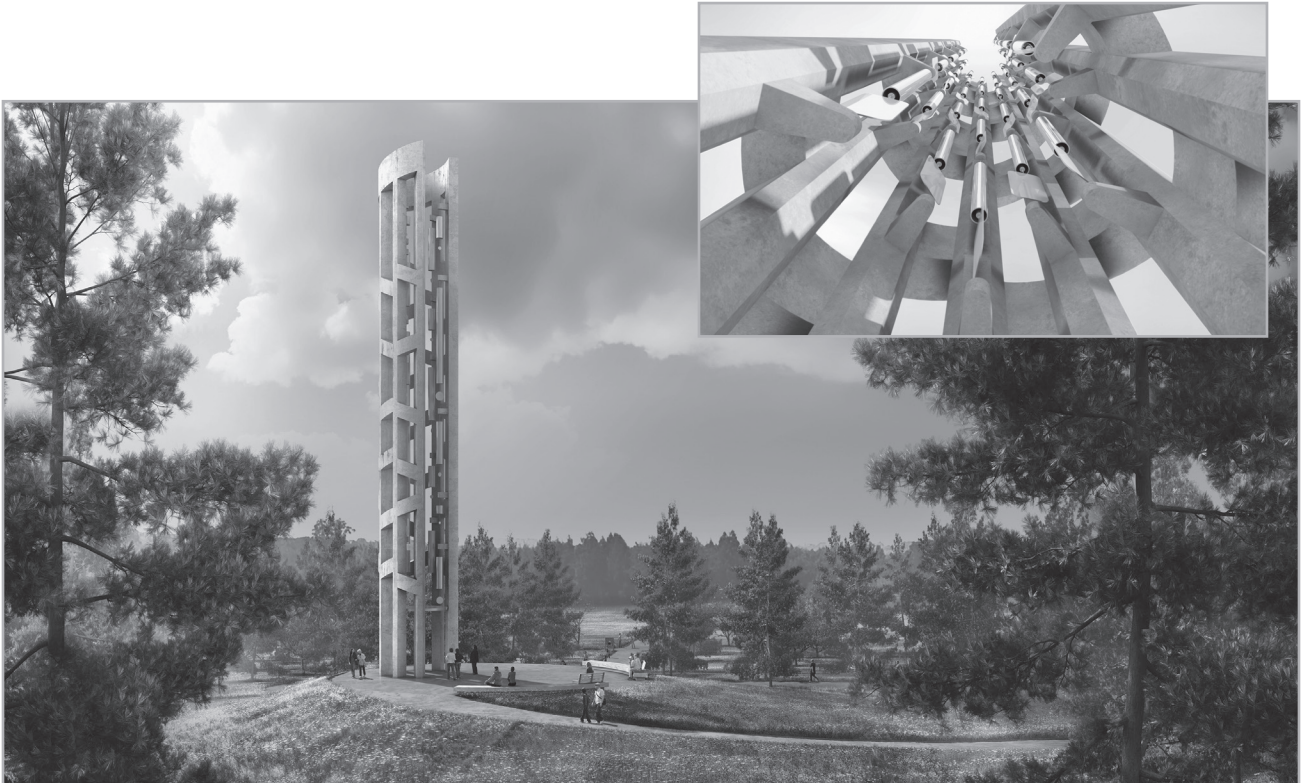
1. What is the name of the 9/11 Memorial at the World Trade Center site?
2. What is now in the place where the north and south towers once stood?
3. If you were standing in front of these pools, reading names, what sound would you hear?
4. How many names are carved into the bronze panels that line the memorial pools?
5. How does this memorial honor the victims? Explain.
6. How does this memorial honor the first responders who helped save others? Explain.

## Document B: Tower of Voices

**Source:** Images of the Tower of Voices park (left) and wind chimes (right) from Paul Murdoch Architects, designers of the memorial, which opened in 2018.

**Note:** Flight 93 was the fourth and last hijacked plane to crash on September 11, 2001. The 33 passengers and seven crew members fought the hijackers. They succeeded in stopping them before the plane could be used to strike another building. The Tower of Voices is a memorial marking where Flight 93 crashed in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. The tower stands 93 feet tall and features 40 wind chimes. Each chime makes its own special sound. The chimes represent the passengers and crew members who lost their lives on Flight 93.

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### Document Analysis

1. Where is the Tower of Voices?
2. How tall is the tower? Why is this number significant?
3. How many wind chimes are in the tower? Why is this number significant?
4. How does this memorial honor 9/11 victims?
5. Could the people aboard Flight 93 be considered helpers as well as victims? Explain.

## Document C: Survivor Tree

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**Source:** Survivor Tree photographs by Michael Brown of New York City Parks, 2001 (left) and Carl DeAbreu for Alamy, 2018.

**Note:** More than 10,000 people who were inside the World Trade Center on September 11 survived the attacks. One pear tree survived as well. This tree has become known as the Survivor Tree. It was discovered among the wreckage of the Twin Towers. Its bark was charred from fires at the site and many of its limbs were reduced to stumps. Yet somehow, the tree still showed signs of life. In November of 2001, recovery workers transported the tree to a nursery in the Bronx. There, it received tender care. With time, the burned stumps gave way to long, smooth branches. Replanted at the 9/11 Memorial in New York City, this Survivor Tree bursts into blossom each spring.



Survivor Tree, 2001



Survivor Tree, 2018

### Document Analysis

1. What tree is shown in these two images?
2. What happened to the tree on September 11, 2001?
3. Where can the tree be found today?
4. A plaque at the 9/11 Memorial calls the Survivor Tree “a living symbol of resilience.” Explain what this means.
5. What group of people does this tree honor? Explain.



## Document D: Memorial Benches

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**Source:** Photos of the 9/11 Pentagon Memorial, including a plaque in honor of the victims (top right) and a father and daughter seated on a memorial bench (bottom right; date unknown).

**Note:** The 9/11 Memorial at the Pentagon building in Washington, D.C., features 184 benches. Each bench honors one of the 125 people who died in the building and the 59 people aboard Flight 77. The benches are engraved with the names of the victims and are arranged according to age, from three-year-old Dana Falkenberg to 71-year-old John Yamnicky, Sr. Each bench arches over a reflecting pool that lights up from below.



We claim this ground in remembrance  
of the events of September 11, 2001.

To honor the 184 people whose lives were  
lost, their families, and all who sacrifice  
that we may live in freedom.

We will never forget.



### Document Analysis

1. What is the main feature of the 9/11 Memorial at the Pentagon?
2. Who do you think is meant to sit on these benches?
3. How does this memorial honor 9/11 victims?
4. How does this memorial honor 9/11 survivors?
5. Who else does this memorial honor? Explain.

## Document E: The Story of Gander

**Source:** Petula Dvorak, *The Washington Post*, September 10, 2016.

**Note:** In the hours after the 9/11 attacks, American air space was closed. Hundreds of planes already in the sky were ordered to land outside the United States. Gander International Airport in Newfoundland, Canada, opened its runways, taking in 38 planes. The story of Gander is so remarkable that it has inspired a hit musical, *Come from Away*.

[Gander] didn't have hotels or restaurants to take in nearly 7,000 passengers, and the community knew that the people from more than 100 countries stuck on those planes were mothers, fathers, daughters, sons, grandmothers. Just like the Newfoundlanders were....

The people of Gander and surrounding fishing villages filled their schools, community rooms and churches with cots for... stranded passengers.... [M]any of the townspeople opened their homes and offered their beds to the "plane people."

They found a way to care for the 17 dogs and cats... that were also aboard the planes.

There, on a Canadian island of green hills and rocky coasts, humans were at their best.

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**Source:** Photo of Gander mural by photographer Jin Lee, date unknown.

**Note:** This mural was created by visitors to the 9/11 Memorial Museum in New York City. It was given to an elementary school in Gander in 2016 to thank the people of the town.



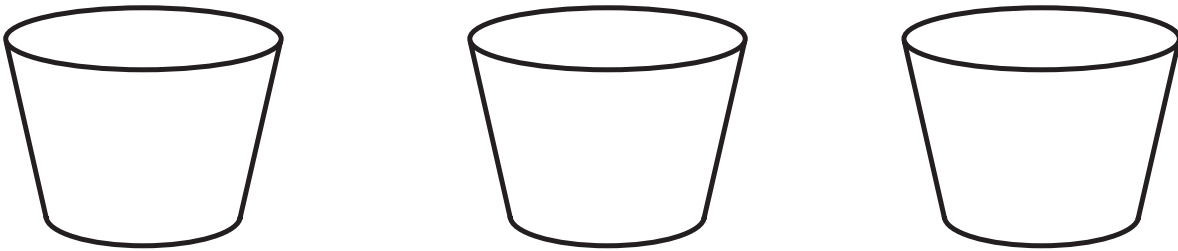
### Document Analysis

1. Why couldn't planes land in US airports on September 11, 2001?
2. How did the town of Gander help? Be specific.
3. Describe three details in the mural that help to tell the story of what happened in Gander on 9/11.
4. Does this mural honor the victims, the survivors, or the helpers? Explain.

## Bucketing—Getting Ready to Write

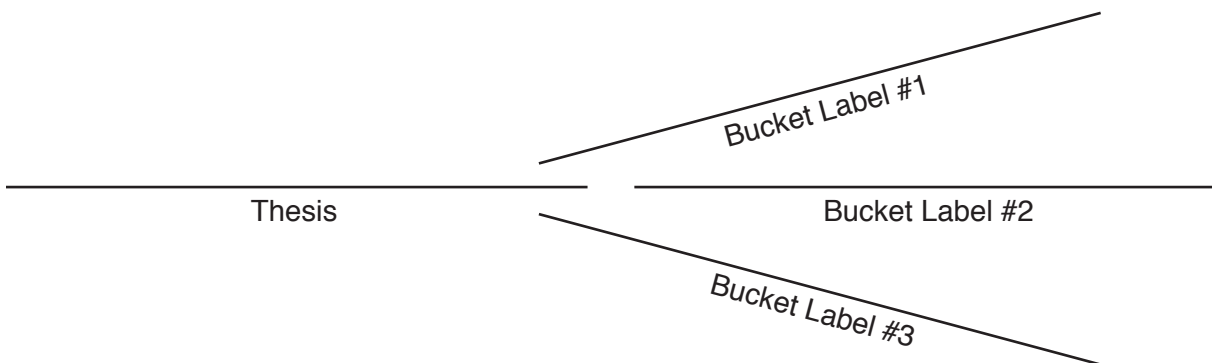
### Bucketing

Look over all the documents and organize them into your final buckets. Write labels under each bucket and place the letters of the documents in the buckets where they belong. Remember, your buckets are going to become your body paragraphs.



### Thesis Development and Road Map

On the chickenfoot below, write your thesis and road map. Your thesis should answer the Mini-Q question. Your road map is created from your bucket labels and lists the topic areas you will examine in order to prove your thesis.



# From Thesis to Essay Writing

## Mini-Q Essay Outline Guide

**Working Title:**

### **Introductory Paragraph**

Grabber:

Background:

Restating the question with key terms defined:

Thesis and road map:

### **Body Paragraph #1**

Baby Thesis for bucket one:

Evidence: Supporting detail with citation

Argument: Connecting evidence to thesis

### **Body Paragraph #2**

Baby Thesis for bucket two:

Evidence:

Argument:

### **Body Paragraph #3**

Baby Thesis for bucket three:

Evidence:

Argument:

### **Concluding Paragraph**

