

**Unit IV:** A Contemporary Case Study

**Grade Levels:** 7-8

**Time:** 90-120 minutes

## **Lesson MIV-10: Looking Back: What Happened Before September 11**

### **Objectives:**

- Students will be able to recognize that September 11 was not an isolated event.
- Students will be able to understand the chain of events which led to the formation of al- Qaeda and bin Laden's role in terror attacks.

### **Key Terms:**

**Fatwa**

**al-Qaeda**

**Osama bin Laden**

**Extremist**

### **Background:**

September 11 was not a random or isolated attack on America, bin Laden and al-Qaeda had been growing in strength since the late 1980's. Their opposition to the United States was defined through multiple terror attacks prior to the attacks on September 11. A timeline will assist students in understanding these events and the history of bin Laden and al Qaeda prior to 9/11.

### **Materials:**

- "Bill Moyers Journal, Brief History of al-Qaeda" and timeline found on <http://www.pbs.org/moyers/journal/07272007/alqaeda.html>
- al-Qaeda timeline  
[http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/osamabinladen/alqaeda\\_timeline.html](http://www.cbc.ca/news/background/osamabinladen/alqaeda_timeline.html)  
<http://www.history.com/topics/al-qaeda>

### **Activities/Procedures:**

1. Instruct the students to build a foundation for this lesson by defining key terms.
2. Assign students the reading from the PBS website (and other websites) which gives a brief history of the events which led to 9/11.
3. The development of al-Qaeda is a substantial amount of information. To enhance the understanding of the sheer number of violent incidents, instruct the students (working in groups) to write an incident and its description on an 8.5x11" piece of paper.
4. Then have the students create a large timeline around the perimeter of the classroom.

### **Evidence of Understanding:**

Students will discuss the complexity, magnitude and the length of time that led to the attacks of September 11, 2011.

### **Extension Activities: Taking Action and Giving Service:**

As the students increase awareness, they will share this information by discussing what they learned in the lesson with others. Have them identify three incidents in the timeline and share with an adult.