

Fundamentalism and Terrorism

Terrorism



STUDENT ACTIVITY

BACKGROUND

The foremost goal of terrorism is to throw society into chaos. It's difficult to assess the degrees of severity where terrorist acts are concerned. A terrorist act in which one person is killed is tragic. When that person is the leader of a nation, there are far-reaching implications, and mass fear and/or anger can result. In a broad-scale terrorist attack, when the numbers of victims—generally members of the public—multiply, does the act become more severe? What factors need to be in place for a terrorist act to create the goal of chaos in a society? Is it location? ...number of victims? ...identity of victims? ...timing? ...does the age of the victims heighten the severity? ...how about occupation of the victims?

Now, consider the implications of terrorism from a terrorist's perspective. Does who the terrorist/s are affect the ability to create chaos? Consider one of the greatest differences between the World Trade Center and Pentagon attacks and the Oklahoma City bombing. In each attack, who did the terrorists represent?

Use the box below to create your own definition of terrorism:

My definition of terrorism is _____

Share your definition with others in your group. Working together, compile your definitions into one group definition of terrorism.

My group's definition of terrorism is _____

Share your group's definition with the class. After listening to each group's definition, revise your group's definition as you see fit.

Terrorist groups use a variety of tools and methods to carry out their plans. In your small group, brainstorm a list of methods or tools that illustrate these approaches. Record your list in the box below.

Brainstorming List

[illegible]

In your small group, write a list of methods or tools that you observe in the *ABC News: Classroom Edition* videos that illustrate these approaches. Record your list in the box below.

Tools or Methods Used by Terrorists

Tools: _____

Methods: _____

How and why do these vary? _____

List 2-3 reasons why these methods are effective in meeting their goals. _____

1. Working back in your group, your teacher will assign you a terrorist group to research. Your assignment is to produce the next segment of the *ABC News: Classroom Edition*, creating a news magazine that investigates the terrorist group, its history, location, members, timeline of activities as known (do they present terrorist threats today?), their cause/complaints, their methodology, and any additional information that becomes available to you in your search and news gathering. In reporting back to the class, be creative in your presentation, but mindful of accuracy in reporting. You may view the *ABC News: Classroom Edition* segment to review your group. However, your research of your group will take you to alternate sources of information. Reporting is your goal.
2. Present your findings to the class. You may elect to do a “live” news presentation or a video-taped news magazine. Your presentation should be 10-15 minutes in length.
3. As you view each group’s presentations, note defining characteristics of each terrorist group. In so doing, consider the following questions, and note your answers below.

a. Is there religious motivation behind this terrorist group?

b. Does this group present terrorist threats today? If so, how?

c. Is there any United States action evident against this terrorist group?

d. As a result of this terrorist group and its actions, can you identify anything that has changed the way we do things in the United States?

e. Can you think of a way in which the United States might protect itself (in a way that doesn’t exist now) from attack from this terrorist group?

4. Revisit your definitions of fundamentalism and terrorism. How have your definitions changed based on your experiences in these activities?