NO PREP

The World Reacts

The Global Response to 9/11

Includes: Student reading, case study, differentiated questions, teacher key

Name: Period: Date:

The World Reacts: The Global Response to 9/11

We Are All Americans

The September 11 attacks happened on American soil, but the world experienced them in real time — and the world's answer came pouring back before the dust settled. The next morning, France's leading newspaper Le Monde, a paper often critical of American power, ran a front-page headline that became famous: 'We are all Americans.' In Berlin, two hundred thousand Germans marched to the Brandenburg Gate in solidarity. Across Europe, trains, buses, and stock exchanges

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Article 5: An Alliance Awakens

The most historic response came from the North Atlantic Treaty Organization. NATO was founded in 1949 around a single revolutionary promise, written as Article 5 of its treaty: an armed attack against one member shall be considered an attack against them all. For fifty-two years, through the entire Cold War, that promise had never once been activated — it existed to guarantee that America would defend Europe from the Soviet Union. On September 12, 2001, the alliance turned the promise around: NATO invoked Article 5 for the first time in its history, on behalf of the United States. The symbolism stunned even seasoned diplomats — the shield built to protect Europe with American power was now raised by Europeans over America. The support was practical as well as symbolic. NATO surveillance aircraft, crewed by member nations, flew hundreds of patrols over American cities in the following months — foreign military crews guarding U.S. airspace — while allied ships deployed to the Mediterranean. When the campaign in Afghanistan began, allies joined it, and NATO eventually took command of the international force there: the alliance's first major operation outside Europe. Over two decades, more than fifty nations contributed troops to the Afghan mission, and allied soldiers from Canada, Britain, Germany, France, and dozens of smaller nations fought and died alongside Americans — more than a thousand non-American coalition troops in all. Article 5 transformed 9/11 from an American tragedy into an attack on an entire alliance, proving the promise on paper was real — a precedent every NATO member still studies today.

The Kindness of Gander

Some of the most moving foreign responses came not from governments but from ordinary people handed an extraordinary morning. When the United States closed its airspace during the attacks — the first total shutdown in its history — hundreds of flights bound for America had nowhere to land. Canada opened its runways under Operation Yellow Ribbon, accepting more than 200 diverted planes. Thirty-eight of them, carrying about 6,600 passengers and crew, descended on

Gander, Newfoundland — a town of roughly 10,000 people with a runway built large for wartime refueling. In hours, the town's population grew by more than half, and Gander simply absorbed it. Schools, churches, and hockey rinks became dormitories. Residents emptied their linen closets, cooked around the clock, and took strangers home for showers. Pharmacists filled prescriptions from dozens of countries free of charge; the town's phone company set up banks of free calls; a local television station broadcast lists of which shelter needed blankets and which needed diapers, while veterinarians boarded the parked planes to feed the animals traveling in their holds. For five days, until American airspace reopened, the stranded 'plane people' lived on Newfoundland hospitality, and many left transformed. Passengers on one Delta flight spontaneously raised money to endow a scholarship for Gander students that has since grown into millions of dollars and put hundreds through college. The story later became the hit musical 'Come From Away.' Against the era's headlines of hijackers and armies, Gander endures as the other answer to September 11: proof of how instinctively decent strangers can be when the world breaks.

The World Signs On

Sympathy became structure with remarkable speed. On September 12 — while fires still burned at Ground Zero — the United Nations Security Council unanimously passed Resolution 1368, condemning the attacks and recognizing the right of self-defense against them. Two weeks later came the further-reaching Resolution 1373, which did something unusual: instead of merely condemning, it imposed binding obligations on every UN member state. All nations were now required to criminalize the financing of terrorism, freeze terrorist funds, deny terrorists safe haven, and share warning information with other governments, with a new committee monitoring compliance. Almost overnight, counterterrorism became part of every country's legal homework. Cooperation deepened along quieter channels too: intelligence services that had barely spoken began exchanging watchlists and tips, finance ministries coordinated to choke terrorist money, and

police agencies worked cross-border cases through Interpol, and dozens of governments arrested suspects and dismantled cells on shared leads. When the United States struck al-Qaeda and the Taliban in Afghanistan in October 2001, it did so with broad international backing, and the International Security Assistance Force authorized by the UN grew into a coalition of more than fifty nations. Diplomats spoke of a global anti-terror coalition spanning old rivals; Russia shared intelligence and opened Central Asian supply routes, and even Iran quietly assisted early American efforts against the Taliban, its longtime enemy. For a season, it was possible to believe September 11 had rearranged world politics permanently around a common cause — which made what came next all the more consequential for every alliance involved.

Sympathy Tested

The global unity of late 2001 was real, but it was not unconditional, and its limits arrived quickly. The war in Afghanistan commanded broad support as a direct answer to the attacks. The invasion of Iraq in 2003 did not. When Washington argued that Saddam Hussein's regime posed a threat justifying war, key allies publicly refused — France and Germany led opposition in the UN Security Council, and millions marched against the war in London, Rome, Madrid, and around the world in some of the largest protests ever recorded. The alliance strains were bitter; Americans renamed cafeteria french fries 'freedom fries,' while global surveys measured a steep slide in international opinion of the United States from its post-9/11 peak, and allied leaders who backed the war paid political prices at home. The sympathy of September 2001, it turned out, was attached to America as victim and leader of a shared cause — not an endorsement of any war it might choose. Yet the deeper structures held. NATO endured the Iraq quarrel; allied troops kept serving and dying in Afghanistan for two decades; the UN counterterrorism rules of Resolution 1373 remain in force; and intelligence sharing built in 2001 still disrupts plots today. The era's lesson for students of history is double-edged. Goodwill between nations is genuine and astonishingly powerful —

Article 5, Gander, the vigils in Tehran all prove it. And it is perishable: a resource that must be spent wisely, because even 'We are all Americans' had an expiration date stamped by the choices that followed.

Key Information: The Global Response to 9/11

Detail	Information
Le Monde headline	'We are all Americans' — Sept. 12, 2001
NATO Article 5	Invoked for the first time ever, for the United States
Buckingham Palace	Queen ordered the U.S. anthem at Changing of the Guard
Gander, Newfoundland	Town of ~10,000 sheltered ~6,600 diverted passengers
UN Resolution 1373	Bound all nations to fight terrorist financing and havens
Afghan coalition	More than 50 nations contributed troops over two decades
Iraq War (2003)	Split the alliance and eroded global sympathy

Case Study: Five Days in Gander

Ingrid Meyer, 41, a software manager from Frankfurt, was six hours into her flight to New York when the captain announced they were landing in a place she had never heard of. On the tarmac in Gander, she counted parked airliners out her window — dozens, nose to tail. "I thought: ten thousand people live here, and seven thousand of us just fell out of the sky. This will be misery." Instead, a school bus driver who had interrupted a union strike to volunteer drove her to a church hall where retirees had laid out casseroles and inflatable mattresses. A pharmacist refilled her blood pressure prescription and waved away payment. A local named Doreen took Ingrid home for a shower, then lent her a sweater she still owns. On the fourth night, Ingrid stood in a hockey rink turned dining hall while passengers from thirty countries sang along to a Newfoundland folk band, and cried for the first time all week. She flies to Newfoundland every few years now. "The hijackers wanted to show what strangers do to each other," she says. "Gander showed what strangers do for each other."

1. How does Ingrid's final quote capture the reading's argument about what Gander represents?

_____

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2. Compare Gander's response with NATO's Article 5. What does each reveal about solidarity after 9/11?

_____

_____

Multiple Choice

1. What did NATO do for the first time in its history after 9/11?
    a) Invoked Article 5, its collective-defense pledge
    b) Expelled a member nation permanently from the entire alliance
    c) Moved its regional headquarters to Washington DC base
    d) Disbanded its entire military and security operations

2. Why did 38 airliners land in Gander, Newfoundland on September 11?

a) A fuel shortage grounded transatlantic flights

b) Canada ordered all foreign planes to land there

c) U.S. airspace closed and flights had to divert

d) Severe weather blocked routes to New York

3. Which event most severely tested global sympathy for the United States?

a) The creation of the TSA

b) The 2003 invasion of Iraq

c) The capture of Khalid Sheikh Mohammed

d) The reopening of the New York Stock Exchange

Matching

Write the letter of the correct definition on the line next to each term.

Term	Definition
1. ___ Article 5	A) International coalition force that served in Afghanistan
2. ___ Operation Yellow Ribbon	B) French newspaper that declared 'We are all Americans'
3. ___ Resolution 1373	C) Canada's plan to receive flights diverted from closed U.S. skies
4. ___ ISAF	D) UN measure requiring every nation to fight terrorist financing
5. ___ Le Monde	E) NATO's pledge that an attack on one member is an attack on all

Fill-in-the-Blank

1. NATO's collective-defense pledge is Article _____.

2. Stranded passengers in Gander became known as the plane _____.

3. The French paper Le Monde declared, 'We are all _____.'

Short Answer

Answer each question in 2-4 complete sentences.

1. Why was NATO's invocation of Article 5 on September 12 so historically significant?

_____

_____

_____

2. What does Gander's response teach about ordinary people's role in a global crisis?

_____

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3. How and why did global sympathy for the United States change between 2001 and 2003?

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