



Lesson:

Tuesday

Grades 9-12



A lesson that analyzes the song *Tuesday*, by songwriter and performer, John Ondrasik, popularly known as Five for Fighting. Students contemplate what safety measures should be taken to prevent another terrorist attack from taking place on American soil, learn the airline and safety protocols that existed leading up to September 11, 2001, and how America's safety and security changed after the attacks.

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Implementation Schedule

It is recommended that the lesson implementation take place any time during the school year, especially on or near September 11, 2001. The lesson is intended to reiterate information that students have previously learned about September 11, 2001 and closely ties to another lesson in the Tunnel to Towers 9/11 Institute™ Curriculum titled, An Anthem for First Responders.

Lesson Description

This lesson teaches some airline and safety protocols that existed prior to the deadliest and darkest attack on American soil on September 11, 2001, and the changes put in place afterward to prevent another 9/11 from taking place. Many know that the United States was attacked with a series of airline hijackings committed by 19 militants associated with the Islamic extremist group al-Qaeda. Most of the hijackers were from Saudi Arabia, and many were in the U.S. prior to the attacks. They traveled in small groups while some received flight training in the United States just prior to the attacks. What most people don't know is that many of the militants were flagged by a computer screening program, called Computer Assisted Passenger Prescreening System (CAPPS), at the airport and/or set off the alarms of metal detectors but were still allowed to get onto their intended flights. America's airline and safety and security protocols drastically changed following the attacks of September 11, 2001, to prevent another attack from happening in the future.

Background for the Teacher

Video Summary



The song *Tuesday*, was written by songwriter and performer, John Ondrasik, popularly known as Five for Fighting. In the video, John Ondrasik describes his reasoning for writing the song a few years after the attacks of September 11, 2001. He noticed people forgetting the attacks and felt that the country's naivety helped lead to the attacks. He says the song's message is, "Don't forget the lessons of 9/11."

1. Begin With an Essential Question

How has America's safety and security changed since September 11, 2001?

(The Essential Question is not designed to be answered directly. It is the overarching or big question. Its answer is contained within student responses to the guided questions.)

2. Introduce the Lesson

To begin, teacher asks the class to make a list of any rules or regulations related to boarding an aircraft that they are aware of. If students are not aware of any rules or regulations they can make a list of rules they think should be in place prior to boarding an aircraft.

Teacher says, “We are going to learn that the safety and security protocols that are in place today at airports weren’t always in place. In fact, our world is drastically different, because of one day in history, September 11, 2001. On September 11, 2001, America was attacked in multiple cities by a militant group named al-Qaeda. Nineteen militants used knives, box cutters, and mace to hijack four planes and crash them into multiple locations. Two planes were crashed into the Twin Towers, two of the world’s tallest buildings at the time, located in New York City. One plane was crashed into the Pentagon, which is headquarters for the U.S. Department of Defense. Passengers on board the fourth plane fought against their hijackers and the plane was brought down in an empty field near Shanksville, PA, about 20 minutes flying time from Washington D.C. According to the 9/11 Commission Report it is believed that the hijackers’ target for that plane was likely the White House or the U.S. Capitol. In all 2,977 innocent people lost their lives. You may be surprised to find out that before September 11, 2001, blades up to four inches long were allowed on aircraft. You didn’t even need a photo identification to board an aircraft, in fact two of the hijackers didn’t have photo identification when they boarded their flight on September 11, 2001. Several hijackers were flagged by a computer software on September 11, 2001, that was meant to identify passengers who should be subject to special screening measures, however the only protocol at that time was to keep their luggage off the plane until it was confirmed that the passenger boarded the flight. Before September 11, 2001, America wasn’t prepared for an attack by someone willing to lose their own life in this way. We now know to be prepared for any type of attack, and because of that our security measures had to change.”

3. Introduce the Song

Teacher says, “We are going to watch a video of music artist, John Ondrasik, who is popularly known as Five for Fighting. He wrote and performs a song called *Tuesday*. I want you to pay close attention to the lyrics, because we are going to try and analyze the song’s meaning.”

Teacher then plays the video of John Ondrasik, located [here](https://www.t2t.org/lesson-john-ondrasik-tuesday) [T2T.org/lesson-john-ondrasik-tuesday].

4. Students’ Task

Teacher should give every student a copy of the official lyrics to the song *Tuesday*, by Five for Fighting, located at the end of the lesson. Students should take five minutes to work with a partner and write down along the margins of the lyrics page any message or meaning of the lyrics.

5. Analyze the Song

As students share their annotations on the lyrics page, the teacher should assist students in analyzing the lyrics of the song, remembering that musical interpretations vary. The song is about not forgetting the lessons of 9/11 because if we forget, another 9/11 could happen.

- September 11, 2001 happened on a Tuesday.
- “Monday lying down fast asleep,” represents Monday, September 10, 2001, when the country had no idea how quickly life as we knew it would change the next morning.
- “No portraits on the walls of Seventh Avenue,” references after September 11, 2001 when people put up portraits of their lost loved ones all around lower Manhattan, where the Twin Towers once stood.

- When a helicopter flies through its propellers create such tremendous wind – it blows everything near it. “Tuesday came and went like a helicopter overhead,” is a simile for how September 11, 2001 felt for those who lived through the day.
- The letter, “cold addressed in red,” represents the loss of life; 2,977 victims on September 11, 2001.
- “Will she come again,” asks will another terrible attack ever happen on our soil or to our country again?
- “The thing about memories, they’re sure and bound to fade,” like the lessons we should all remember about September 11, 2001.

6. Explain Airline Security and Protocols

Teacher says, “We started this lesson by listing current rules or regulations before boarding an aircraft. Would anyone like to share something from their list now?”

Teacher can use information from the list below to explain or expand on the rules or regulations given by the students. While going over the new regulations it would also be helpful to remind students how these regulations changed.

- Until 2025, passengers were required to take off shoes through a security checkpoint if not screened by TSA canines. *(It can be noted for the students that this law was not put in place directly because of 9/11, but rather because in December 2001 a man popularly known as the Shoe Bomber, put explosives in his shoes in a failed attempt to detonate an aircraft.)*
- Passengers are required to take off belts through a security checkpoint.

- Passengers are required to remove anything wrapped around their waist or in their pockets through a security checkpoint.
- Passengers are required to take electronics out of their bags and sometimes liquids at a security screening checkpoint.
- All liquids, gels and aerosols over 3.4 ounces are prohibited, unless purchased after the security checkpoint, to eliminate the possibility of dangerous unknown substances on aircraft. Mother’s milk is an exception, it is not prohibited.
- Only passengers with a valid boarding pass can go through the security checkpoint. Prior to 9/11, family and friends of passengers were allowed to accompany passengers to the gate.
- Passengers over the age of 18 must present a valid photo identification with their boarding pass. Prior to 9/11 passengers did not need photo identification to board a flight.
- Box cutters and blades are prohibited. Prior to 9/11 box cutters and blades four inches or less were allowed on flights.

7. Extension

As an extension, students can write whether they believe the current rules and regulations prior to boarding an aircraft adequately protect people from safety concerns, and what else, if anything, should be done to protect America from a terrorist attack.

Tuesday, by Five for Fighting

One year like any old other year
In a week like any week
Monday lying down
Half asleep
People doing what people do
Loving, working and getting through
No portraits on the walls
Of seventh avenue
Then Tuesday came and went
Like a helicopter overhead
The letter that she left
Cold addressed in red
Tuesday came and went one
One September
When will she come again
The thing about memories
They're sure and bound to fade
Except for the stolen souls
Left upon her blade
Is Monday coming back
That's what Mondays do
They turn and turn around
Afraid to see it through
Tuesday came and went
Like a helicopter overhead
The letter that she left
Cold addressed in red
Tuesday came and went one
One September
When will she come again
Tuesday came and went one
One September, when?
Cold and dressed in red
How could I forget
Tuesday came and went
Like a helicopter overhead
Will she come again

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