

What are the effects of US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?

This inquiry was designed by a group of high school students in Fairfax County Public Schools, Virginia.



US Marines toppling a statue of Saddam Hussein in Firdos Square, Baghdad, on April 9, 2003
<https://www.newyorker.com/news/news-desk/the-fate-of-a-leg-of-a-statue-of-saddam-hussein>

Supporting Questions

1. What are the economic effects of US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?
2. What are the political effects of US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?
3. What are the social effects of US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?

Overview - What are the effects of US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?

What are the effects of US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?		
Standards and Content	VUS.14 The student will apply social science skills to understand political and social conditions in the United States during the early twenty-first century. WHII.14 The student will apply social science skills to understand the global changes during the early twenty-first century.	
Introducing the Compelling Question	HOOK: Option A: Students will go through a see-think-wonder thinking routine based off the primary source depicting the toppling of a statue of Saddam Hussein, as seen on the previous page. Option B: Students will read a brief summary of the US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and will write down any questions they have on sticky notes or on a class poster. Students should return to these questions throughout the lesson to see if their perspectives have changed.	
Supporting Question 1	Supporting Question 2	Supporting Question 3
What are the economic effects of US intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?	What are the political effects of US intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?	What are the social effects of US intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?
Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task	Formative Performance Task
Students will complete a “Twitter reflection”, evaluating the economic impact of invasion and occupation in 140 characters or less.	Students will use one of the sources to create a mind-map illustrating the complex rationale for invasion of Iraq and Afghanistan.	Students engage in a Jamboard activity discussing the social effects of U.S. involvement in the Middle East.
Featured Sources	Featured Sources	Featured Sources
Source A: Annotated graph of Iraqi GDP from 1970 to 2020 Source B: Excerpt from CNN article “Why the war in Iraq was fought for Big Oil” Source C: Excerpt from the RAND Corporation’s “Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority” Source D: “How the US Failed to Rebuild Afghanistan”	Source A: “Operation Enduring Freedom” Source B: George W. Bush Making His Speech About Saddam Hussein Source C: “September 11th” Source D: Bush Declaring War on Afghanistan and the Taliban	Source A: The Untold Story of the Afghan Refugees Diana Nazari Source B: Graph of US Refugee Resettlements in 2017 and 2018 Source C: Excerpt from Institute for Policy Studies’ “America’s Role in the Refugee Crisis” Source D: Excerpt from US Department of State’s “Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance”
Summative Performance Task	ARGUMENT: Students will create an argument with a claim and specific evidence (either from the featured sources or from independent research) in a 1-2 page essay.	
	EXTENSION: Students will participate in a Socratic Seminar discussing the positive and negative impacts of US intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan.	
Taking Informed Action	Students will create an infographic/poster concerning a modern-day issue in Iraq or Afghanistan. Student creations can be presented to an authentic audience, such as another classroom, the school district’s central office, or an organization related to the topic such as a nonprofit.	
Taking Globally Informed Action	Students will identify opportunities to take action with local, national, or global initiatives supporting UN Sustainable Development Goals.	

Staging the Compelling Question – The Hook (15-20 Minutes)

Option A: Students will conduct a see-think-wonder thinking exercise based on the picture of the toppling of a statue of Saddam Hussein, as seen on the first page of this document. Students may then share out their conclusions.

Option B: Students will read a brief summary of the US invasions of Iraq and Afghanistan and will write down any questions they have on sticky notes or on a class poster. The goal is for these questions to be answered by the end of the lesson. To achieve this, the teacher should encourage students to return to their questions throughout the lesson to see if their perspective on or understanding of the topic has developed.

Summary of the Invasion of Iraq:

<https://online.infobase.com/HRC/Search/Details/3?articleId=244048&q=iraq%20war>

The invasion of Iraq officially began on March 20, 2003, under the name "Operation Iraqi Freedom." The stated justification for the invasion was that Saddam Hussein, ruler of Iraq, had weapons of mass destruction (WMDs) and supported terrorism, and that the Iraqi people were suffering under his tyranny and needed to be freed. The United States contended that Iraq was in violation of both United Nations (UN) Security Council Resolution 1441 and the terms of the 1991 cease-fire agreement, which ended hostilities after Desert Storm. Both of these documents prohibited Iraq from possessing or researching WMDs. Saddam's links to terror were indirect and centered mostly on monetary rewards provided to the families of Palestinian suicide bombers and to the families of the "victims of Israeli aggression." Allegations that Saddam was linked in some way to the September 11, 2001, terrorist attacks were never supported by evidence.

...A primary strategic goal of the Coalition was to limit damage to Iraq's oil production capability; key sites related to the oil industry were to be secured as quickly as possible. The course of the invasion was designed to prevent both the destruction of oil sites and to limit the Iraqi army's ability to concentrate their defenses...The city of Baghdad was formally occupied on April 9. Saddam was declared deposed and went into hiding, and many Iraqis rejoiced by defacing his monuments. The initial invasion had lasted a mere 21 days. Looting followed the fall of the regime, with store goods, museum items, and military arms and equipment being targeted, as did outbreaks of violence between tribes and cities based on old grudges.

Coalition troops began searching for Saddam, Iraqi politicians and leaders of the Ba'ath Party, military leaders, and Saddam's family members...In all, 300 top leaders from Saddam's regime were killed or captured along with a large number of lower-level troops and government officials.

After the fall of Baghdad and Saddam's regime, the Coalition Provisional Authority (CPA) was formed to run Iraq until power could be turned over to the Iraqis. The CPA was led by Paul Bremer. The CPA officially controlled Iraq from April 21, 2003, until June 28, 2004. The CPA opposed holding elections in Iraq shortly after the fall of Saddam and wanted to hand power over to an appointed interim Iraqi government, which would be chosen by the Coalition. A second group formed in early 2003 was the Iraq Survey Group (ISG). The ISG was charged with finding the WMDs that Iraq was alleged to possess. They could not find any WMDs or programs to build them even though Iraq was known to have had nuclear, biological, ballistic missile, and chemical weapons programs prior to the 1991 Gulf War.

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...On May 1, 2003, major combat operations were declared over by U.S. president George W. Bush. Peace was short-lived, as a disjointed insurgency took hold in Iraq with many factions fighting for control. They included religious radicals, Fedayeen, Ba'athists, foreign Arabs, and other Muslim jihadis—and Iraqis opposed to the occupation. The insurgency was a chaotic decentralized movement with as many as 40 separate groups fighting for control. The picture was further clouded as each group was splintered into large numbers of semiautonomous cells. Insurgent attacks increased around Iraq, but especially in the "Sunni Triangle," home to most of the Sunni population. Insurgents used guerrilla-style tactics, employing suicide bombs, mortars, rockets, ambushes, snipers, car bombs, sabotage of the infrastructure, and improvised explosive devices (IEDs).

...On June 28, 2004, the CPA transferred sovereignty of Iraq to the Iraqi Interim Government, which was charged with holding national elections. The elected Iraqi government would then draft a new constitution. The Interim Government was also to try Saddam Hussein for his many crimes. At the end of his first trial, Saddam was sentenced to death for crimes against humanity and was executed by hanging on December 26, 2006.

The Iraqi constitution was ratified on October 15, 2005, and a general election was held on December 15 to choose the new national assembly. In a first for Iraq, the constitution stipulated that 25 percent of the assembly seats must be held by women.

...The last U.S. troops left Iraq on December 18, 2011. According to the U.S. Defense Department, as of December 15, 4,487 U.S. troops had been killed and 32,000 more had been wounded in the Iraq war, and the United States had spent more than \$800 billion on military operations and reconstruction. Private contractors killed and wounded are not included in this figure and have not been published. Tallies of Iraqi casualties varied widely, but it was thought that well over 100,000 Iraqis had been killed during the war. As of the end of 2011 no evidence of weapons of mass destruction has been found.

Summary of the Invasion of Afghanistan:

<https://americanhistory.abc-clio.com/Search/Display/1896289?terms=afghanistan+war&sTypeId=2>

Operation ENDURING FREEDOM was the code name given to the American-led invasion of Afghanistan that began on October 7, 2001, and ended on December 31, 2014. The purpose of the invasion was to topple the Taliban government and kill or capture members of the Al Qaeda terrorist group, which had carried out the terror attacks of September 11, 2001. The Taliban had sheltered Al Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden, on Afghan territory and provided the terrorists with bases, training facilities, and quite possibly financial support.

The United States faced major problems in planning a war against the Taliban and Al Qaeda. Prime among these were logistical concerns, for Afghanistan is a landlocked country quite distant from U.S. basing facilities. American planners decided that an alliance would have to be forged with the Afghan United Front (also known as the Northern Alliance), an anti-Taliban opposition force within Afghanistan. The Northern Alliance would do the bulk of the fighting but would receive U.S. air support, along with assistance, advice, and cash from U.S. special operations forces.

...The war began on October 7, 2001, with American air strikes from land-based B-52 and B-1 bombers, carrier-based F-14 Tomcat and F-18 Hornet aircraft, and Tomahawk cruise missiles. These attacks were intended to knock out the Taliban's anti-aircraft defenses and communications infrastructure. However, desperately poor Afghanistan had a very limited infrastructure to bomb, and the initial air attacks had only minimal impact.

...Northern Alliance forces captured the Afghan capital of Kabul without a fight on November 13. On November 26, a besieged garrison of 5,000 Taliban and Al Qaeda soldiers surrendered at Kunduz after heavy bombardment by American B-52s. Meanwhile, an uprising by captured Taliban fighters held in the Qala-e-Gangi fortress near Mazar-i-Sharif prison was suppressed with great brutality in late November.

The scene of the fighting then shifted to the city of Kandahar in southern Afghanistan. Because the Taliban had originated in Kandahar in the early 1990s, they were expected to put up a stiff fight for the city. Kandahar was attacked by Northern Alliance forces led by Generals Hamid Karzai and Guyl Agha Shirzai, with U.S. special operations forces coordinating the offensive. The Taliban deserted Kandahar on December 6, and Taliban leader Mullah Muhammad Omar and the surviving Taliban elements went into hiding in the remote mountain regions of Afghanistan and Pakistan. The fall of Kandahar marked the end of Taliban rule in Afghanistan, only nine weeks after the beginning of the bombing campaign. On December 22, 2001, an interim administration, chaired by Hamid Karzai, took office.

...Despite the rapid and efficient progress of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM, Taliban and Al Qaeda elements remained at large in Afghanistan, and the operation failed to capture or kill either bin Laden or Omar...Bin Laden [had] escaped into Pakistan through the foreboding but porous border that separates Afghanistan from Pakistan. U.S. special operations personnel finally apprehended bin Laden in May 2011 in Abbottabad, Pakistan, where he was killed in a fire fight.

By the end of 2001, despite the failure to capture or kill bin Laden, the United States could point to notable success in the so-called War on Terror. The Taliban had been deposed, and Al Qaeda was on the run, with many of its members and leaders having been killed or captured. This occurred despite the fact that the United States had only deployed about 3,000 service personnel to Afghanistan by the end of the year, most of them special operations forces. The U.S. death toll had been remarkably light, with only two deaths attributed to enemy action. Estimates of Afghan fatalities are approximate, at best. Possibly as many as 4,000 Taliban soldiers may have been killed during the campaign. Afghan civilian deaths have been estimated at between 1,000 and 1,300, with several thousand refugees dying from disease and/or exposure. Another 500,000 Afghans were made refugees or displaced persons during the fighting.

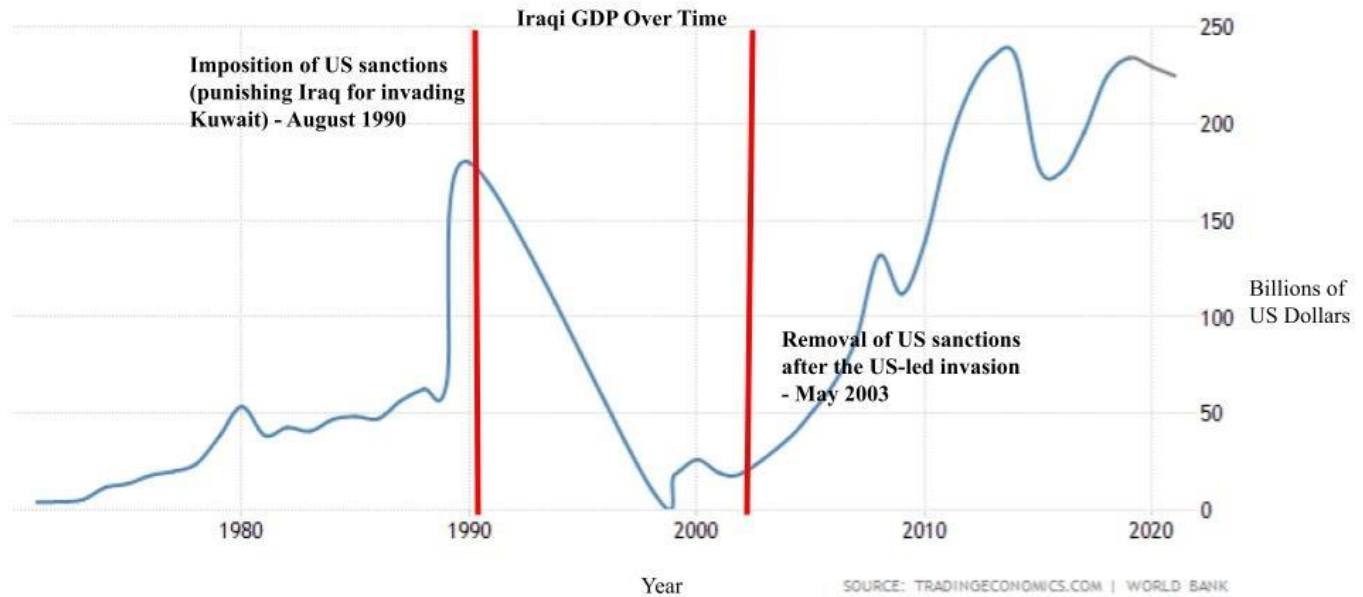
...Since 2002, Taliban and Al Qaeda remnants have maintained a persistent insurgency in Afghanistan. Troops from the United States and allied countries, mainly from North Atlantic Treaty Organization (NATO) member states, remained in Afghanistan operating under the banner of Operation ENDURING FREEDOM until December 31, 2014. On January 1, 2015, when ENDURING FREEDOM's mandate ended, U.S. forces and assorted troops from other nations continued to be stationed in Afghanistan, as part of Operation RESOLUTE SUPPORT. Efforts at achieving and maintaining lasting stability in Afghanistan, however, have met with success.

Supporting Question 1	
Supporting Question	What are the economic effects of US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?
Formative Performance Task	Students will reflect on US intervention in the Middle Eastern economy in 140 characters or less (a “Twitter reflection”).
Featured Source(s)	<p>Source A: Annotated graph of Iraqi GDP from 1970 to 2020</p> <p>Source B: Excerpt from CNN article “Why the war in Iraq was fought for Big Oil”</p> <p>Source C: Excerpt from the RAND Corporation’s “Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority”</p> <p>Source D: “How the US Failed to Rebuild Afghanistan” https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKVDXblpW9Q&ab_channel=Vox</p>

This lesson should take place after students have studied the events of 9/11. The compelling question is designed so that students will exercise critical thinking about the economic effects, both positive and negative, of the US occupations of Iraq and Afghanistan. Students will examine the featured sources before writing a short reflection that allows them to synthesize their new knowledge about US influence on the Middle Eastern economy.

- 1) Show students the provided annotated graph of Iraqi GDP from 1970 to 2020. If necessary, explain the meaning of economic sanctions so that students can easily interpret the graph. Once students have had a moment to examine the graph, ask the class questions such as:
 - a) What effect might these economic sanctions have had on ordinary Iraqis?
 - b) Why did US sanctions have such a large effect on the Iraqi economy?
- 2) Next, give students 15 minutes to read and annotate sources C and D (students can read an online version of the excerpts or you can pass out hard copies; either works). Source B paints a negative picture of US influence on the Iraqi economy, while source C is more positive. Together, these two sources will provide students a holistic understanding of the complexities of nation-building.
- 3) Afterward, show the students the six-minute clip about Afghanistan’s Ring Road. Then have students write a reflection of no more than 140 characters, advising them to synthesize what they’ve learned from the sources into a short judgment on the merits of US economic intervention. Once the students have completed this “Twitter reflection”, the teacher should lead a class discussion so that students have the opportunity to hear their classmates’ opposing viewpoints.

Featured Source A: Annotated Graph of Iraqi GDP Over Time



Featured Source B: Excerpt from Antonia Juhasz’s “Why the war in Iraq was fought for Big Oil”

<https://www.cnn.com/2013/03/19/opinion/iraq-war-oil-juhasz/index.html>

It has been 10 years since Operation Iraqi Freedom’s bombs first landed in Baghdad. And while most of the U.S.-led coalition forces have long since gone, Western oil companies are only getting started.

Before the 2003 invasion, Iraq’s domestic oil industry was fully nationalized and closed to Western oil companies. A decade of war later, it is largely privatized and utterly dominated by foreign firms. From ExxonMobil and Chevron to BP and Shell, the West’s largest oil companies have set up shop in Iraq.

...[The] Iraq Hydrocarbons Law, partially drafted by the Western oil industry, would lock the nation into private foreign investment under the most corporate-friendly terms. The Bush administration pushed the Iraqi government both publicly and privately to pass the law.

...But due to enormous public opposition and a recalcitrant parliament, the central Iraqi government has failed to pass the Hydrocarbons Law.

...In 2008, with the likelihood of the law’s passage and the prospect of continued foreign military occupation dimming as elections loomed in the U.S. and Iraq, the oil companies settled on a different track.

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By passing parliament, the firms started signing contracts that provide all of the access and most of the favorable treatment the Hydrocarbons Law would provide – and the Bush administration helped draft the model contracts.

...[The] contracts do achieve the key goal of the Cheney energy task force: all but privatizing the Iraqi oil sector and opening it to private foreign companies.

...Iraq's oil production has increased by more than 40% in the past five years to 3 million barrels of oil a day (still below the 1979 high of 3.5 million set by Iraq's state-owned companies), but a full 80% of this is being exported out of the country while Iraqis struggle to meet basic energy consumption needs. GDP per capita has increased significantly yet remains among the lowest in the world and well below some of Iraq's other oil-rich neighbors. Basic services such as water and electricity remain luxuries, while 25% of the population lives in poverty.

The promise of new energy-related jobs across the country has yet to materialize. The oil and gas sectors today account directly for less than 2% of total employment, as foreign companies rely instead on imported labor.

...Fed up with the firms, a leading coalition of Iraqi civil society groups and trade unions, including oil workers, declared on February 15 that international oil companies have “taken the place of foreign troops in compromising Iraqi sovereignty” and should “set a timetable for withdrawal.”

Featured Source C: Excerpt from the RAND Corporation's “Occupying Iraq: A History of the Coalition Provisional Authority [the US-backed government that led Iraq after the 2003 invasion]”

https://www.rand.org/content/dam/rand/pubs/monographs/2009/RAND_MG847.pdf

Iraq's health care infrastructure was decimated in the final years of Saddam Hussein's rule...During the 1990s, annual per-capita spending on health care had fallen from the equivalent of \$17 to about 50 cents. Half of Iraq's primary health care facilities had closed in that decade, and the country's infant mortality rate was five times that of neighboring Saudi Arabia...The CPA's efforts to improve Iraqi health care made slow but steady progress. Whereas on April 9 only 30 percent of hospitals in Iraq had been functioning, by early July, almost all of Iraq's hospitals and 1,115 clinics were open to patients. However, the Ministry of Health reported that in Baghdad Iraqis were receiving only 70–75 percent of prewar basic service...The decade of no maintenance of equipment and facilities had caused systemic failure that needed to be redressed. Similarly, looting of facilities after the regime's fall caused a loss of capital equipment and technology...

...Despite these challenges, by September the CPA could point to some significant indicators of progress in the health care sector. Since the Ministry of Health was reformed, 9,000 tons of medical supplies were delivered, an increase of over 200 percent. Some 22.3 million doses of vaccine were received...The CPA increased the Iraqi health care budget from \$13 million in 2002 to \$211 million in the second half of 2003, over a 1,500 percent increase in spending. Most importantly, Iraqis noticed the improvement in health care. A majority of Iraqis polled in August said the CPA was doing “a very/fairly good job” at providing medical care.

Featured Source D: “How the US Failed to Rebuild Afghanistan

https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=XKVDXbIpW9Q&ab_channel=Vox

Supporting Question 2	
Supporting Question	What are the political effects of US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?
Formative Performance Task	Students will create a mindmap based on the information provided from either Source B or D.
Featured Source(s)	<p>Source A: "Operation Enduring Freedom"</p> <p>Source B: George W. Bush Making His Speech About Saddam Hussein</p> <p>Source C: "September 11th"</p> <p>Source D: Bush Declaring War on Afghanistan and the Taliban</p>

- 1) After reading "Operation Enduring Freedom," have students create a timeline or flowchart of the information presented in the article. Students should be able to clearly explain the events presented in the article.
- 2) Show students both "George W. Bush Making His Speech About Saddam Hussein" and "1a Sep 20th 2001 Bush Declares War on Afghanistan And The Taliban." Then have each student pick one out of the two videos to create an infographic, mindmap, or poster based on the information in the video that they picked.
- 3) Have students read the Khan Academy Article, "September 11th," and then have them compare and contrast Bush's response to Afghanistan and Iraq post 9/11, the US in Afghanistan and Iraq, and the Impact of the US on Afghanistan and Iraq. Once students complete the assignment, the teacher should have the students engage in a class discussion.
 - a) This could be a T-chart, Venn Diagram, essay, flowchart, etc.
- 4) After completing the previous assignments and readings or watching the featured sources, have students research current events and lasting impacts of the wars on Afghanistan, Iraq, and the United States. After giving the students time to research, have the students engage in a class discussion where they discuss what they learned and then have them write two facts they found shocking, surprising, or interesting.

Featured Source A: "Operation Enduring Freedom"

<https://dema.az.gov/sites/default/files/Publications/AR-Operation%20Enduring%20Freedom-BORUNDA.pdf>

The War in Afghanistan (Operation Enduring Freedom) began in October, 2001 in response to the September 11, 2001 terrorist attacks on the United States. Following the Soviet withdrawal from Afghanistan in 1989 and the fall of the Afghan Communist government in 1992, a protracted civil war raged on between the various factions of anti-Communist Afghan fighters, who called themselves the Mujahadeen.

It is now known that the killing of Massoud was coordinated with the terror attacks on the United States which took place on September 11. As the United States assigned blame for the attacks on bin Laden and al

Qaida, plans began to take the fight to al Qaida and its Taliban sponsors as the first phase of what became known as the Global War on Terror.

The War in Afghanistan began on October 7, 2001 with allied air strikes on Taliban and al Qaida targets. On the ground, American, British and other Allied special forces troops worked with the Northern Alliance to begin a military offensive to overthrow the Taliban. This alliance between the Northern Alliance and the Allies led to coordination between Allied air attacks and ground attacks by the Northern Alliance. These attacks led to the fall of Kabul on Nov. 13, 2001, as the Taliban retreated from most of northern Afghanistan.

As more Allied troops entered the war and the Northern Alliance forces fought their way southwards, the Taliban and al Qaida retreated toward the mountainous border region between Afghanistan and Pakistan.

From 2002 onward, the Taliban focused on survival and on rebuilding its forces. From 2005 to 2007, the Taliban has increased its attacks and was using suicide bombers and other tactics from the Iraq War.

On February 27, 2007, while on a diplomatic trip to Afghanistan, an apparent assassination attempt was made by Taliban insurgents, who claimed that Vice President Cheney was a target in the attack. A suicide bomber blew up a checkpoint at Bagram Air Base outside of Kabul, killing 20, including an American soldier. Cheney was unhurt in the attack.

In the spring and summer of 2008, the violence in Afghanistan claimed more coalition (foreign) troops than died in the concurrent Iraq War. The Taliban, enjoying strong bases in Pakistan, enjoyed resurgence and showed that it could launch large, coordinated, and effective attacks on coalition and Afghan forces.

US forces are still involved in Afghanistan attempting to destroy al Qaeda and its leaders including Osama bin Laden.

Featured Source B: “George W Bush Making His Speech About Saddam Hussein”

<https://youtu.be/NB76bhf2E80>

Featured Source C: “September 11”

<https://www.khanacademy.org/humanities/us-history/modern-us/us-after-2000/a/september-11th>

- On September 11, 2001, terrorists affiliated with **al-Qaeda** hijacked and flew airplanes into the World Trade Center in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. Nearly 3,000 Americans were killed in the attacks.
- The administration of President George W. Bush declared a **Global War on Terror** and sent troops to Afghanistan, where the ruling Taliban regime was providing safe haven to al-Qaeda, and to Iraq, where Saddam Hussein purportedly was harboring weapons of mass destruction.
- Concerns about US national security resulted in the creation of the **Department of Homeland Security** and the signing of the **USA Patriot Act** into law. These developments sparked a debate over constitutional rights and protections, and the proper balance between security and liberty in a democracy.

The road to 9/11

The origins of the terrorist attacks on **September 11th, 2001** stretch back to the US involvement in Afghanistan in the 1980s. After the Soviet invasion of Afghanistan in 1979, **Osama bin Laden**, the son of an extremely wealthy Saudi Arabian family, went to Afghanistan to organize the Arab mujahideen resistance to the Soviet occupation. Still in the grip of the Cold War, the United States supported the anti-Soviet mujahideen, providing them with weapons and training.

After the Soviets withdrew from Afghanistan, bin Laden turned his sights on the United States. He condemned US support for Israel and criticized the presence of US troops in Saudi Arabia during the first Gulf War. Bin Laden was one of the founders of **al-Qaeda**, a radical Sunni Islamist terrorist network that has attacked civilian and military targets in numerous countries. Al-Qaeda organized the September 11th attacks, which involved hijacking and flying airplanes into the **World Trade Center** in New York City and the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. The attacks killed almost 3,000 Americans and injured over 6,000 more.

Wars in Afghanistan and Iraq

After September 11th, President **George W. Bush** declared a **Global War on Terror**. The first front in this war was Afghanistan, where the ruling **Taliban** regime provided al-Qaeda with a safe haven and an operating base from which to plan and carry out their attacks. The objectives of the US invasion of Afghanistan were to depose the Taliban and rout al-Qaeda.

Although US troops enjoyed initial success at driving the Taliban from power, bin Laden managed to escape, and the Taliban eventually regrouped and launched a major counter-offensive. The conflict in Afghanistan was one of the longest and costliest wars in American history.

In March 2003, the United States invaded Iraq. The Bush administration claimed that Iraqi dictator **Saddam Hussein** had ties to al-Qaeda and that he was harboring weapons of mass destruction. US troops rapidly defeated the Iraqi armed forces and toppled Hussein from power, but weapons of mass destruction were never found, nor did evidence surface definitively tying Saddam Hussein to the terrorist network that had masterminded the 9/11 attacks. Although elections were held in Iraq in 2005, sectarian violence intensified and Iraq descended into civil war.

The war on terror at home

The war on terror was fought on the home front as well. The Homeland Security Act of 2002 created the **Department of Homeland Security** to centralize the collection and analysis of intelligence and to coordinate US efforts to prevent future terrorist attacks.

On October 26, 2001, President Bush signed the **USA Patriot Act** into law. The act authorized the extensive use of wiretapping and other surveillance measures. When revelations surfaced that the **National Security Agency**

(NSA) was collecting mass cellphone data, the law was amended so that the agency could only request the data of certain targeted individuals. A public debate erupted over whether the NSA had violated the American public's reasonable expectations of privacy.

In 2004, another public debate arose over the use of enhanced interrogation techniques in extracting information from detained suspected terrorists. Evidence of torture at the **Abu Ghraib** prison in Iraq led to investigations of US human rights abuses. Former detainees reported that they had been beaten, starved, sexually assaulted, and subjected to routine humiliations. Though the military claimed that these incidents were the work of a few bad apples, the investigatory reports by human rights organizations reflected a much broader pattern of abuse. The revelations opened a debate about whether the use of torture was justified, or whether it was fundamentally antithetical to American principles, values, and traditions.

What do you think?

In a democracy, what is the proper relationship and balance between security and liberty?

How would you evaluate President Bush's decision to go to war in Afghanistan and Iraq?

How does the Global War on Terror compare to past military conflicts, such as World War II or Vietnam?

Featured Source D: "1a Sep 20th 2001 Bush Declares War on Afghanistan And The Taliban"

<https://youtu.be/mQFVT48eeqU>

Supporting Question 3	
Supporting Question	What are the social effects of US involvement in Iraq and Afghanistan since the Gulf War?
Formative Performance Task	Students engage in a Jamboard activity discussing the social effects of U.S. involvement in the Middle East.
Featured Source(s)	<p>Source A: The Untold Story of the Afghan Refugees Diana Nazari</p> <p>Source B: Graph of US Refugee Resettlements in 2017 and 2018</p> <p>Source C: Excerpt from Institute for Policy Studies' "America's Role in the Refugee Crisis"</p> <p>Source D: Excerpt from US Department of State's "Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance"</p>

- 1) Have students split off into small groups and assign each group a country to research. The students should explore their country's culture, history, and any important events that have happened since 1900.
 - a) Assigned countries might include Israel, Palestine, and Yemen, Libya, the UAE, Lebanon, Jordan, and Syria.
 - b) Each group should nominate a spokesperson to share their findings out to the class.

- 2) Have students watch "The Untold Story of the Afghan Refugees" as a class. Then show students the graph of "US Refugee Resettlements in 2017 and 18". Have students use their research from the beginning of class to brainstorm possible causes of the graph's peaks and troughs.
 - a) If done in person, have students write their findings for each peak or trough on a sticky note. Project the graph onto the SMARTboard and have students put their sticky notes next to the corresponding point in the graph.
 - b) If done virtually, put the graph on a whiteboard or Jamboard and have students write their thoughts in text boxes next to the corresponding points in the graph.

- 3) Have students read excerpts from sources C and D. Students should then develop an intro paragraph-- context and a thesis statement--on how the US is affecting the Middle Eastern refugee crisis.

Featured Source A: "The Untold Story of Afghan Refugees"

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xwF-OnvzYho>

Featured Source B: Graph of Refugee Admissions Over Time

U.S. trailed rest of world in refugee resettlement in 2017 and 2018 after leading it for decades

Number of refugee admissions, in thousands, by calendar year



Note: Figures rounded to the nearest thousand.

Source: Pew Research Center analysis of United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees data, accessed June 12, 2019.

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Featured Source C: “America’s Role in the Refugee Crisis”

“Yet even as the administration rails against refugees, it continues to participate in the ongoing global warfare — much of it under the so-called “war on terror” — that perpetuates the refugee crisis. It’s long past time to critically examine our country’s role in forced migration.

The war on terror began in 2001, the same year as the first World Refugee Day. Since then, the U.S. has played a significant role in the displacement of people around the world — especially in the Middle East and neighboring areas, where we’ve almost exclusively pursued a policy of war and militarism. We’ve launched “regime change” operations in Afghanistan, Iraq and Libya, and bombing campaigns in Pakistan, Somalia, Syria and Yemen.

This past April, President Donald Trump’s continuation of the war on terror included dropping “the mother of all bombs” on Afghanistan, where the U.N. counts 2.7 million refugees. Together with Syria and Somalia, two

other countries the U.S. has active military operations in, those three states account for over half of all people displaced outside their home countries.

For many, the alternative to displacement is death. Physicians for Social Responsibility and its international partners produced a report in 2015 estimating that 1.3 million Iraqis, Afghans and Pakistanis have died in the course of the war on terror.

Despite the fact that they're largely displaced by wars we've helped instigate, Muslim refugees in particular are portrayed in our media and by politicians as dangerous – as criminals, terrorists, financial burdens, etc. We're taught to fear refugees while simultaneously applauding ourselves as a country that is (supposedly) tolerant of them.

For example, U.S. military actions in recent weeks have displaced some 200,000 Syrians, according to one recent report. Yet Trump has referred to Syrian refugees as “Trojan horses,” as though they left their homes in a covert attempt to undermine the U.S. government. It's not enough to try to bar them from our country – apparently Trump has to tarnish them in public opinion, too.

This seems to be the cruel illogic of our wars: to obscure the violence we've created and to deny the victims any sort of accountability, much less entry into the country that displaced them from theirs. Yet if we're serious about remedying the refugee crisis, then the solution isn't in the number of refugees we accept or deny – it's to end the wars that are displacing people.

The way to do this is threefold: First, we must rely on diplomacy to resolve conflicts. Second, we must acknowledge the harms our foreign policy has caused. Third, we must stop perpetuating wars that accomplish nothing in the way of making us safer (rather, they result in more conflict at home).”

Featured Source C: “Refugee and Humanitarian Assistance”

“The United States is the largest single provider of humanitarian assistance worldwide. Total U.S. humanitarian assistance worldwide was more than \$10.5 billion in fiscal year 2020, including funding from the State Department's Bureau of Population, Refugees, and Migration and the U.S. Agency for International Development's Bureau for Humanitarian Assistance.

The primary goal of U.S. humanitarian assistance is to save lives and alleviate suffering by ensuring that vulnerable and crisis-affected individuals receive assistance and protection. U.S. funding provides life-saving assistance to tens of millions of displaced and crisis-affected people, including refugees, worldwide.

Our assistance provides urgent, life-saving support, including food, shelter, safe drinking water, improved sanitation and hygiene, emergency healthcare services, child protection programs, and education, among other activities. This assistance is provided as close to refugees' homes as possible in order to ensure timely access to assistance and mitigate against the need for dangerous onward travel. This approach also helps facilitate the safe and voluntary return to their countries of origin, if and when conditions allow them to do so.”

Summative Performance Task

Summative Performance Task	ARGUMENT: Students will create an argument with a claim and specific evidence (either from the featured sources or from independent research) in a 1-2 page essay.
	EXTENSION: Students will participate in a Socratic Seminar discussing the positive and negative impacts of US intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan.

Description:

In the Summative Performance Task, students will synthesize information from the previous lessons and form their own evidence-based argument in response to the question “What are the effects of US intervention in Iraq and Afghanistan”. In the extension, students will have the opportunity to share their unique perspectives with others in the form of a Socratic Seminar. To get conversation flowing, teachers may wish to ask questions such as:

- What were some of the effects on Iraq and Afghanistan’s transitions of power?
- How might the occupation affect school life in Iraq and Afghanistan?
- Why did the U.S. initially occupy Iraq and Afghanistan? (there can be multiple answers)
- How has US occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan changed over time?
- How has US occupation in Iraq and Afghanistan affected their economies?
- How has US occupation impacted Iraqi and Afghan refugees and immigration?

Taking Informed Action

Taking Informed Action

Students will create an infographic or poster concerning a modern-day issue in Iraq or Afghanistan. Student creations can be presented to an authentic audience, such as another classroom, the school district’s central office, or any independent organization related to the issue at hand, such as a nonprofit.

[EXPLORE THIS BLOG POST FOR MORE INFORMATION ON TAKING INFORMED ACTION](#)

DESCRIPTION/NOTE TO TEACHER: Taking informed action can manifest itself in a variety of forms and in a range of venues: Students may express action through discussions, debates, surveys, video productions, and the like; these actions may take place in the classroom, in the school, in the local community, across the state, and around the world.

Taking Globally Informed Action

Taking Globally Informed Action

Introduce the UN Sustainable Development Goals (or SDGs) to students. Students should be broken up into groups, where they will pick 3 SDGs and create an action plan outlining how they can help the US or other countries achieve those goals in the future. Once complete, students can present their action plans to the classroom.

Taking Informed Action: UN Sustainable Development Goals

The [UN Sustainable Development Goals](#) (SDG) outline “[a supremely ambitious and transformational vision](#)” for humanity. These 17 goals, and their 169 targets, offer teachers and students an opportunity to frame their C3 Inquiry in a global context. By engaging classes with informed action that addresses the SDG, students nurture their global citizen competencies, disposition, and mindset.

Our decision to develop Informed Action tasks that are globally minded highlight both the benefits of social studies teaching and learning and addresses a gap in educational resources of this genre.

Ultimately, teachers who use a global scope better prepare students to navigate, understand, and act in a future that is increasingly complex and interconnected.

- Twitter: [@GlobalGoalsUN](#)
- Twitter: [@SustDev](#)