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### TIPS FOR USING THIS DAY IN HISTORY DOCUMENTARY CLIPS

- 1. Before viewing a documentary, quiz students on their background knowledge. While showing a video segment in class, you may want to pause the program to encourage discussion and debate. These clips can be incorporated into existing lesson plans, or can jumpstart a new one.
- 2. As they are watching these clips, ask students to take notes and jot down questions, observations and new vocabulary words. These notes can provide a framework for your class discussions.
- 3. Consider using these video segments as a basis for cross-disciplinary projects. These clips can connect with a wide range of subjects including science and technology, literature, the arts and civics.
- 4. Are there historic sites or people in your community related to a particular *This Day in History* fact? You may want to design a related field trip or invite a guest speaker to attend your class.
- 5. Encourage your students to create their own *This Day in History* projects. These projects could include student-produced short videos, essays, or illustrated timelines. Many additional activity ideas are included in this manual.
- 6. Don't forget: there are many more video segments online at www.history.com/tdih and many more tips available on *The History Channel Classroom*<sup>®</sup> site at www.history.com/classroom.

### WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?





### December 18, 1620 THE MAYFLOWER ARRIVES

Today many students recognize that the establishment of the European colonies in North America was not a simple tale of feasting and friendship, as images of pilgrims and Native Americans sharing corn and pumpkin pie might imply. The roots of the Mayflower story were embedded in 1606, when a group of reform-minded Puritans in England founded a church separate from the state-sanctioned Church of England. Restrictive religious policies drove William Bradford and his congregation to the Netherlands before they set their sights on the New World. Convincing a group of British investors that their hopes for prosperity were not just thin dreams, they secured funding and set out on a risky course to try to make their visions real in August of 1620.

The passage of the Mayflower through the Atlantic was a transportation feat in itself. Aboard a leaky ship which was difficult to navigate, the Mayflower's 102 passengers endured a treacherous 66-day journey. Blown by unexpected weather to a location far north of their destination, they eventually found suitable territory for their settlement in Plymouth, Massachusetts. The first winter they experienced in the New World was bitter and harsh. Wracked by disease, 50 of the original passengers had perished by the spring of 1621. The colonists quickly learned that establishing relations with the Native American groups they encountered was critical. They made connections with the local Wampanoag group and an interpreter named Squanto in an effort to learn more about how to grow crops and travel through these new territories. Though much negotiation, struggle, and strife would follow from these initial contacts, the pilgrims slowly gained their footing in this strange new land.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- prosperous in the New World?
- 2. What was the Mayflower Compact, and why was it important?
- 3. What are three adjectives you would use to describe the journey of the Mayflower?
- the Europeans and the indigenous peoples of North America?

### **ACTIVITIES**

- colony at Plymouth had been established.
- and share them with the larger class or group.

### WEBSITES

Plimoth Plantation's excellent website on the history and culture of the colony: www.plimoth.org A wonderful site from the Wisconsin Historical Society with primary sources and images from the early colonies:

www.americanjourneys.org/index.asp

Additional history on the Mayflower: www.mayflower.org

### BOOKS

Bradford, William. Of Plymouth Plantation: Bradford's History of the Plymouth Settlement (Reprint; Vision Forum, 1999). Josephy Jr., Alvin. 500 Nations: An Illustrated History of North American Indians (Gramercy, 2002). Philbrick, Nathaniel. Mayflower: A Story of Courage, Community, and War (Viking, 2006). Waters, Kate. Sarah Morton's Day: A Day in the Life of a Pilgrim Girl (Scholastic, 1993).



1. How do you think William Bradford and his fellow Mayflower passengers convinced investors that they could be

4. Who were some of the Native American groups the pilgrims encountered? How would you describe relations between

1. Crossing the Atlantic. The journey of the Mayflower was a milestone moment in North American history, yet few people reflect on the circumstances of the actual journey. Ask students to imagine they were aboard the Mayflower. Then, ask them to write three diary or journal entries, one before the journey, one as they were midway across the Atlantic, and one after the

2. The Ties That Bind Us. The Mayflower Compact is considered a foundational document in the development of North America. At the library or online, have students research the Mayflower Compact and read it in its entirety. Then have students imagine they were aboard the ship and needed to write a similar document. Ask students to write their own "compacts"

3. Before They Arrived. The Narragansett and the Wampanoag are only two of the hundreds of Native American groups that inhabited North America before the arrival of the Mayflower. Ask students to break up into small groups and create posterboard projects or PowerPoint presentations exploring the history and customs of one of these Native American groups.

uring the War of 1812, a British fleet



### WILL BE HE MARCH 6, 1857



## May 14, 1804 THE LEWIS AND CLARK EXPEDITION

For decades before the Lewis and Clark expedition set out, European nations had laid claim to the vast lands beyond the Mississippi. After the French ceded this territory through the Louisiana Purchase in 1804, Thomas Jefferson decided to dispatch a team to appraise the newly acquired territory to the west. Their goals were to mark U.S. claims to these lands, record details about the terrain, and seek a water route to the Pacific Ocean. Jefferson knew the leaders of the expedition would need a tough sensibility and an abundance of resourcefulness. His personal secretary, Meriwether Lewis, was only 29 years old when he was chosen to spearhead the journey. Jefferson had been warned that Lewis could be rash, but his experience in the military had proven his leadership capabilities. Lewis chose congenial Clark, an old army friend and fellow Virginian with proven military savvy, as his co-captain.

Top priorities for Lewis and Clark were to recruit men and learn new skills they would need along the way. Jefferson took advantage of the inherent abilities of each man. Lewis was sent to study botany and the natural sciences. Clark was to act as engineer and mapmaker. Both men took lessons from traders on how to negotiate with the Native American groups they would surely encounter. Together with their team known as the Corps of Discovery, they set off from St. Charles, Missouri on May 14, 1804 into the vast western unknown.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- two men while analyzing this segment?
- 2.
- 3.
- journey changed the United States?

### **ACTIVITIES**

- one-page essay examining how it sheds new light on the Lewis and Clark journey.
- the political structure, cultural life, and location of the Native American group.

### WEBSITES

A rich online exhibit from the Library of Congress: www.loc.gov/exhibits/lewisandclark An array of primary sources and activities from the National Archives: www.archives.gov/education/lessons/lewis-clark An excellent site from the Missouri Historical Society: www.lewisandclarkexhibit.org

### BOOKS

DeVoto, Bernard, ed. The Journals of Lewis and Clark (Houghton Mifflin, 1997). Erdrich, Liselotte and Julie Buffalohead (Illustrator). Sacagawea (Carolrhoda Books, 2003). Herbert, Janis. Lewis and Clark for Kids: Their Journey of Discovery, with 21 Activities (Chicago Review Press, 2000). Ronda, James P. and Robert M. Utley. Jefferson's West: A Journey With Lewis and Clark (Thomas Jefferson Foundation, 2002).

### WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

APRIL 3, 1860





APRIL 12, 1861 ne American Civil War starts as

## MAY 20, 1862

**KEY TERMS:** 

expedition

migration

continental

negotiation

acquisition

Louisiana territory

PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY:

Louisiana Purchase.

Ask students to review a map

and note the new territorial

of the United States as of 1804

boundaries established by the

ands to adult heads of families for minima fees, paving the way for increased

### **JANUARY 1, 1863**



#### APRIL 9, 1865

is army to Union General Ulysses S. Grant at

### APRIL 14, 1865

1. From watching this video segment, how would you describe Lewis and Clark? Did you notice any distinctions between the

What were the major goals of the Lewis and Clark expedition? What do you think were the primary challenges they faced?

What were the names of some of the Native American groups Lewis and Clark encountered? How did they manage to communicate? What do their interactions reveal about the previous relations between these groups and European explorers?

What do you think were the most important discoveries Lewis and Clark made on their journey? How do you think this

1. Following the Trail of Lewis and Clark. The Lewis and Clark expedition took place over the course of two and a half years and covered a vast territory. Ask students to create illustrated timelines of the expedition, tracing their path west. Students can start by locating a map of the U.S. in the early 1800s, making a list of important events from the expedition and plotting them on their maps. Then, students can create their own timelines adorned with images and quotes.

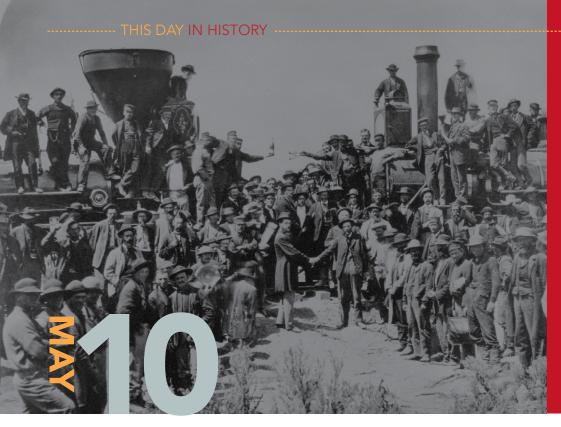
Writing Down the Journey. Lewis and Clark's journals are among the richest primary sources from 19th-century U.S. history, revealing colorful details about their experiences. Ask students to search through these journals online or at the library and choose a passage they find compelling. Students should then write a short synopsis of the passage and a

Who Was Here Before? Lewis and Clark encountered many Native American tribes on their journey. Online or at the library, ask students to further research these tribes and write short essays about one of them. These essays should describe

Thanks to Lewis and Clark. Upon their return to St. Louis, Lewis sand Clark were regarded as heroes. Jefferson's decision to send them on this journey was heralded as a brilliant move for the young United States. Ask students to write a personal letter of thanks from Jefferson's perspective thanking Lewis and Clark for their leadership roles in the expedition.



### MAY 10, 1869



#### **KEY TERMS:**

merge 'Biq Four' ranscontinental reight entrepreneur speculate expansion and grant

#### PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY:

In order to give students historical context for understanding the unification of the railroad. distribute a map of the United States which illustrates the routes of rail lines in the 19th century.

### May 10, 1869 TRANSCONTINENTAL RAILROAD

The day the last spike was driven into the rail line connecting the Union Pacific and Central Pacific lines was marked with ceremony and dazzling celebration on May 10, 1869. Reporters, corporate leaders, workers, and curious onlookers gathered at Promontory Point, Utah to watch as the lines were fused with a special 18-karat gold spike. The shiny spike which merged these lines not only served as a physical link between East and West but also as a symbol of the unification of the United States. No longer would all western-bound travelers be forced to make the long and dangerous journey by wagon train. The wild charm and bountiful resources of the West had been opened up to travelers and eager entrepreneurs.

Between 1865 and 1890, the rail network in the United States grew from 35,000 to 164,000 miles. This staggering expansion was propelled by the Pacific Railroad Act passed by Congress in 1862, providing funding and land grants to the major rail companies. In addition to the financial costs of this massive construction endeavor, the human power and sacrifice required was enormous. Thousands of laborers, including substantial numbers of Irish and Chinese immigrants, slogged through frigid winters, searing summers, and 12-hour work days to complete the network. Their work had an immediate impact. Journeys that had taken months by wagon train or weeks by boat now took only days. The ingenuity of these workers and the teams of engineers who masterminded the railway resulted in an amazing transformation. The decades after May 10, 1869 were years of rapid growth for the United States. The railroad set the nation in motion as production took off like wildfire.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- What do you think the "last spike" symbolized in U.S. history? 2.
- 3. this innovation to the creation of the automobile?

### **ACTIVITIES**

- this event and other train-related photos.

### WEBSITES

An excellent site from the California State Railroad Museum with primary sources and images: www.csrmf.org America on the Move, an online exhibition from The Smithsonian: www.americanhistory.si.edu/onthemove/ Photos and background from the Central Pacific Railroad Photographic History Museum: www.cprr.org/Museum/

### BOOKS

Del Vecchio, Michael. Iron Horses: The Illustrated History of the Tracks and Trains of North America (Courage Books, 2000). Fraser, Mary Ann. Ten Mile Day: And the Building of the Transcontinental Railroad (Henry Holt, 1996). Hine, Robert V. and John Mack Faragher. The American West: A New Interpretive History (Yale University Press, 2000). Lamar, Howard. The New Encyclopedia of the American West (Yale University Press, 1998). Sandler, Martin. Riding the Rails in the USA: Trains in American Life (Oxford University Press, 2003).

### WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

### MARCH 1, 1872



#### JUNE 25, 1876

lians commanded by Chief Crazy rse defend their encampmen<sup>-</sup> nst troops led by Colone

#### **JANUARY 27, 1880**

Inventor Thomas Edison receives his patent application for the light bulb

#### JUNE 19, 1885

arrives in NY on the ship Iser

# **JANUARY 1, 1892**

REGERENCE

### APRIL 6, 1917

1. From watching this segment, how would you describe the work required to complete the transcontinental railroad?

How do you think the completion of the transcontinental railroad changed the United States? How would you compare

4. Who do you think deserves the most credit for the completion of the transcontinental railroad, and why?

1. A System in Sync. The completion of the transcontinental railroad created a network of rails capable of carrying enormous quantities of goods and people. At the library or online, ask students to research the celebration of this union at Promontory Point, Utah. Then, ask them to imagine they were a reporter on hand the day the rail lines were united and write a newspaper article describing this event and how it might change U.S. history. These articles can be designed with images of

2. The "Big Four." The most active entrepreneurs in the railroad industry in the 19th century became known as the "Big Four." Ask students to research these four men online or at the library. Students should choose one of the four and create miniature biographies describing the life of one of these men and his role in the railroad industry. These biographies could be in essay form, but could also be presented in PowerPoint or on posterboard and shared with the larger class or group.

How It All Started. The construction of the transcontinental railroad was spurred by the Pacific Railway Act passed by Congress in 1862. Break students up into small groups. Ask students to locate this document online or at the library, or provide them with a copy. Then, ask each group to pick a passage of 3-5 sentences that they think are the most important in the text. Ask one student from each group to present their findings and discuss the overall meaning of the act as a larger group.

Northern Pacific Railway Historical Association site, with a searchable database; www.nprha.org

### **DECEMBER 17, 1903**

Near Kitty Hawk, NC, American inventors Orville and Wilbur Wright make the first

The U.S. enters World War I by declaring



**NOVEMBER 11, 1918** Vorld War I ends



### **KEY TERMS:**

propeller internal combustion engine aviation rudder glider aloft patent

### PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY:

Ask students to make a list of events that took place in the early 1900s to give them a sense of the broader context for the Wright brothers' invention.

### December 17, 1903 THE WRIGHT BROTHERS TAKE FLIGHT

The solitary souls who walked along the quiet beaches near Kitty Hawk, North Carolina in early December, 1903 would probably never have imagined that history would fly from its unsuspecting shores just weeks later. Two eager brothers named Orville and Wilbur Wright had been experimenting with gliding machines for years, with the eventual goal of building a self-propelled flying machine that could stay aflight. These two constant companions from Dayton, Ohio may not have graduated from high school, but they were determined students who tested hundreds of flying machines both on paper and in trials in wind tunnels. For years, the Wright brothers tried, tested, and failed to build an "airplane." Having mastered a biplane glider with a steering system and propeller blades, the Wrights just needed an engine to lift their machine off the ground and keep it there.

Back home at their bike shop in Ohio in 1903, the Wrights fashioned a 12-horsepower internal combustion engine with the help of an ace machinist named Charles Taylor. The ability to keep their creation in the air was a study in persistence at every juncture. On December 14, Wilbur nearly tasted flight before stalling and exacting minor damage. Suitable weather returned just as the plane was repaired. Orville was next to try his hand at destiny. Lying flat on his stomach, he steered the airplane down a monorail track miles from Kitty Hawk. He stretched his body forward in a reach to grip the future – and pulled history into his hands. With a sparse handful of onlookers peering upward from the sandy dunes below, Orville made flight for the first miraculous seconds on December 17, 1903.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- 2.
- 3. brothers' invention started to truly shape American society?
- influential than another in U.S. history?

### ACTIVITIES

- ent their document to the larger class in a short oral presentation.
- brothers in appreciation of their innovations.
- inventions and turning points in U.S. history.

### WEBSITES

The Smithsonian's online exhibit on the Wright brothers: www.nasm.si.edu/wrightbrothers/index\_full.cfm The Franklin Institute's helpful guide to the Wrights' first flight: http://sln.fi.edu/flights/first/intro.html Wright Brothers National Memorial's timeline: www.nps.gov/archive/wrbr/indepth/brochure.htm

### BOOKS

Anderson, John D. Jr. Inventing Flight (The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2004). Freedman, Russell. The Wright Brothers: How They Invented the Airplane (Holiday House, 1994). Tobin, James. To Conquer the Air: The Wright Brothers and the Great Race for Flight (Free Press, 2004). Wright, Orville. How We Invented the Airplane: An Illustrated History (Dover Publications, 1988).

### WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

AUGUST 18, 1920



## OCTOBER 29, 1929

### MARCH 12, 1933

AUGUST 14, 1935

### APRIL 30, 1939

### **DECEMBER 7, 1941**

# APRIL 15, 1947

AUGUST 15, 1945

1. What do you think were the key factors in the Wright brothers' ability to construct a flying machine for the first time?

How do you think the collaboration and friendship between Orville and Wilbur Wright facilitated their experiments?

How do you think the creation of the airplane changed the United States? When do you think the impact of the Wright

4. How would you compare the invention of the airplane to the train and the car? Do you think one of these has been more

**Records of Flight.** Orville and Wilbur Wright carefully documented their experiments and successes with building an airplane. Online or at the library, ask students to locate a primary source written by one of the brothers. These sources could include magazine articles, diary entries, letters, or other writings. Ask students to write a short synopsis describing their source, when and where it was published, and what it reveals about the Wright brothers' experiments. Ask students to pres-

Thank You from Mr. President. Theodore Roosevelt served as president at the time of the Wright brothers' first flight in 1903 and through the years in which they conducted many of their experiments with airplanes. After researching President Roosevelt and his political philosophies, ask students to write a thank you letter from his perspective to the Wright

**Milestones on the Move.** The creation of the airplane was one among many transportation milestones which helped propel the American economy and transform everyday life. Ask students to brainstorm and make a list of 10-15 other transportation milestones, starting in the 17th century. Students can then create illustrated timelines in PowerPoint format or on posterboard, putting the Wright brothers into the context of U.S. transportation history. Students may also use their research as the basis to write a short storybook for younger readers about the Wright brothers and/or major transportation



### OCTOBER 20, 1947



### **KEY TERMS:**

lunar module alloy propulsion payload orbit NASA Cold War Apollo program

### PRE-VIEWING ACTIVITY:

Before watching the video segment, ask students to write a paragraph about what they already know about Neil Armstrong's walk on the moon.

### July 20, 1969 THE WALK ON THE MOON

Despite the sheer isolation of space, astronaut Neil Armstrong was far from alone when he took the first fateful step on the surface of the moon on July 20, 1969. Hundreds of millions of people watched and listened in awe as he descended the lunar landing module Eagle and became the first man to walk on the moon. Just eight short years after President John F. Kennedy's bold challenge to put a man on the moon before the close of the decade, Armstrong declared to a vast worldwide audience, "This is one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind." From 240,000 miles away, Americans cheered as Armstrong drove the stars and stripes onto the moon's bleak surface.

The aim to reach the moon was a supreme challenge – and the stakes were elevated enormously both practically and politically. The escalation of competition between the United States and the Soviet Union continued, as each nation struggled to prove that their system of government produced the most sophisticated technology and capability. In light of these chilling Cold War tensions, the success of Apollo 11 was paramount. As Armstrong's words were broadcast far and wide, the United States had suddenly surpassed the Soviet Union in the contest known as the "space race." This test of will, feat of technology, and leap of faith marked a spectacular milestone in space, and a political triumph for the United States.

### **DISCUSSION QUESTIONS**

- might your impressions of this event change if the music were different?
- space was critical to the Cold War? Discuss.
- Why do you think Apollo 11 was considered such an important success for the U.S.? 3.

### **ACTIVITIES**

- 1. ing the importance of this passage and its implications in U.S. history.

- to debate the merits of Kennedy's decision. Each group should carefully research its argument.

### **WEBSITES**

Helpful lesson plans and resources from NASA: www.nasaexplores.com Information and links from the Smithsonian's National Air and Space Museum: www.nasm.si.edu More information from NASA on the Apollo program, with lesson plans: www.spaceflight.nasa.gov/history/apollo/index.html

### BOOKS

Armstrong, Neil, Michael Collins, and Edwin Aldrin. First on the Moon (Merrell, 2005). Craddock, Bob and the Smithsonian Institution. Apollo 11 Box (Chronicle Books, 2003). Thimmesh, Catherine. Team Moon: How 400,000 People Landed Apollo 11 on the Moon (Houghton Mifflin, 2006). Winkler, Allan M. The Cold War: A History in Documents (Oxford University Press, 2003).

### WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

### MAY 17, 1954

own v. Board of Educatio



### OCTOBER 28, 1962

#### **NOVEMBER 22, 1963**

#### **FEBRUARY 11, 1964**

JULY 2, 1964

### AUGUST 7, 1964

JULY 20, 1969

1. Think carefully about the music in this segment. How do you think the music affects the way you interpret the clip? How

2. Why do you think President Kennedy decided to make the moon landing a priority? Do you think American dominance in

"We Choose to Go to the Moon." On September 12, 1962, President John F. Kennedy delivered a speech at Rice University outlining the goals of the U.S. to send an astronaut to the moon. Circulate a copy of Kennedy's speech to students. Ask them to choose which passage in the speech they find most important. Then ask students to write a one-page essay describ-

2. One Giant Leap. Neil Armstrong's first words from space are well-known worldwide. Ask students to write a detailed report of the moon landing. First, have students research the Apollo program online or at the library. Then, ask them to write a 3-5 page newspaper article, essay, or documentary script detailing Armstrong and Aldrin's experience on the moon.

Cold War Countdown. The race to the moon was driven in part by the Cold War. Ask students to think about the moon landing within the context of this conflict. Have students break up into small groups and brainstorm 10-15 key events in Cold War history. Then, ask students to create illustrated timelines including events which occurred after the moon landing.

The Great Space Debate. The achievements of *Apollo 11* on the moon were heralded as a major success for the U.S. Yet, some critics argued that the space program was too costly and drained funds from other important national priorities. Ask students to imagine they were present at Kennedy's 1962 "race to the moon" speech. Break students up into opposing sides

/ietnam War without an official declaration

U.S. astronauts take the first walk on the mo



AUGUST 17, 1969 e Woodstock M

## ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

Below is a list of additional recommended books and websites on American history topics. For more information on classroom initiatives and resources from **The History Channel**<sup>®</sup>, see www.history.com/classroom.

### BOOKS

Foner, Eric. *Give Me Liberty!: An American History*, Volumes 1, 2, and Sourcebook (WW Norton, 2006).
Foner, Eric and John Arthur Garraty, editors. *The Reader's Companion to American History* (Houghton Mifflin, 1991).
Franklin, John Hope and Alfred Moss Jr. *From Slavery to Freedom: A History of African Americans* (Knopf, 2000).
Gonzalez, Juan. *Harvest of Empire: A History of Latinos in America* (Penguin, 2001).
Hakim, Joy. *A History of US: Book One: The First Americans* (Oxford University Press, 2002).
Nash, Gary and Carter Smith, editors. *Atlas of American History* (Facts on File, 2006).
Okihiro, Gary. *The Columbia Guide to Asian American History* (Columbia University Press, 2001).

### WEBSITES

Online exhibitions, primary sources, and background from the Gilder Lehrman Institute: www.gilderlehrman.org

Milestone documents from the National Archives, with teaching tools: www.ourdocuments.gov

Excellent resources and lesson plans from EDSITEment: www.edsitement.neh.gov

Resources and background information from ABC-CLIO: www.abc-clio.com/schools/

Teaching tips and history education resources from the National Council for History Education: www.nche.net

The American Memory Project from The Library of Congress, with a searchable database of documents, images, and essays: www.memory.loc.gov/ammem/index.html

Calisphere – digital resources and primary sources for K-12 educators from the University of California libraries: www.calisphere.universityofcalifornia.edu

Helpful lesson plans from the National Center for the Preservation of Democracy: www.ncdemocracy.org

### WHAT HAPPENED TODAY?

AUGUST 8, 1974

nnounces that he will re ign from the presidency



### JUNE 12, 1987

In one of his most famous Cold War speeches, President Ronald Reagan challenges Soviet leader Mikhail Gorbachev to tear down the Berlin Wall

#### SEPTEMBER 11, 2001

Terrorists attack the World Trade Center and the Pentagon using U.S. commercial airplanes

AUGUST 29, 2005