

# News Currents

Vol. 71 No. 01

Week of September 6, 2021

## The 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks



**WHO AM I?**



See inside cover

### ALSO IN THIS ISSUE:

Many Afghans flee the country after Taliban takeover

New study finds giraffes are as social as chimps and elephants

FDA approves COVID vaccine as Delta variant spreads

Country of the Week: Germany

This Week in History: Labor Day



## Who Am I?

Can you answer this question? If not, here are some clues.

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### BASIC/GENERAL

A) I am the current governor of California. I am a member of the Democratic Party.

B) I was born in San Francisco 53 years ago. I was the mayor of San Francisco from 2004 to 2011, and served as the lieutenant governor of California. In 2018, I was elected governor.

C) Republicans have launched several efforts to remove me from office. They have accused me of not doing more to lower taxes. They also blame me for my response to the COVID-19 pandemic and for the state's homelessness problems. On September 14th, I face a recall election. If more than half of the state's voters say they want me out, then the person receiving the most votes will be California's new governor. **Who am I?** (Gavin Newsom.)

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### NEWS NAMES, NEWS PLACES, NEWS WORDS

#### News Names:

- Angela Merkel** — Current chancellor of Germany
- Food and Drug Administration** — U.S. federal agency responsible for public health related to medicines and consumable products
- George W. Bush** — 43rd president of the United States (served 2001-2009)
- Osama bin Laden** — Saudi-born founder of militant Islamic group al-Qaeda (lived 1957-2011)
- Sirhan Sirhan** — Palestinian-American found guilty of 1968 assassination of Sen. Robert F. Kennedy
- Taliban** — Militant Islamist group that controlled Afghanistan from 1996 to 2001 and retook control in 2021

#### News Places:

- Afghanistan**
- Germany**
- Iraq**
- New York**
- Pennsylvania**
- United Kingdom**

### ADVANCED

A) I am a 53-year-old Democratic politician from California. I have served as the state's governor since 2019.

B) I was born in San Francisco. After college, I became a successful businessman. I was elected to two terms as the mayor of San Francisco, and then served as the lieutenant governor of California for eight years.

C) On September 14th, I face a recall election. The petition — one of seven efforts to remove me from office — was started by state Republicans, on the basis of California's problems with homelessness, high taxes, and water rationing. The recall ballot asks whether or not I should be recalled, and (if so) who should replace me. If more than half of the ballots say "yes," then the new governor will be whichever one of the 46 replacement candidates gets the most votes. **Who am I?** (Gavin Newsom.)

#### News Words:

- labor union** — Organization of workers formed to win better conditions and higher wages
- mandate** — An official order to do something
- meme** — Element of culture passed from one individual to another
- memorial** — Structure or service to honor a person or event
- mutation** — Change in the genetic structure of an organism
- refugee** — One who is forced to leave their country to escape persecution, war, or disaster
- ruminant** — Hoofed animal that re-chews partially digested plant material, or "cud"
- strike** — In labor, an organized work stoppage meant as protest
- terrorist** — One who uses fear tactics and/or violence in an attempt to force political change

## The 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks

Terrorists struck several U.S. targets on Sept. 11, 2001.

### BASIC

This week is the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the biggest terrorist attack in U.S. history. **What is a terrorist?** (Someone who uses violence against innocent people to try to make a point about something.) On September 11, 2001, a group of terrorists took over four U.S. passenger airplanes. They crashed two of these planes into the World Trade Center towers in New York City. People around the world watched the horrible sight of two buildings burning and crumbling to the ground. Soon after that, a third airplane crashed into the Pentagon. This is the government building in Washington, D.C.

### GENERAL

This week, the U.S. observes the 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. On that day in 2001, members of a terrorist group hijacked, or took over, four U.S. airplanes. Their plan was to crash all the planes into large buildings. The first crash came at 8:46 a.m. when a plane struck one of the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City. The second crash into the second tower came 18 minutes later. Many Americans were watching morning news shows and saw the terrible sight of these buildings collapsing and burning. **What do you think these attacks meant to U.S. citizens, and to the rest of the world?**

The third plane crashed into a building called the Pentagon. **What is the Pentagon?** (A five-sided building in Washington, D.C., where the U.S. Department of Defense has

### ADVANCED

Twenty years ago this week, an event took place that changed the U.S. and the world forever. Nineteen terrorists, most of whom were from Saudi Arabia, hijacked four U.S. commercial airliners on Tuesday, September 11<sup>th</sup>, 2001. Many Americans watching morning news shows saw a scene that seemed unreal: two commercial airliners crashing into the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City, 18 minutes apart. Live footage showed the 110-story towers, the workplace of many thousands of people, burn and crumble. A third plane crashed into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. **What government department has its headquarters in this building?** (The Department of Defense.) The fourth plane crashed into a field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. From

that houses the U.S. Department of Defense. Passengers on the fourth airplane heard about what was happening. They fought back against the terrorists. That airplane ended up crashing into an empty field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. In all, nearly 3,000 people died in the attacks. **Have you heard of the 9/11 attacks? How would you have felt on that day?** NEXT

its headquarters.) We may never know where the fourth airplane was headed. Some of the passengers on that plane heard what had happened to the other planes. They fought back against the hijackers, forcing the plane to crash into an empty field in Somerset County, Pennsylvania. Everyone on all four planes was killed, as well as many people in the buildings. In all, nearly 3,000 people died in the attacks, including more than 400 police officers and firefighters. The 9/11 terrorist attacks remain the worst ever on American soil. They also made many Americans afraid that more terrorist attacks would happen. These events changed the country and the world forever. **What else have you heard, read, or remember about the September 11 attacks?** NEXT

flight recordings, we know that some passengers fought back against the hijackers, who crashed the plane rather than lose control. Some people think the hijackers intended to crash that plane into the U.S. Capitol. **Do you think we will ever know for sure?**

Crews spent more than a year combing through the wreckage in New York City, termed "Ground Zero," and the other sites. In the end, it was determined that nearly 3,000 people, from several dozen countries, were killed. This number includes more than 400 first responders. It was by far the worst terrorist incident on American soil. It was hard for people to grasp that 19 terrorists could do so much damage to the most powerful country in the world. **What else do you know about the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks?** NEXT



## The 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks (cont'd)

The 9/11 attacks led to wars in Afghanistan and Iraq.

**BASIC** The 9/11 attacks were carried out by the terrorist group al-Qaeda, led by Osama bin Laden. Bin Laden was hiding in Afghanistan when the attacks took place. At the time, the extremist group known as the Taliban controlled that country. U.S. President George W. Bush announced a "War on Terror." He and other world leaders sent troops to Afghanistan to find bin Laden. These troops forced the Taliban out of power and chased al-Qaeda out of the country. But they did not find Osama bin Laden at that time. **Was he ever found?** (Yes, U.S. troops killed him in Pakistan in 2011.) In 2002, President Bush said Iraq's leader, Saddam Hussein,

**GENERAL** Not long after the attacks, U.S. President George W. Bush declared a "War on Terror." Soon, the world learned the name of the terrorist group behind the attacks: al-Qaeda, led by Osama bin Laden. He was hiding in Afghanistan, as he had been forced out of his native country for his terrorist actions. **What was bin Laden's native country?** (Saudi Arabia.) The U.S. learned that bin Laden was hiding in Afghanistan, sheltered by the extremist group that controlled that country. **What is the name of this group?** (The Taliban.) In the fall of 2001, the U.S. and other countries sent troops to Afghanistan. They overthrew the Taliban and forced Al Qaeda out of the country, but they did not find bin Laden. **Was bin Laden ever found?** (Yes, U.S. forces killed him in Pakistan in 2011.)

**ADVANCED** Soon after 9/11, an extremist group called al-Qaeda claimed responsibility for the attacks. Al-Qaeda and its leader, Osama bin Laden, were based in Afghanistan, sheltered by another extreme Islamist group that had seized control of the country. **What was this group?** (The Taliban.) On September 20<sup>th</sup>, President George W. Bush declared a global "War on Terror." **Do you think a "war on terror" can ever be won?** Bush issued an ultimatum to the Taliban: turn over bin Laden or face an invasion. When the group did not comply, the U.S. and other countries invaded Afghanistan. This coalition overthrew the Taliban's government and destroyed al-Qaeda's network there. **Who knows the ultimate fate of bin Laden?** (He remained at large until he was killed at the orders of the Obama

was helping al-Qaeda. In 2003, U.S. troops invaded Iraq and removed Saddam Hussein from power. The war lasted for eight more years, causing the deaths of hundreds of thousands of Iraqis. No dangerous weapons or links to al-Qaeda were ever found, but the Iraq War allowed new terrorist groups to move into the country. **What is the name of the group shown here?** (The Islamic State, or ISIS.) NEXT

Soon after the invasion of Afghanistan, the White House shifted its focus to the country of Iraq. President Bush said Iraq's cruel dictator, Saddam Hussein, was helping al-Qaeda, and that Iraq had, quote, "weapons of mass destruction." This phrase refers to nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons that could kill thousands of people. The U.S. and other nations invaded Iraq in 2003 and overthrew Saddam Hussein. But the war continued for another eight years, destroying much of the country. Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis died. **Did we ever find weapons of mass destruction?** (No.) Without Hussein, however, Iraq became a very weak country. This allowed new terrorist groups such as the Islamic State, also known as ISIS, to enter the country. NEXT

administration in May, 2011 in Pakistan.) While still fighting the Taliban in Afghanistan, the White House turned its attention to Iraq. Officials in the Bush administration claimed that Iraqi President Saddam Hussein was actively aiding Al-Qaeda. They also said Hussein had "weapons of mass destruction." **What does this phrase mean?** (Nuclear, chemical, or biological weapons that could kill thousands of people.) In 2003, the U.S. and several other countries invaded Iraq and overthrew Hussein. **Did we find links to Al Qaeda or any weapons of mass destruction in Iraq?** (No.) Hundreds of thousands of Iraqis died in the eight years of this war. The war also made Iraq very unstable, which allowed terrorist groups such as the Islamic State, or ISIS, to gain a foothold there. NEXT



## The 20th anniversary of the September 11 attacks (cont'd)

The events of 9/11 changed the country in multiple ways.

**BASIC** The 9/11 attacks had a big effect on the world. They also changed life in the United States. At right, you see the 9/11 Memorial in New York City. **What is a memorial?** (Anything that honors the memory of an event or a person.) On August 31st, the last American troops left Afghanistan. This ended the longest war in U.S. history. **What happened when the troops left?** (The Taliban regained control of the country.) More than 8,000 U.S. troops died in the wars in Iraq and Afghanistan. So far, these wars have cost the U.S. at least \$6.5 trillion. The U.S. also formed a new government agency called the

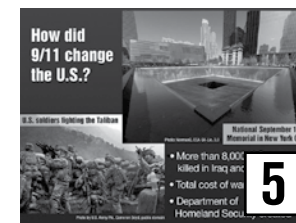
**GENERAL** The 9/11 Memorial in New York City is shown here. **What do you notice about it?** The walls around the memorial contain the names of all the victims of the attacks. The 9/11 attacks are still affecting the U.S. and the world in many ways. More than 8,000 U.S. troops died in Iraq and Afghanistan and many more suffered long-term injuries. **Do you know anyone who fought in these wars?** These wars have cost the U.S. \$6.5 trillion dollars so far. In the past, the U.S. has raised the tax rate for the richest Americans to pay for wars. But the Bush administration chose to cut these taxes. This meant the government had to borrow money, which it will have to pay back with interest. **What is interest?** (Extra money charged by a lender to a borrower.)

**ADVANCED** The National September 11 Memorial & Museum was built to commemorate the attacks and honor the victims. It is located in New York City at the World Trade Center site. The walls around the memorial contain the names of all the victims of the attacks. While most U.S. troops left Iraq in 2011, the War in Afghanistan lasted for nearly 20 years. **What happened when the U.S. pulled out its troops this summer?** (Taliban fighters quickly regained control of the country.) More than 8,000 U.S. military personnel died in Iraq and Afghanistan, and many more suffered serious long-term injuries. The wars also had a huge financial cost for the U.S. **From the words here, how much will they end up costing?** (More than \$6.5 trillion.) While the government has financed previous wars either through war

Department of Homeland Security. This group is in charge of keeping the United States safe. **Do you think this department has done its job well?** Congress also gave the government new powers. These included the power to spy on Americans by checking emails and phone calls. **Is this kind of spying okay if it keeps us safe? Why or why not?** END

Another domestic effect of 9/11 was a renewed focus on security. New rules were put in place to provide more security at airports. The government also created a new agency to be in charge of making the country safer. **What is this agency?** (The Department of Homeland Security.) The White House and Congress also passed a series of laws called the USA Patriot Act. This Act gave the government the right to collect information from the emails and phone calls of all Americans. Some people said this went against the Constitution. **Do you think the U.S. has to sometimes trade freedom for security? Why or why not?** The Patriot Act was very controversial. It remained in place until December of 2020, when Congress allowed it to expire. **How else do you think the events of 9/11 have affected our country?** END

bonds or tax increases, nothing similar was done for the recent wars. In fact, the Bush administration and Congress passed large tax cuts at the time, vastly increasing the national debt. These attacks also put a renewed focus on security in the U.S. The government created the Department of Homeland Security to deal with all threats to the U.S. It also pushed the USA Patriot Act through Congress six weeks after September 11<sup>th</sup>. This series of laws gave the federal government much more power to spy on American citizens' emails and phone calls without warrants. Many people saw these powers as a violation of basic privacy rights under the Constitution. Congress let the Patriot Act expire in December of 2020. **What, if anything, should the U.S. government have done differently after 9/11?** END



# Many Afghans flee the country after Taliban takeover

The U.S. and other countries airlifted more than 122,000 people out of Kabul.

**BASIC** On August 15<sup>th</sup>, a military group known as the Taliban took over the city of Kabul. **Based on the map, where is Kabul?** (Afghanistan.) The Taliban had been fighting U.S. and Afghan forces for the last 20 years. The group had already taken control of the rest of Afghanistan after the U.S. said it would leave Afghanistan by August 31<sup>st</sup>. Many Afghan people were scared after the Taliban took over Kabul, the capital city, so they tried to leave the country. Afghans rushed to the Kabul airport, which was the only way to leave. As of last week, the U.S. and other countries had helped nearly 120,000 Afghans escape the country. Those people will all be resettled in other

**GENERAL** On August 15<sup>th</sup>, an Afghan military group called the Taliban overtook Afghanistan's capital city. **What is the capital of Afghanistan?** (Kabul.) The Taliban is an extremist group that previously controlled Afghanistan before the U.S. invaded in 2001. The group has been fighting U.S. and Afghan forces since that time. After the U.S. announced it was pulling its troops out of Afghanistan by August 31<sup>st</sup>, the Taliban took control of many parts of the country. Once the Taliban entered Kabul, many Afghans rushed to the city's airport to try to flee the country. Sadly, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, terrorists attacked the airport with bombs. They killed more than 150 Afghan people, as well as 13 U.S. military members.

Despite the terrible tragedy, the U.S. and other countries airlifted more than

**ADVANCED** After 20 years of fighting in Afghanistan, the U.S. announced it would withdraw its troops by August 31<sup>st</sup>, 2021. After the withdrawal began, Taliban forces took control of cities across Afghanistan, finally reaching the capital, Kabul, on August 15<sup>th</sup>. The Taliban overtook Kabul quickly, leaving thousands of Afghans and Americans scrambling to evacuate. For people trying to flee, the only route out was Kabul's Hamid Karzai International Airport. The scene at the airport became chaotic with thousands of Afghan men, women, and children desperately trying to get on a plane out of the country. **What do you see in the photo here?** Tragically, on August 26<sup>th</sup>, terrorists attacked one of the gates at the Kabul airport, killing 170 people, including 13 U.S. military members. **Do you think**

countries. People that are forced to leave their home countries because of wars are called refugees. Many of the refugees that escaped Afghanistan were people that helped the U.S. during the war there. But sadly, many more people who wanted to leave were left behind. The U.S. and other countries are still working to help people escape Kabul. **Can someone read the quote here? What should be done to help people still trying to escape?** NEXT

122,000 people from Kabul's airport between August 14<sup>th</sup> and the 25<sup>th</sup>. **What do you see in the photo here?** Many of the Afghans evacuated were people that had helped the U.S. during the war. **Why do you think they were afraid to stay?** The U.S. officially left Afghanistan on August 30<sup>th</sup>, but there are still many Afghans that helped the U.S. who were left behind. **Can someone read the quote here?** The U.S., as well as other countries and groups, are still working to help these Afghans leave. All of the Afghans who did leave the country are now refugees. **What is a refugee?** (A person forced to leave their country because of war, persecution, or natural disasters.) These refugees will all be settled in different countries around the world, including the U.S. and Canada. NEXT

**the U.S. government could have done more to avoid this chaos and tragedy?** Between August 14<sup>th</sup> and 25<sup>th</sup>, the U.S. and other countries helped 122,000 people, including 5,000 Americans, evacuate from Afghanistan. Many of the Afghans were people who had worked for the U.S. during the war. Sadly, thousands of Afghans who aided the U.S. were not evacuated by the August 31<sup>st</sup> deadline. **Can someone read the quote here?** However, the U.S. and many other countries are still working to help more Afghans escape the country. The Afghans who were evacuated are now refugees who will be resettled in many different countries around the world, including the U.S. and Canada. **Does the U.S. have a responsibility to help the Afghans who actively helped us during our 20 years in the country?** NEXT



# Instagrammer raises millions for Afghan refugees

Tommy Marcus raised more than \$6 million in less than two days.

**BASIC** The man shown here is 26-year-old Tommy Marcus. Marcus runs a popular Instagram page where he has more than 800,000 followers. Marcus normally uses the page to share funny memes and videos. **Does anyone know what a meme is?** (An image or video that gets changed and shared around the internet.) In August, Marcus followed the news stories about Afghans trying to escape the country. He saw that many people trying to escape were being left behind. Marcus decided he wanted to use his Instagram page to help people in

**GENERAL** Twenty-six-year-old Tommy Marcus runs a popular Instagram page under the name "Quentin Quarantino." Marcus has gained a following of more than 800,000 by sharing memes and political content. **What is a meme?** (A funny image or video that is copied and quickly spread across the internet.) After the U.S. withdrew its military from Afghanistan, Marcus followed the news coverage of Afghan people trying to escape the country. He saw many people in need and decided to use his platform to help Afghan refugees.

So, Marcus created a GoFundMe page to raise money to help Afghans escape the country. GoFundMe is an online fundraising website where users can donate money to various causes. Originally, Marcus set a goal of \$550,000, which would be enough to make two to three flights to Kabul,

**ADVANCED** Tommy Marcus is a 26-year-old with a popular Instagram page. Going by the name "Quentin Quarantino," Marcus posts memes and videos about politics and life during the COVID-19 pandemic. **What is a meme?** (A funny image or video that is copied, sometimes changed, and spread across the internet.) Recently, after witnessing the chaotic aftermath of the U.S. leaving Afghanistan, Marcus decided he wanted to use his platform to help people. Many Afghan people were attempting to flee their homes before the Taliban took total control of the country. Marcus created a GoFundMe page and shared it with his more than 800,000 followers. GoFundMe is a website where users can raise money for charitable causes. Marcus originally set a goal of \$550,000. He planned to use this money

Afghanistan. He created an online fundraiser and asked his followers for donations. The response was overwhelming. Marcus raised over \$6 million in less than two days. Marcus said all the money will go toward rescuing Afghan people trying to escape the country. **Can someone read the quote here? Why do you think Marcus was able to raise so much for this cause?** END

where refugees would be picked up and taken to other countries. Marcus raised over \$6 million in less than two days, making his fundraiser one of the most successful GoFundMe campaigns of all time. **Can someone read the quote on the screen? Why do you think Americans feel so strongly about this cause?**

Marcus didn't have experience planning emergency flights in other countries, so he turned to experts for help. Marcus worked with several non-profit groups and former military members to plan evacuation flights. He says that any money that didn't go to evacuation flights will be donated to other charities that help refugees. **Have you been following the news in Afghanistan? What else should the international community do to help people there?** END

to help send two or three flights to Kabul to get Afghan refugees out of the country. Marcus's fundraiser was met with overwhelming support. He was able to raise more than \$6 million in less than two days, making his campaign one of the largest in GoFundMe history. **Can someone read the quote here? Why do you think so many Americans are invested in this cause?** Marcus didn't have experience planning evacuation flights in other countries, so he enlisted several non-profit groups and former military members to help him. Marcus says that any money that didn't go to emergency flights will be donated to the International Women's Media Foundation, a nonprofit group that will help refugees settle in other countries. **Do you use social media? Are there ways you could use those platforms to help people? If so, how?** END



# New study finds giraffes are as social as chimps and elephants

Female giraffes form friendships that can last years.

**BASIC** Scientists know that animals like chimps and elephants are social creatures. Social animals live in groups and work together. Like humans, they have families and friends. Recently, scientists in the U.K. discovered that giraffes are social animals too. **Can someone read the quote here? Have you ever seen a giraffe at the zoo? What was it like?**

Scientists found several interesting ways that giraffes behave toward one another. Female giraffes can form friendships with other giraffes that can last years. **Have you had friendships that have lasted for**

**GENERAL** Researchers have recently learned some amazing things about the social lives of giraffes. Scientists know that many animals have complex ways of interacting. **Can you think of animals that have complex social behavior?** (*Chimpanzees, dolphins, elephants, among others.*) But giraffes have never been thought of as highly social, that is, until now. **Can someone read the quote here?**

In August, researchers at the University of Bristol published a paper showing that giraffes may have social behaviors just as complex as those of chimps and elephants. **Based on the map here, where is the University of Bristol located?** (*In the U.K.*) These researchers spent time looking at hundreds of different giraffe studies. In doing so, they found that giraffes interact

**ADVANCED** Recently, researchers at the University of Bristol in England made some amazing discoveries about the social lives of giraffes. Scientists have known for a long time that certain animals like chimpanzees and elephants have complex social behaviors. But giraffes have largely been considered solitary animals, that is, until now. **Can someone read the quote here?**

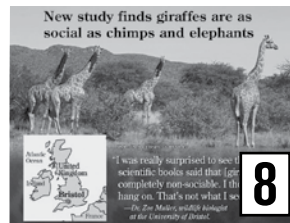
In August, the U.K. researchers published a paper combining the findings of hundreds of giraffe studies. The paper shows that giraffes have many complicated and subtle social behaviors. For example, some female giraffes can form bonds that last many years. Mother giraffes also create “daycares” with other giraffe mothers. These groups allow the giraffes to share the responsibility of feeding and protecting young giraffes.

**years?** They also found that mother giraffes create daycares, where they take turns babysitting and feeding the young of other giraffes. Scientists have also found that giraffes have certain friends that they like to eat meals with. **Why do you think giraffes like to eat with their friends?** These findings make it clear that humans still have a lot to learn about giraffes. Sadly, giraffes are in trouble. Their population has decreased by 40 percent over the last 30 years. **NEXT** in many interesting and complicated ways. Female giraffes, for example, form daycares with other mother giraffes. Some females spend time babysitting and feeding the children of other giraffes. The researchers also found that giraffes prefer to eat meals with a friend. The researchers say that giraffes hadn’t been considered social in the past because they communicate in ways that are hard for humans to see and understand. Giraffes don’t bark or call in loud and obvious ways. Instead, they make low humming sounds.

Humans still have a lot to learn about giraffes, but, unfortunately, these animals are in trouble. Experts say giraffe populations have fallen over 40 percent in the last 30 years because of habitat loss and hunting. **What do you think should be done to protect these animals?** **NEXT**

The researchers also found that some giraffes have specific friends that they prefer to eat meals with. **Why do you think giraffes have this preference?** Scientists believe that giraffes haven’t been considered social in the past because the animals communicate in ways that are hard for humans to see and understand. A recent study found that giraffes use low-frequency humming sounds to communicate at night, although experts still aren’t sure what purpose these sounds serve.

Unfortunately, the giraffe population in Africa has been under threat for decades. Giraffes are currently listed as vulnerable to extinction by the International Union for Conservation of Nature. The giraffe population has fallen by 40 percent over the last 30 years. **What should be done to protect giraffes?** **NEXT**



# New study finds giraffes are as social as chimps and elephants (cont'd)

The giraffe is the tallest land animal in the world.

**BASIC** From the map here, on what continent do giraffes live?

(*Africa.*) Giraffes are the tallest land animals in the world. Male giraffes can be 20 feet tall and weigh more than 3,000 pounds. Giraffes are ruminants, like cows and sheep. This means they chew their food more than once before digesting it. That is a lot of chewing, because adult giraffes eat about 75 pounds of leaves a day. Their long necks are great for reaching high branches. But their necks make drinking water from the ground difficult. Luckily, giraffes get most of their water from the leaves they eat. Giraffes travel in herds

**GENERAL** Giraffes only live in the wild on one continent. **From the map, which one?** (*Africa.*) The giraffe is the tallest living land animal. Male giraffes can reach up to 20 feet tall and can weigh more than 3,000 pounds. In the wild, they can live for 25 years. Because of their long necks, giraffes have extra-large lungs to draw air through their long windpipes. They also have very large hearts to pump blood through their bodies. A giraffe’s heart can be two feet across. Their long necks are great for reaching leaves on high branches. But giraffes must adjust their bodies to get low enough to the ground to drink water. Fortunately, they get most of their water from the leaves they eat and can go long periods without drinking. Giraffes consume about 75 pounds of

**ADVANCED** Giraffes mainly live in Africa’s dry woodlands and savannas. **From the map, in what parts of Africa do they live?** (*Southern and Eastern Africa.*) Giraffes are ruminants, like cows, sheep, and camels. **What are the characteristics of ruminants?** (*They have hooves and chew cud, or partially digested, regurgitated food.*) Giraffes are the tallest living land animal. Male giraffes are often 20 feet tall and weigh 3,000 pounds. Adults eat about 75 pounds of vegetation every day. Giraffes prefer to eat the leaves and twigs of acacia trees. To do this, they spend from 16 to 20 hours a day standing and walking, and sleep no more than two hours a day.

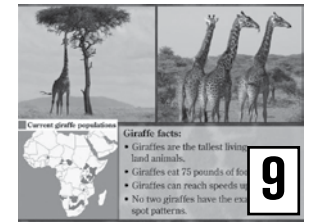
Like most mammals, including humans, giraffes have seven bones in their necks. In giraffes, these bones are much longer,

to protect themselves from predators like lions. They can also run up to 35 miles per hour. But those predators have to be careful, too. Giraffes can use their strong legs to fight and kill attackers. Sometimes they use their long, powerful necks to fight each other. But that is very rare, because giraffes prefer to live peacefully with each other. And each giraffe is special, because no two giraffes have the same spot pattern. **What do you find most interesting about giraffes?** **END**

twigs and leaves a day. To get this much food, they spend from 16 to 20 hours a day standing and walking. They sleep no more than 2 hours a day.

Giraffes are ruminants, like cows and sheep. This means they have hooves and chew cud. Cud is partially digested food that they bring up from their stomachs and chew again. Giraffes always travel in herds of at least six or seven animals. They are capable of running up to 35 miles per hour. This helps them avoid predators and protect their young. But predators are also cautious around giraffes. **Why?** (*They’re very strong; one kick from a giraffe’s powerful leg can kill a lion.*) And each giraffe is unique, because it has its own pattern of spots on its coat. **What do you think is most interesting about giraffes?** **END**

and supported by strong neck muscles. Giraffes have extra-large lungs to draw air through their large windpipes, and large, powerful hearts. A giraffe’s heart can weigh more than 20 pounds and measure two feet across. Still, their necks aren’t long enough to reach the ground easily. Fortunately, they can go days without drinking, because they get most of the water they need from the leaves they eat. Giraffes protect their young from predators by traveling in herds. **How do you think giraffes fight off predators?** (*With their powerful leg-kick, which can kill a lion.*) Their legs are so powerful that giraffes can reach speeds up to 35 miles per hour. Each giraffe sports a different pattern of spots, and no two individuals share the same pattern. **What do you find most surprising about giraffes? Why?** **END**

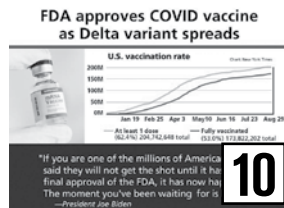


# FDA approves COVID vaccine as Delta variant spreads

Pfizer also seeks approval for booster shots.

**BASIC** The Food and Drug Administration, or FDA, is a government group that makes sure food and medicines are safe. Recently, the FDA announced that it had fully approved the Pfizer vaccine, one of the COVID-19 vaccines. The FDA spent a long time studying the science behind the vaccines to make sure they were safe for people to take. **Have you or anyone you know gotten one of the vaccines?** Now that the vaccine has been fully approved, some businesses and organizations have said they will make all employees get the vaccine. The U.S. Defense Department,

another government group, has already said they will have a vaccine mandate. A mandate is a command to act a certain way. **Do you think businesses should be able to make people who work for them get vaccinated? Why or why not?** Some schools around the country are making all their teachers get vaccinated as well. **Can someone read the quote here? What is President Biden saying?** NEXT



**GENERAL** The Food and Drug Administration, or FDA, is a government agency that oversees food and medicine safety in the U.S. Recently, the FDA announced it had fully approved the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. Last year, the FDA gave two vaccines emergency use authorization. This authorization allowed Americans to start receiving the vaccines earlier this year. These vaccines went through a lot of testing before they were authorized for use. But the FDA wanted to do more testing before giving full approval. The FDA hopes the new approval will encourage more Americans to get vaccinated. **What can you tell about the vaccination rate from the graph here? Do you think more people will get vaccinated now? Why or why not?**

begin requiring employees to be vaccinated. For example, the U.S. Defense Department has announced a vaccine mandate for its employees. A mandate is a command to act in a certain way on a public issue. Some school districts will also require their teachers to be vaccinated. **Do you think your school district should have a vaccine mandate? Why or why not?**

Pfizer also recently asked the FDA to approve booster vaccinations. Booster shots are additional vaccines that would help boost immunity against COVID. **What does immunity mean here?** (*The ability to resist a particular disease.*) Experts say booster shots could help defend against the more contagious Delta variant of the COVID virus. **Can someone read the quote? Why do you think so many people are hesitant to get vaccinated?** NEXT

**ADVANCED** On August 23<sup>rd</sup>, the Federal Food and Drug Administration, or FDA, announced that it had fully approved the Pfizer-BioNTech COVID-19 vaccine. In December of last year, the FDA gave both the Pfizer and Moderna vaccines emergency use authorization. This allowed public health groups to begin vaccinating people in early 2021. Both vaccines went through vigorous testing before being approved for emergency use. But the FDA needed to do more testing before granting full approval. The FDA hopes that the approval will encourage more people to get vaccinated. **Why do you think the approval process took so long?** (*The FDA looks at hundreds of thousands of pages of data, while inspecting how vaccines are made. They also needed to study the long-term effects of the vaccines.*) **What can you tell about the current**

**vaccination rate from the graph here?** Now that the vaccine has been approved, some organizations may require employees to be vaccinated. The U.S. Defense Department, for example, has announced a vaccine mandate. **What does mandate mean?** (*A command to act in a certain way on a public issue.*) And New York City announced that it would require all public-school teachers to be vaccinated. **Should businesses and government agencies require vaccinations? Why or why not?**

Pfizer is now asking the FDA to approve a booster shot for those who have already been vaccinated, as the immune response lessens over time. Boosters could help improve immunity against the more contagious Delta variant. **Can someone read the quote here? Do you think more people will get vaccinated now?** NEXT

# FDA approves COVID vaccine as Delta variant spreads (cont'd)

The Delta variant has caused a surge in COVID cases.

**BASIC** This summer, a new version of the COVID-19 virus began spreading around the world. This virus is called the Delta variant. As viruses spread, they sometimes change and act differently. This change is called a mutation. Experts say the Delta variant is easier to catch than the original virus. The Delta variant is as easy to catch as chickenpox. Because the Delta variant is so easy to catch, the number of people who have caught COVID has gone up in the last few months. States in the south, like Florida and Mississippi, have seen a big spike in case numbers.

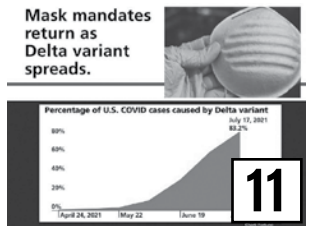
**GENERAL** During the summer, the Delta variant of the COVID-19 virus caused case numbers around the country to rise. The Delta variant is a mutation of the COVID-19 virus. As viruses spread, they sometimes mutate, or change, in ways that can make them more dangerous. The Delta variant is more contagious than the original virus. It was first found in India last December. But since then, the new virus has spread around the world. It is currently the most common type of COVID caught in the U.S. **From the graph, what percent of COVID cases were caused by the Delta variant in mid-July?** (83.2%.)

The Delta variant spread rapidly across the American South this summer, with major outbreaks in states like Florida and Mississippi. At one point in August, Florida

**ADVANCED** Last year, scientists identified a new strain of the COVID-19 virus in India. This strain is a mutation of the COVID-19 virus called the Delta variant. As viruses spread, they sometimes change, or mutate. **What is a mutation?** (*A change in the DNA structure of a cell.*) In the case of COVID-19, these mutations have made the virus more contagious. Since the Delta variant was discovered, it has spread across the world and is now the dominant strain of COVID in the U.S. **From the graph, what percent of COVID cases were caused by the Delta variant in mid-July?** (83.2%.)

Over the summer, the Delta variant spread rapidly across the southern U.S. States like Florida and Mississippi experienced case numbers as high as when COVID-19 first arrived in the U.S. At one point, Florida alone was responsible

To help stop the spread of the Delta variant, some states, cities, and schools are bringing back their mask mandates. The Centers for Disease Control, or CDC, recently announced even people who have been vaccinated should keep wearing masks inside. **Does your city or school have a mask mandate? How do you feel about it?** END



was responsible for about 20 percent of all cases in the U.S. **Why do you think things were so bad there?** Experts think cases will begin to start going down in the South soon. But surges are expected in the Midwest in September and October.

In late July, the Centers for Disease Control, or CDC, changed its suggestions about wearing masks. Earlier this year, the CDC said vaccinated people could gather indoors without masks. But due to rising case numbers, the organization has suggested vaccinated people continue to wear masks indoors. Some states and cities around the country have created new mask mandates in response. Many schools are requiring students to wear masks when they return this fall as well. **Has your town or city started a new mask mandate? How do you feel about it?** END

for 20 percent of all U.S. cases. **Why do you think these states were hit so hard?** Experts believe case numbers will soon begin to decrease in the South, but they expect new surges in Midwest states in September and October. **What do you think could be done to prevent additional surges?**

In response to the spreading variant, the Centers for Disease Control, or CDC, recently updated its mask recommendation. Earlier this year, the CDC said vaccinated people could gather indoors without masks, but now the agency has recommended that even vaccinated people continue to wear masks inside. Many states and cities around the country have reinstated their previously mask mandates. **Does your city require wearing masks inside? Do you agree with this policy? Why or why not?** END

# Country of the Week: Germany

Germany is one of the most powerful nations in the world.

**BASIC** Germany is one of the most powerful countries in the world. It is only a bit larger than the state of New Mexico. But it has a population of more than 82 million people. **In what continent is it located?** (*Europe.*) Germany is in the center of Europe and borders nine other countries. **From the map, can you name some of them?** (*France, Poland, Austria, Switzerland, and others.*) It also borders the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. Germany has many beautiful areas, like the one in the photo at right. **What do you see in this picture?** It also has some of Europe's

**GENERAL** Germany is slightly larger than the state of New Mexico, but it has a population of more than 82 million people. It borders nine other European nations. **From the map, can you name some?** (*France, Poland, Austria, Switzerland, and others.*) Germany also borders the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. Germany has many beautiful areas, featuring mountains and valleys, like the one at right. **What do you see in this photo?** Part of the mountain range called the Alps is located there. It also contains some of the oldest and most important cities in Europe. Hamburg, the country's second-biggest city, is shown here. **What is the largest city in Germany?** (*Berlin, the capital.*)

Germany has a high number of recent immigrants. In the past few years, it has taken in more than one million refugees

**ADVANCED** Germany borders nine other European countries. **Can you name any?** (*Poland, France, Austria, Belgium, and others.*) It also borders two major bodies of water that are part of the Atlantic Ocean: the North Sea and the Baltic Sea. Tourists flock to Germany to see beautiful mountains and valleys, as shown here, as well as historic castles and other sites. Tourists also visit Germany's second largest city, Hamburg, and its capital and largest city, Berlin, to experience the rich culture, architecture, and famous food of Germany.

Germany is about the size of New Mexico, but more than 82 million people live there. Germany has the world's fifth-largest economy, and leads the world in exports of cars, electronics, industrial equipment, and pharmaceuticals. It is also a leader in both coal mining AND solar and wind

greatest cities. The picture here shows the country's second-largest city, Hamburg.

**From the map, what is Germany's capital city?** (*Berlin, which is also the largest city.*) Germany has a very strong economy. Angela Merkel—*ON-gah-lah MUR-kul*—is the country's chancellor, or leader. She has been in charge of Germany for sixteen years, but she is going to retire after the next election and a new leader will take over. **NEXT**

from people escaping war in Africa and the Middle East. One reason so many immigrants settle in Germany is that it has one of the world's largest economies. Germany exports more machinery, vehicles, and other manufactured items than almost any other nation. It also exports valuable minerals such as coal, iron, and uranium. Germans also receive government benefits, like free healthcare and low-cost college tuition. **Would you like Americans to get these services?** On September 26th, Germany will hold an election to choose the country's leader for the next four years. Angela Merkel—*ON-gah-lah MUR-kul*—who has served as chancellor since 2005, has chosen not to run again. During her time in office, she has been called the most influential politician in the world. **Do you agree? Why or why not?** **NEXT**

power. Germans enjoy a high standard of living. The government provides benefits that include high unemployment pay, universal healthcare, and inexpensive college tuition. **Would you like to see the U.S. offer such benefits?**

Angela Merkel has been Germany's chancellor since 2005. She is often seen as the unofficial leader of the European Union due to her power and influence. She has also been a bold leader during Europe's refugee crisis, welcoming more than one million people from the Middle East and Africa into Germany. **How will this help Germany's economy?** (*It provides a younger workforce for a country with an aging population.*) Germany is having an election on September 26th; however Merkel has chosen not to run again. **What is your opinion of her as a leader?** **NEXT**



# Country of the Week: Germany (cont'd)

Germany was once called "the land of poets and thinkers."

**BASIC** Germans are proud of most of their country's history and culture. Many famous musicians and writers grew up and lived in Germany. **Who was Ludwig van Beethoven?** (*One of the most famous music composers of all time.*) But there are some parts of German history that its people are not proud of at all. Starting in the 1930s, the Nazi Party took over German politics. This party believed that white, non-Jewish Germans were better than all other people. **Who was the leader of the Nazi Party?** (*Adolf Hitler.*) Hitler invaded other countries in Europe. This led to World War Two. After Germany

**GENERAL** The German people are proud of their culture. This country was often called "the land of poets and thinkers." Some of the most famous music composers of all time lived in Germany. One of them, Ludwig van Beethoven, is shown here. Can you think of others? (*Wolfgang Mozart, J.S. Bach, Richard Wagner, and so on.*) **What else do you think of when you think of German culture?**

Germany's history from the 20th century is not as inspiring. After Germany lost World War One, a terrible dictator gained power. **Who was this dictator?** (*Adolf Hitler, who founded the Nazi Party.*) He blamed Germany's problems on Jewish people and other groups. **Why do you think Germans listened to him?** In 1939, Nazi Germany invaded Poland and started World War Two. The Nazis also

**ADVANCED** Germany was once divided into locally ruled states. These states shared a common language and a vibrant culture, which produced many of the world's greatest authors, philosophers, and composers, including Ludwig van Beethoven. **How many other famous Germans can you name?** (*Wolfgang Mozart, Karl Marx, Johann Wolfgang von Goethe, Immanuel Kant, Friedrich Nietzsche, and Albert Einstein, to name a few.*) In 1871, Germany became one nation. But expansion of the empire helped trigger World War One. Germany's loss in that war devastated its economy, helping a militant party to take power. **What was it called, and what was its ideology?** (*The National Socialist German Workers' Party, or the Nazi Party, led by Adolf Hitler, believed that white non-Jewish Germans were genetically*

lost this war, the US, Great Britain, France, and Russia divided up Germany.

The Soviet Union, led by Russia, kept East Germany, but the other countries soon left West Germany to be on its own. In 1989, as the Soviet Union was coming to an end, Germans broke down the wall that separated East and West Berlin, as you see in the bottom picture, and the country was brought together again. **Why do you think this was so important for Germany?** **END**

started a period called the Holocaust in which they killed millions of people, including six million Jews in Europe. In 1945, Hitler was finally defeated by Great Britain, France, the U.S., and the Soviet Union. These countries divided Germany into four zones. Britain, the U.S., and France soon gave their zones back. This area became West Germany. But the Soviet Union kept East Germany. In 1961, they built a wall between East and West Berlin. In 1989, protesters in East Berlin began demanding that the wall be torn down. The protests grew, with East and West Germans standing on the wall and then knocking it down. The bottom photo shows this dramatic event. **What do you see in this photo?** In 1990, East and West Germany were reunited as a single country. **What do you think the wall symbolized for Germans?** **END**

*superior to any other people on Earth.*) The Nazis invaded Poland in 1939, setting off World War Two. They also started what later came to be called the Holocaust, during which they murdered ten million people, including six million Jews. In 1945, the Allied Forces finally defeated the Nazis and divided Germany into four zones. The Western powers soon turned over their zones to German leadership. The Soviet Union, however, kept East Germany. **What did it do to keep East Berliners from escaping to the West?** (*It built the Berlin Wall in 1961.*) In 1989, in the face of huge demonstrations in East Berlin, the wall was brought down. East and West Germany formally reunited the next year. Today, Germany is one of the most tolerant and progressive countries in the world. **How do you think it is affected by its past?** **END**



# This Week in History

Labor Day always falls on the first Monday in September.

On the first Monday in September, people in the United States observe the holiday known as Labor Day. Many people take advantage of the three-day weekend to get out of town, have a family gathering, or binge-watch their favorite shows. But amid all the fun, it is important to remember that Labor Day honors working people, and the labor unions that represent them.

**What is a labor union, and what does it do?** (*It is an organization of workers in a certain profession that advocates for better wages and safer working conditions.*) **Do you know anyone who has ever belonged to a union?**

For many years, U.S. employers had all the power over their workers. They could hire or fire anyone for any reason, or no reason at all. Many employers expected staff to work six days a week, at least ten hours per day, in often-unsafe conditions. There were no laws preventing companies from hiring children for certain jobs. And wages, of course, were completely up to each individual business owner. If a worker didn't like their work situation, they had two choices: quit and look for something else, or keep their jobs by keeping their mouths shut. **Should workers have a say in their own work conditions? Why or why not?**

In 1768, some tailors in New York became frustrated at having their wages cut. They got together and decided to stop working until the problem was fixed. **What is this kind of action called?** (*A strike.*) This was the first strike in the Americas. It prompted skilled workers in some other industries to organize themselves into unions. But union membership really started to grow with the rise of factories after the Civil War. **When did the Civil War take place?** (*1861 to 1865.*) Some business owners, threatened by the growing power of workers, fired any worker who tried to organize a union. Rich businesspeople talked politicians into passing laws against strikes and other activities. These owners could then call the police — and their own private security forces — on their own workers. Some of these situations

led to violent clashes, with deaths and injuries on both sides.

**How would you feel about this if you were a worker? How do you think owners felt about this?**

As union membership grew, smaller unions started to join together to form larger organizations. The man shown here, P.J. McGuire, was a vice president of the biggest unions, the American Federation of Labor. In 1882, McGuire came up with the idea of a day to honor all workers, as well as the unions that represented them. He chose the first Monday of September because it was halfway between two other important holidays. **What do you think these holidays are?** (*The Fourth of July and Thanksgiving.*) This idea soon spread to states across the country before Congress made Labor Day an official federal holiday in 1894.

In the 1930s, labor unions were able to win workplace improvements that we now take for granted. Some of these improvements are listed here. **Who wants to read the list?** These fights helped workers to enjoy better and safer work conditions, better wages, and better lives. Unions also battled for years to pass laws regulating child labor. **What would it be like to work in dangerous conditions as a child, like the mine workers shown here?** After several tries, Congress finally passed the Fair Labor Standards Act in 1938. This law restricted the kind of jobs that could be done by people under the age of 16, as well as the number of hours they could work. **How do you feel about this law?** Despite these gains, however, the number of Americans who belong to unions has declined from more than 30 percent in 1955 to about ten percent today. **Why do you think fewer people belong to unions now? Will this number rise again later, or do you think labor unions are done as a political force?**  
END



# Faces and Places

## Sirhan Sirhan

On August 27<sup>th</sup>, a California parole board recommended Sirhan Sirhan for parole. Sirhan was found guilty of murdering Robert F. Kennedy, the former U.S. Senator and brother of President John F. Kennedy. Robert Kennedy was killed at the age of 42, after giving a speech at the Ambassador Hotel in Los Angeles in 1968. Sirhan was convicted and sentenced to death in 1969, but after three years in prison, was given a life sentence instead. Sirhan has been in prison ever since. He is now 77 years old and has attempted to gain parole 16 times. Six of Robert Kennedy's children have condemned the parole board's decision, while two of Kennedy's children have supported it. California Governor Gavin Newsom will review the case before making a final decision on whether or not to grant Sirhan his freedom. **Do you think Sirhan should be released from prison? Why or why not?**

## Charlie Watts

Charlie Watts, the drummer for the British rock band the Rolling Stones, died at the age of 80 on Tuesday, August 24<sup>th</sup>. Watts had been a member of the band since he joined in 1963. During the 1960s and 70s, the Rolling Stones were one of the most popular bands in the world. Watts was born in London, England, in 1941 and displayed musical talent at an early age. He received his first drum kit from his parents in 1955. Watts worked as a graphic designer and played drums in a jazz band on the side until he met members of the Rolling Stones in the 60s. Watts was known to be a more reserved person than his bandmates Mick Jagger and Keith Richards. Watts was considered by many to be one of the best rock drummers of all time. Rolling Stone magazine put him at number 12 on their list of "100 Greatest Drummers of All Time." **Are you a fan of the Rolling Stones? What do you think made Watts' drumming special?**



## Louisiana

On Sunday, August 29<sup>th</sup>, Hurricane Ida made landfall in Louisiana. Ida was a category 4 hurricane, making it the most powerful storm to strike Louisiana since Hurricane Katrina in 2005. Reports show that the storm contributed to the deaths of five people. Ida caused extreme flooding in coastal areas, and search-and-rescue teams are still working to rescue people in some of the hardest-hit areas. More than one million people in Louisiana lost power due to the storm and experts estimate it could take months to restore electricity across the state. The levees and floodwalls that protect the city of New Orleans survived the storm, but some areas around the city still experienced major flooding. The storm is believed to have caused at least \$15 billion worth of insured damage so far. **What should Louisiana do to help prevent major power losses from storms in the future?**

## Singapore

In late August, the nation of Singapore announced it had fully vaccinated 80 percent of its population, or around 4.4 million people. The announcement means Singapore has the highest vaccination rate of any country in the world. Several other countries have vaccinated at least 70 percent of their populations, including Chile, Uruguay, and the United Arab Emirates. Singapore has managed the COVID pandemic well compared to other countries. So far, they have reported a total of 67,171 confirmed cases and only 55 deaths. With the success of the vaccination program, Singapore plans to ease some of its COVID restrictions. The country will now allow travelers from certain countries and intends to reopen its economy slowly. Masks are still mandatory in most public places, group gatherings are limited, and residents must use a contact tracing app. **Why do you think Singapore was so successful in its vaccine campaign?**



# Where in the World?

reproducible activity

Write the names and numbers of the locations on the map next to their descriptions below.

a. Angela Merkel, this nation's leader since 2005, will not be running for re-election.

b. A U.S.-led coalition ousted Saddam Hussein as this country's leader.

c. Researchers in this country found that giraffes are very social animals.

d. One of the airplanes used in the 9/11 attacks crashed in a rural area of this state.

e. Tens of thousands of people have fled this country since the Taliban regained control there.

f. Tailors in this state held the first U.S. labor strike.

Answers on inside back cover



## Standards in this issue

This week's issue of NewsCurrents relates to the following Common Core standards for English Language Arts:

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.1  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.2  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.3  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.4

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.7  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.L.6  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.1  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.2

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.3  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.4  
CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.6

The stories in this week's issue of NewsCurrents apply to the following content area standards: National Council of Social Studies (NCSS) Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS)

### Who am I?

#### NCSS:

THEMATIC: People, Places, and Environments; Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Power, Authority, and Governance; Production, Distribution, & Consumption; Science, Technology, and Society; Civic Ideals and Practices  
DISCIPLINARY: History; Geography; Civics and Government; Economics; Psychology

#### NGSS:

DISCIPLINARY CORE IDEAS: Life Science; Engineering, Technology, & the Application of Science

### FDA approves COVID vaccine as Delta variant spreads

#### NCSS:

THEMATIC: Time, Continuity, and Change; People, Places, and Environments; Individual Development and Identity; Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Power, Authority, and Governance; Production, Distribution, & Consumption; Science, Technology, and Society; Civic Ideals and Practices  
DISCIPLINARY: History; Civics and Government; Economics; Psychology

#### NGSS:

DISCIPLINARY CORE IDEAS: Life Science; Physical Science; Engineering, Technology, & the Application of Science

### The 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks

#### NCSS:

THEMATIC: Culture and Cultural Diversity; Time, Continuity, and Change; People, Places, and Environments; Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Power, Authority, and Governance; Production, Distribution, & Consumption; Science, Technology, and Society; Global Connections; Civic Ideals and Practices

DISCIPLINARY: History; Geography; Civics and Government; Economics; Psychology

#### NGSS:

DISCIPLINARY CORE IDEAS: Life Science; Physical Science; Engineering, Technology, & the Application of Science

### Country of the Week: Germany

#### NCSS:

THEMATIC: Culture and Cultural Diversity; Time, Continuity, and Change; People, Places, and Environments; Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Power, Authority, and Governance; Production, Distribution, & Consumption; Science, Technology, and Society; Global Connections; Civic Ideals and Practices  
DISCIPLINARY: History; Geography; Civics and Government; Economics; Psychology

#### NGSS:

DISCIPLINARY CORE IDEAS: Life Science; Earth and Space Science; Engineering, Technology, & the Application of Science

### Afghans attempt to flee the country after Taliban takeover

#### NCSS:

THEMATIC: Culture and Cultural Diversity; Time, Continuity, and Change; People, Places, and Environments; Individual Development and Identity; Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Power, Authority, and Governance; Production, Distribution, & Consumption; Science, Technology, and Society; Global Connections; Civic Ideals and Practices

DISCIPLINARY: History; Geography; Civics and Government; Economics; Psychology

#### NGSS:

DISCIPLINARY CORE IDEAS: Life Science; Engineering, Technology, & the Application of Science

### This Week in History: Labor Day

#### NCSS:

THEMATIC: Time, Continuity, and Change; People, Places, and Environments; Individual Development and Identity; Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Power, Authority, and Governance; Production, Distribution, & Consumption; Science, Technology, and Society; Civic Ideals and Practices  
DISCIPLINARY: History; Civics and Government; Economics; Psychology

#### NGSS:

DISCIPLINARY CORE IDEAS: Life Science; Engineering, Technology, & the Application of Science

### Faces & Places

#### NCSS:

THEMATIC: Culture and Cultural Diversity; Time, Continuity, and Change; People, Places, and Environments; Individual Development and Identity; Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Power, Authority, and Governance; Production, Distribution, & Consumption; Science, Technology, and Society; Global Connections; Civic Ideals and Practices  
DISCIPLINARY: History; Geography; Civics and Government; Economics; Psychology

#### NGSS:

DISCIPLINARY CORE IDEAS: Life Science; Earth and Space Science; Physical Science; Engineering, Technology, & the Application of Science

### New study finds giraffes are as social as chimps and elephants

#### NCSS:

THEMATIC: Culture and Cultural Diversity; Individuals, Groups, and Institutions; Production, Distribution, & Consumption; Science, Technology, and Society; Global Connections

DISCIPLINARY: History; Geography; Psychology

#### NGSS:

DISCIPLINARY CORE IDEAS: Life Science; Engineering, Technology, & the Application of Science

# Reading, Writing, & Inquiry

## September 11<sup>th</sup> oral history

Speak to at least five people who remember the September 11<sup>th</sup> attacks. Ask them what they remember about that day, and write down their answers.

## Afghanistan coverage

For one week, monitor news stories about Afghanistan from newspapers, TV, radio, and the internet. At the end of the week, sum up your feelings about how this story is being covered by the media.

## Giraffe art project

Create an original piece of visual art, using giraffes as your inspiration. (Note: your artwork doesn't have to be realistic.)

## Local Delta variant update

Do some research to find out the current situation in your state or local area when it comes to the Delta variant. Write a brief (one-paragraph) summary of what you learn.

### Internet links

To learn more about this week's stories go to:

[www.newscurrents.com/](http://www.newscurrents.com/)

## The NewsCurrents Student Editorial Cartoon Contest

### THE RULES:

Entrants can submit original cartoons on any subject of national or international interest. Students may submit as many cartoons as they wish.

① Each cartoon must be verified as the original work of the student by one of the student's teachers. The teacher's signature on the back of the cartoon will serve as verification.

② Each cartoon must include the student's name, grade, address, and home telephone number, and the teacher's name, name of school, school address, and school telephone number. Please print this information legibly on the back of each cartoon. Cartoons without this information will be disqualified.

③ Contest winners will receive cash prizes.

④ All cartoons must be postmarked by Friday, April 15th, 2022. Please mail entries to:

**NewsCurrents Editorial  
Cartoon Contest  
P.O. Box 52, Madison, WI  
53701**

### Copyright Notice:

All cartoons become the property of Knowledge Unlimited, Inc., and may be used for publicity and other purposes. We're sorry, but cartoons cannot be returned.

## Word Jumble

This jumble features some of the biggest animals on Earth.

1. PATHELEN \_\_\_\_\_
2. SCTHORI \_\_\_\_\_
3. EBUL HELAW \_\_\_\_\_
4. FIGFARE \_\_\_\_\_
5. RBNOW AREB \_\_\_\_\_
6. NASAKAL SOMOE \_\_\_\_\_
7. MARYEDDRO MACEL \_\_\_\_\_
8. CIRAAMEN IBSNO \_\_\_\_\_
9. AGTIN UDIQS \_\_\_\_\_
10. WALTERSAT OILERDOCC \_\_\_\_\_

## BASIC REVIEW QUIZ

- 1) Osama bin Laden was a founder of the (CHOOSE ONE: Boko Haram, al-Qaeda) terrorist group.
- 2) After the September 11th attacks, President (CHOOSE ONE: Bill Clinton, George W. Bush) declared a “War on Terror.”
- 3) TRUE OR FALSE: Kabul is the capital city of Iraq.
- 4) A military group known as (CHOOSE ONE: al-Qaeda, the Taliban) recently took over the country of Afghanistan.
- 5) TRUE OR FALSE: Female giraffes create “daycares” where they take care of the young of other giraffes.
- 6) TRUE OR FALSE: Giraffes only live in the wild on the continent of Africa.
- 7) The FDA is a government group that makes sure food and (CHOOSE ONE: medicines, airplanes) are safe.
- 8) Experts say the (CHOOSE ONE: Delta, Beta) variant of COVID-19 is easier to catch than the original virus.
- 9) A large wall once separated Germany’s capital city, (CHOOSE ONE: Berlin, Bonn), into two parts.
- 10) TRUE OR FALSE: Labor Day is observed on the first Monday of October.

### ESSAY OR DEBATE QUESTION

What could countries around the world do to further help the people of Afghanistan?

## GENERAL REVIEW QUIZ

- 1) The September 11th attacks were masterminded by \_\_\_\_\_, leader of al-Qaeda.
- 2) After the attacks, Pres. Bush declared a “War on \_\_\_\_\_.”
- 3) Afghanistan’s capital city, Kabul, was recently overtaken by a military group known as the \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) Afghans that have been forced to flee their country because of violence are now considered \_\_\_\_\_.
- 5) Giraffes communicate using a low (CHOOSE ONE: humming, growling) sound.
- 6) Giraffes are (CHOOSE ONE: mustelids, ruminants) like cows and sheep.
- 7) Last year, the FDA gave two vaccines (CHOOSE ONE: emergency, temporary) use authorization.
- 8) The U.S. \_\_\_\_\_ Department has announced a vaccine mandate for its employees.
- 9) German Chancellor \_\_\_\_\_ will not be running for re-election.
- 10) New York (CHOOSE ONE: glassblowers, tailors) held the first U.S. labor strike in 1768.

### ESSAY OR DEBATE QUESTION

Should U.S. citizens ever trade basic freedoms for increased safety, in your opinion? Use at least one example to illustrate your point.

## ADVANCED REVIEW QUIZ

- 1) The September 11th attacks targeted the twin towers of the World Trade Center in New York City and the \_\_\_\_\_ Building in Washington, D.C.
- 2) \_\_\_\_\_, who masterminded the 9/11 attacks, was hiding in \_\_\_\_\_ along with others from the al-Qaeda network.
- 3) The Taliban is an extremist group that previously controlled Afghanistan before the U.S. invaded in \_\_\_\_\_.
- 4) The only way for people to escape Afghanistan's capital city, \_\_\_\_\_, was to leave from the city's airport.
- 5) Giraffes, like cows and sheep, are \_\_\_\_\_, which means they chew \_\_\_\_\_.
- 6) Giraffes get most of the water they need from the leaves of the \_\_\_\_\_ tree.
- 7) The U.S. \_\_\_\_\_ Department recently announced a \_\_\_\_\_ mandate.
- 8) The \_\_\_\_\_ variant is now the dominant strain of COVID in the U.S.
- 9) The \_\_\_\_\_ Wall divided Germany's largest city from 1969 to 1981.
- 10) Congress passed the \_\_\_\_\_ Standards Act in 1938, which restricted the kinds of jobs that could be done by children under the age of 16, among other things.

## ESSAY OR DEBATE QUESTION

Was the "War on Terror" successful in the short term? Was it successful in the long term? Explain your answers.

## Answers to Where in the World:

- |                     |                   |
|---------------------|-------------------|
| a-2, Germany        | d-5, Pennsylvania |
| b-6, Iraq           | e-1, Afghanistan  |
| c-4, United Kingdom | f-3, New York     |

## Answers to Word Jumble:

- |               |                    |
|---------------|--------------------|
| 1. ELEPHANT   | 6. ALASKAN MOOSE   |
| 2. OSTRICH    | 7. DROMEDARY CAMEL |
| 3. BLUE WHALE | 8. AMERICAN BISON  |
| 4. GIRAFFE    | 9. GIANT SQUID     |
| 5. BROWN BEAR | 10. SALTWATER      |

## Solution to Word Search:

E	I	L	T	O	E	O	E	A	I	W	A	L	H	F	D	F	B
Y	N	O	I	A	R	I	M	U	R	R	A	Y	H	H	A	I	
S	O	I	A	D	L	O	C	D	E	E	E	R	I	E	N	H	N
B	S	E	A	T	L	I	G	T	G	U	O	R	L	E	W	I	S
O	R	G	R	E	R	H	U	E	R	T	A	H	L	D	T	L	C
I	T	H	O	S	W	L	I	K	H	H	D	A	M	A	I	L	A
R	E	L	S	M	U	E	R	V	I	E	D	S	A	A	N	R	L
L	R	U	H	W	P	P	E	T	E	R	S	O	N	R	H	R	M
Y	A	U	N	I	I	E	O	M	R	E	K	N	S	S	W	D	E
H	D	K	S	D	A	R	R	A	N	D	O	L	P	H	A	T	T
H	I	L	D	T	O	K	B	S	W	C	R	T	A	E	R	H	D
S	A	U	R	E	I	I	D	O	R	H	I	H	T	N	A	E	F
O	E	K	H	I	B	N	R	N	H	A	Y	W	O	O	D	O	N
M	E	U	R	H	E	S	E	T	N	V	W	B	R	D	T	E	T
T	A	N	D	E	A	L	J	O	N	E	S	T	H	T	E	A	S
E	O	Y	I	N	E	O	E	H	W	Z	A	T	N	S	A	S	I

## Quiz Answers

### BASIC QUIZ

- 1- al-Qaeda
- 2- George W. Bush
- 3- FALSE
- 4- the Taliban
- 5- TRUE
- 6- TRUE
- 7- medicines
- 8- Delta
- 9- Berlin
- 10- FALSE

### GENERAL QUIZ

- 1- Osama bin Laden
- 2- Terror
- 3- Taliban
- 4- refugees
- 5- humming
- 6- ruminants
- 7- emergency
- 8- Defense
- 9- Angela Merkel
- 10- tailors

### ADVANCED QUIZ

- 1- Pentagon
- 2- Osama bin Laden; Afghanistan
- 3- 2001
- 4- Kabul
- 5- ruminants; cud
- 6- acacia
- 7- Defense; vaccine
- 8- Delta
- 9- Berlin
- 10- Fair Labor

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# Word Search

Please find the LAST NAMES of these famed U.S. labor leaders in the word search below.

*Words can be found across, down, and backwards, forwards and diagonally.*

Cesár CHAVEZ	Mary Harris	Philip MURRAY
Eugene DEBS	“Mother” JONES	Frances PERKINS
Samuel GOMPERS	Lane KIRKLAND	Esther Eggertsen
“Big” Bill HAYWOOD	John L. LEWIS	PETERSON
Joe HILL	Lucy Randolph	A. Philip RANDOLPH
Sidney HILLMAN	MASON	Walter REUTHER
Dolores HUERTA	Peter J. MCGUIRE	Bayard RUSTIN

E I L T O E O E A I W A L H F D F B  
Y N O I A R I M U R R A Y H H H A I  
S O I A D L O C D E E E R I E N H N  
B S E A T L I G T G U O R L E W I S  
O R G R E R H U E R T A H L D T L C  
I T H O S W L I K H H D A M A I L A  
R E L S M U E R V I E D S A A N R L  
L R U H W P P E T E R S O N R H R M  
Y A U N I I E O M R E K N S S W D E  
H D K S D A R R A N D O L P H A T T  
H I L D T O K B S W C R T A E R H D  
S A U R E I I D O R H I H T N A E F  
O E K H I B N R N H A Y W O O D O N  
M E U R H E S E T N V W B R D T E T  
T A N D E A L J O N E S T H T E A S  
E O Y I N E O E H W Z A T N S A S I