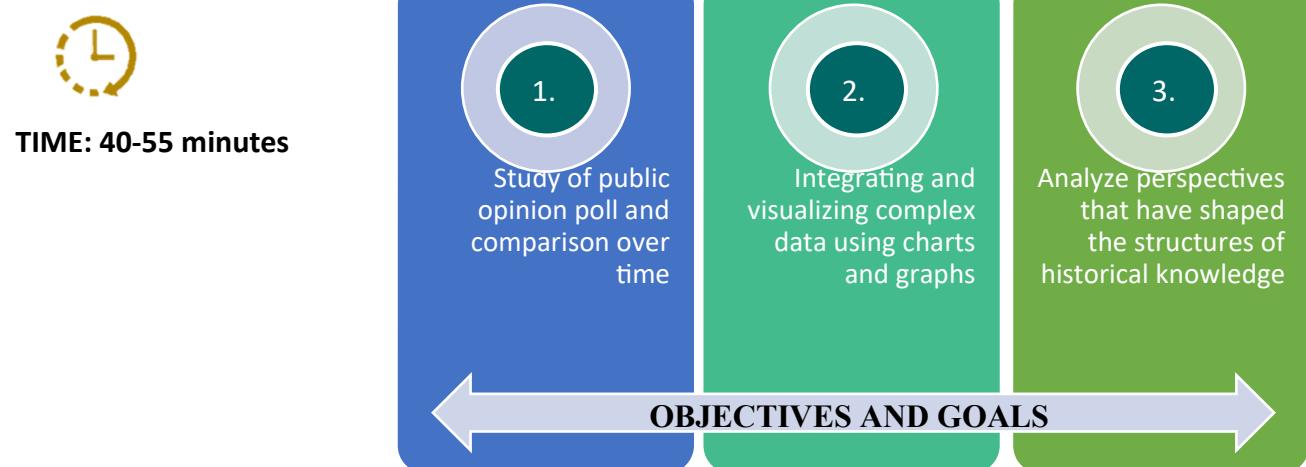


# REMEMBERING THE START OF WAR IN AFGHANISTAN:

## October 7, 2001-October 7, 2021.

### LESSON PLAN



### PROCEDURE

5 Minutes- teacher reads to class:

*The War in Afghanistan was the longest war in U.S. history. On Oct. 7<sup>th</sup> 2001, after a terror attack destroyed the World Trade Center in New York on September 11th, the US government led an international military to attack Afghanistan. It was believed that Osama bin Laden, the mastermind of the 9-11 attack on the U.S. and other acts of terrorism, was being protected by the Taliban, an Afghan Islamist group, that essentially ruled Afghanistan. Three years later, Al Qaeda, a radical terrorist group conquered the Taliban which meant that the U.S. led coalition had another enemy.*

*The 20-year-long conflict ultimately ended when the Taliban returned to power and re-established the Islamic Emirate. By that time, most of the US coalition partners had left Afghanistan, although US troops didn't leave Afghanistan until August 30, 2021.*

*At the time of the invasion in 2001, the war was overwhelmingly supported by the American public. However, with the passage of time, American support and opinions about the war changed. We are going to look at a line graph that helps visualize changes of public opinion about the war in Afghanistan over time and its cost to the American people.*

**OPTIONAL:** If your students need instruction on how to read a line graph Khan Academy offers a short explanation.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/math/statistics-probability/displaying-describing-data/more-on-data-displays/v/u08-l1-t2-we2-reading-line-graphs>

Line graphs are used to reveal a trend or comparison. Here is a line graph with results of a recent poll about the support of the war in Afghanistan. This line graph shows information on polling results over time.

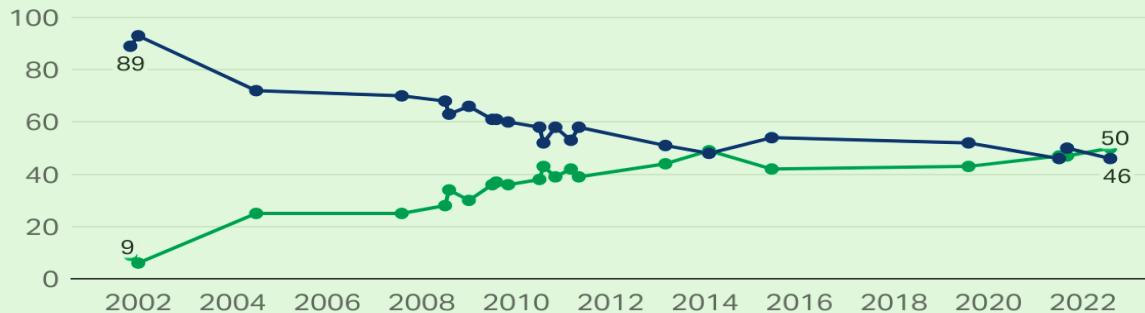
**TEACHER DISPLAY following chart:**

Gallup Poll: americans-divided-over-whether-afghanistan-war-was-mistake.png

### Americans Divided Over Whether Afghanistan War Was Mistake

Looking back, do you think the United States made a mistake sending troops to fight in Afghanistan in 2001, or not?

— % Yes, a mistake — % No, not a mistake



From 2001 to 2011, question read "Thinking now about U.S. military action in Afghanistan that began in October 2001, do you think the United States made a mistake in sending military forces to Afghanistan, or not?"

GALLUP

FROM: <https://news.gallup.com/poll/398726/year-withdrawal-call-afghanistan-war-mistake.aspx>



10 minutes:

**Teacher says:** Turning to your neighbor, discuss and answer the following questions. Teacher reads (and/or displays) the following questions one at a time, allowing students to interpret the graph with partners.

- 1.** What conclusion can you and your partner make about the support of the war in 2002? (*Answer: Support was over 90%*)
- 2.** Approximately what year was support of the war equal (50/50)? (*Answer: Approx. 2014/ answers may vary slightly*)
- 3.** A year after the troop withdrawal from Afghanistan in 2021, how many Americans supported the original 2001 decision to send troops to war? (*Answer: 46% supported the decision of U.S. to send troops to Afghanistan*)
- 4.** Again in 2022, what percentage of Americans polled say U.S. made a mistake sending troops to Afghanistan? (*Answer: 50% of Americans say the U.S. made a mistake in sending troops to the country*)
- 5.** What reason do you think half of all Americans lost support of the war? (*Possible answers: 20 years is too long for a war, Americans want troops to return home, it is costing Americans too much money to continue the war*)
- 6.** What reasons do you think 46% of Americans still supported the war? (*Possible answers: fear of terrorism, fear of failure*)

**Teacher reads:**

### **So why did the U.S. stay in Afghanistan so long?**

*At the beginning of the war, most Americans blamed the Taliban in Afghanistan for the terrorist attacks of 9/11 and hoped that the U.S. and her allies could end Taliban rule and establish a democracy in Afghanistan. Some believed that military action is the only way to deal with terrorists. As Americans began to consider leaving Afghanistan, some felt that if America left Afghanistan, it would make the U.S. look weak at home and internationally.*



**15 -20 minutes: Presentation and**

**Teacher reads:**

*Next we are going to review a pie chart which shows the U.S. spent \$2.313 trillion of American taxpayer money on the 20- year war in Afghanistan.*

**OPTIONAL:** If necessary, the teacher reads the following simple explanation of a circle graph:

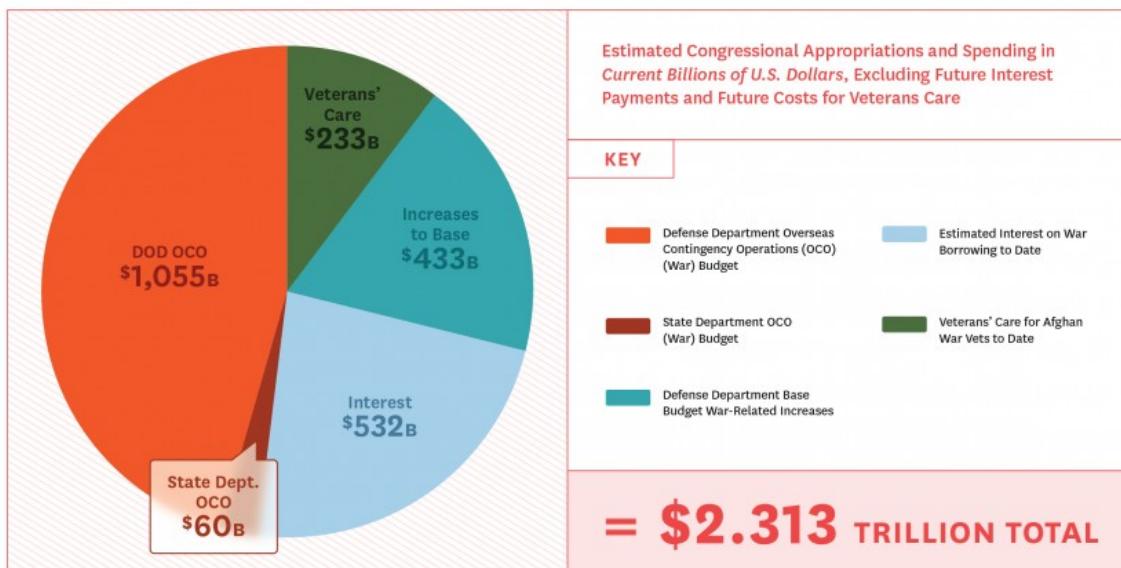
*A pie charts (or circle graphs) are used to represent data as portions (or segments) of a whole. Just as you would see a pizza pie cut up into pieces, a pie chart is divided into different pieces of data. Each portion represents a percentage of the pie. All portions add up to 100%.*

**Teacher continues reading:**

The circle or pie graph from Brown University below breaks down the total cost of the war in Afghanistan. The small case "b" in the chart represents one billion dollars. To put \$1 billion dollars into perspective-- if a person spent \$1 per second 24 hours a day it would take 27 years to spend it all. One trillion is 1000 billion dollars. So if a person spent \$1 per second 24 hours a day, it would take 27,000 years to spend an entire trillion dollars.

Here is a chart which shows Brown University research on how \$2.313 trillion dollars were spent.

### U.S. Costs to Date for the War in Afghanistan, in \$ Billions FY2001–FY2022\*



<https://watson.brown.edu/costsofwar/figures/2021/human-and-budgetary-costs-date-us-war-afghanistan-2001-2022>

**Teacher says:**

Turn to your partner and together read the chart and answer the following questions:

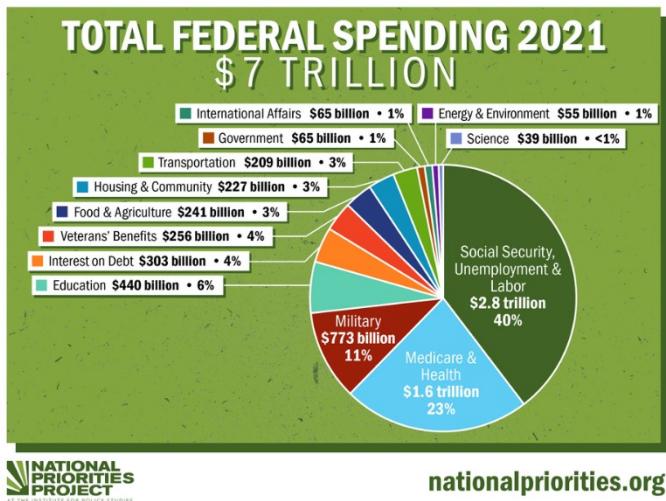
1. How many billions were spent on Federal Defense Department Overseas Operations?  
Answer: \$1055 billion
2. Is that over or under a trillion dollars?  
Answer: \$55 billion over \$1 trillion
3. How much money was spent on interest charges for borrowing money?  
Answer: \$532 billion
4. When added together, how much money came from the State Department budget and Increases to spending on military bases?  
Answer: \$493 billion total-\$60 billion on the State Department war budget and \$433 billion on Increase spending on military bases.Increase spending on military bases.
5. How much has been spent so far for our returning troops? Answer: 233 billion.

**Teacher says:**

died as a direct result of the war in Afghanistan. These figures do NOT include injuries, suicide and PTSD, deaths caused by disease, injury, loss of access to food, water, homes, infrastructure, and/or other indirect consequences of the war. 2,465 U.S. troops died in the war in Afghanistan. The Veterans Administration estimates that the US veteran suicide rate averages 17 per day. These estimates do not include the cost of the larger war in Iraq, where 4,586 US troops lives were lost).

**Teacher says:**

*Here is another circle graph. This one shows the US budget proposal for spending US tax dollars for 2021.*



*Teacher points out major expenditures in the pie graph and asks class the following questions:*

- 1. What surprises you about the budget? Ask about two students to answer.**
- 2. How many of you agree with these priorities? (raise hands)**

*Teacher continues: Every year the U.S. congress approves a budget proposal like this to decide where American tax dollars should be spent, but what if you were in charge of deciding how the 2021 discretionary funds were spent?*



**5-10 minutes:**

**PIE CHART ACTIVITY: Journal or hand in for participation**

*Draw your own simple circle graph. Use 4 categories by combining some (Example: transportation, community services and housing as ONE category). Fill in the chart in a way that reflects your values and explain why you think a particular area deserves to be the biggest piece of the pie.*



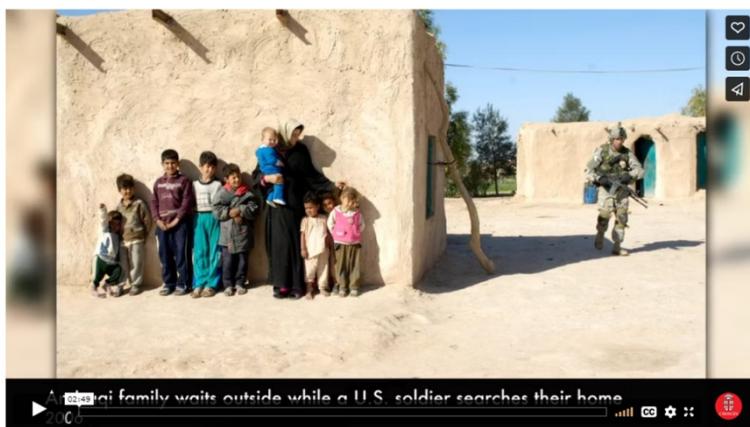
**5 minutes**

### **VIDEO CLOSURE/CONTEXT: Video and written response:**

#### **Teacher says:**

*Researchers at Brown University analyzed the effectiveness of using the military in response to the War on Terror (the war in Afghanistan) and came to the conclusion that military action may not be effective in dealing with terrorism:*

*The following is a short video summary made by the Brown University researchers. The professor presents alternate strategies to war when responding to terrorism.*



**LINK:** <https://www.choices.edu/video/has-the-war-on-terror-been-effective/>

**Summary Question:** In your journal (or under your pie chart to be handed in for participation points)

**Do you think that if we had used these alternatives, we could have avoided the war in Afghanistan? Explain.**

#### **Standards:**

#### **Social Studies/History:**

*RH 7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.*

#### **Science/Math:**

#### **CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RST.9-10.7**

*Translate quantitative [or technical information] expressed in words in a text into visual form (e.g., a table or chart) and translate information expressed visually or [mathematically (e.g., in an equation)] into words.*