

REMEMBERING THE START OF WAR IN AFGHANISTAN: STUDENT HANDOUT

October 7, 2001-October 7, 2021.

STUDENT NAME:



TIME: 40-55 minutes

Please Note:

This PDF can be filled in by computer, re-saved as PDF or filled in by hand on paper.

Pie chart: Import digital graphic or draw by hand.

Change title to include your name after completion and save to send to instructor by e-mail or upload.



HOW CAN WE ANALYZE THIS WAR?

The longest war in U.S. history

The War in Afghanistan was the longest war in U.S. history. On Oct. 7th 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.

If you need instruction on how to read a line graph the link below at Khan Academy offers a short explanation.

<https://www.khanacademy.org/math/statistics-probability/displaying-describing-data/more-on-data-displays/v/u08-11-t2-we2-reading-line-graphs>

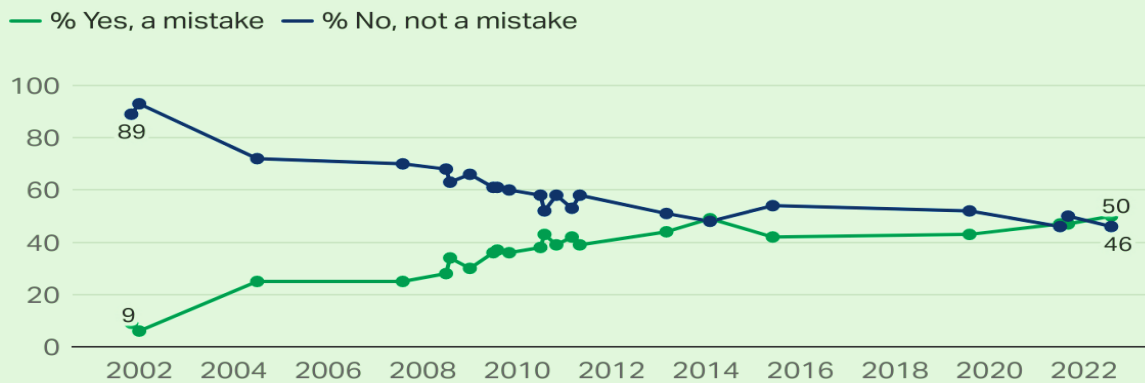
Line graphs are used to reveal a trend or comparison. Here is a line graph with results of a recent poll about the support of the war in Afghanistan. This line graph shows information on polling results over time.

Did the opinions of the American people change about the Afghanistan war over 20 years?

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?



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>



Let's discuss about these findings with other students in the class.

Turning to your neighbor, discuss and answer the following questions:

1. What conclusion can you and your partner make about the support of the war in 2002?
Answer:
2. Approximately what year was support of the war equal (50/50)?
Answer:
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:
4. Again in 2022, what percentage of Americans polled say U.S. made a mistake sending troops to Afghanistan?
Answer:
5. What reason do you think half of all Americans lost support of the war?
Possible answers:
6. What reasons do you think 46% of Americans still supported the war?
Possible answers:

Why did the U.S. stay so long in Afghanistan?

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 Discussion

How much did the American people spend on this war?

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.

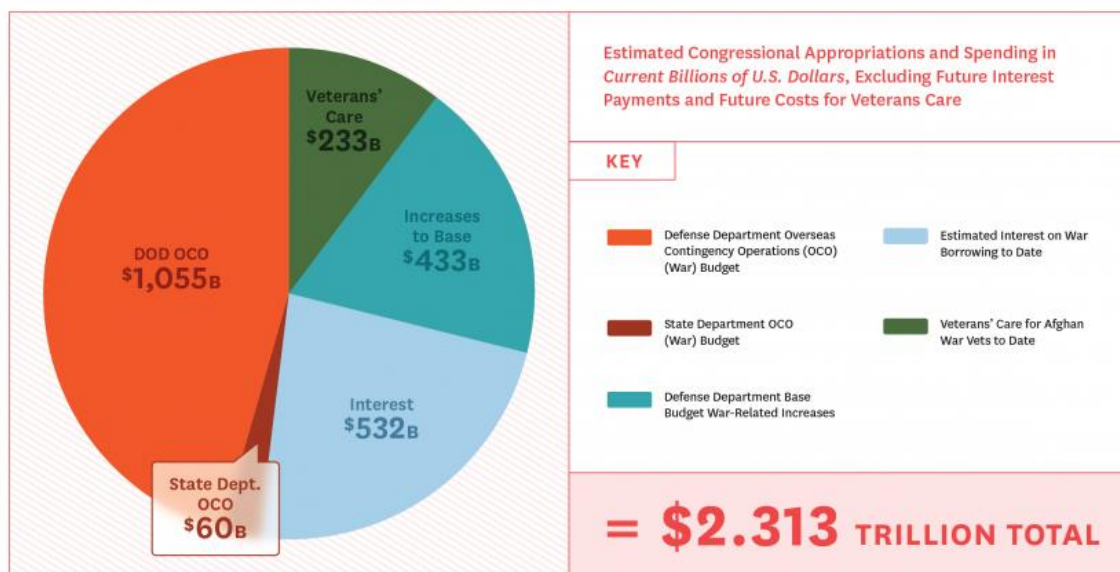
A pie charts (or circle graphs) are used to represent data as portions (or segments) of a whole. Just as you would see a pizza pie cut up into pieces, a pie chart is divided into different pieces of data. Each portion represents a percentage of the pie. All portions add up to 100%.

How the *Costs of War Project* breaks down the total costs of the Afghanistan war:

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>

Let's answer the following questions:

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

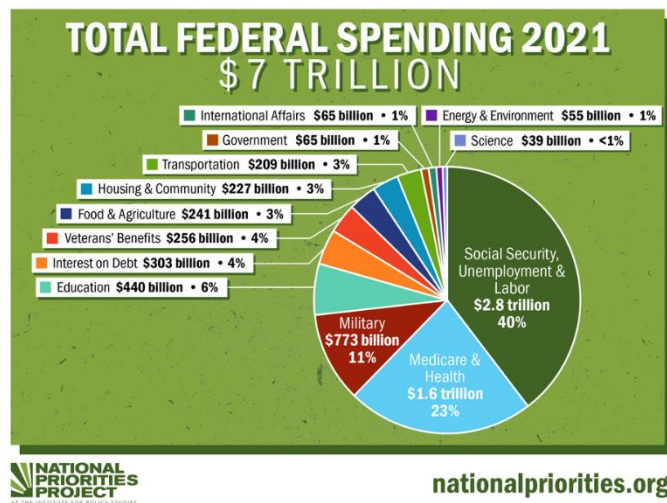
1. How many billions were spent on Federal Defense Department Overseas Operations?
Answer:
2. Is that over or under a trillion dollars?
Answer:
3. How much money was spent on interest charges for borrowing money?
Answer:
4. When added together, how much money came from the State Department budget and increases to spending on military bases?
Answer:
5. How much has been spent so far for our returning troops? Answer:

Costs of War Project at Brown University

The researchers at Brown University Costs of War Project also estimates that 243,000 people have 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).

Federal Spending

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



Read the major expenditures in the pie graph and asks the following questions:

1. What surprises you about the budget?
2. How many of you agree with these priorities?

Every year the U.S. congress approves a budget proposal like this to decide where American tax dollars should be spent.



5-10 minutes:

Make a pie chart showing how the costs of the war were distributed:"

Ugg'Dgny 'hqt 'lput wv'kpu'qp'b cnlpi 'e'ej ct v+

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. (Use extra page at the end of the handout for your chart and for your summary answer.)



5 minutes

VIDEO CLOSURE/CONTEXT: Video and written response:

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/>

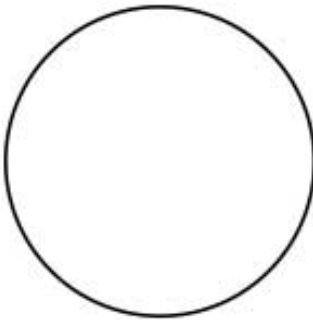
Summary Question: In your journal (or under your pie chart to be handed in for participation points)

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

Afghanistan War Assignment Student Chart and Summary:

(Please add your name again before your chart and summary answer)

You can create your Pie Chart online at the [Create A Graph Website](#) or draw one in the space below:



Draw your own simple circle graph:

Use 4 categories by combining some examples:

(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.

(For teachers that are passing out paper versions only)