



# REPORTING Terrorism

## Teacher Resources

When terrorism strikes, people from around the world turn to the media for information. Journalists bring breaking news, local needs and the courageous stories of those most affected to the masses. *Reporting Terrorism* features stories, artifacts and video from media who covered the chaos caused by the terrorist attacks from the Oklahoma City bombing to the War on Terror.

Most students today were very young or were not born yet when the Oklahoma City bombing occurred; however, terrorism has become part of their everyday life. From the War on Terror to school shootings, today's youth are exposed to violence daily. How do students get their information and what role does the media play in their lives?

As your students tour the Museum and the *Reporting Terrorism* special exhibit they will see the variety of ways the media informs the public regarding terrorism. Below are some guiding questions to discuss with your students and some suggested activities.

### REPORTING TERRORISM PRE-VISIT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. What are some examples of terrorism that have occurred in the past 15 years, domestically and internationally?
2. Do you think the way terrorism is reported has changed since the Oklahoma City bombing? What types of changes have occurred?
3. What is the First Amendment? When was it created and why? Do you think the First Amendment is important for a free society?
4. Do you think the coverage on terrorism is the same across the country? Across the world? Why or why not?
5. Where do you get your news?

## MAKING THE CONNECTION....

### The Oklahoma City National Memorial Museum and *Reporting Terrorism*

The Oklahoma City National Memorial Museum helps educate students about the impact of violence, the senselessness of using violence as a means to effect change and the importance of personal responsibility. As students tour the Museum, they will see the devastating effects terrorism has on individuals, communities and the world. They will also see how the media covered the April 19, 1995, incident and will be able to compare and contrast that to the way the media covers other acts of terrorism as they tour the *Reporting Terrorism* exhibit. Below are some questions for students to consider while they tour the Museum.

#### TERRORISM

- Where and why does terrorism occur?

#### THE FIRST NEWS FOOTAGE AFTER THE BOMBING

- What were the newscasters reporting?

#### STORIES FROM SURVIVORS AND RESCUE WORKERS

- What emotions do these videos evoke?

#### THE WORLD'S REACTION TO THE BOMBING

- How were the headlines, photographs and broadcasts alike or different?

#### MEDIA ARTIFACTS

- What type of technology did journalists use to take notes or archive their footage?

#### REPORTS OF THE INVESTIGATION

- What types of headlines or stories were written?

#### TRIAL COVERAGE

- What were some of the headlines? Why are courtroom drawings important? Why weren't photojournalists allowed in the courtroom?

#### EDITORIAL CARTOONS

- What are editorial cartoons? What were the artists trying to say in their drawings?

## REPORTING TERRORISM POST -VISIT DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

Using the following discussion questions or ideas, students will use different media formats to share their findings.

- Newspapers from around the world covered the stories of April 19, 1995, September 11, 2001, and other acts of terrorism. How was the coverage similar and how was it different? Did you see some of the same images? What stories or images were the most powerful or effective? Why?
- Look at the headlines from today's newspapers regarding terrorism. Has the coverage changed? How? Do you feel the changes are for the better?
- Students are creating content online more than ever. How accurate is the information found online? Do individuals have a responsibility in what information they put online? What should the consequences be for putting information online that is not accurate?
- Journalists follow a code of ethics. One sample of those ethics can be found at [www.spj.org/ethics.asp](http://www.spj.org/ethics.asp). Should citizen journalists follow a code of ethics? If so, what should be included?
- After touring the exhibit and reflecting on what you view daily in the media, do you feel there is a limit to what should be published? Does it depend on the type of medium?
- Across the world there are differences in the way the War on Terror is portrayed. Why do you think there are differences? Are people portrayed differently in different countries? Does the media report stories in a way that stereotypes people or their culture?
- Does the government have a right to censor freedom of expression? Are there governments that censor what is shown in the media? What types of governments allow censorship?

### Media Format Suggestions for Sharing Results

Create a video or Public Service Announcement

Create a blog

Create a web page

Create a multi-media presentation/audio slideshow

Create a student newspaper that includes the following:

- Editorial Cartoons
- Editorials
- Opinion Column
- Feature Stories
- Polls
- Photographs
- Interviews

Please be sure to pick up your copy of the *Reporting Terrorism* Special Edition at the conclusion of the exhibit. This edition highlights the personal challenges of reporting terrorism as told by local and national media.

To learn more about student journalism, visit the following web sites:

Oklahoma Scholastic Media

<http://jmc.ou.edu/osm-oipa/about.htm>

ASNE High School Journalism

<http://www.highschooljournalism.org/>

RTNDF High School Broadcast Journalism

<http://hsbj.org/>

Poynter Online

[http://www.poynter.org/content/content\\_view.asp?id=73952&sid=2](http://www.poynter.org/content/content_view.asp?id=73952&sid=2)

Student Television Network

<http://www.studenttelevision.com/>

Journalism Education Association

<http://www.jea.org/>

Project for Excellence in Journalism

<http://www.journalism.org/>

