

Gander's 9/11 Legacy

Big inquiry question

How did the response of Gander and surrounding communities to September 11, 2001 create a legacy that continued long after the attacks ended?

About this activity

The response of Gander and surrounding communities to September 11, 2001 lasted only a few days, but its impact continued for years afterward. After 38 diverted flights carrying nearly 7,000 passengers arrived in Gander, local residents and organizations provided food, shelter, transportation, medical support and other forms of care to people stranded far from home. In this activity, students will watch the video *Gander's 9/11 Legacy* to explore how these acts of kindness led to lasting relationships, opportunities, cultural works and forms of remembrance.

Grade Level

6-12

Learning goals

Students will:

- identify examples of the long-term legacy of Gander and surrounding communities following September 11, 2001
- examine how relationships, stories, opportunities and memorials can preserve the impact of an event
- trace how the community response continued to influence people and places over time
- use evidence from the video to explain why Gander's response became part of the lasting story of 9/11.

LESSON BREAKDOWN

Get Thinking

Before showing the video, provide students with a short introduction to the role of Gander and surrounding communities such as Appleton and Glenwood in the response to September 11, 2001.

Explain that 38 diverted transatlantic flights carrying nearly 7,000 passengers arrived in Gander, Newfoundland, a community of fewer than 10,000 people. The community responded by supporting the stranded passengers during the days that followed.

Have students complete the Get Thinking section of their worksheet by considering the question: *If a community helped thousands of strangers during a major crisis, what kinds of impacts might still be felt years later?*

Students are encouraged to check any possibilities they think could occur:

- ☐ friendships or relationships
- ☐ donations or opportunities
- ☐ stories, plays or other cultural works
- ☐ memorials or commemorations
- ☐ changes to how the community is remembered
- ☐ another idea of their own.

Afterwards, have students choose one type of impact from the list above that they think would be most likely to have a lasting legacy and briefly explain why. Invite several students to share their ideas.

Do not reveal which examples actually developed in Gander and surrounding communities. Explain that while watching the video, students will look for evidence showing how the community response continued long after September 2001.

Explore, Notice & Gather

Introduce the video *Gander's 9/11 Legacy*. Explain that students should watch for examples of what happened after the stranded passengers left Gander.

Have students collect evidence under four categories:

- Relationships
- Opportunities
- Stories and culture
- Remembrance

Encourage students to use short notes or keywords rather than complete sentences. After viewing, give students a few minutes to complete their notes. Afterwards, review several examples as a class. Discuss whether some examples could reasonably fit into more than one category.



ROYAL CANADIAN
GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY



Gander's 9/11 Legacy

Dive Deeper

Explain that a **ripple effect** occurs when the impact of one action continues to spread outward over time.

Write or project the following idea on the board:

**GANDER'S RESPONSE IN SEPTEMBER 2001 → WHAT HAPPENED NEXT? →
WHAT GREW FROM IT? → HOW DID THE IMPACT SPREAD?**

Explain that the starting point of the ripple effect is Gander's response to the thousands of passengers stranded there during September 2001. Using evidence from the video and their organizer on their worksheet, have students create their own ripple effect based on Gander's response to 9/11.

- **The Start:** Gander welcomes and supports thousands of stranded passengers during September 2001.
- **Ripple 1** — What happened next? (Students identify one result that happened relatively soon after the passengers returned home.)
- **Ripple 2** — What grew from it? (Students identify a relationship, opportunity, cultural work or act of remembrance that developed later.)
- **Ripple 3** — How did the impact spread? (Students identify an example showing Gander's story reaching other people, places or generations.)

Clarify that students do not need to create one perfect cause-and-effect chain. Their examples should demonstrate how the impact of Gander's response continued and spread beyond the original event.

Once students have completed their organizer, have them share their ripple effect with a partner. Encourage partners to discuss:

- Which example surprised you most?
- Which example reached the farthest beyond Gander?
- What helped Gander's story continue to be remembered?

Teacher Support

Students may identify a range of examples from the video. Possible responses include:

- **Relationships:** friendships between residents and stranded passengers that continued after the passengers returned home.
- **Opportunities:** gifts, donations and the creation of a scholarship fund for local youth.
- **Stories and culture:** Lufthansa naming an aircraft Gander/Halifax and the development and international success of the musical *Come From Away*.
- **Remembrance:** the influence of Gander on the design of the 9/11 Memorial Museum Pavilion and the presentation and display of recovered World Trade Center steel at Gander International Airport.

Encourage students to focus on how Gander's response continued after September 2001, rather than memorizing every date or detail.



ROYAL CANADIAN
GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY



Gander's 9/11 Legacy

There is no single correct way to organize the Ripple Effect. Students should be able to explain how each example connects back to Gander's response during 9/11.

Think Further

Use the following questions for a short class discussion. These do not need to be completed in writing.

- Which example from the video best shows that Gander's response to 9/11 had an impact beyond Newfoundland?
- Why do you think Gander's story continued to be told long after September 2001?
- How can friendships, theatre, stories and memorials help shape the way an event like 9/11 is remembered?

Return to the Big Inquiry Question: How did the response of Gander and surrounding communities to September 11, 2001 create a legacy that continued long after the attacks ended?

Invite students to use one example of the different Ripple Effect talked about during class discussion to help answer the question.

Optional Extension

Have students use Google Earth or another digital mapping tool to explore Gander, Newfoundland and the surrounding area.

Ask students to locate:

- Gander International Airport;
- the town of Gander and surrounding communities such as Appleton, Glenwood, and Benton;
- several schools, community buildings or other places that could serve a large number of people;
- Gander's location in relation to the Atlantic Ocean and major communities in Newfoundland.

As students explore, ask them to consider: *What does seeing Gander today add to your understanding of the community's response to September 11, 2001?*

Students can share one observation with a partner or with the class.



ROYAL CANADIAN
GEOGRAPHICAL SOCIETY



Gander's 9/11 Legacy



GANDER'S 9/11 LEGACY STUDENT WORKSHEET

Name: _____

Big inquiry question:

How did the response of Gander and surrounding communities to September 11, 2001 create a legacy that continued long after the attacks ended? How did the response of Gander and surrounding communities to September 11, 2001 create a legacy that continued long after the attacks ended?

Get thinking

On September 11, 2001, 38 diverted transatlantic flights carrying nearly 7,000 passengers arrived in Gander, Newfoundland, a community of fewer than 10,000 people. The people of Gander and surrounding communities supported the stranded passengers during the days that followed.

Consider: What kinds of impacts do you think could still be felt years later?

Check any that you think are possible:

- ☐ Friendships or relationships
- ☐ Donations or opportunities
- ☐ Stories, plays or other cultural works
- ☐ Memorials or commemorations
- ☐ Changes to how the community is remembered
- ☐ Something else: _____

Which type of impact do you think would last the longest? Why?

Explore, notice & gather

As you watch the video *Gander's 9/11 Legacy*, collect examples showing how Gander's response continued after September 2001. Use short notes or keywords.

Type of legacy	Evidence from the video
Relationships	
Opportunities	
Stories and Culture	
Remembrance	

Gander's 9/11 Legacy



Dive Deeper → Create your own ripple effect

In the space below, draw or visualize a ripple effect of how Gander's response to 9/11 created a lasting legacy. Start with: Gander supports thousands of stranded passengers in September 2001. Then add at least three examples from the video showing how the impact continued or spread. Use arrows, circles, symbols, drawings, keywords or short phrases to show the connections.

Use this thinking sequence to guide your visual:

GANDER'S RESPONSE IN SEPTEMBER 2001 → WHAT HAPPENED NEXT? → WHAT GREW FROM IT? → HOW DID THE IMPACT SPREAD?

Final thinking

Which example from the video do you think best represents Gander's legacy after 9/11? Why?

Complete the sentence:

Gander's response to September 11, 2001 became a lasting legacy because...