

Summary: Twenty-First Century Begins

The 2000 Election

On December 31, 1999, people all over the world celebrated the beginning of a new millennium. The new millennium really began on January 1, 2001. In a presidential election, the vote of individual citizens is called the popular vote.

The candidate who wins the popular vote in a state wins all of that state's Electoral College votes. To win the election you have to win the electoral vote.

The 2000 presidential election was unusual because no one knew who won for weeks. The race was very close. Whoever won the vote in Florida would win the election. In Florida, Bush won the first count. Gore said the votes were not counted properly. Finally, the Supreme Court said that the Florida votes would not be recounted. Bush became President.

Attack on the Nation

On September 11, 2001, nearly three thousand people were killed by acts of terrorism in the United States. Terrorists hijacked four airplanes. They crashed two airplanes into the World Trade Center in New York, and one into the Pentagon in Washington, D.C. A fourth plane crashed in Pennsylvania.

The terrorists were from a group called al-Qaeda. They were against the United States' involvement in the Middle East. After the attacks, Bush accused the country of Afghanistan of hiding the leader of al-Qaeda, Osama bin Laden, and his followers. In October, 2001, a coalition of nations led by the United States went to war in Afghanistan. They defeated the government but they did not find bin Laden.

In 2003, Bush said Saddam Hussein, the leader in Iraq, was a danger to his neighbors and to the United States. In March, 2003, the United States went to war in Iraq. After defeating Hussein's army and capturing Hussein, the military stayed in Iraq while a new Iraqi government formed.



Before You Read

Find and underline each vocabulary word.

millennium *noun*, a period of 10 centuries, or 1,000 years

popular vote *noun*, the vote of individual citizens

Electoral College *noun*, representatives, called electors, from each state

terrorism *noun*, the use of violence against ordinary people to achieve a political goal



After You Read

REVIEW What is the difference between the popular vote and the electoral vote? Circle the words that tell what a popular vote is. Highlight the words that tell what the votes in the Electoral College are. Underline the words that explain how a presidential election is won.

REVIEW How did the United States respond to the terrorist attacks of September 11, 2001? Circle the sentences that tell you the answer.