Remembering
September 11, 2001
"September Twelfth, 2001,"
by X.J. Kennedy, from *The Lords of Misrule*

Two caught on film who hurtle from the eighty-second floor, choosing between a fireball and to jump holding hands, aren't us. I wake beside you, stretch, scratch, taste the air, the incredible joy of coffee and the morning light.

Alive, we open eyelids on our pitiful share of time, we bubbles rising and bursting in a boiling pot.
The organization Wikileaks recently published a data set of pager intercepts from the 9/11 tragedy. As described on their website:

Text pagers are usually carried by persons operating in an official capacity. Messages in the archive range from Pentagon, FBI, FEMA and New York Police Department exchanges, to computers reporting faults at investment banks inside the World Trade Center. The archive is a completely objective record of the defining moment of our time. We hope that its entrance into the historical record will lead to a nuanced understanding of how this event led to death, opportunism and war.

I have taken this data and done an analysis for 100 phrases selected to summarize the events of that horrible day. I have focused on the time period from 8am until 8pm, September 11th, 2001.

This video below shows a Phrase Burst Visualization of the data. The larger the text the more frequently it was used during the 12 hour period. Text appears bright during the times of high usage and fades away otherwise. The color hues are cosmetic. This phrase burst visualization is basically a word cloud where the brightness of the words varies according to how prominent the words were during specific periods of time. You can drag the playhead for the video around to examine specific times.
“Beverly Eckert, 55 remembers her husband, Sean Rooney”

Published in All There Is: Love Stories from Storycorps

Since 2003, StoryCorps has collected and archived more than 45,000 interviews with nearly 90,000 participants. Each conversation is recorded on a free CD to share, and is preserved at the American Folklife Center at the Library of Congress. StoryCorps is one of the largest oral history projects of its kind, and millions listen to our broadcasts on our Listen page and on public radio.
Making Powerful Sentences

Remembering September 11, 2001
Start with a simple sentence that consists of

The towers tumbled.
Add adjectives and adverbs

The magnificent towers tumbled tragically.
Add prepositional phrases

In the morning hours of September 11, 2001, the magnificent towers tumbled tragically towards the ground.
Add an **appositive phrase**

The towers, sophisticated structures, tumbled.

The towers, symbols of America’s power and achievement, tumbled.
Add an appositive phrase

The towers, sophisticated structures, tumbled.

The towers, symbols of America’s power and achievement, tumbled.
Add an appositive phrase

In the morning hours of September 11, 2001, the magnificent towers, symbols of America’s power and achievement, tumbled tragically towards the ground.
Add a subordinate clause

In the morning hours of September 11, 2001, the magnificent towers, symbols of America’s power and achievement, tumbled tragically towards the ground as the smoke and debris rose above the city skyline.
Add a **subordinate clause**

**After** the towers crashed
**As** the people ran to the street
**Although** the rescue workers tried
**When** the towers hit
**While** the people ran
**Until** the rescue workers entered
**Before** the towers crashed
**Because** the people cried
**If** the rescue workers tried
**Since** the towers fell
In the morning hours of September 11, 2001, the magnificent towers, symbols of America’s power and achievement, tumbled tragically towards the ground as the smoke and debris rose above the city skyline.
Add a triad of **absolute phrases**

In the morning hours of September 11, 2001, the magnificent towers, sophisticated structures symbolizing America’s power and achievement, tumbled tragically towards the ground as the smoke and debris rose above the city skyline, **the ash exploding like a bag of flour**, the people running to escape the danger, the heroes sacrificing to save lives.
Phrase vs. Clause

the ash exploding like a bag of flour,
The ash was exploding like a bag of flour.
the people running to escape the danger,
The people ran to escape the danger.
the heroes sacrificing to save lives
The heroes were sacrificing to save lives.
SENTENCE:
The ash **was** exploding like a bag of flour.

**ABSOLUTE PHRASE:**
the ash exploding like a bag of flour
SENTENCE:
The people **were** running to escape the danger.

ABSOLUTE PHRASE:
people running to escape the danger
SENTENCE:
The heroes were sacrificing to save lives.

ABSOLUTE PHRASE:
the heroes sacrificing to save lives
Add a triad of absolute phrases

In the morning hours of September 11, 2001, the magnificent towers, sophisticated structures symbolizing America’s power and achievement, tumbled tragically towards the ground as the smoke and debris rose above the city skyline, the ash exploding like a bag of flour, the people running to escape the danger, the heroes sacrificing to save lives.
In the morning hours of September 11, 2001, the magnificent towers, symbols of America’s power and achievement, tumbled tragically towards the ground as the smoke and debris rose above the city skyline, the ash exploding like a bag of flour, the people running to escape the danger, the heroes sacrificing to save lives.
In the morning hours of September 11, 2001, the magnificent towers, symbols of America’s power and achievement, tumbled tragically towards the ground as the smoke and debris rose above the city skyline, the ash exploding like a bag of flour, the people running to escape the danger, the heroes sacrificing to save lives.