



Tushikur Rahman/CARE Bangladesh



#LETTERS OF HOPE CLASSROOM

An interactive curriculum on refugees

Lesson 1: Who is the Refugee? (Part 1)

Time: 50 Minutes

In collaboration with



GENERATION HUMAN RIGHTS

FALL 2017

Essential Question

- Who is the “refugee?”

Universal Declaration Of Human Rights: Article 3: Right to Life, Liberty and Security of Person. Article 9: Right to Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest, Detention or Exile. Article 13: Right to Freedom of Movement, including the right to leave one’s own country, and to return. Article 14: Right to Seek Asylum. Article 15: Right to Nationality.

Common Core Learning Standards:

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1.A](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.1.C](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2.A](#)

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.WHST.6-8.2.D](#)

Assessment

The educator can check for understanding throughout the lesson by assessing the dialogue of student-to-teacher and student-to-student understanding.

Overview

In this lesson, students will learn the definition of a refugee and what conditions cause a person to become a refugee. They will examine art, either a sculpture or a poem, depicting the plight of refugees.

Learning Goals

Students will be able to:

- Articulate the definition of a refugee.
- Analyze the reasons a person can become a refugee and create a class list of examples.
- Build a tangible understanding of the obstacles refugees must overcome to find safety in other countries through the analysis of a poem and a sculpture.
- Interview family members and create a family tree in order to investigate whether any of students’ ancestors were refugees.

Materials for Instructor (materials available for download at care.org/lettersofhope)

- Whiteboard, smartboard or projector
- The video [Exodus](https://youtu.be/8AI-BNV2aFw) / Ron Haviv VII (<https://youtu.be/8AI-BNV2aFw>)
- Photo of the refugee sculpture by artist Frances Bruno Catalano
- Poem: *Home*, by Warsan Shire (British-Somali poet)
- Refugee Story Cards & Discussion Questions
- Family Tree worksheets to hand out for homework
- Access to the #LettersOfHope Facebook Group: As you begin this curriculum, you can click the following link to request access so you and your students can post to the group throughout the

curriculum and especially at the conclusion when students create messages to share with refugees through social media. <https://www.facebook.com/groups/112655672747894>

Materials for Students

- Journal to be used for reflection
- Post-it Notes

Vocabulary

- *Refugee*: a person who has been forced to leave his or her country in order to escape war, persecution or natural disaster.

I. Introduce the “Refugee” (15 min.)

Step One:

- To introduce the “refugee” and provide the foundation for the activities by leading a class discussion. Include the following entry-point questions:
 - Who are refugees?
 - Where do they come from and why?
 - What does a refugee look like?

Step Two:

- Watch [Exodus](#)
- Follow with a discussion that focuses on whether students’ original perceptions of a refugee have changed. Entry-point questions to consider:
 - Did anything surprise you from this video?
 - Did the refugees look different from you or the same?
 - Did a refugee share something similar to how you feel?
- To deepen the conversation about the particular stories in the video, share the following questions:
 - Did these young refugees have long journeys to safety?
 - Are they hopeful? If so, what are their hopes for the future?
 - What obstacles do you think they may face to reach their goals?

Step Three:

- Share with students that in 2017 there are 22.5 million refugees. More than half of them are under the age of 18.
- Guide students to build a class definition of the “refugee” and write it on the board.
- Share the dictionary definition of “refugee” and write it on the board too.
 - Depending on the outcomes, you can compare and contrast the definitions.

Step Four:

Lead a discussion about the difficulties individuals face when they choose to escape a war or conflict in their country and become refugees in a new country.

- Support students to examine the difficulties of leaving one's home country. List them on the board. Examples may include:
 - You leave behind people you love.
 - You leave your job.
 - You may not speak the language in the new country.
 - You leave your culture.
 - You may not be accepted in your new community.

II. Refugee Story Cards (4 cards) 10 min.

In this activity students will hear first-hand accounts of from refugees who are their peers.

Step One:

- Choose several students to read the personal story card journeys aloud to the class.

Step Two:

- Ask students to come to the board and write an adjective that describes the feelings they experienced while listening to the personal stories. They can write directly on the board or on a Post-it note.

Step Three

- Read the adjectives aloud. This will create a unified and reflective feeling in the classroom.
- Tell the students that we will be using these adjectives in another lesson.

III. Art and the Refugee (15 Min.)

Using Frances Bruno Catalano's sculpture of a refugee or Warsan Shire's poem, *Home*, students will explore the ramifications and consequences of becoming a refugee. The choice of the sculpture or poem as the entry point to the topic is based on the complexity and sophistication of the content and on what you feel is more appropriate for your students. We recommend the sculpture for 6th and 7th grades, and the poem for 8th grade.

Choose one of the following activities:

Activity: Sculpture by Frances Bruno Catalano

Step One:

- Project Frances Bruno Catalano's the Sculpture of the Refugee, which the artist writes symbolizes the vacuum created by being forced to leave one's land, life and society.
 - Discussion entry points include:
 - What is missing on the refugee's body?
 - List the answers. (Heart, Hand, etc.)

- What can it mean to be missing your heart? Where could his heart be now?
- What can it mean to be missing a hand?
 - What do you think the refugee is carrying in his suitcase?
 - Remind students that whatever is in his suitcase is all he has taken with him to begin his new life.
 - List the answers.

Reflection Writing (10 min)

End the art exploration activities with a reflective writing in student journals.

- Entry-point questions into the free writing can be:
 - How did the sculpture speak to you?
 - What have you learned about refugees and does it change how you view the world?

Sharing

Depending on the time left in class, invite students to share their writings.

Activity: *Home*, by Warsan Shire (British-Somali poet) (15 min)

Step One:

- Read the poem aloud with the class.
- Discussion entry points include:
 - Go to the first line: “No one leaves home unless / home is the mouth of a shark”
 - What do you think the poet is communicating to you when she describes home as the mouth of a shark?
 - Go to the line: “The dirty looks in the street”
 - What do you think the poet is referring to when she writes the “dirty looks in the street?”
 - Have you seen or heard of a refugee looked upon in insulting ways?
 - Go to the line: “No one leaves home until home is a damp voice in your ear saying, ‘leave, run now, I don’t know what I’ve become’”
 - How can a home talk?
 - Have you ever been afraid of change or the unknown?

IV. Reflection Writing (10 min)

End the poem activity with a reflective writing in student journals.

- Entry-point questions into the free writing can be:
 - How did the poem speak to you?
 - What have you learned about refugees and does it change how you view the world?

Sharing

Depending on the time left in class, invite students to share their writings.

Closing

Share with students that we covered some very difficult topics and congratulate them on their courage to explore and discuss them.

Homework: Family Tree Worksheet

- Ask students if they know whether they have family that came to America as refugees?
- Explain they will now have the chance to explore their own family trees and investigate whether they have relatives or ancestors who were refugees at one point in their lives.
- They should bring their family trees to the next class.

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