

**REFUGEES & HUMAN RIGHTS
CHILD & YOUTH POETRY
CONTEST 2022**



Resources for Teachers



ABOUT WORLD REFUGEE DAY

Around the world, June 20th marks an opportunity for hope. Since the year 2000 when the United Nations General Assembly passed a resolution marking this date as the celebration of World Refugee Day, people have been coming together to celebrate courage, strength and resilience. It offers a chance to raise awareness about the plight of the over 35.8 million¹ people who have been forced to flee.

According to the *1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees*, a refugee is a person who: “owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion, is outside the country of his nationality, and is unable to or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country.”²

In Canada, refugees are our neighbours, our peers and our friends. They are part of the multicultural fabric of our communities and are important members of our society. Taking the time to learn more about their stories and experiences help to raise shed light on important questions of displacement, forced migration and human rights.

This resource has been prepared by the Program Manager of the Client Support Services program at COSTI Immigrant Services, a program that provides support and assistance to government-resettled refugees in the greater Toronto area. The Resource Material is meant as a tool to support the Child and Youth Poetry Contest by providing some resources to assist primary and secondary school teachers in incorporating the theme of “Refugees and Human Rights” into their lesson planning.

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1. UNHCR (2013). Displacement: The New 21st Century Challenge [Global Trends 2012]. United Nations High Commission for Refugees: Geneva, Switzerland. Retrieved from <https://fas.org/irp/agency/dhs/fema/displace.pdf>

2. UN. (1951). Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees. United Nations General Assembly: Geneva, Switzerland. Retrieved from <http://>

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RESOURCES AND GUIDES

UNHCR Canada's Teacher's Corner

Teaching tools from UNHCR.

<https://www.unhcr.org/teaching-resources.html>

Australian Human Rights Commission – *Face the Facts Rights*

Easy and downloadable, this resource offers great activities on the lives of refugees which can easily be updated and adapted as necessary: “What is it like to be a refugee?” and “Refugee in the media” and “Readers’ theatre and storytelling.” <https://www.humanrights.gov.au/publications/face-facts-rightsed>

BBC News – *The Road to Refuge*

An interactive online resource with guides, interview, slideshows and stories of refugees.

http://news.bbc.co.uk/hi/english/static/in_depth/world/2001/road_to_refuge/

Refugee Week's Teacher Resources Guides (Australia and UK)

Includes a comprehensive list of activities, lesson plans, posters, and resources <https://refugeeweek.org.uk/resources/education-resources/> also check out <https://refugeeweek.org.uk/resources/education-resources/classroom-resources/>

Human Rights Education Associates – *Study Guide: The Rights of Refugees*

A comprehensive overview about refugee concerns and international refugee law, including training materials and resources <http://www1.umn.edu/humanrts/edumat/studyguides/refugees.htm>

Compassio Resources for Primary School Teachers

Developed by the Council of Europe, Compassio is designed for educators working with children aged 7-13. Including concepts of human rights and children's rights and provides background on 13 key human rights issues such as democracy, citizenship, gender equality, environment, media, poverty and violence. <http://www.eycb.coe.int/compassio/>

Activity: Time to Flee – Amnesty International UK

Offers an activity for use in classrooms that guides young people through the experience of forced migration and lets them make critical decisions about their lives. <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/resources/activity-pack-time-flee>

Activity Pack: Seeking Safety – Amnesty International UK

Eight interactive and adaptable activities to engage primary school aged children in issues of asylum and refugee protection in a participatory way. <http://www.amnesty.org.uk/resources/activity-pack-seeking-safety>

The Great Escape Board Game – Amnesty International UK

A board game that allows students to be faced with a series of human rights dilemmas as they seek protection, problems which must be resolved as a group and by consensus. <https://www.tes.com/teaching-resource/the-great-escape-game-6256678>

Asylum seekers: news and teaching resources round up – Citizenship Hub, the Guardian

“Switzerland's restrictions on asylum-seekers' movements prompted international furore. Here are some resources to help you explore the issues surrounding displaced people” <http://www.theguardian.com/teacher-network/teacher-blog/2013/sep/01/asylum-seekers-immigration-news-teaching-resources>

LESSON PLANS

Who is a Refugee? By Multiculturalism Australia
For English, Geography and History classes,
contains objectives, materials/resources,
activities, checklists [http://
www.multiculturalaustralia.edu.au/lessons/
viewLesson/Who-is-a-Refugee.98](http://www.multiculturalaustralia.edu.au/lessons/viewLesson/Who-is-a-Refugee.98)

Everyone Everywhere – Refugees and Asylum Seekers -
By Amnesty International UK

Uses a true story and role play

[https://www.amnesty.org.uk/education-
resources-refugee-asylum-immigration](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/education-resources-refugee-asylum-immigration)

Refugees – Global Education Australia

Through this series of five activities, students
develop an understanding of the situations which
cause people to flee, looking closely at the Case
of Burmese refugees from Myanmar.

[http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/teaching-
activity/ refugees-up.html](http://www.globaleducation.edu.au/teaching-activity/refugees-up.html)

AUDIO/VISUAL RESOURCES

Online Video Game – *Against All Odds* by UNHCR

“Against All Odds” is an online simulation game for
High School students. In the game, students
follow a young person’s flight from oppression in
his/her home country to exile in an asylum
country. The game is intended to increase
students’ awareness and knowledge about
refugees – where they come from, what
situations they have faced and how they adapt to
their new lives. There is a teacher’s guide with
suggested lessons plans to accompany every
level of the game. It provides background
material, exercises and discussion topics aimed
at increasing students’ understanding of refugee
issues.

Audio – *Refugee Radio*

Features ten refugees and asylum seekers talking
about their journey to Australia. They share their
struggles and the difficulty of leaving family and
the familiar behind, learning a new language and
culture. <http://www.3cr.org.au/refugeeradio>

Video – *To Be a Refugee* – UNHCR Video

Tells the story of different children and their lives as
refugees. Great resource to share with children in
Grades 4 through 6. [https://www.youtube.com/
watch?v=LpwqK3B2ac8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=LpwqK3B2ac8)

Giving Refugees a Better Home – IKEA Foundation

Did you know that the IKEA Foundation has made
the largest donation in United Nations’ history to
help build better homes for refugees? Here are
some videos that explain what they have done:

Ikea Foundation: *Designing a better home for
refugee children* [https://
www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ect-FwtK-84](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Ect-FwtK-84)

GeoBeats News: *Ikea Ships Easy-to-Build
Refugee Shelters to Syria* [https://
www.youtube.com/watch?
v=ydhAMCw3q5Y](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ydhAMCw3q5Y)

UNHCR: *Iraq: Innovation and Refugee
Shelter* [https://www.youtube.com/watch?
v=lxUMpEBk4IM](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lxUMpEBk4IM)

Video – Amnesty International – *A Life on Hold: The
story of a teenage refugee*

At 13 years old, Omar was forced to flee his home in
Somalia because of war. He then worked in
Libya until the conflict broke out in 2011. After
fleeing across the border, he is now living in the
Choucha refugee camp in Tunisia. He was 17
years old. This is his story. [https://
www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIJ_0x1q6l8](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YIJ_0x1q6l8)

DOCUMENTARIES

Video – Climate Refugee, Trailer

International Refugee Protection does not provide a definition for refugees who are forced to flee their homes from Climate Change. This critical gap has been exploited by some and hurt others. Climate change refugees is a new hot topic in the field that will most certainly keep growing in importance as the issues deepen <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=28MH3jZlucc>

Video – UNHCR – *Carly, A Refugee Story*

Carly is forced to flee her home and leave everything behind. All alone, she sets out to find help in other lands. She encounters the Stone-eaters, Smoky-crows, and Silk-trails. But none of them will help her because she is “strange and different from them.” “Where will Carly find the safety and warmth of a new family?” This cartoon is a child-friendly way to explore what it would feel like to be excluded because of forced migration <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=oF1HGfg2bSo>

Video: Daadab Stories – *Welcome to Dadaab*

Dadaab is the world’s largest refugee camp. Refugees living in the camps come together to tell their stories of living in these devastating conditions. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qMMLb4pBt5w>

Video: Daadab Stories – *The Newspaper*

Dadaab is the world’s largest refugee camp with a population of 500,000. They started a Newspaper to raise awareness and the voices of their communities. Inspiring stuff. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7OiCp1YJWR8>

Video – Free Country Media – *If We Knew Their Stories*

Powerful testimonies from doctors across Canada about the refugee patients they see in their clinics everyday. A resource created in response to the cuts to refugee health care. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=UV86iWr7TFw>

Music – Sierra Leone’s Refugee All Stars

This group of artists met as refugees in Guinea, after having fled from Sierra Leone and are now a widely acclaimed musical group, famous the world over, who use stories of struggle in their music. Watch a trailer on the group: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9rQzq-LnIVE>

Music – K’naan

A famous Canadian of Somali origin who is well known for speaking about refugee issues through his music. Watch his acclaimed song, Wavin Flag: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=amXeJrA-wDc>

A Well Founded Fear - Michael Camerini & Shari Robertson (2000)

Tells the stories of oppression that brought political refugees to America but even more interestingly, it looks at the system that decide who gets to stay and who gets sent back, perhaps to prison or death.

Children of Shatila -Mai Masri (1998)

The Shatila Camp in Beirut has become home to more than 15,000 Palestinians and Lebanese who share a common experience of displacement, unemployment and poverty. This is the story of two Palestinian children born and raised in the Shatila Camp - Farah aged 11 and Issa aged 12. It is the intent of documentary filmmaker Mai Masri to present the children's stories of the realities of life in Shatila through their own eyes and words, providing each child with a video camera.

Dreams and Silence - Omar Al Qattan (1991)

It is the autumn of 1990 in Jordan. The Islamic movement has declared a Holy War against the West and the Gulf War is at its height. Haifa Samhuri is a middle-aged Palestinian refugee living in Jordan. Haifa talks of her life as a refugee.

Eternity and a Day - Theo Angelopoulos (1998)

A famous author, reaching the end of his life, encounters a young Albanian refugee boy who is one of the thousands of ‘illegal immigrants’ from Eastern Europe coming into Greece. Alexandre begins a quest to return the boy home, and when that proves impossible, attempts to give the young orphan the security and opportunities unavailable to him on the streets.

Forgotten Refugees: the Rohingya in Bangladesh – Amnesty International Australia (2007)

In March 2007 Amnesty International Australia joined UNHCR, the Centre for Refugee Research, and a number of other Australian NGOs for consultations with Rohingya refugees who have fled from Burma to camps in Bangladesh. The documentary highlights the atrocious conditions faced by the 26,000 refugees, many of whom have spent over 16 years living in the camps. You can see the short film at: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?gl=AU&hl=en-GB&v=lq5eiXYAMbo>

God Grew Tired of Us - Christopher Dillon Quinn (2006)
Written and directed by Christopher Dillon Quinn, this documentary film is about three of the "Lost Boys of Sudan", a group of some 25,000 young men who have fled the wars in Sudan since the 1980s, and their experiences as they move to the United States.

Home Across Lands - John Lavall (2009)
This documentary explores the journey of resettlement-- It tells the story of a small group of Kunama refugees and how they re-establish their sense of community in their new home in the US.

Hope - Steve Thomas (2008)
Hope is the story of Amal Basry, one of 400 Iraqi refugees on the ill-fated SIEV X, which sank between Indonesia and Australia, killing 353 people. Amal was one of only seven survivors who made it to Australia. Now she fights to reunite her family, and to ensure that this disaster is not forgotten. A Study Guide prepared for secondary students by the Australian Teachers of Media can be found at:
https://www.metromagazine.com.au/hope/pdf/ho pe_studyguide.pdf

In the Shadow of the Palms - Wayne Coles-Janess (2004)
In the Shadow of the Palms is a multi-award winning production that details life in Iraq before, and during, the most controversial war of the 21st Century. It provides an intimate insight into the lives of ordinary people during Saddam's Regime as they prepare for the rapidly approaching war.

Jenin - Jenin - Mohammed Bakri (2002)
This documentary features interviews of Palestinians in a refugee camp in Jenin during April 2000. It is a film of despair, human tragedy, hatred, cynicism and, last but not least, of hope.

Lost Boys of Sudan – Megan Mylan & Jon Shenk (2003)
This documentary follows two Sudanese refugees on an extraordinary journey from Africa to America. Orphaned as young boys in one of Africa's most vicious civil wars, Peter Dut and Santino Chuor survived lion attacks and militia gunfire to reach a refugee camp in Kenya along with thousands of other children. From there, remarkably, they were chosen to come to America. Safe at last from physical danger and hunger, a world away from home, they find themselves confronted with the abundance and alienation of contemporary American suburbia. <http://www.lostboysfilm.com>

Molly & Mobarak Clips (2003)
Molly and Mobarak follows the emotional journey of Mobarak Tahiri, a young Hazara refugee from Afghanistan living on a Temporary Protection Visa, as he struggles to adjust to life in the

regional New South Wales town of Young. Molly Rule and her mother Lyn provide friendship and support to Mobarak. The narrative centers on the interactions between the townspeople of Young and the Afghani community, through the characters of Molly and Mobarak respectively. Mobarak has escaped war, persecution and danger in his homeland, but his journey to Australia has only just begun. The website shows clips of the documentary. <http://australianscreen.com.au/titles/molly-mobarak/clip3/>

New Year Baby (2008)
Born in a Thai refugee camp on Cambodian New Year, filmmaker Socheata Poenv grew up in the United States never knowing that her family had survived the Khmer Rouge genocide. In this documentary, she embarks on a journey to Cambodia in search of the truth and why her family's history has been buried in secrecy for so long. See the website for background information, discussion questions and resources. <http://newyearbaby.net/>

Pushing the Elephant (2010)
This documentary tells the story of Rose Mapendo from the Democratic Republic of the Congo (DRC). As Rose fled the atrocities of war in DRC, she was forced to leave her five-year-old daughter, Nangabire, behind. With her other nine children, she was eventually resettled in Arizona, USA, where she works as a full-time advocate for refugees. Now, after 12 years apart, Rose and her daughter Nangabire are reunited.

Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars - Zach Niles & Banker White (2005)
Sierra Leone's Refugee All Stars documents a band of six Sierra Leonean musicians who came together while living in a refugee camp in Guinea. Despite the unimaginable horrors of civil war, they were saved and brought hope and happiness to other refugees through their music. Also see the website for background information on Sierra Leone.

The Plight of Tibet and the Dalai Lama: Interviews with Tibetan Refugees(1999)
This film consists of interviews with Tibetan refugees (predominantly Buddhists persecuted for their religion), including the current Dalai Lama, as well as those people who operate the services in India which assist the arriving refugees. They describe both their treatment at the hands of the country's rulers as well as the general socio-economic climate brought about by the policies of the government of Tibet.

REFUGEE-INSPIRED MOVIES

War Child: Emmanuel Jal's Story (2010)

A former child soldier in Sudan, Emmanuel Jal is now an internationally acclaimed hip-hop artist who fights for peace and reconciliation in his home country. *War Child* intersperses original interviews, live concerts, and rare footage of Emmanuel Jal as a seven year-old boy.

What's Going On? Child Refugees in Tanzania (2009)

This 10-part television series features UNHCR Goodwill Ambassador Angelina Jolie. She works with children who have been victimized by long years of civil strife in the Democratic Republic of the Congo, and who have had to flee their homes for refugee camps in Tanzania. You can purchase the DVD through the UN Bookshop at <https://shop.un.org/books/whats-going-refugees-tanza-26832> or you can access each part on Youtube. For Part 1, see: https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jF8Zr_hPylE

A Time for Drunken Horses (2000) – by Bahman Ghobadi

This is a movie about a Kurdish family who are struggling to survive after the death of their father. Living in squalor and poverty in a village on the Iran-Iraq border for Kurdish refugee families, they must face the harshest of conditions as they try to save their youngest brother.

Asylum (2003) - by Nigel Roffe -Barker

Fleeing persecution and torture in northern Iraq, three young Kurdish boys smuggle themselves into England where they register for asylum and try to establish new lives. However, their future is threatened when their genuine claims get bound up in red tape. One boy is detained, while the others evade capture by taking refuge in a local church, amid escalating media and police attention.

Baran (2001) – by Majid Majidi

Based in Tehran, Baran tells of Lateef, a 17-year-old Kurdish worker, who is irresistibly drawn to Rahmat, a young Afghan worker. The revelation of Rahmat's secret changes both their lives.

Barefoot to Heart (2002) – by Majid Majidi

This film was shot during two trips that Majid Majidi took in Western Afghanistan in 2001 and 2002. In the first trip in November 2001, Majidi visited the refugee camp of Makaki, located in a Taliban-controlled area, and Mile 46, another small camp situated in a Northern Alliance held area. The second trip took place in February 2002 in the city of Herat now freed from the Taliban and in the hunger stricken camp of Maslakh, one of the largest in the world.

Beyond Borders (2003) – Martin Campbell

Tells the story of two people brought together by a shared passion for the world's hot spots. Sarah encounters a renegade doctor, whose impassioned plea for help to support his relief efforts in war-torn Africa inspires her to embark upon a journey to the far corners of the world. Features UNHCR spokesperson Angelina Jolie.

The Blackboard (2000) – Samira Mekhmalbaf

This movie tells of a group of Kurdish teachers who wander from village to village in the remote Iranian Kurdistan region during the Iran-Iraq war in search of students. They carry large blackboards on their backs, sometimes using them as shelter, camouflage and as shields for gunfire.

The Cage House (2002) – by Angela Van Boxtel
This award-winning short movie was inspired by the drawings of six-year old Shayan Badraie in Villawood Detention Centre in Australia <http://www.abc.net.au/am/stories/s456606.htm>

Distant Lights (2003) - Christian Schmid (2003)
Set on the Polish/German border, this film tells the story of life on the border of two countries. A picture of life in this region and the division between the prosperous west and the impoverished east is told through the fate of many single characters.

El Norte (1984) - Gregory Nava
This film tells the story of Mayan Indigenous youths in the 1980s who are tired of being labelled "brazos fuertes" (manual labourers). In an effort to improve their life, they are discovered by the Guatemalan army. After the army destroys their village and family, they are forced to flee Guatemala due to ethnic and political persecution.

Exile in Sarajevo (1997) - by Tahir Cambis and Alma Sahbaz
This is a personal account of the siege of Sarajevo, from the viewpoint of Bosnian-Australian Tahir Cambis and Sarajevan Alma Sahbaz. Nirvan, a talented young dancer, dies after a shelling attack. Her family is forced to leave Sarajevo as refugees bound for America. Eight year old Amira's illustrated diary is poignant testimony of the murder of family and friends. Both stories are set within the context of NATO bombing missions, UN Press Conferences and the liberation and reunification of parts of the city under Bosnian-Serb control.

Frontiers of Dreams and Fears (2001) - Mai Masri
Powerful, passionate and often disturbing, *Frontiers of Dreams and Fears* tells the heart-breaking story of two young Palestinian girls growing up in refugee camps in Beirut and Bethlehem. The film focuses on the friendship of two young girls, their daily life, their dreams, hopes and aspirations.

In This World (2002) - Michael Winterbottom
Based on true events and using refugees themselves as the actors, this story follows two young Afghan refugees on their journey to London, England.

Kandahar (2001) - Monsen Makhmalbaf
This feature film, shot in documentary-style, is about a woman refugee from Afghanistan who is now a reporter in Canada. The story follows her as she returns to Taliban-controlled Afghanistan in order to save her sister.

The Kite Runner (2007) - Marc Forster
Based on the international bestseller by Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner* is set in Afghanistan. In 1978, Amir and Hassan are young boys living in Kabul, where Hassan and his father work as servants for Amir and his father, Baba. As the Russians and then the Taliban take over Afghanistan, Baba and Amir escape to America. But even as he begins a new life in America, Amir is haunted by memories of his friend and his own cowardice.

La Promesse (1997) - Pierre Dardenne and Luc Dardenne
Igor and his father, Roger, are making a decent living renting apartments to illegal immigrants and sometimes having them work illegally, among other scams. But when the building inspector pays a surprise visit and Amidou falls off a scaffold in his hurry to hide, things start to unravel, particularly when Igor makes a promise to the injured Amidou that ultimately exposes the different values of Igor and Roger, and of Amidou's wife, Assita

Live and Become (2005) - Radu Mihaileanu
This story begins at a Sudanese refugee camp in 1984. An Ethiopian boy is placed by his mother with an Ethiopian Jewish woman whose child has died. This woman, who will become his adoptive mother, is about to be airlifted from the camp to Israel. His birth mother, who hopes for a better life for him tells him "go, live, and become" as he leaves her to board the plane. The film tells of his growing up in Israel as he faces isolation and loneliness and deals with the secret of not being Jewish and having left his birth mother.

Lucky Miles (2007) - Michael James Rowland
Lucky Miles is inspired by several true stories. In 1990, an Indonesian fishing boat abandons Iraqi and Cambodian refugees in a remote part of the Western Australia. Whilst most are quickly caught by officials, three men with nothing in common but their misfortune and determination escape arrest and begin an epic journey into the heart of Australia.

Mother Fish (2010) - Khoa Do
This is an inspirational tale about four refugees fleeing Vietnam in 1980. The story goes inside the mind of one of the survivors, a quiet factory worker, as she relives the extraordinary journey that she and her sister took in a creaky boat in search of a better life.

Osama (2003) - Siddiq Barmak
Inspired by a true story, this movie centres on three generations of Afghan women all deeply affected by the advent of the Taliban's rule in Afghanistan.

BOOKS FOR CHILDREN

Spare Parts (2003) - Damjan Kozole

The director is a veteran punk rocker from Slovenia whose film focuses on drunk, corrupt and depressed smugglers who reminisce about their former lives as racing car drivers as they ferry terrified human cargo across the Croatian border to Italy.

A Stranger in My Homeland (2005) - Chloe Traicos

This short film tells the story of the Zimbabwean refugees who were tortured and left for dead after speaking out against the regime of terror under which they lived.

Turtles Can Fly (2004) - Bahman Ghobadi

Set near the Iraqi-Turkish border on the eve of the American invasion, *Turtles Can Fly* follows 13-year old Kak, and other refugee children, as they await their fate.

Unveiled (2005) - Angelina Maccarone

This film is a beautiful portrait of an Iranian refugee struggling between survival in small-town Germany and her love for a local woman.

War Dance (2006) - Sean Fine and Andrea Nix

War Dance follows the lives of three children living in a displacement camp in war-ravaged northern Uganda. The three youngsters attend school in the camp and find hope through song and dance, as they take part in their country's national music and dance festival.

Welcome (2010) - Philippe Lioret

Welcome is a touching personal account of Simon, a swimming teacher who helps his young immigrant pupil, a 17 year old Kurdish refugee named Bilal. The film highlights the inhumanity of the French Government's immigration policies.

The Visitor (2007) – Thomas McCarthy

In the US, a professor encounters two illegal immigrants who he invites to stay with him. After an incident the young Syrian musician is arrested by police and sent to a detention center, and the professor gets involved in trying to save the man from his impending fate.

Mohammed's Journey by June Allan

This is a true story of an Iraqi-Kurdish refugee child and his flight from his home in Kirkuk to the UK. This is the story of Mohammed's escape from Iraq by bus, on horseback, in an inflatable raft on a raging river and, finally, hiding in a lorry on a ship. It covers his journey from Kirkuk to the Iraq-Iran border, through Iran, into Turkey and then on to England and safety.

The Little Refugee by Anh Do with Suzanne Do

One of Australia's favourite personalities recounts his family's escape from war-torn Vietnam in an over-crowded boat, defying pirates and terrifying storms. The story recounts the family's new life in suburban Australia and overcoming the challenges of having no English language and funny lunches. Laughter helped deal with the difficulties and turn them into triumph for Anh, his brother Khoa and sister Tram.

A Safe Place to Live by Bic Walker

This book contains fabulous illustrations of a true story about a young girl's journey as a refugee to Australia. She encounters pirates and is rescued by an oil tanker, before waiting in a refugee camp until sponsored to Australia.

Along the tracks by Tamar Bergman

This story recounts the adventures of a young Jewish boy who is driven from his home by the German invasion, becomes a refugee in the Soviet Union, is separated from his family, and undergoes many hardships before enjoying a normal home again.

For Every Child by Caroline Castle (in conjunction with the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child)

For Every Child is picture book which details the 15 most important rights of the child. Each right has a specific illustration in a different style by a different artist around the world. This could lead to a discussion about why people may have to flee from their own country

W is for World: A Round the World ABC by Kathryn Cave (in conjunction with Oxfam)

This alphabet book looks at the daily life of adults and children around the world. Suitable for 5 – 9 year olds, it encouraging a message about basic human rights of shelter, food, water, health and education.

Rainbow Bird by Czenya Cavouras

Rainbow Bird is a deeply moving children's picture book written and illustrated by 14-year old Czenya Cavouras, who is now in high school. Everyone who has had anything to do with refugees and asylum seekers will want to read this book. It tells the story of a refugee journey from a destroyed homeland to a desolate detention centre and finally, to future of hope. Rainbow Bird is quietly harrowing, has a unique author voice, and is ultimately inspiring and uplifting.

Christophe's Story by Nicki Cornwell

This book tells the story of eight-year old Christophe who flees the fighting in Rwanda to come to England as a refugee with his family. It is about his difficulty settling in to his new home and also about the notion of telling stories and awareness-raising.

The Red Shadow by Shelley Davidow

Miri, a young refugee girl, returns home to her village after the end of the war. The story follows the rebuilding of her village and Miri's reunification with her brother and, eventually, her father.

Dark Dreams: Australian Refugee Stories by young writers aged 11- 20 by Sonja Dechian, Heather Millar and Eva Sallis

"These stories will remind you that these unbearable events did not happen far away, to people we pity from a distance – a view the nightly news, especially now, too easily encourages. These events and histories are carried in the heart and mind of the person next to you, these experiences are with us, beside us..." (Dr. Eva Sallis, editor).

Children of war: Iraqi refugees speak by Deborah Ellis

Written five years after the United States and its allies invaded Iraq – but with true democracy still out of sight – Deborah Ellis turns her attention to the war's most tragic victims: Iraqi children. She interviews more than 20 young Iraqis, mostly refugees living in Jordan, but also a few trying to build new lives in North America. Some families left Iraq with money; others are penniless, ill, or disabled. Most of the parents are working illegally or not at all, and the fear of deportation is a constant threat. The children speak for themselves, with little editorial comment, and their stories are frank, harrowing, and often reveal a surprising resilience in surviving the consequences of a war in which they played no part.

Walk in My Shoes by Alwyn Evans

Aimed at secondary students, this book tells of an Afghan refugee, Gulnessa, who struggles to establish a life for herself and her family in Australia. They are confined in a detention centre for asylum seekers, and forced to prove their refugee status.

Letters to Grandma Grace by Victoria Francis

An African refugee family's experiences in their country of asylum are told through letters from the children to their Grandma Grace. The letters illustrate the difficulties and hardships they face in adapting to their new home.

Boy Overboard by Morris Gleitzman

Morris Gleitzman writes of Jamal, who just wants to play football, but with a sister defying Taleban curfews and parents running an illegal school, his problems escalate until the whole family must flee Afghanistan in search of refuge in Australia. Serious themes and dilemmas are presented with a large ration of humour and morals derived from the beautiful game: namely, never give up!

Jumping to Heaven by Katherine Goode

Children from Bosnia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Herzegovina, Iraq, Sudan, and Vietnam who have come to Australia to escape persecution are given a voice in this collection of short stories compiled from interviews with refugees. Written for a more mature youth, the stories evoke the sad, scary, thought-provoking, and sometimes amusing experiences of children and families who have displayed extraordinary courage and hope. This collection offers insight that seeks to bridge the gap between refugees and their new host communities, and gives youth a global perspective on the refugee experience. It is recommended for children over 13 years.

Soraya the Storyteller by Rosanne Hawke

Aimed at upper primary students, this story tells of 11-year old Soraya. Soraya is an asylum seeker from Afghanistan living under the shadow of Australia's former temporary protection visa system. As she adapts to life in Australia, she is haunted by both her father's absence and the fear that she may have to return to Afghanistan. To console herself, she begins writing stories.

My Dog by John Heffernan

My Dog is a very moving, understated story in picture book format suitable for 8 – 12 year olds. Seen through the eyes of a young boy, it tells of the terrible suffering as a consequence of ethnic cleansing in the former Yugoslavia. This book would serve as a moving introduction to discussion on human rights and suffering.

The Colour of Home by Mary Hoffman

This is a fabulous book about the difficulties refugees may face adjusting to a new environment. Hassan feels out of place in a new, cold, grey country. At school, he paints a picture showing his colourful Somali home, covered with the harsh colours of war from which his family has fled. He tells his teacher about their voyage from Mogadishu to Mombasa, then to the refugee camp and on to England. But gradually things change. When Hassan's parents put up his next picture on the wall, Hassan notices the maroon prayer mat, a bright green cushion and his sister Naima's pink dress: the new colours of home.

My Brother is a Soldier by Clare M. G. Kemp

This story tells of the return of a child soldier to his village in Africa and the problems he faces in trying to reintegrate and lead a normal life.

Cry Baby by Lynn Kramer

Cry Baby is a story of a young refugee girl who finds herself in a new home after fleeing from war. Zione has difficulty making new friends because the other children see her as different. However, she overcomes this by demonstrating through a heroic act that she is really no different from the other children.

Kiss the Dust by Elizabeth Laird

This book tells the story of Tara and her family as they are forced to flee Iraq because of her father's involvement in the Kurdish resistance movement. Suitable for 12 – 17 year olds, the story details the plight of a family who become refugees.

Refugees by David Miller

In David Miller's book, two wild ducks become refugees when their swamp is drained. Their journey in search of a new place to live exposes them to danger, rejection and violence before they are given a new home. Their story is told with brightly coloured three-dimensional paper sculptures in this attractive picture book for young children.

On the Other Side of the Hill by Sibylla Martin

In this story, Jacques finds himself in a refugee camp and has trouble making friends with the local children. However, a football match between the children from the refugee camp and the local populations brings the children together.

The Lost Children by Sibylla Martin

The Lost Children recounts the story of how young Ibuka becomes separated from her family when fleeing her home and comes to find herself, along with her younger brother, at a centre for lost children.

The Other Side of Truth by Beverley Naidoo

Aimed at teenagers, this topical novel is set during 1995 in the aftermath of Ken Saro-Wiwa's execution in Nigeria for alleged political crimes. *The Other Side of Truth* tackles multiple themes, most importantly injustice, the right to freedom of speech, the complexities of political asylum, bullying and, ultimately, the strength of the family.

Refugee: It happened to me by Angela Neustatter and Helen Elliot

This book features extended interviews with six children and young adults who are refugees or asylum seekers. They came from various countries including Kosovo, Somalia, Afghanistan and Romania. The interviews are carefully constructed to cover both the emotional as well as the practical consequences of their refugee experiences. The aim is not to be sensational but, rather, empathetic and informative. Talking points and black and white photographs are also included.

Gervelie's Journey by Anthony Robinson

This is a true story of a young refugee. In 1995, Gervelie was born in the Republic of Congo. In 1997 fighting broke out in her home city, and they had to flee to safety. Her father's political connections mean that they are still unable to return home. This is Gervelie's story, told using photographs from her own life. At the time of writing, Gervelie and her father were living in the UK, waiting to hear if their case for asylum would be accepted.

Hazmat's Journey by Anthony Robinson

This story tells of Hazmat from Chechnya, who stepped on a landmine on his way to school. His leg had to be amputated and eventually he and his father came to the UK for expert treatment. As it was unsafe for them to return home, the family sought asylum in the UK. Eventually Hazmat's mother and sister joined them in London and now the family are learning to adapt to their new life after the horror of living in a war zone. This poignant, and at times harrowing, story reveals the bravery of Hazmat and his family in facing and overcoming their circumstances to start a new life.

Meltem's Journey by Anthony Robinson

Meltem's Journey describes as a family flees the Kurdish region of Turkey after Meltem's father is badly beaten by soldiers. When their application for asylum is rejected in Germany, they undertake a desperate journey to Britain, unable to return to Turkey because of the circumstances of their departure. It takes nine years for their application to succeed in Britain, but not before many stressful incidents, periods of detention and threats of deportation. Meltem's story is told in her own words, in diary format, and conveys memorably the emotional highs and lows of her experiences.

Home is a Place Called Nowhere by Leon Rosselson

Suitable for teenagers, this topical, fast-paced novel deals with issues of discrimination and prejudice against refugees. Amina runs away to London after a crisis in her adoptive family, hoping to track down her mother and to discover the truth about her apparent abandonment. Paul, an older and more streetwise runaway, helps her to make contact with the refugee community. It is by listening to other people and their stories that she comes, finally, to understand her own.

Why do they have to fight? Refugee children's stories from Bosnia, Kurdistan, Somalia and Sri Lanka by Jill Rutter and Mano Candappa

Most of the testimonies used in this book were collected during a research project about refugee children. The book serves as a valuable resource for teachers, with the issues behind asylum and refugees are brought to life by these children's stories and testimonies.

Grandfather's Journey by Allen Say

This is a beautifully illustrated picture book suitable for students aged nine and over. Allen Say's grandfather made the journey from Japan to the United States when he was a young man and this story beautifully describes through text and illustrations the love that he and his grandson feel for both countries. Many students will relate to the feelings of longing that are captured.

Global Issues: Refugees by Cath Senker

This information book quotes extensively from mixed-media sources to examine responses to refugee issues in different parts of the world and to debate notions of bias and prejudice. Combining photographs and varied texts in a lively format, it presents real-life case studies showing why people become refugees alongside a range of media viewpoints on their treatment in host societies.

The Arrival by Shaun Tan

This is an extraordinary text-less picture book which tells the story of an immigrant's journey to a new land where he knows no one and understands very little. Yet on his arrival to the new country, he meets friends who help him and tell stories about how they too came to the new land. Through these stories children can learn about the experiences of a variety of immigrant families.

One Day We Had To Run!: Refugee children tell their stories in words and paintings by Sybella Wilkes

This book tells the stories of three children who were forced to become refugees. The children's stories and paintings are set against background information about Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia, which helps to explain why refugees have been forced to flee from these countries. The roles of the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) and Save the Children are outlined, and ideas for using this book in the school classroom are also included.

Brothers in Hope: Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan by Mary Williams

Based on true events, this moving picture book tells the story of Garang, an 8-year old Sudanese boy forced to embark on an epic journey across deserts and mountains to Ethiopia and eventually to Kenya after his family and village are overtaken by war whilst he is away tending cattle. He joins a band of over 1000 boys, some as young as 5, who share his predicament. Despite the hardships of a perilous journey and years spent in refugee camps, Garang occupies himself with the welfare of younger boys, seizes any educational opportunity, and never loses hope of a new life in a permanent place of safety.

Refugee boy by Benjamin Zephaniah

This is a powerful novel that tells of Alem from Ethiopia. Alem is on holiday with his father in London. They have a great few days together until one morning when Alem wakes up to find the unthinkable: his father has left him. The owner of the bed-and-breakfast hands him a letter in which Alem's father explains that because of the political problems in Ethiopia, both he and Alem's mother felt Alem would be safer in London, even though it is breaking their hearts to do this. Alem is now on his own, in the hands of the social services and the Refugee Council. He lives from letter to letter, waiting to hear from his father, particularly about his mother who has now gone missing.

BOOKS FOR ADULTS

The Suitcase: Refugee Voices from Bosnia and Croatia (1997) – by Rada Boric, Julie Mertus, Jasmina Tesanovic and Habiba Metikos

This is powerful collection of memoirs – including essays, letters, and poems – from refugees fleeing Bosnia and Croatia during the civil wars in the former Yugoslavia. Contributors from all ethnic groups and every region of Bosnia and Croatia describe their loved ones, their sense of community and their towns and homes that they have had to leave behind. These stories tell of perseverance, brutality, exile, and courage.

The Happiest Refugee: A Memoir (2010) – by Anh Do

One of Australia's best-loved comedians, Anh Do, depicts his incredible, uplifting and inspiring life story. In his memoir he tells of his family's treacherous journey from war-torn Vietnam, surviving starvation and pirates in an overcrowded boat. He describes the pleasures and the pitfalls as he grew up in Australia as an outsider, and the struggles that his family faced. This heart-warming book captures Anh's gratitude for what he has, and his hope for the future.

What is the What: The Autobiography of Valentino Achak Deng (2006) – by Dave Eggers

This is the story of Valentino Achak Deng, a refugee in war-ravaged southern Sudan who flees from his village in the mid-1980s and becomes one of the so-called Lost Boys. Valentino's travels bring him in contact with enemy soldiers, with liberation rebels, with hyenas and lions, with disease and starvation, and with deadly murahaleen (militias on horseback) the same sort who currently terrorize Darfur. Eventually Deng is resettled in the United States with almost 4000 other young Sudanese men, and a very different struggle begins.

Under the Persimmon Tree (2005) – by Suzanne Fisher-Staples

This widely acclaimed novel explores the relationship between a young American woman and an Afghan girl, Najmah, who is all alone in Taliban-ruled Afghanistan. The story follows Najmah's perilous journey through the mountains in search for safety and refuge in Pakistan.

Child Soldier (2004) – by China Keitetsi

This is a powerful true story of Keitetsi, a child soldier who joined the Ugandan National Resistance Army at just eight years old. Her story details the abuse she suffered at the hands of her officers and how she finally escaped to Europe to start a new life. Now living in Denmark, she is an international campaigner on child soldiers.

The Boat (2008) – by Nam Le

Winner of the 2009 Australian Prime Minister's Literary Award and the Dylan Thomas Prize, this collection of short stories, begins and ends with and the semiautobiographical account of the authors experience as a refugee, travelling with his family by water, from Vietnam to Australia.

Human Cargo: A Journey Among Refugees (2005) – by Caroline Moorehead

This book looks at 'human cargo' from Afghanistan, Liberia, Palestine and many other places. Moorehead has visited war zones, camps, prisons - and the black Dinka families from the Sudan who were re-settled north of the Arctic Circle in Finland. She follows the fate of 57 young member of the Mandingo tribe, who fled ethnic cleansing and ended up happily in America via Egypt. She is shown the graves in Sicily of drowned boat people, and examines the fence that has been built across Texas and into the sea to keep migrants out of America. She has interviewed emigration officials in Australia and members of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees in Geneva. In this book she asks the difficult questions.

Little Daughter: A Memoir of Survival in Burma and the West (2009) – by Zoya Phan and Damien Lewis

Zoya Phan was born to committed resistance fighters in the Karen State of Burma. Despite the civil conflict under the nation's brutal military regime, Zoya's early years were blissfully removed from the war. However, at the age of fourteen, Zoya's childhood was shattered as the Burmese army attacked and her family was forced to flee. Zoya joined thousands of refugees hiding in the jungle, before she sought refuge across the border in a Thai refugee camp. With her enemies still pursuing her, in 2004 she fled to the UK and claimed asylum, where she now acts as the face for UK's Burma Campaign.

Under a Starless Sky (2010) - by Banafsheh Serov

This memoir recounts how the author's personal escape from revolutionary Iran, where her family struggled with the harsh regime. Her grandfather was dragged in for questioning, mother Nina interrogated and father Kamal placed on a stop-list so that he could not leave the country. Finally, fearing for their family's safety, the family must flee across the dangerous Turkish mountains.

