

# Refugees Past and Present

## comparing and contrasting short animation films

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### THEME

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Refugees past and present: gaining a broader picture

### CONTEXT

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Migration plays a central role in human history. Since the beginning of humankind people have left the place they were born to find food, security, and in general to create a better life for themselves.

People flee their country for different reasons: war, natural disasters (typhoons, floods, earthquakes, droughts, etc.), famine, political violence, economic depression, etc. However it is not always easy to find a place of refuge. Throughout the world violence and the threat of violence continues to force people to leave their countries. It is very difficult for refugees to leave their family, friends and home country and start all over again in a foreign country with a different language and culture.

For those who genuinely have to fear for their lives or who are persecuted, world leaders have agreed that these individuals have the right to seek and to enjoy refugee status. This right is anchored in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (article 14). What a refugee is has been defined in the Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees, adopted in Geneva in 1951. In this convention, a refugee is defined as:

*a person outside of his or her country of nationality who is unable or unwilling to return because of persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution on account of race, religion, nationality, membership in a particular social group, or political opinion.*

There are some weaknesses with this definition. Firstly this definition excludes people who flee for economic reasons and/or natural disasters, although they are also unable to live in their own country and are forced to live somewhere else. Secondly it can be difficult to decide who fits the definition. The criteria can be subjective. Learning materials for classrooms are becoming less traditional. Increasingly, for instance, with the advent of the Internet and on-line learning, people find their sources of information on-line. Also, graphic representations of historical and contemporary events have become more popular educational resources. This exercise combines on-line learning with educational animations.

### GOALS

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- Better understanding the rights that refugees have, as well as their duties
- Better understanding different reasons for fleeing to another country
- Promoting empathy for those who find themselves becoming a refugee
- Better understanding the difficulties that refugees experience
- Better understanding the connection between refugees in the past and refugees today
- Improving ability to compare and contrast different resources on a similar issue
- Improving ability to summarize a short film, conduct research on-line and present to others
- Gaining experience and insight into the Jigsaw method.

## MATERIAL & EQUIPMENT NEEDED

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- pen, paper, multiple laptops (one per subgroup) with access to the internet if done in person; if all learning is done online, access to the internet
- five short animation films on refugees (make sure the links still work):

*NOTE: MOST OF THE FILMS LISTED BELOW ARE ONLY IN ENGLISH. ALTERNATIVE 1, GIVEN BELOW, CAN THEN BE MORE USEFUL.*

- GROUP 1: Just Now animation  
[https://youtu.be/i5fnRd2\\_gB4](https://youtu.be/i5fnRd2_gB4)
- GROUP 2: Two animations from UNICEF (there are more in this series):  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MT49ghJ7aGA>  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3scOr\\_d9Dwo&t=25s](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3scOr_d9Dwo&t=25s)
- GROUP 3: An empty promise  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YNvcYE9ohbs>
- GROUP 4: World refugee day  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=EeLKHcoo6hs>
- GROUP 5: BBC - A Harrowing story  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=BOHWYcFIY-8&t=144s>

## METHODOLOGY

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- Small group work (either in person or online)
- Comparing and contrasting short online animation films
- Creating the front page of a (digital) newspaper
- Presenting (either in person or online)
- Variation of the Jigsaw method

## Overview of activities (process)

**Length of the module:** 5-6 sessions of 45/50 minutes

### PART 1: 45-50 MINUTES (WATCHING THE FILMS)

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#### **Introduction: 10 minutes**

The teacher/educator briefly explains what is expected of the students/participants. He/she then places the students/participants into subgroups of 4-5. This division into subgroups can be done in person or online.

#### *Jigsaw methodology*

Each subgroup is given a number (1 through 5, for instance). Each individual participant/student in the subgroups is also given a letter (either A, B, C, D, or E). These allocations are recorded by the teacher/educator. So Group 1, has students/participants 1A, 1B, 1C, 1D, 1E, Group 2 has students/participants 2A, 2B, 2C, 2D, 2E etc.

Each subgroup assigns the role of facilitator and writer.

### **Watching and interrogating a film: 30-35 minutes**

Each subgroup watches one of the short animation films.  
The facilitator guides the ensuing group discussion and the writer takes notes.

The group takes the rest of the period to summarize the contents of the film (on paper or in a digital file).  
Note: the students/participants should only focus on main points. The students/participants will probably need to watch the film multiple times. This will take close observation, careful note taking and a good deal of discussion to reach agreement. The students/participants should watch for the following (among others):

- How is the film told (e.g. first person narrator, third person)
- What facts are being conveyed?
- Is anybody quoted or cited?
- Who is cited as an expert, if anybody?
- Are any international documents cited, and if yes, which ones?
- Is the focus historical or contemporary or both?
- Are any laws cited? If so, which ones?
- What different emotions are referred to if any?
- Is the focus on adults or children, or both?
- What do you think the message of the animation film is?
- Is the film effective in getting the message across?

When finished, each member of the subgroup should have a copy of the summary (either as a copy on paper or as a digital file).

### **Wrap up: 5 minutes**

## PART 2: 45-50 MINUTES

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### **Recap and intro: 5 minutes**

The teacher/educator recounts what happened during the previous session

### **Devising questions and research: 35-40 minutes**

The students/participants return to their groups (either in person or online). The facilitator goes through the summary quickly and asks each person to identify one question that arises out of the animation film and that can most likely be answered through online research. This is done individually.

The students/participants share their questions and the subgroup selects 2-3 questions (total) to research – questions that will have relatively short answers. The subgroup conducts the research and adds the results of their research to their summary.

### **Wrap up: 5 minutes**

## PART 3: 45-50 MINUTES (JIGSAW MIXING)

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### **Sharing the findings and insights: 40-45 minutes**

The previous subgroups will now be mixed into new subgroups of the A's, B's, C's and D's from the previous subgroups. The new GROUP 1 consists of all the 'A's' from the previous groups, GROUP 2 all the 'B's', etc.. In this way, each person will have part of the puzzle (hence the method is called the Jigsaw Puzzle or Jigsaw Classroom).

A facilitator, time keeper and 'designer' are selected.

The students/participants start by each showing the animation film they watched earlier, the research questions they selected and the summary they made. Others can ask questions. At the end of this session everybody, in all groups, should have presented. The facilitator and time keeper should make sure this happens effectively and on time.

#### PART 4: 2 X 45-50 MINUTES (CREATING A NEWSPAPER HEADLINE)

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This will take 2 sessions to be done well.

The students/participants work together, in person or online, to create the front page of an online newspaper that contains all the important information from the 5 original groups. This means summarizing the material and making compromises.

The students/participants should:

- Think of a name for the headline on the newspaper
- Think about using images, or drawings
- Think about the writing style (objective versus advocacy, for instance).
- Is there a focus on facts or opinion or both?
- Try to keep the language accessible for those who know less than they do

At the end of this process, each subgroup (the new subgroups) presents its newspaper front page to the larger group and also discusses any difficult choices they needed to make. The teacher/educator compares and contrasts the front pages and also points out things that might be missing.

#### **Wrap up: 10-15 minutes**

The teacher/educator summarizes the full activity and takes any final comments or questions.

#### HOMEWORK IDEAS

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The students/participants can investigate after the workshop/class what refugee-related initiatives exist in their community.

If the students/participants are from youth organizations, for instance, they can research what youth organizations across the globe are doing to support refugees. If they are school students, they can also research what other schools across the globe have done to support refugees.

#### ADAPTATION ALTERNATIVES

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##### **Alternative 1:**

Divide the larger group into 4 subgroups (or 8 subgroups, depending on the size of the larger group). This can take place in person or online. There are 4 different assignments. Each subgroup receives the power point of the Just Now short film on refugees.

Each subgroup chooses a facilitator and also a presenter. Each subgroup is assigned one of the assignments below (can also be given as homework) and spends 1-2 work periods or lessons using the internet to research one of the following assignments, building on information in the film:

**ASSIGNMENT 1 (subgroup 1)** - SLIDE 7 mentions that hundreds of millions of people migrated across the planet in the last century. The chart only covers 2013-2016. Can the subgroup identify, through online research, two other major migration histories on the planet in the last century that produced refugees,

preferably on two different continents? Who migrated from where to where, and what were the main causes for this migration? Can you find one personal story of a refugee who got caught up in this migration? Please present what you find to the larger group at the end of the activities.

**ASSIGNMENT 2 (subgroup 2)** - SLIDE 13. The slide comments that more than one million people escaped Nazi Germany between 1939 and 1945 and that most were Jews. Please research the following questions: where did the fleeing Jews go to? What countries were willing to accept these Jewish refugees? Find 2 personal stories of Jews who fled Germany after 1939 and create a short summary of their lives. Please present what you find at the end of the activities.

**ASSIGNMENT 3 (subgroup 3)** - SLIDE 19 and 22. These slides talk about the Universal Declaration of Human Rights from 1948 and the 1951 Refugee Convention. Find each one of these on-line and read them through carefully. Try to find how these two might be different but also where there are similarities. Try to identify the life history of one person involved in the 1951 convention. Please present what you find at the end of the activities.

**ASSIGNMENT 4 (subgroup 4)** - SLIDE 43. This slide mentions that we are now facing the world's worst refugee crisis since the Second World War. Research the refugee crisis associated with the war in Syria and Russian invasion of the Ukraine. Who is fleeing and why? Where are these people trying to escape to and how are they being received? Can you find one personal story of a recent refugee from both conflicts who has gotten caught up in this migration, preferably in your own country? Please present what you find at the end of the activities.

### **Alternative 2:**

The teacher/educator can identify 5 famous refugees from the past (and present), instead of animation films. There is a good deal about past and present refugees online.

If some students/participants in the group speak a foreign language, have them research the issue in another language and bring that back to the classroom.

## EXPLANATION OF ROLES MENTIONED IN THE ACTIVITY

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### **Facilitator/Team Captain**

- Makes sure that everybody understands the task
- Makes sure that everybody contributes to the task
- Focuses less on his/her own ideas and more on those of the entire group
- Tries to find where people agree and disagree
- Encourages a positive group atmosphere
- Represents the group if it has a question for the teacher.

### **Writer**

- Takes notes on what is said
- Makes sure that the notes are rewritten and summarized for presentation

### **Presenter/Reporter**

- Readies the group for presentation (who says what, what is used in the presentation)

### **Designer**

- Responsible for layout and design of the newspaper front page

### **Time keeper**

- Makes sure that the task is completed on time.



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