Lesson 1

In this complete lesson students learn key vocabulary: asylum-seeker, migrant, refugee and internally-displaced. Through instruction and discussion, students’ understanding of people who migrate in our world will be enhanced. There are opportunities for local and global service, as well as to extend learning. pages 4-6.

**time:** 40mins - 1 hr 40mins + viewing time  
**grades:** 5-12  
**subjects:** ELA, History

Lesson 2

In this complete lesson students experience the voice and perspective of a Syrian refugee through the examination of a primary source. Students create a piece of art based on that primary source. There are opportunities for local and global service, as well as to extend learning. pages 6-8.

**time:** 30mins to 1 day (+ viewing time)  
**grades:** 6-12  
**subjects:** Arts Ed, ELA, Social Studies

Videos and Student Worksheets

Related episodes can be viewed by students here. Downloadable student worksheets to accompany the lesson are provided on pages 9-12.

Additional Resources for Teachers

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Essential Questions

Guiding questions to help students understand the overarching themes in the episodes:

- Why would someone leave their home?
- What is a refugee?
- How does a refugee differ from an asylum-seeker? Migrant?
- What do refugees throughout history have in common? How do they differ?
- What can we do to help others feel welcome?
Background Information for Teachers

According to the United Nations, 5.6 million Syrians have been forced to flee their home country since 2011. A further 6.6 million have been internally displaced within Syria. Excerpts from the BBC's "The story of the conflict" are provided as background information.

1. Uprising turns violent

In the southern Syrian city of Deraa, pro-democracy protests erupted in March of 2011 following the arrest and torture of several teenagers who painted revolutionary slogans on a school wall. Demonstrators were killed when security forces opened fire, but more took to the streets. The unrest triggered nationwide protests demanding the resignation of President Assad. The government's use of violent force in an attempt to crush the movement merely hardened the protesters' resolve. By July of 2011, hundreds of thousands of citizens had taken to the streets across the country. Opposition supporters eventually took up arms as well, first to defend themselves and later to expel security forces from their local areas.

2. Descent into civil war

Violence escalated and the country descended into civil war as rebel brigades were formed to battle government forces for control of cities, towns and the countryside. Fighting reached the capital of Damascus and the city of Aleppo in 2012. By June of 2013, the UN reports that 90,000 people had been killed in the conflict.

3. Fighting continues in Syria

The Syrian government under President Bashar Al Assad has regained control of many of Syria's biggest cities, but large parts of the country are still held by opposition groups some of whom are backed by international forces. As of fall 2019, the last remaining opposition stronghold (and heaviest fighting) is in the north-western province of Idlib and adjoining parts of northern Hama and western Aleppo provinces. It is home to an estimated 2.9 million people, including a million children, many of them displaced and living in dire conditions in camps.

4) Syrian Refugees

The war in Syria has gone on for longer than World War II. As a result of the war, many Syrians have left their homes to avoid the violence both internally within Syria or beyond. As of March 2019, roughly 5.7 million Syrians have fled the country, according to the UN High Commissioner for Refugees, and more than 6.1 million people are displaced internally. Lebanon, Turkey, and Jordan are hosting most of the Syrian refugees, many of whom attempt to journey onwards to Europe in search of better conditions. The 1951 Geneva Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees describes a refugee as any person who, "owing to 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 or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that country".

It is important to note: The story highlighted in Crash Test World is one of successful resettlement. However, the crisis is ongoing. About 1 million displaced Syrians have moved to Europe as asylum-seekers or refugees, which is the largest number of refugees to arrive in Europe since World War II. More than 5 million displaced Syrians live in the neighboring countries of Turkey, Lebanon, Jordan, and Iraq; and more than 138,000 people risked their lives trying to reach Europe by sea in 2018 alone.

The United Nations High Commission For Refugees provides exceptional teaching materials on refugees, asylum, migration, and statelessness for K-12 school teachers. We recommended using these materials alongside the Crash Test World lessons.
Key Vocabulary
"Understanding the terms refugees, migration and asylum begins with understanding a few basics. The word "refugee" is often used as a blanket term for people displaced by war, violence or persecution. But there are different categories of displaced people, each with specific needs. Knowing what these categories mean exactly is important and will contribute to a better understanding of this complex topic." - United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - UNHCR.org

We recommend that you view these UNHCR videos as preparation for using these lesson plans with your students.

Refugee: Person fleeing conflict or persecution. Refugees are specifically defined and protected in international law. Refugees are people outside their country of origin because of feared persecution, conflict, violence, or other circumstances which have seriously disturbed public order, and who, as a result, require ‘international protection’.

Migrants: People moving to another country for reasons other than conflict and persecution. Unlike refugees who cannot safely return home, migrants face no such impediment to return. If they choose to return home, they will continue to receive the protection of their government.

Asylum-Seeker: People seeking international protection from conflict and persecution. An asylum-seeker is someone whose request for sanctuary has yet to be processed. Every year, around one million people seek asylum.

Internally Displaced: Internally displaced people (IDPs) have not crossed a border to find safety. Unlike refugees, they are on the run at home. IDPs stay within their own country and remain under the protection of its government, even if that government is the reason for their displacement.

Definitions for key terms in this lesson have been provided by The United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees - UNHCR.org
Lesson 1: What is a Refugee?

In this complete lesson students learn key vocabulary: asylum-seeker, migrant, refugee and what it means to be internally displaced. After watching Part II of the Berlin episode here and through instruction and discussion, students’ understanding about people who migrate in our world will be enhanced. There are opportunities for service, both locally and globally, as well as to extend learning.

Make this lesson your own! While this lesson is "plug & play" we encourage you to remix and adapt these activities to fit your students and your own style. Suitable for students grades 5-8. (Engage in the Content, Extend the Learning, and Service Opportunity suitable for grades 9-12)

Setting the Stage (discussion)
Begin by watching Part II of the Berlin episode here. Then, using a white board or piece of paper/poster board, etc., ask students to sketch out their thoughts using words, pictures, or a combination of both, in response to the question:

- What do you think about when you hear the word "refugee"?

Invite students to share their thoughts with the whole group by asking:

- What are some of our common understandings/themes?
- Do you think these sketches and words really fit with the word "refugee"?

Engage in the Content (vocabulary instruction)
Provide students with the Note Taker Worksheet provided on page 9.

Engage the whole group in a class discussion around the following questions and encourage students to make notes along the way possibly dividing their page into columns for my ideas, class ideas, and formal definitions:

- What are the differences between these words?
- Can a refugee be an asylum-seeker? Can an asylum-seeker be a refugee?
- Beyond conflict and persecution, why would people decide to move to another country (migrants)?
- What do these words have in common?
- When have you seen these words misused?

Share with students the definitions for the key vocabulary provided by United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees provided on page 3 and discuss legal/formal definitions vs. classroom definitions.
Analysis / Synthesis (small groups or whole class)
Have students revisit their original drawings, sketches, or words.
- Did what was initially captured truly fit with the UNHCR’s legal definition of a refugee?
- Did some of the initial ideas fit better with one of the other vocabulary words?

Reflection & Assessment (individual)
Randomly assign two of the vocabulary words to each student and have them, in writing, explain the difference(s) between the key words.

Extend the Learning (individual)
Provide students with the "Worldwide Refugee Crises of the last 100 year" handout provided on page 10

Have students conduct deep dive research into one of the refugee crises listed or another of their choosing. Include personal perspective - what did the student find surprising? Most interesting? Students may demonstrate acquired knowledge and understanding through a paper or in-class presentation.

Suggested Service Opportunity
LOCALLY: Research local refugee development centers or shelters, and ask what your classroom could do to help or volunteer.

GLOBALLY: Encourage students to write letters to child refugees. You can connect via Care.org. Through Care.org, your classroom can send kind, empathetic words of hope to refugees around the world.

Videos and Student Worksheets
Related episode can be viewed by students here. Downloadable student worksheets to accompany the lesson are provided. pages 9-12
Objectives and Standards for Lesson 1

**Literacy (Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards):**
- Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

**Social Emotional Learning Competencies:**
- Social Awareness: Demonstrate consideration for others and a desire to positively contribute to the school and community.
- Social Awareness: Demonstrate an awareness of different cultures and a respect for human dignity.

**Social Studies**
- Use historical perspectives to analyze global issues faced by humans past and present.

Lesson 2: A Refugee's Story (using Primary Sources)

In this complete lesson students experience the voice and perspective of a Syrian teen refugee through the examination of a primary source. Students then create a piece of art based on that primary source. There is also an opportunity for service and action based on the reading.

Make this lesson your own! While this lesson is "plug & play" we encourage you to remix and adapt these activities to fit your students and your own style. Suitable for students grades 6-12. (Scaffolding for younger students is possible)

Setting the Stage (discussion)
If you already completed "Setting the Stage" in Lesson 1 you may skip to "Engage In The Content" on the next page. Otherwise, begin by watching Part II of the Berlin episode here. Then, using a white board or piece of paper/poster board, etc., ask students to sketch out their thoughts using words, pictures, or a combination of both, in response to the question:
- What do you think about when you hear the word "refugee"?

Invite students to share their thoughts with the whole group asking:
- What are some of our common understandings/themes?
- Do you think these sketches and words really fit with the word "refugee"?
Engage in the Content
Make sure that each student has one copy of "Walaa's One Sad Dark Night" (pages 11 & 12).

- Invite students to read closely while talking to their text: asking questions in the margins of the paper, paraphrasing portions of the text to better understand it, reacting to her words with emotions/emojis to the information.
- Ask students to focus on what the piece makes them feel or visualize as they read, and underline or highlight particular words or "golden lines" that resonate with them.
- Reconvene to share ideas (reinforcing the thinking and sparking new ideas).

Reflection & Assessment (individual)
Having studied and reflected on the text, students will create a piece of art bringing new perspective through a different medium to the powerful words of Walaa. Students can draw, paint, sculpt, or use any medium available to complete this task. As students create, they continue to return to Walaa's work for inspiration, noting which parts of the text most strongly influence their own creation. Students might give their piece a title and write a bit about what inspired them or how their work evolved from this primary source. If students need additional inspiration, they might seek out other refugee art initiatives online.

Extend the Learning
Artwork can be displayed gallery-style in the classroom or in another location, and shared with a larger audience. Students can seek out a refugee art show in their own community.

Suggested Service Opportunity
Re-read the last paragraph of "Walaa's One Sad Dark Night" aloud as a class (provided on pages 11-12).

"I ask to those who read this, please provide help to the people still inside Syria. They need help, more help than you can even imagine. A child deserves the right to live and a future, do they not?"

LOCALLY: Research local refugee development centers or shelters and ask what your classroom can do to help or volunteer.

GLOBALLY: Young people are constantly creating innovative and powerful ways to create change. Have your students research and take action to help refugees. Action could include promoting inclusion to humanitarian aid. A good place to start research is Cities Stand #withrefugees which includes access to 200 organizations committed to promoting tolerance and respect for people forced to flee.
Objectives and Standards for Lesson 2

Literacy (Common Core College and Career Readiness Standards):
- Acquire and use accurately a range of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when encountering an unknown term important to comprehension or expression.

Social Emotional Learning Competencies:
- Social Awareness: Demonstrate an awareness of different cultures and a respect for human dignity.

Social Studies:
- Use historical perspectives to analyze global issues faced by humans past and present.

National Core Art Standards:
- Responding: Perceive and analyze artistic work.
- Responding: Interpret intent and meaning in artistic work.
- Connecting: Relate artistic ideas and works with societal, cultural and historical context to deepen understanding.

Videos and Student Worksheets
Related episode can be viewed by students here. Downloadable student worksheets to accompany the lesson are provided. pages 9-12
Throughout history, people have been migrating for different reasons, under different circumstances. Specific words and terms were therefore needed to describe each type of human migration. Let’s explore what they each mean, and why they matter.

Even though the word “refugee” has been in use for thousands of years, it did not have a formal definition until the early 1900s. In 2019, 70.8 million people worldwide were forced from their homes. Of these, about 25.9 million are refugees.
Worldwide Refugee Crises of the last 100 years

Over the last century, large numbers of people have fled their homelands due to war and persecution. The list below includes some of the refugee events of the last 100 years.

World War I (1914-1918): Nearly 2 million people left their European countries during the first World War. The largest groups of refugees were from France, Belgium, and those of Jewish ethnicity from various European countries.

During & after World War II (1940-1955): During World War II, there were nearly 40 million displaced people. After the war, there were nearly 6 million displaced people in Germany alone. Temporary camps were set up to shelter them until they were able to either return home or be granted residency in a different country.

Bangladesh War (1971): An estimated 10 million Bengali refugees fled to India. A further 30 million were internally displaced.


Central American Crisis (1980-1992): This crisis began in the early 1980s when people fleeing the violence of civil war in El Salvador, Guatemala, and Nicaragua began to head north. Nearly 2 million people sought refuge in neighboring countries.

Somali Civil War (2009 - present day): There have been nearly 25 years of armed conflict in Somalia resulting in an estimated 2.1 million internally displaced people and Somali refugees settled around the world.

Syrian Civil War (2009 - present day): 5.6 million Syrians have been forced to flee their home country since 2011. A further 6.6 million have been internally displaced.

Myanmar Rohingya (2017 - present day): Rohingya are one of the ethnic minorities in the country of Myanmar (Burma). The Rohingya people have faced decades of discrimination and violence. Today more than 1 million Rohingya have fled to Bangledesh to seek refuge.
One Sad Dark Night
By Walaa - a 17-year old Syrian refugee living in East Amman, Jordan

One sad dark night, a night without a moon, I was with my family at my home in Syria and we were preparing a dinner to have a nice meal together. Suddenly the power goes off and darkness prevails, a moment later the sky lights up, but not by the moon but from an explosion.

Then all light is gone and all we can hear is screaming. Another explosion goes off and the screaming gets louder and louder. Death was around us, between us and we were waiting for our turn. My little brothers started to cry and I had to be strong for them, although I was afraid too.

The night of April 24th 2011, we left our house to find safety at our grandparents' house. On our journey, all we could see was death, all we could hear was screaming, and all we could smell was blood. Our house had gone and we were homeless.

After that night, for a year and a half, all nine of us lived in one room. Even that room they took from us, in a big explosion on a night like that night. And we left our grandparents' house for the same reason and came to Jordan. We left our schools, our education, our friends and we lost everything.

In Jordan we've had to change our house twice in just 3 months, as the houses are too expensive here and my parents cannot afford the rent. There is no school for us anymore, as our parents can't work here, because many Syrians are not allowed. We are not children anymore, we are old people in children's bodies.

The Syrian children are not thinking about having fun or playing or making friends, they have bigger things to worry about. All they are thinking about is how to sleep not hungry, not thirsty or not cold. And if they actually will have a place to sleep tomorrow or will they be on the street as their parents can no longer afford the rent.

When we went to register, there were a lot of people fighting. I can't blame them, they are afraid for their children. There were crowds of people there, crowds of children who have lost their education, their friends and their families.

Early marriage is happening more and more and girls are no longer able to continue their schooling. But at least we are safe here, the situation in Syria is becoming worse by the day. You see people living on streets as if they're in an apartment. Children are always crying because they are starving and almost dying from the cold. There they do not have the necessities for life. They are destitute, needing everything from a house to food, medical care and medicine, clothes, books, schools, a heater to keep them warm and even water.
One Sad Dark Night
By Walaa - a 17-year old Syrian refugee living in East Amman, Jordan

The children do not ask to play and have fun or to study and learn, they simply ask for the right to a life.

I still cannot believe what has happened. It feels like a nightmare that I cannot wake up from. I wish anyone to wake me up from it. Is it true that I have left my house, my school, my family, my friends, and my country?

I can't stand living without my country. I can't continue to watch the Syrian people suffer anymore. It's been a thousand days and how much more suffering needs to happen before this conflict is over?

My friends and family still inside Syria, please forgive me for being safe while you are in great danger.

I ask to those who read this, please provide help to the people still inside Syria. They need help, more help than you can even imagine. A child deserves the right to live and a future, do they not?

Taken from: savethechildren.org
Additional Resources and Links for Teachers

UNHCR Teaching About Refugees
Free-of-charge and adaptable teaching materials on refugees, asylum, migration and statelessness as well as a section dedicated to professional development and guidance for primary and secondary school teachers.

Against All Odds
Against All Odds is an educational online game that shows what it’s like to flee a country.

Refugee Week
Lesson plans, workshop activities and assemblies for children and young people of all ages.

In Search of Safety: Teaching About Europe Refugee Crisis
This free teaching resource allows you to explore the refugee and migrant crisis with children and young people at school.

A visual guide to 75 years of major refugee crises around the world
The Washington Post's brief guide to the major refugee events in recent history.

Authors
Katie Tasch Bielecki started her career with Teach For America. After receiving her Bachelor’s Degree from Lyman Briggs (Science and Technology Studies) at Michigan State University, she obtained a Master’s Degree in the Art of Teaching from Dominican University.

She has served as a classroom teacher, an interventionist, and a district curriculum coach. Her passions lie in social justice, equity, and identifying a method to capture the accounts of all storytellers. Her classroom community is designed to invite the stories and voices of her students. The curriculum she develops challenges learners to think beyond themselves, build empathy, and problem solve with other global citizens.

Kristin Hundt is a fervent teacher, learner, and global citizen. These roles make up how she plans for, dreams about, and empowers students to spread their genius while making a positive impact on the world.

She has a Bachelor’s degree in Elementary Education from Michigan State University and a Master’s degree in Curriculum and Instruction from Central Michigan University. Kristin speaks at innovation, literacy, and technology conferences to inspire teachers to give students more voice and choice in the classroom. She loves nothing more than to go on ‘adventures’ with her husband and four young boys learning, exploring, and serving the world around them.
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