

Resources:

Armstrong, Louise
Living as a Refugee
Ticktock, 2005, ISBN: 1860078257

Bradman, Tony
Give me shelter an asylum seeker anthology
Frances Lincoln Publishers, 2007
ISBN: 9781845075224

Cheeseman, Tom
Soft touch: refugee writing in Wales 3
Hafan Books, 2005, ISBN: 9780954514730

Donnellan, Craig
Refugees and Asylum Seekers
Independence Educational Publishers, 1999
9781861681027

Global Communities: Learning about Refugee Issues
An activity book aimed at primary school children to help raise awareness of asylum seekers and refugees.
ISBN: 2005 0946787212

Global Communities: Learning about Refugee Issues
Aimed at secondary school children
The Refugee Council, 2005, ISBN: 0946787212

Global Express: Issue 30
www.dep.org.uk/ge/geedition.php?editionid=30

Laird, Elizabeth
Kiss the Dust
Macmillan Children's Books, 2007
ISBN: 978-0230014312

Refugee Children UNHCR Guidelines on protection and care.
Available at: www.asylumsupport.info/publications/unhcr/refugeechildren.htm

Rutter, Jill
Refugees, A Resource Book for Primary Schools
The Refugee Council, ISBN: 0946787778

Rutter, Jill
Refugee: We left because we had to
The Refugee Council, ISBN: 094678759X

Wilkes, Sybella
One Day We Had To Run!
Millbrook Press, ISBN:1995 9781562945572

Websites:

Refugee Week: www.refugeeweek.org.uk
Celebrates the contribution of refugees to the UK.

The Refugee Council: www.refugeecouncil.org.uk
wealth of information, statistics, activities and stories of refugees in the UK including dispelling myths, use the search facility.

UNHCR: www.unhcr.org
Essential, user friendly UN website for information, statistics and case studies on refugees around the world.

BBC News: <http://news.bbc.co.uk/cbbcnews/>
Click on Teachers' link to access curriculum linked lesson plans; pictures, case studies, children's views on asylum seekers, links to news and answers to common questions.

Amnesty International: www.amnesty.org/ailib
Education in Human Rights and discrimination on the Amnesty International site with useful resources.

Home Office: www.homeoffice.gov.uk
This government site has the latest statistics on asylum seekers and immigration. The main Home Office site has a range of information on immigration including pages of information for potential immigrants which could be useful for a role play activity.

Global Dimension: www.globaldimension.org.uk
Click on the Teach about Refugees link to access information and resources.

UNHCR: www.unhcr.org
Wealth of published resources, including posters available on their website.

www.ninemillion.org
A UNHCR led global campaign for World Refugee Day: nine million refugee children in the world dream of a better future. This campaign is helping these children realize their dreams by improving their lives in refugee camps through education and sport.

DfES: <http://tinyurl.com/cnepph>
A downloadable guide including dealing with controversial issues

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www.globalfootprints.org



promoting global learning in schools

There are an estimated 12 million refugees around the world today – almost all are victims of wars and conflicts and most of them are based in countries of the Global South.

Discussion on refugees has become very emotive with many extraneous issues such as jobs, housing, crime and race brought into play. The way the debate is conducted has implications for the well being and safety of many people in the UK and for the future of its multi cultural society.

Sections of the media and some politicians vilify refugees without going into the underlying reasons why people seek political asylum. The debate over refugees has been confused with immigration, and the terms immigrant, asylum seeker and refugee are used synonymously, with possibly disturbing implications for race relations in the UK. So-called bogus refugees have been linked with global terrorism and, in turn, global terrorism with the war against Iraq.

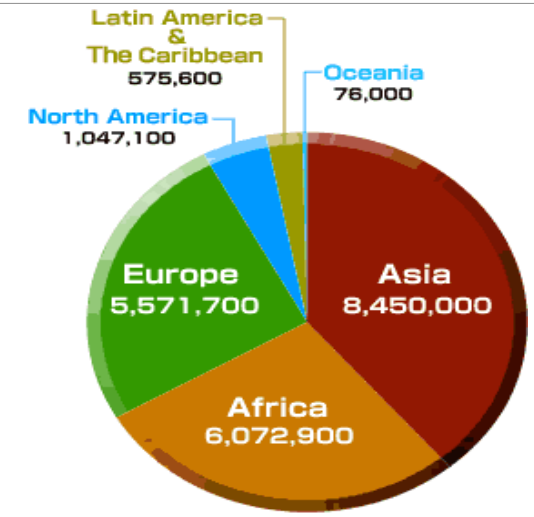
The 1951 Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees defines a refugee as someone who is forced to leave their country and seek protection in another country because of a well founded fear of persecution in their own country for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion.

When a refugee arrives in a new country, they are known as an asylum seeker until they are granted refugee status. If someone has fled their home in fear of their life but has not crossed the borders of their country, they are known as an internally displaced person.

Events

- February 21** International Mother Language Day
- March 21** International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination
- May 21** World Day for Cultural Diversity for Dialogue and Development
- June 20** World Refugee Day
- June 15-21** Refugee Week UK 2009
- June 26** International Day in Support of Victims of Torture
- August 9** International Day of the World's Indigenous People

Global Leaflet 6: Refugees



Distribution of refugees around the world.
Data from UNHCR

Global Context

The UK hosts a small fraction of the world's refugees. In 2003 there were 20.6 million refugees, that's roughly one in every 300 of the world's population.

According to UNHCR, the vast majority of refugees are sheltering in the developing world. Pakistan hosted 1.2 million at the start of 2003, Iran 1.3 million. Asia hosted nearly half of all people of concern to UNHCR, followed by Africa, which hosted 22%.

The **Millennium Development Goals** do not directly address the issue of refugees.

Glossary

Asylum seeker: Someone who has entered another country and is claiming asylum because they fear persecution at home.

Illegal immigrant: Someone who doesn't have permission to enter a country legally. Many refugees do not have the correct papers simply because they are fleeing war or persecution.

Immigrant: Someone who settles in a different country.

Refugee: Someone who has fled their home country and been granted the legal status of refugee.

South and North: the terms are used to refer to countries categorised as 'developing' and 'developed'. This is done with a recognition that any such dichotomy is problematic.

Timeline: refugees in British history

1190: Jews flee England after many killed in riots. The remaining Jews were later expelled from England.

13th century: Armenian traders flee Turkey and settle in Plymouth and London

16th century: Many Catholics leave England and French and Dutch Protestants flee to England because of their religious beliefs.

1665: Jews allowed to settle in England again.

1685-1700: Louis XIV renews prosecution of French Protestants and over 100,000 settle in London, Canterbury, Bristol, Norwich and Exeter.

1780-1900: Refugees flee to England from many European countries due to political repression.

1870-1914: Intensive persecution of Jews in

Eastern Europe, especially in Russia, where many were killed in pogroms (riots). Over 200,000 Jews settle in England, mainly in cities.

1914-1918: 250,000 Belgians flee to England after the Germans invade and occupy most of the country. Most return at the end of the war.

1933-1939: 60,000 refugees, mostly Jewish, flee from Nazi Germany to the UK.

1937: 4,000 Basque refugee children flee the Spanish civil war and come to Britain.

1939: Nearly 100,000 refugees flee to the UK from Western Europe as a result of Nazi aggression. Most return at the end of the war.

1939-1950: 250,000 Polish refugees flee the occupation of their country by Germany in 1939, or the Communist takeover after WW2.

1945-1960: 50,000 refugees settle in the UK when communism imposed in Eastern Europe.

1956: After the Red Army brutally represses an anti-communist rebellion in Budapest, 17,000 Hungarian refugees escape to the UK.

1968: 5,000 Czech refugees flee after a Russian invasion of their country removes a more liberal communist government.

1968-1970: 25,000 flee Northern Ireland to the Republic of Ireland after anti-Catholic rioting.

[Source: *Refugees: A resource book for Primary Schools*, J.Rutter, Refugee Council, 1998]

Key issues facing refugees and asylum seekers in the UK

Threats to the 1951 Convention

The Convention is currently under threat because European governments are increasingly seeking ways to prevent refugees from entering the European Union. Restricting access to the UK means that refugees fleeing persecution sometimes find it impossible to reach safety, and are denied the protection that is promised them in the 1951 Convention.

Destitution

Increasing numbers of asylum seekers are being forced underground because of changes in asylum legislation. Until now failed asylum seeking families have been supported under the Children Act but the government plans to introduce legislation which will force them into destitution if they do not agree to return home. If they refuse, their children could be taken into care.

Detention

In the UK, asylum seekers, including children, can be detained at any stage of the asylum process. According to UNHCR, the UK detains more people for longer periods and with less judicial supervision than any comparable country in Europe. Despite criticism from human rights organisations, the UK government does not publish the annual numbers of asylum seekers detained under the Immigration Act.

Unsafe returns

The Refugee Council has raised concerns over an increasing international trend towards returning failed asylum seekers to countries which are unsafe. Although a country may be deemed 'safe' by a government, failed asylum seekers returned there may still have a 'well-founded fear of persecution': Reliable, independent country information is difficult to obtain which makes it impossible to judge if a country is safe or not.

Media Hostility

The media have a big impact on public perception of asylum seekers and refugees and negative coverage can have a powerful effect. It can lead to policy decisions that make it difficult for asylum seekers to enter the UK and increased hostility towards those who do make it: In October 2003 the Press Complaints Commission issued a guidance note to editors on reporting about asylum seekers and refugees warning of the danger that inaccurate, misleading, or distorted reporting may generate an atmosphere of fear and hostility that is not borne out by the facts and could be in breach of Clause 1 of the industry Code of Practice.

Case Study

.According to official figures some 1.5 million refugees have returned to Afghanistan after the fall of the Taliban regime in 2001. Throughout the 1990s Pakistan was host to around 3 million Afghan refugees. Some one million refugees still live in Pakistan, mostly in North West Frontier Province.

This is Farhad's story as told to Christopher Nadeem, for Global Express, in Peshawar. Farhad Zakaria was a boy of five when the war in Afghanistan intensified in 1991. His parents fled Afghanistan for Pakistan. Now seventeen, Farhad works as an office boy in a small computer shop.

"I was very young when we came to Pakistan but I still have a vivid memory of our house in Kabul, the capital of Afghanistan. It had a big garden with apple trees. Me and my cousins used to play in it."

"At that time I did not understand why we had to leave our house but later on understood that my father decided to leave because of the constant battles. When I think about it, I'm not sure whether my family or I would have been alive had my parents opted to stay back in Afghanistan."

"I still remember our first days in Peshawar in Pakistan. There were times when we did not have enough food to eat. Though my father started doing odd jobs, it seemed as if we never had enough money for our needs."

"Back in Afghanistan I could not go to school because of the war. I did get to go to a school for refugee children for almost a year when we moved to Islamabad. But then we had to move back to Peshawar and that was the end of my school days."

"Over the years I learned Urdu, the national language of Pakistan. I was also lucky enough to get a job - in a factory that manufactured polythene bags. I used to work for 12 hours a day and earn 1,500 Rupees (£16) per month, which I used to hand over to my mother. I have also worked as a messenger boy and a waiter. There were times when my father did not have any work, and the family depended solely on my meagre earnings."

"Three months ago I travelled to Kabul to find out whether the situation had improved so that we could return. I found it far from ideal. We no longer have our house in Kabul, which has been sold off. I know I will have to start my life all over again when I go back to my own country, if peace ever returns there."

Starter Points, Classroom Activities and Assembly ideas

- Read Farhad's story and list three reasons why Farhad might want to stay in Pakistan and three reasons to return home to Afghanistan.
- Check your past and history - find out if there are any immigrants in your family.
- Discover the story of an immigrant or refugee living in your local community.
- Research a famous migrant, for example Karl Marx, Albert Einstein, the Dalai Lama, Victor Hugo.
- *To consider the needs of refugees:* Pupils can work in groups to draw up a plan for welcoming refugees to their class, school or community. They should discuss what they think the refugees will need most in the chosen context and plan up to ten ways in which they will provide a practical and warm welcome. For example they might feel that refugees will need a special friend or two who will look after them for a few days, or where the nearest shops are.
- *Home is where the heart is:* To create empathy with refugees, especially children. Talk with children about what home means to them. Then ask them to imagine that they have to leave their home very suddenly and can only carry a small back pack with them. What would they take if they knew they would never see their home again?
- Look at the Open Spaces for Dialogue and Enquiry website: www.osdemethodology.org.uk Secondary activity available and primary materials being developed.

Woodberry Down Primary, Hackney Assemblies

Assemblies focused on the themes of Refugee Week before and during the week.

The first assembly, and a great starting point for our work, was the UNHCR poster shown below. The UNHCR had sent us loads of resources, magazines, postcards and multiple copies of various posters, including this one. www.unhcr.org

Children talked with their partners in response to being asked to identify the occupation of each Lego figure.

After their answers were collected they were then asked to identify the refugee.

The answer was that all the Lego figures were refugees.

