



SESSION PLAN

LEARNING ABOUT REFUGEE RIGHTS

Designed for students aged 7-11

INTRODUCTION

This session will support students to explore what we mean by the term refugee. Students will explore an individual's story and consider what action they could take to welcome refugees into their community.

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Knowledge and Understanding: Students understand what refugee means and the UDHR articles relating to them
- Values: Students reflect on and empathise with the experience of refugees
- Skills: Students recognise how they can act in solidarity with refugees

RESOURCES

- Ali's story case sheet
- Refugee definition sheet
- Map
- Coloured pens

MAP PREPARATION

Print the map on a large scale by using the 'poster' print setting. This enables you to scale up and split the map across multiple sheets of paper, called 'tiling'. It also allows you to add an overlap and cut marks, so that you can then piece and stick it together.

We suggest you pre-mark Ali's journey to Germany on the map as an example.



Ali Özdemir with some of the solidarity cards and messages he has received from Amnesty activists. ©Private

STARTER ACTIVITY:

SIT DOWN IF ...

5 mins

Tell all the students to stand up. Ask them to sit down if ...

- You have come to school today

Tell the students to stand again. Sit down if:

- You have seen your friends today

Tell the students to stand again. Sit down if:

- You felt safe as you travelled here today

Tell any students still standing to sit down.

Explain:

- In this workshop you are going to be looking at the topic of refugees
- For many refugees around the world: they are separated from friends and family; they are on dangerous journeys; going home is simply not an option

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ACTIVITY 1:

15-20 mins

ALI'S STORY

Ask the students to get comfortable as they about to listen to a story.

EXPLAIN:

- The story is about a boy who is a refugee
- The name of the boy is Ali Özdemir
- This is a true story
- They should listen carefully to the story

Read 'Ali's Story' out loud to the students.

ASK:

- Why did Ali have to leave his home?
- What happened to Ali whilst he was on his journey to Turkey?
- What do you think Ali might miss about his home?
- What would you miss about your home if you had to leave?
- If you had to start at a new school how would you want to be welcomed?
- What two new skills has Ali been learning since he has been in Germany?
- What do you think we mean by the term refugee?

EXPLAIN:

- **A refugee is someone who has left their country and cannot or does not want to go back because they are scared of being hurt or treated unfairly**

Give each student a copy of the 'Refugee Definition Sheet' to keep.

EXPLAIN:

- For people to be able to achieve their best they need to feel safe, secure and part of the community where they live

Ask the students to imagine that they had arrived in a new country and joined a new school.

ASK:

- How would you want people to treat you if you had to start a new school in a new country?

Ask the students to imagine that Ali (from the story) has arrived from Syria in the UK and has started at their school.

ASK:

- What would you do to make him feel welcome?

ACTIVITY 2:

15-20 mins

ON ARRIVAL

Ask the students to imagine they were a refugee and had to leave their home to move to a new country.

Tell the students they had not being able to bring any of their belongings with them.

Give the students 10 minutes to draw the items they would want on arrival in their new country.

Invite the students to share and explain their drawings to the rest of the group.



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If we are frightened of being badly treated in our own country, we all have the right to run away to another country to be safe.

Cartoon by *Margarita Nava*, Amnesty International Mexican section. Colours by *Shahid Mahmoud*.

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OPTIONAL ACTIVITY: JOURNEYS

15-20 mins

Organise the students into groups of 5-6.

EXPLAIN:

- Marked on the map is the country Ali came from - Syria - and the country Ali now lives in - Germany. The two countries are joined together. This represent Ali's journey as a refugee
- Each group should think of different people they know, or have heard about, who have come from a different country and now live in the UK. The students can mark on the map where they came from and the journey they each took

Hand out maps and pens to each group.

After 10 minutes bring the students back together. Ask some of the groups to show their map and share who they talked about.

CONCLUSION: CONTRIBUTIONS

5 mins

EXPLAIN:

- Refugees flee their homes to countries all around the world
- Some refugees have settled here in the UK over the years and many refugees have made positive contributions to the UK

BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Amnesty International campaign for individuals, families, communities and organisations around the world who have had their human rights violated.

The case sheet that supports this workshop shares the experience of Ali Özdemir.

Ali Özdemir, a Syrian national, was shot in the head on the night of 18 to 19 May 2014 when approaching the Turkish border. He survived but was blinded in both eyes. He was 14-years-old at the time.

Ali's father told Amnesty International that there has been no official apology from anyone in Turkey. A legal aid lawyer from Mardin took a statement from Ali and himself on or around 10 June but Gani Özdemir did not know his name – nor was he given any contact information or informed about the outcome of any investigation.

In October 2014, Gani Özdemir made a criminal complaint to prosecutors regarding the shooting of his son. To date there had been no response from the prosecutor's office.

Amnesty International act to aid specific individuals at risk and pressure governments to address underlying human rights issues. In Ali's case there are human rights issues of impunity, refugee rights and children's rights. Amnesty International wants to see those responsible for Ali's attack brought to justice. We want a prompt, effective, independent and impartial investigation. We also want Ali to receive reparation i.e. compensation for his injuries that have been life changing and all the medical and psychosocial support necessary for his recovery in a sustainable manner.

Soldiers/border guards or other state officials should not use excessive and abusive force against refugees. Where allegations are

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made of excessive and abusive force by state officials there must be effective, independent and impartial investigations. Those who are found to have used excessive and abusive force should be brought to justice.

In light of widespread human rights abuses and the ongoing conflict in Syria, Amnesty International are also calling on the Turkish authorities to allow all civilians seeking to leave Syria to enter through official border crossings. We are calling for this regardless of whether they have valid passports or urgent medical needs.

On the night that Ali attempted to cross the border he was with nine other refugees – his cousin, two friends and a family of six. They planned to enter Turkey from near the Syrian town of al-Derbasiyah to Kızıltepe in Mardin province, south-eastern Turkey where Ali's family had been living for most of the crisis in Syria. They had not paid smugglers to take them across.

Gani Özdemir, Ali's father, told Amnesty International about what happened to his son. Gani was not with his son but the events were relayed to him by Ali and others who were with him.

“About 10 metres before the Turkish border, they heard people talking Turkish. Ali was afraid. He had been afraid before making the attempted crossing and now didn't know what to do. Just as he decided to turn back from the border and turned his head and body slightly to his left to begin to do so, he was shot in the side of the head. There was no verbal warning and there were no warning shots in the air. It was a single shot that entered his skull just behind the right eye socket and exited his head just behind the left eye socket.”

Ali fell to the ground, saying “I can't see,” but did not lose consciousness. Other shots were then fired but no one was hit. Ali was carried away by members of the group he was with and taken to al-Derbasiyah hospital in Syria. However, due to a lack of medical staff and facilities the hospital was unable to treat him. Ali was subsequently transported to several other hospitals in Syria – none of which were able to provide adequate medical care. Eventually Ali was brought into Turkey for emergency medical treatment before being taken to his father's home in Turkey. In June 2014 Ali was granted a visa to join his mother in Germany. In February 2015 Ali's father Gani and Ali's two other siblings were reunited with Ali and his mother in Germany.

In November 2014 Ali's mother explained some of the ongoing impact on Ali. Ali has nightmares every night about the incident. He has been seeing a psychologist once a week. In addition to the loss of both eyes, Ali also lost his sense of smell. He is attending school, though language difficulties are making his full integration more difficult. He is learning Braille.

Ali loves music and wants to learn how to play the piano and the guitar. He also loves football and supports Real Madrid but cannot follow the games on television because the commentary is in German.

Activists around the world have been taking action on Ali's case, writing appeal letters to the Turkish authorities and sending solidarity messages to Ali. Unfortunately, we have had very few updates on how the legal case is progressing in Turkey.

In April 2016 we received photos of Ali with some of the solidarity messages students' in the UK have been sending. Ali's father said he has been very happy to receive them.