



# SESSION PLAN

## REFUGEE RIGHTS: A TIME TO FLEE

*Designed for students aged 11-14*

### INTRODUCTION

This session will introduce the students to different words related to refugee rights. It uses the story of a family to explore the difficult decisions faced by refugees who are fleeing and asks students to consider what they could do to welcome new arrivals.

### LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Knowledge and Understanding: Students understand what refugee, asylum seeker and migrant mean
- Values: Students reflect on and empathise with the experience of refugees
- Skills: Students recognise how they can act in solidarity with refugees

### RESOURCES

- Word and definition cards
- My Rights Passports
- Story sheet – A Time to Flee
- Sample note – A Time to Flee
- Post-it notes
- Flipchart
- Pens and marker pens

### ORDERING RESOURCES

To order copies of the My Rights Passport quote your name, your postal address, the 'My Rights Passport' product code **ED112** and quantity required (one per student). Please allow one week for any orders. Telephone: **01788 545 553** Email: [amnesty@mdams.com](mailto:amnesty@mdams.com)

### 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 will be looking at some of the issues faced by refugees
- Many refugees around the world are separated from their friends and family; they are on dangerous journeys; going home is simply not an option



My Rights Passport ©Carmen Valiño / Amnesty International UK

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## ACTIVITY 1:

### WORDS & DEFINITIONS

10 mins

#### EXPLAIN:

- This activity will explore definitions.
- You will each be given a card with a different word or definition on it
- You will need to stand up and find the person with the card with the word or definition which matches your card

Hand out the cards and give the students time to find their partner.

In plenary, ask each pair to read out the word and definition. Ensure that these are all correct.

Reiterate the definition of refugee and asylum seeker:

- **A refugee is a person who has fled their country and cannot or does not want to go back because of well-founded fears of persecution**
- **An asylum seeker is a person who claims they are a refugee and has asked the Government of another country if they can stay there for their safety**

#### EXPLAIN:

- Many laws that protect our human rights are based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights
- The Universal Declaration of Human Rights is an international declaration created by governments following World War Two. It contains 30 articles listing the human rights that every single human being is entitled to.

Give out a copy of the 'My Rights Passport' to each student.

Ask the students to turn to page 23 which includes Article 14:

***'Everyone has the right to seek and to enjoy in other countries asylum from persecution'***

*If someone hurts us, we have the right to go to another country and ask it to protect us'.*

#### EXPLAIN:

- Refugees have their rights protected in various internal laws, such as the 1951 Refugee Convention.

## ACTIVITY 2:

### A TIME TO FLEE

25 mins

#### EXPLAIN:

- The situation and reasons people become refugees are varied and complex.
- In your groups you are going to listen to the story of one family who become refugees.
- You should listen carefully and take notes.

Read **setting the scene - character descriptions**.

Ask the group to imagine that this is your family. Explain that you are going to tell them the story of what happened to your family.

Read **tell the story**.

Midway through the story there is a prompt to pass out the 'sample note' to students.

After you have finished reading the story, divide the class into groups of five or six.

Ask the students to discuss what happened in their groups and to decide if the family should stay where they are or leave.

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After the groups have had time to discuss their ideas bring the group back to plenary.

### ASK:

- Did you decide the family should stay? Why?
- Did you decide the family should leave? Why?
- What might be the conflicting issues the family faced when making their decision?

Ask the students to imagine the family has decided to leave.

In their groups they have 5 minutes decide on the 10 most important items the family need to pack to take with them as they leave to attempt to cross the border.

They should write or draw the 10 items onto a sheet of flipchart paper. This is the 'bag' the family takes with them.

Each group to feedback on their 'bag'.

### EXPLAIN:

- After a long, difficult and frightening journey, tired and hungry, the family arrive at the border and want to seek asylum.
- Each group should now imagine they are the family
- Each group will now face an Immigration Officer who will be processing their asylum application

Each facilitator to take a group of students.

Each facilitator will now take on the role of an Immigration Officer at Passport Control.

### IN CHARACTER, ASK:

- Who are you?
- What are you doing here? [the family is in danger and they need a place of safety]
- What happened?

Encourage the students to explain what has happened to the family.

### IN CHARACTER, ASK:

- This story seems improbable and I think you are bogus. Do you have any items with you that can prove your story?

Students to identify any items in their 'bags' that could count as evidence for their story.

Evidence could include Dad's union card, the anonymous death threat and the newspaper article.

### IN CHARACTER, ASK:

- What else do you have in your bags? You look suspicious to me. Are you hiding weapons in there?

*If any of them have listed a weapon among their 10 things:*

### IN CHARACTER, ASK:

- What do you intend to do with those weapons?
- Are you terrorists?

Confiscate the weapons by asking the students to cross it out on their sheets.

*If they have brought family photographs:*

### IN CHARACTER, ASK:

- Why have you brought photos with you? I am confiscating them from you. They may prove useful in my investigations

*If they cannot provide any proof for their story:*

### IN CHARACTER, SAY:

- I don't believe your story. I am rejecting your asylum claim and sending you back home as 'failed asylum seekers'.

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## ACTIVITY 2 (CONT.)

25 mins

End being in the role of an Immigration Officer at Passport Control.

Bring the groups back into plenary.

### EXPLAIN:

- In this country, asylum seekers who travel to the UK to seek safety must make their claim as soon as they arrive at the border. If they do not, they are not entitled to any support
- In the exercise the family's claim was assessed immediately on arrival. In practice, people who arrive in country and claim asylum will have their claim assessed over a longer period of time.
- During this time, asylum seekers may be detained to prevent them from going into hiding. If their asylum claim fails, they will be sent back to their country, or if they can't go back they stay in the UK but are not allowed to work and most government support is withdrawn

### ASK:

- How did the family in the story feel when they had to leave their home?
- Was there anything in the story that surprised you? Why?
- Did anything in the story change your perception of asylum seekers in this country?



Sample note – A Time To Flee

## CONCLUSION: REFLECTION

5 mins

Share one or both of the quotes with the students below.

- “no one puts their children in a boat / unless the water is safer than the land”, a line from the poem Home by Warsan Shire
- “Those who choose not to empathise enable real monsters. For without ever committing an act of outright evil ourselves, we collude with it, through our own apathy.”, JK Rowling

### ASK:

- What might the quote mean?

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY: MAKE A DIFFERENCE

15 mins

Give each student a couple of post-it notes.

Ask the students to reflect on how the family in the story might have felt.

Ask the students to imagine the family's asylum claim was successful and that they came to live in the students' community or to be a student at their school.

Each student to write two or three ways, each on a different post-it note, that they could make a difference to people arriving in their school or community.

Students to stick the post-it notes up on the wall.

Share some of the ideas and suggestions.

**SESSION PLAN****DEFINITIONS ANSWER SHEET**

|  |  |
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| <b>Refugee</b>                             | A person who has fled their country and cannot or does not want to go back because a well-founded fear of persecution.   |
| <b>Asylum Seeker</b>                       | A person who claims they are a refugee and has asked the Government of another country if they can stay there for their safety.  |
| <b>Migrant</b>                             | A person who is moving or who has moved away from where they usually live. This could be for a variety of reasons including to find work or to join family. Some move voluntarily whilst others are forced to leave. |
| <b>Persecution</b>                         | To subject a person to prolonged hostility and ill-treatment because of who they are or what they think.   |
| <b>Internally Displaced Person (IDP)</b>   | A person who has moved to another part of their own country to find safety because they are scared that they will be treated unfairly, hurt or suffer serious harm.  |
| <b>Citizen</b>                             | A person who is legally recognised as belonging to a country or nation, either because they were born there or because they were granted legal status.   |
| <b>European Convention on Human Rights</b> | The legal international instrument that protects human rights in Europe.   |
| <b>Human Rights Act</b>                    | The legal instrument that means that the European Convention on Human Rights is part of UK law.  |