

all you need for a **REFUGEE ASSEMBLY**

What do Albert Einstein and Jerry Springer have in common? Einstein was a refugee and Springer the child of one! With over 12 million refugees in the world there are more now than at any other time in history – and most are living in African and Asian Countries. Relatively few settle in Britain, but those who have make a tremendous contribution to the society they have been forced to join. Public opinion on refugees and asylum seekers is strongly influenced by negative images and reporting in the media – this pack challenges the myths and stereotypes which promote prejudice.

It aims to enable students and their teachers to:

- find out more about refugee and asylum issues – the current situation as well as past events
- develop empathy towards refugees and asylum seekers - personal stories are included to help participants understand and empathise with the human side of the issues
- explore concepts such as human rights, justice, leaving home and being a newcomer
- develop a commitment to justice, through exploring ways in which individuals and communities can take action to support refugees and asylum seekers.

contents

what's a refugee? who's a refugee? ks2/3	
assembly 1	3
lesson 1	11
myth busting ks 2/3	
assembly 2	15
lesson 2	23
awareness & action ks3/4	
assembly 3	28
lesson 3	31
further information	34

© RISC, 2004

devised & written by **Louise Robinson**

design by **Dave Richards**

thanks to **Judith Joyner;Carolynn Low & Aleks Tutus, Action for Children in Conflict; Reading Youth & Community Service; Refugee Council; Elizabeth Tonge; Jo Walsh; Mandy Warwick**

Users may copy pages from this pack for educational use, but no part may be reproduced for commercial use without prior permission from RISC.

using the pack

As a resource for assemblies this can be used with limited preparation, but it offers a wide range of areas to develop & explore with pupils. Although appropriate to different Key Stages each assembly is intended to be flexible and adaptable for different age groups. The lessons alongside each assembly could be used either as a lead in or as a follow up – or be used independently with other resources (see Further information p34).

guidance for teachers

Being sensitive to the needs of refugee/asylum seeker children in the school before introducing any discussion of refugee/asylum issues, is essential. If you know that one or more of your pupils are in this situation it's important to talk to them in advance of any assembly or classroom discussion. Explain to them what the session will be about and give them the opportunity not to be there – as well as the opportunity to talk about their experience, or about their home country, if they would like to.

Guidance from the Refugee Council reminds us that refugee children may have experienced great trauma in their home country or during their escape. They may have seen members of their family injured, killed or arrested – such horrific events cannot easily be discussed in classrooms – and the children may now be facing much uncertainty. Refugee children may not want to talk about their home country or family circumstances because they might feel it could jeopardise their chances of staying in Britain or because they do not want to feel different from other children. They may feel embarrassed about the media images of their own country and the popular misconceptions people have about refugees and where they come from – this can affect the refugee children's self-esteem, and prevent non-refugee children from empathising with them.

Making sure refugee children feel secure, while raising awareness of the circumstances which have brought them to Britain is vital. Popular misconceptions and prejudices about refugees must be challenged to enable all the children to develop as positive Global Citizens.

resources

Before you begin, finding answers to the following questions may be useful for discussion:

- 1 Are there any refugees/asylum seekers locally?
If there are none locally, where is the nearest town/city with a refugee population?
If there are refugees locally, how many are children?
Are there any unaccompanied children?
- 2 What contributions have refugees/asylum seekers made locally and in Britain as a whole?
The local CRE, Refugee Support Group and local museums may be able to provide information (see Further information, p34)

what's a refugee? who's a refugee?

ks2/3

aims

- To develop pupils' understanding of the issues.
- To encourage empathy with people who become refugees and asylum seekers.

assembly 1

activities

resources

introduction

- ▶ Start by asking the audience to raise a hand if...
- Someone in your family, a friend or neighbour has come from another country.
- Someone in your family, a friend or neighbour lives in another country.
- You have moved home – to or from another country yourself
- ▶ Alternatively start with everyone standing up and ask them to sit down if... see how few are left standing.
- ▶ Some of us have lived in another country ourselves, most/ many of us know people who live, or used to live, in another country.

Some people move from one country to another because they want to, but some people move because they have to – they are forced to leave the country they live in and find another country where they can live safely.

- ▶ This is an assembly about some of these people – ordinary people like us – but people who've lived through an extraordinary time.

who am i?

- ▶ Explain that the audience now needs to identify some famous people from their descriptions – individual pupils could be asked to read out the clues, enlarged onto card, with the famous person's identity concealed.
 - ▶ Answers/guesses could be invited from the audience before the identity of each famous person is revealed (in words or pictures).
 - ▶ Famous refugees... choose some or all: Sitting Bull, the Dalai Lama, Marlene Deitrich, Jesus, Albert Einstein, Michael Marks, Gloria Estefan, Lomana Lua Lua, Ann Frank. Look out for more contemporary examples, eg music or sports personalities, some of those listed may soon date).
 - ▶ What do these people all have in common? They were/are all refugees.
- clues for each famous refugee, p4-5
 - picture of each famous refugee, p5-7

what is a refugee?

- ▶ Many people are forced to flee from their own country because they are afraid for their lives. When they arrive in a new country the government there must decide whether or not to let them stay. If they are allowed to stay they are called refugees. While they are waiting for the government to decide if they can stay, they are called asylum seekers.

- Key terms 'Refugees' & 'Asylum Seekers' written on signs or OHTs

why do people become refugees/asylum seekers?

- ▶ People might have been forced to leave their homes because of their religion, their political beliefs, their way of life, or because they belong to a minority ethnic group – this means a group of people who share a culture and language, which is different from most of the other people in the country

what would you take?

- ▶ Ask audience to imagine what belongings they would take if they had to grab a bag and leave their home at very short notice.
- ▶ Ask for some suggestions. Unpack your own bag to show what you might choose (about 10 items) and lay them out on a table.
- ▶ Show audience all the objects, then ask them to indicate which 5 they would have chosen – by raising their hands as you hold up each item.
- ▶ Extend this by telling audience about what you couldn't take, eg a favourite place in your house, something too big/heavy to carry, a pet... and ask them to think for a moment about what they would have to leave behind...

- bag of belongings to be unpacked, eg warm jacket, mobile phone, passport/ID, gold necklace, scissors/pen knife, torch, matches, old family treasure book, packet of sweets, walking boots...

stories

- ▶ Read 1 or 2 refugee children's stories – suggest audience try to imagine themselves in that situation while listening.

- Fortesa's and Chol's stories, pg-10

resources for assembly 1

Clues for famous refugees, past and present

- A singer who fled from Germany in the 1930s and went to Hollywood where she became a famous film star. She had a colourful personal life full of romance! **Marlene Dietrich**
- A footballer from the Democratic Republic of Congo (a country in Central Africa) who was transferred from Newcastle to Portsmouth for £2million. **Lomana Tresor Lua Lua**
- Tibet's spiritual leader, who fled into India 50 years ago, when Chinese soldiers invaded Tibet. He won the Nobel Peace Prize in 1989. **The Dalai Lama**
- In 1933, when Hitler took control of Germany, this famous scientist fled to America. He is most famous for his theory of relativity. **Albert Einstein**
- A Native American chief of the Sioux tribe. He fought the US army when they invaded his people's lands. In 1877 he led his people into Canada. **Tatanka Iyotake, 'Sitting Bull'**
- As a baby, this famous person had to flee to Egypt with his parents because King Herod was after him. He had ordered that all baby boys should be killed. This happened about 2000 years ago – and the baby's birth is celebrated by many people around the world every Christmas. **Jesus Christ**