

Ideas for Teachers



Join us in celebrating Refugee Week – seven days of events that will raise awareness about refugees and their needs, as well as celebrating the contribution that refugees make to their new homeland.

During Refugee Week, many events take place all across Australia, including music, art, theatre, crafts, food, fashion, conferences and sport. These events are organised by charities, local councils, refugee organisations, schools, youth groups, libraries and theatre companies – to name but a few. Anybody who wants to organise an event, big or small, can do so.

Refugee Week provides a perfect opportunity to find interesting and fun ways to introduce students to refugee issues and expand their knowledge of other cultures. Below we've put together some ideas for what you can do as well as links to games, lesson plans, and useful information. There's loads of exciting material out there so make the most of it!

Please remember we'd love to hear from you. Any feedback and ideas for improvements to the kit would be greatly appreciated. We're also keen to learn about what you've done. Your successes and failures could help inform other classes in the future.

Finally, if you have any questions, please don't hesitate to contact us on the number/emails below.

Good luck!

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What you can do

Schools and youth groups can take part in Refugee Week in many different ways. The information and ideas provided below are adapted from advice provided by Bill Bolloten, Freelance Refugee and Education Consultant.

Refugee Week Activities: Getting Started...

If you want to involve students in activities or projects, the best place to start is with them. They are likely to have plenty of original ideas, which could be tailored specifically to your school.

Split the class into small groups and ask them to brainstorm different ideas for things they could do to support refugees and asylum seekers, or to celebrate the contribution they make to this country. Encourage them to think about possible activities they could do in their class, in the whole school, with the local community or even ways to get involved at a national level.

They could also consider what the aims of any event or project might be. For example, would it be to raise awareness of key issues, or maybe to campaign on behalf of refugees? It could be to learn more about the culture of countries where refugees in your local community come from or it could be to make refugees in your school feel welcome when they arrive.

If students are finding it difficult to come up with ideas, you will find plenty of suggestions below which you could use to start them off.

Groups can feedback their ideas to the whole class. If time is limited, they could just share their favourite idea. You could then discuss with the whole class how they might want to develop this, and set aside time for planning the next steps they need to take.

Ideas, ideas..... and more ideas!

1. Assemblies – In the UK, over 400 schools put on pupil-led assemblies for Refugee Week in 2005. You could include poetry, stories and other readings, particularly refugee testimonies, participatory activities, opportunities for contemplation and reflection or performances.

2. Art projects – There is no limit to what you could do with art. Students could create their own pieces of art or use photography or art to depict



what this year's Refugee Week theme, 'Freedom from Fear', means to them. Another idea is for students to create a display of artwork, combined with information about refugees, and exhibit it in a prominent place in the school.

One example of a successful art project was carried out in Refugee Week 2000 by Save the Children. They worked with children to create a Celebrating Sanctuary art wall. Pupils from several schools worked together to contribute to the final wall. The images on the wall focus on:

- What makes a place safe?
- Where do you go if you want to feel safe?
- Why might people want to leave their own country?
- What experiences might people be running away from?
- How should we welcome refugees to this country?
- What new experiences might refugees have in this country?

Your group could try and create their own Celebrating Sanctuary art wall or mural for your own school.

3. Competitions – Encourage students to think about refugee issues by participating in a competition. This could be to design a T-shirt or a poster, write a poem or even write and perform a play, once again bearing in mind the theme, 'Freedom from Fear'. You could hold the competition together with other schools in your area.

4. Performing arts – Have a world music day; learn songs or dance from countries where refugees in this country come from; invite local musicians who are refugees to perform at the school or run a workshop with students; hold a poetry reading; have a storytelling or writing workshop; show films about refugee stories or issues – or even make your own short film; contact local theatre companies, and see if they can work with the school during Refugee Week; use role play activities as a basis for developing a short drama.

5. Speakers – Contact a local refugee community organisation and invite a speaker to come and talk to your class. Hearing personal stories first hand can be incredibly powerful. Be sure to read the 'Guidelines for Working with Refugees' beforehand.

6. Food Fair – Try food from different countries, particularly countries from where refugees in Australia come from. Invite parents or local refugee organisations to come into the school and cook or bring different kinds of food typical of their home country. Have a 'Masterchef' competition.

7. Fashion – Have a fashion show featuring and celebrating clothes from different cultures.

8. Sport – learn a sport played in another country. Hold a mini World Cup football tournament, with all the different nationalities at your school represented.

One Primary School's Example...

- They held special assemblies in which some of the children who are refugees shared their experiences of coming to Australia and memories of home.
- They held a poetry competition on the theme 'Feeling Safe'.
- They organised a food fair, combined with a fashion show in which children wore their traditional clothes.
- They invited performance artists to the school including African drummers, a multicultural poet / storyteller and a Polish Roma band.
- They hired a badge making machine and all the children in the school made a badge.

9. Fundraising – one way to show your support for refugees could be to hold a fundraising event to benefit a local refugee organisation or charity which supports refugees.

Here are some ideas:

- A sponsored walk, swim or run.
- A sponsored football match or tournament.
- A sponsored fast, where you don't eat anything for a day.
- A quiz where everybody pays \$1 to enter, the winner gets a prize bought with some of the money collected, and the rest of the money goes to charity. You could write the questions yourself, and include a section on refugee issues.
- Put on a play or a concert in aid of refugees.
- Research on the internet or in the library some cake or biscuit recipes from other countries. You can then make them and sell them at breaktime or lunchtime.
- A non-school uniform day, where pupils pay \$1 to charity for the privilege of not wearing their uniforms.



10. Have a debate in the classroom or develop some lesson plans – use some of the lesson plans, interactive games or information provided by various organisations to raise awareness in the classroom. Check out all the links provided in the next chapter.

11. Join the Simple Acts Campaign – the Simple Acts Campaign began in the UK and is founded on the belief that if everyone does at least one of the simple actions listed, we could make a big change to the way refugees

and host countries see each other. Use the Simple Acts as a guide for your own activities.

See the Simple Acts listed below and think of ways you can get everyone to participate in your school. For more information about the campaign go to: <http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk/simple-acts/>





Resource for Teachers

Listed below are links to lesson plans, games and other useful information that would be great for the classroom. There's a wealth of creative material out there so make the most of it!

And if you know of any other links or resources you'd like to see added, just email them our way. However, we strongly advise you to check with authors and see how up to date it is.

Documentaries

"Long Journey Young Lives" (2002)

http://www.abc.net.au/longjourney/index_flash.html

"Long Journey Young Lives" is a story about being a young refugee. It's an online interactive documentary which provides an intimate and unique insight into the experiences of child refugees. From the violence and danger of their homeland, to their dangerous journey and subsequent detention in Australia, young refugees present an exclusive account of their experiences as refugees. The documentary also explores the opinions of young Australians on issues surrounding asylum seekers. Australian school children, all under the age of 12, express their views on mandatory detention, being called 'boat people' and 'queue jumpers', and talk about whether Australia has a responsibility to accept refugees. Even though some of Australia's policies have changed since this was made, it's still interesting.

Molly & Mobarak Clips (2003)

Online clips from the documentary are available on

<http://australianscreen.com.au/titles/molly-mobarak/clip3/>

Online Resources

OXFAM

<http://www.oxfam.org.au/refugee/index.php>

This recent Oxfam project 'Refugee Realities' has educational materials for both teachers and students such as:

Virtual Refugee Realities

This interactive online simulation invites you to take the journey of a young refugee. Experience what it is like to be forced to flee from your home, take a dangerous trek in search of safety, explore a refugee camp and consider your future home.

Refugee Realities interactive simulation *is running in Melbourne now*. It's not too late for your students to experience Refugee Realities in person. Teaching materials are provided for teachers bringing student groups to the refugee realities simulation on

<http://www.oxfam.org.au/refugee/learning/teachers/index.php>

The Dusty Diaries

Written by humanitarian worker Paul Bolger in 2005 and 2007 in Chad, the Dusty Diaries outline his experiences while setting up a refugee camp for those fleeing the violence in nearby Darfur.

Stories and blogs

Read about Lindy Hogan's work with Burmese refugees in Bangladesh, and stories from Australian and Ugandan youth.

Refugee Game for Change

Aissa is a refugee who has to flee conflict in Darfur with her four children. In this game you can help Aissa and her children avoid all the dangers they face, like landmines and guerrillas, and when you see the children's life running out, look for food to feed them.

Links

Oxfam has compiled an extensive list of links to humanitarian organisations, news sources and online audio and video covering a range of refugee-related material.

Downloads

Download a range of fact sheets, articles and reports on issues affecting refugees and asylum seekers.

Glossary

A comprehensive list of terms and definitions.

Victorian Department of Education and Training

<http://www.education.vic.gov.au/studentlearning/programs/esl/refugees/refugeeweek.htm>

This site provides resources and classroom activities on refugee issues.

Amnesty International Australia

http://www.amnesty.org.au/hre/comments/refugees_rights_classroom_resources/

Amnesty International Australia's website provides detailed information and research relating to human rights issues, refugees and asylum seekers in Australia. In addition to commentary on recent and topical refugee issues in Australia, the Amnesty website also contains specific resources for schools.



Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF)

<http://www.msf.org.au/refugeecamp/about-the-event.html>

Médecins Sans Frontières (MSF) is an international medical aid organization that provides emergency relief in many of the areas of the world from which refugees flee. Its website can provide more information about the conditions refugees endure before they reach countries like Australia.

Last year, MSF in Australia took on tour a 'refugee camp'. This free exhibition provided a recreation of a refugee camp and its facilities, with the aim of creating a better understanding of the vulnerability of life for displaced people and refugees who have fled their homes.

The exhibition, entitled 'A Refugee Camp in your City', is scheduled to go on tour again later this year. To learn more visit the website <http://www.msf.org.au/refugeecamp/about-the-event.html>

United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR); Australia for UNHCR

<http://www.unrefugees.org.au/how-you-can-help/schools.html>



UNHCR is the United Nations agency mandated to respond to refugee crises around the world. The UNHCR website provides a wide range of resources including up to date information, news, current statistics relating to refugees and displaced persons worldwide.

It is also a fantastic source of photographs and images of refugees worldwide. As long as these are sourced and acknowledged correctly, these images can be used in presentations or on posters and promotional materials for your event or school project. Check the website regularly as these photographs are updated and change frequently.

The Australia for UNHCR website is also a great resource for teachers and students alike, and includes a school curriculum that incorporates refugee

and asylum seeker issues into learning. Australia for UNHCR also has ideas and suggestions for interesting events and activities you can organise in support of refugees and to raise awareness about refugee issues.

Foundation House: the Victorian Foundation for Survivors of Torture and Trauma

http://www.foundationhouse.org.au/resources/publications_and_resources.htm

This website offers lots of information about the experiences of refugees and asylum seekers as well as having a fantastic schools page with great resources that can be used in the classroom.

A Just Australia

www.ajustaustralia.com

The core mission of A Just Australia is to campaign for changes to government policy on refugee and asylum seekers. A Just Australia runs a national campaign that incorporates a series of public awareness activities including public events and meetings, advertising, lobbying, research, and letter-writing. The 'A Just Australia' website has information on a range of refugee and asylum issues.

The Australian Red Cross

www.redcross.org.au

The International Committee of the Red Cross (ICRC) www.icrc.org

The Australian Red Cross assists asylum seekers with health support, counselling, accommodation, material aid, education, legal referrals, and social support. The website has a FAQs section, a News Room page, and a library resource. The photographic library can be used for school projects and presentations. Please be sure to acknowledge the ICRC if you are using any of their images.



Australian Human Rights Commission (AHRC)

<http://www.hreoc.gov.au/education/index.html>

AHRC has a number of educational resources on multiculturalism, racism and diversity, including: Face the Facts and Voices of Australia. Resources are available for both students and teachers.



National Council of Churches in Australia

http://www.ncca.org.au/actforpeace/about_us/protect_refugees/refugee_and_migrant_sunday

An education kit and many resources for schools are available for download from this site which has gathered resources for the National

Council of Churches Refugee and Migrant Sunday and are also great for Refugee Week.

Refugee Council of Australia (RCOA)

<http://www.refugeecouncil.org.au/newsevents/refugeeweek.html>

RCOA is the national umbrella advocacy body working on refugee issues in Australia. All information relating to Refugee Week 2008 will be posted on the Council's website as it becomes available and will include a poster to download, a Calendar of Events which will be updated regularly, and other information to assist community groups and others in their planning for Refugee Week 2009.

Other Resources

Refugee Week Stickers

The Refugee Council in the UK has provided a 'Refugee Week' sticker template which can be downloaded from <http://www.refugeeweek.org.uk/Events/Downloadable+Materials/Downloadable+Materials.htm>

All you need to do is load your page of labels into the printer. They have other materials as well, however these are more UK specific.