

refugee week

20 - 26 june 2005



What is Refugee Week?

Refugee Week is a unique opportunity to celebrate the positive contributions that refugees and asylum seekers make to the UK, and to try and promote understanding about why people seek sanctuary. It aims to create a positive image of refugee and asylum issues in Britain, whilst challenging the ignorance and negative views that are so often associated with refugees. Refugee Week takes place every year in June, to coincide with the annual World Refugee Day on 20th June. This year Refugee Week will be held from 20th to 26th June.

continued...

The Refugee Week Website:
www.refugeeweek.org.uk
includes information and activities for teachers.

To find out more about what events are happening locally look at the Norfolk Refugee Week website hosted on **www.nead.org.uk**. This will be launched in early June. To take part or help with events in Refugee Week contact Finbarr Carter on 01603 610993 / **finbarr@nead.org.uk**. This newsletter aims to give teachers information on the issue, ideas on where to find out more and a list of useful teaching resources available. We also include a Refugee Quiz.



Aden Ahmed Mohid, 14, Walking to Kenya. © UNHCR.

What is the theme for Refugee Week this year?

The theme for Refugee Week 2005 is Persecution, as part of an ongoing three-year theme of the global causes of forced migration and displacement.

Persecution is fundamental to the definition of refugees in the Geneva Convention of 1951, which protects the rights of people seeking asylum. Unfortunately, many people forget that millions are forced to flee their homes every year because they or their families are being persecuted. This can be for political reasons but can just as easily be on the grounds of their race, religion, sexuality or membership of a particular ethnic group.

It is important to raise awareness of persecution as a key factor in the creation of refugees and to help people understand what it might mean to be a victim of persecution where there is no adequate protection from people in authority. Those persecuted are often faced with no choice but to flee their homes, and only a tiny proportion come to the UK to seek asylum. Sadly, many people suffer further persecution once they get here, when essentially they should be safe.



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Aims of Refugee Week

The purpose of Refugee Week is to deliver positive educational messages that counter fear, ignorance and negative stereotyping of refugees through arts, cultural and educational events. Refugee Week aims to:

- **promote awareness and understanding amongst the general public of the real plight of refugees and asylum seekers, and challenge negative stereotyping**
- **celebrate the enormous contribution that refugees make to the United Kingdom's social, cultural and economic heritage**
- **facilitate encounters between the general public and refugee communities, and enable people to learn about the diverse communities living in their area**
- **celebrate the UK's proud history as a place of sanctuary for those fleeing from conflict or persecution**
- **enable individual refugees and asylum seekers to participate in community events which celebrate their own distinctive heritage**

A City of Refuge

- Nothing New to Norwich

Immigration has been happening since people have been able to travel. This region, East Anglia, is named after the Angles that settled here after the Romans left and the English language is based on their's and the Saxons' who settled here at the same time. However, there is a huge difference between moving for choice – and migrant workers fall into this category - and forced migration.

People get confused about the difference between the terms 'asylum seeker' and 'refugee'. The UN defines a refugee as someone who has a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion. An asylum seeker is someone who is applying for asylum and has to wait and see whether they are recognised as a refugee or not.

Refugees have made a huge contribution to the local economy. In 1565, local authority figures sent a request to Queen Elizabeth for permission to have immigrant workers settle in Norwich as the local economy had hit a low point and it was felt immigrants would help. Queen Elizabeth issued a 'letters patent' allowing thirty Dutch and Walloon 'Strangers' and their households to settle within Norwich City walls. The people of the Low Countries were having many troubles at the time; their ruler, Philip II of Spain enforced many anti-Protestant policies and there was also economic hardship and war. Up to 300,000 people sought refuge and religious freedom in other countries, including Protestant England.

The Dutch and Walloons brought with them their expertise in textiles, which had been used in the Low Countries previously and had devastated the textile industry in Norfolk. When they moved to Norfolk, they rejuvenated the local economy with their expertise, assuring Norwich as England's second city.



Under Queen Elizabeth, there was some attempt to restrict the numbers and activities of Stranger communities to stop locals getting upset, without preventing them from contributing to the economy. The Government suspected the Strangers of helping foreign countries to invade, and searched their homes for armour and weaponry. Many Stranger families would not take on apprentices from outside their own families, saying they had enough of their own to help them. Some also set up businesses rivalling locals. Their population grew rapidly, expanding to a quarter of the population of Norwich. They also built their own places of worship, such as Blackfriars Hall. This was curtailed in the 1630s under Archbishop Laud of Canterbury and Bishop Matthew Wren of Norwich, who were worried this would weaken the English Church. However, relations improved and the Strangers became part of Norwich. Rich Strangers married rich Norwich elites and rebuilt Norwich north of the River Wensum after it was devastated by the great fire of 1507.

There are still signs left of this time in Norfolk's refugee past; Strangers Hall Museum is still open, but probably the most visual reminder is the local football team. The Strangers had brought with them a love of canary breeding, which soon caught on with the locals and led to the breed known as the 'Norwich Canary', thus giving rise to the nickname 'the Canaries' for the local team.

Source: www.bbc.co.uk/legacies/immig_emig/england/norfolk/

Myths and Facts about Refugees



©H.Davies/Exile Images

There is much in the media about refugees, especially in the recent run-up to the election. As in Elizabethan times, some people believe that refugees hugely impact on their lives in a negative way. We hope the following information will help you as educators to dispel some of the myths about asylum seekers and refugees.

Myth: Britain bears more than its fair share of 'The Asylum Burden.'

Fact: A MORI poll in 2003 found that many people in this country selected 23% as the proportion of the world's refugees hosted by Britain. In fact, even within the EU, Britain only ranks 9th per capita for the number of refugee admissions, which is already less than 10%. If you take the rest of the world into consideration, we take less than 2%.

Most refugees go to countries near their country of origin, with 72% going to countries of the South such as Tanzania and Iran. Asia hosts 45% of refugees, Africa, 30%, leaving 25% for the Americas and Europe to share.

The conflict in Sudan, for example, has forced 4 million people to flee their homes. Over half a million have fled the country to neighbouring countries such as Chad and only around 930 Sudanese applied for asylum in the UK last year.

Myth: Asylum seekers choose Britain because it is a 'soft touch'.

Fact: A recent study has shown that the main reason asylum seekers come here is that they already have family and friends here and therefore have ties with this country. The next most important reason is an ability to speak the language and a knowledge of the culture. Many asylum seekers brought here by agents are unable to choose their destination.

Britain detains more asylum seekers than any other country in the EU, with no time limit on detention. In 2001 only 26% of asylum claims were recognised before appeal, compared with 52% in Denmark in the same year.

Myth: Asylum seekers are draining our public services and taking our jobs.

Fact: A recent Home Office report shows that people born outside the UK, including asylum seekers, contribute 10% more to the economy than they use in benefits and services. The Treasury says that immigration has added around half a percentage point to the UK's trend rate of growth. Although asylum seekers are not allowed to work, there are many areas of work where there is a severe labour shortage, and this is partly made up by foreign labour. The NHS, for example, would collapse without foreign workers, with 23% of doctors and 47% of nurses born outside the UK.

Myth: Terrorists and criminals use the asylum system to enter Britain.

Fact: There are 100 million international arrivals in Britain every year. People come here for holidays, on work visas, as students and so on, in addition to those claiming refugee status. As well as going through all the normal border controls, those claiming asylum are fingerprinted and photographed amongst other extra checks. A criminal would hardly use this method to enter the country.

Myth: Asylum seekers only come here to sponge off and drain our generous benefits system.

Fact: Asylum seekers cannot legally work and only receive 70% of normal income support rates, (around £38 a week). A joint study by Oxfam and the Refugee Council found that 85% of asylum seekers experience hunger, 95% cannot afford to buy clothes or shoes and 80% cannot afford to stay healthy. In December 2003, the Home Office was supporting 80,000 asylum seekers, compared with 15.5 million Britons on benefits, (excluding retirement pensions); 0.5% of those claiming government support were asylum seekers. Surely asylum seekers cannot be draining our economy if there are so few of them.

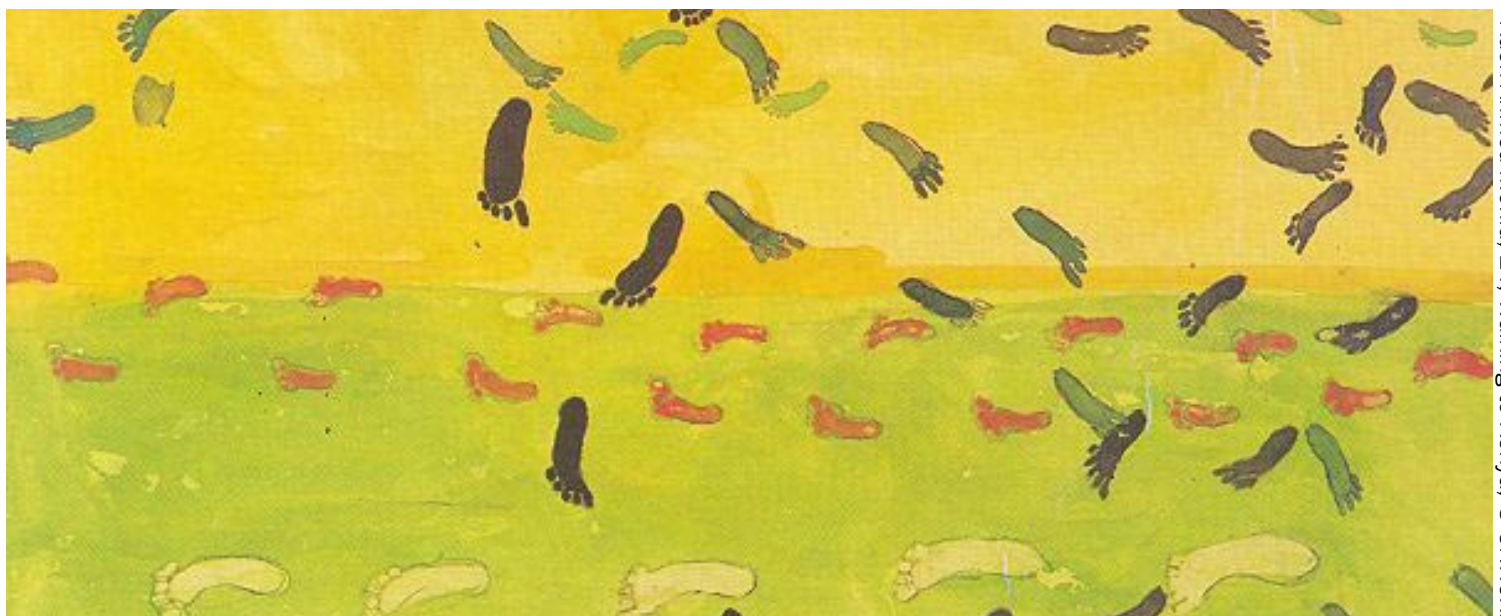
Myth: Asylum seekers bring diseases into this country.

Fact: Since TB testing on arriving asylum seekers began, over 5,500 people have been tested with no positive results. Asylum seekers tend to live in poor and overcrowded conditions, something which is never good for people's health.

Source: The Refugee Council
(www.refugeecouncil.org.uk)

Conclusion

As far as some people are concerned, asylum seekers can't ever get it right. If they work, they are stealing our jobs, if they don't work they are draining our economy. Neither of these are true – furthermore, asylum seekers are not allowed to work. Refugees come here because they are in danger in their own country. When they get here, they are treated like criminals all over again. If the media were to be more balanced and factually correct and if politicians tried to challenge these misconceptions instead of pandering to them, it would be much more helpful to the world in general.



Aden Ahmed Mohid, 14, Walking to Kenya, © UNHCR.

Teaching Resources

All these resources are available to buy/order from NEAD -
contact Sarah Gann on 01603 610993 / email: sarah@nead.org.uk.

Kosovan Journeys - BIG BOOK

Two refugee children talk about their lives, their families, why they left Kosova and their hopes for the future. The book helps develop empathy with refugees at a time of growing hostility towards them in the UK.
(KS2 Refugee Council £7)



Supporting Refugee Children in 21st Century Britain

This handbook provides information on many different refugee groups in British society. It explores: new approaches to education for refugee children; using expressive arts with young children; parental involvement; family literacy.
(Ages 3-18 Trentham Books, £15.95)

Refugees: a resource book for 5 to 11 year olds

This book examines the causes of conflict which force families to flee their home countries, and explains why they arrive in Britain as refugees. The testimonies of young refugees help children in the classroom to empathise with the difficulties of being uprooted and trying to make a new life in a strange place. This resource would also be useful for lower secondary school pupils.
(KS1/2 Refugee Council £5.00)

In Safe Hands - VIDEOPACK

A resource and training videopack to support work with young refugee children, offering help and guidance to primary teachers and early years practitioners. It includes information on how to support children who have experienced violent conflict, using play and art as a means of dealing with difficult experiences and guidance in the usage of anti-racist practice. The video case-studies two schools with considerable experience of working with refugees. (Pre-school/KS1/2 SCF £21.50)

Refugee Education: Mapping the Field

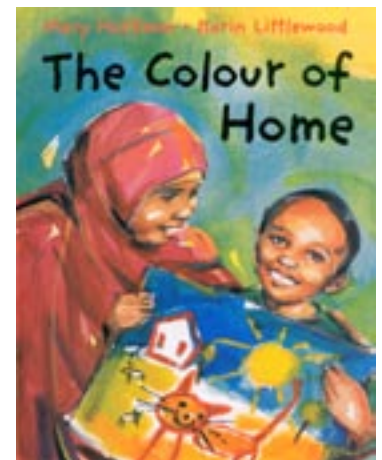
There are over 50,000 asylum seekers and refugee children in British schools. Although national asylum policies are increasingly restrictive, many positive projects at LEA and school level offer support to refugee children. Examples of best practice include: induction; positive strategies to combat racism; home/school liaison; and support for unaccompanied refugee children. (All ages Trentham Books £15.99)

I Am Here: Teaching about refugees, identity, inclusion and the media - VIDEOPACK

A programme of six one-hour lessons uses drama, case studies and video clips to tackle this controversial subject and stimulate critical thinking. Young people are encouraged to link their own sense of belonging with the acceptance and inclusion of people from diverse backgrounds. The pack also features materials for training teachers to teach about refugees.
(KS2/3 Save the Children £16.10)

The Colour of Home (by Mary Hoffman)

This picture book deals with the impact of a new school and country on a young boy whose family are refugees from Somalia. At school, he paints a picture of his home in Somalia in bright, sunny colours, but the harsh reds and blacks he adds reveal a darker side to his experience of the homeland he has recently left behind. By the end of the story, he is able to appreciate the colours of his new home. This beautifully illustrated book, winner of the 2003 National Literacy Association Wow! Award, raises difficult issues in a sensitive way.
(KS1/2 Frances Lincoln £5.99)



One Day We Had to Run

This book tells the true story of three children who were forced to become refugees. They fled from their homes in Somalia, Sudan and Ethiopia, leaving their families and facing many dangers before reaching a refugee camp in Kenya. Beautifully produced and illustrated with photographs and the children's own paintings.

(KS2/3 Evans Brothers £9.99)

All you need for a Refugee Assembly

This short booklet contains material for three assemblies and three complementary lessons on refugees, which help teachers to inform and educate pupils about refugees and to challenge myths and stereotypes.

(KS2/3/4 RISC £4.00)

Moving Here: The Refugee Experience

A teaching activity book for Citizenship, PSHE and English, with a collection of activities on the theme of migration. It features a wealth of photocopiable material, including case studies, testimonies, and role-play and prompt cards; a variety of activity types, which can be adapted for younger or older groups; themes including identity, rights, exclusion and prejudice. It also makes links between the refugees of today and other migrants, past and present, including Roman soldiers and British workers in Saudi Arabia.

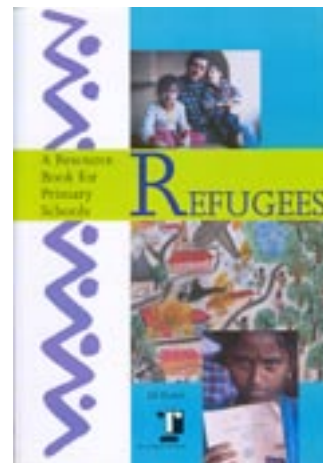
(KS2/3/4 Sheffield Ethnic Minority Service/SY DEC £7.25)

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a resource book for 5 to 11 year olds

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(KS1/2 Refugee Council £5.00)



Immigration and Asylum: the facts behind the headlines

A well illustrated book offering an in-depth but accessible explanation of immigration and asylum in the UK as a major item in the news. Includes: the latest issues in the debate; background and historical detail; up-to-date facts and figures; and current opinions. Special panels highlight key information and suggest important talking points.

(KS2/3/4 Franklin Watts £12.99)



FREE RESOURCES.....

The Refugee Council are producing free educational packs for schools, one for primary schools and one for secondary schools, 'Global Communities: Learning about Refugee Issues'. The packs have been brought together by the leading agencies supporting refugees and include a wealth of information and activities to help teachers teach about refugee issues and global citizenship.

The packs will be ready in August 2005. If you would like to place a request for a free resource, you can do so using the order form on the Refugee Week website at www.refugeeweek.org.uk;

or send an email to info@refugeeweek.org.uk. Either way, PLEASE BE SURE TO SPECIFY WHETHER YOU REQUIRE A PRIMARY OR A SECONDARY PACK.

The Refugee Council will also be offering free INSET opportunities for teachers on the packs' links to the National Curriculum and on how to approach sensitive/controversial issues in the classroom.

To register your interest, email info@refugeeweek.org.uk.

Web links

On-line Teaching Resources

www.sustnable.woodcraft.org.uk/index2.htm

This site is aimed at children and is full of information, group activities and even a forum where they can discuss their thoughts with other children. Children can gain a glimpse of what it might be like to be an asylum seeker.

www.unhcr.org.uk/info/resources/lesson_plans.html

This is a comprehensive site providing subject and age categorised lesson plans which can be incorporated into the national curriculum.

www.savethechildren.org.uk/eyetoeye/teachers/

This resource enables both primary and secondary pupils to explore the lives of young Palestinians, and look at issues about communities, refugees, children's rights and the media. It also provides hints for teachers on how to deal with sensitive issues, gives further sources of related information and a gallery of photos of refugees.

www.amnesty.org.uk/education/

Amnesty international has a section dedicated to educational resources (including activities about refugee issues), such as videos, assembly materials, speakers available, and links to the national curriculum. There are activities such as 'The Great Escape' game and a border control role-play.

www.refugeecamp.org

A virtual tour of a refugee camp, looking at problems faced by refugees, can be used by students to supplement the teacher resources and activities provided for middle and secondary age students.

www.britkid.org

This is an easy to use website for children to explore the different lives and experiences of children of diverse cultures.

There is a valuable on-line discussion group for teachers, with information about new resources and events at refed-subscribe@yahoogroups.com
To subscribe, simply send an empty message.

General Information

www.refugeeweek.org.uk

Includes information and activities for teachers to use during the week.

www.refugeecouncil.org.uk

Here you can read about the latest work and activities of the Refugee Council, find ways to become involved and obtain useful website links.

www.bbc.co.uk/legacies/immig_emig_uk_index.shtml

Information on the history of immigration and emigration in the UK. Here you can choose between different locations within the UK and discover the history of immigration or emigration behind them. You can even add your own story!

www.refugee-action.org.uk

This site provides clear basic information on asylum, for example about various myths and why people seek asylum. It has a wide selection of resources, including audio-visual, many of which contain refugees' own stories.

www.movinghere.org.uk

This focuses on the stories and history of immigration to the UK. It provides tips for teachers, a range of activities for children from KS2 to KS4 and links to the citizenship curriculum.

www.qca.org.uk/ca/inclusion

The Qualifications and Curriculum Authority website has a section with advice on how to help refugee and other foreign children settle in at school. It has information on the different countries children come from and advice on how to fulfil the needs of all the children in the classroom.

Guidance on Teaching Controversial Issues

www.citizenship-global.org.uk

Links to information to support the global dimension to Citizenship education, including guidance on dealing with sensitive and controversial issues.

www.refugeeducation.co.uk

Gives advice specifically on educational matters and other useful guidance.

See also

www.savethechildren.org.uk/eyetoeye/teachers

Refugee Quiz

1. How many refugees are there in the world today?

- 1 million 6 million 12 million 280 million

2. Which countries do most refugees flee from because they are in danger?

Name as many as you can.

3. What % of the world's refugees come to Britain?

- less than 2% 5% 12% 25% 55% more than 80%

4. Why do refugees flee from their home country? (list as many reasons as you can)

5. Which continent do you think has the most refugees?

- Asia North America Europe Africa

6. Which country in Europe do you think has the highest number of refugees?

- France Italy Germany UK Austria

7. What do you think are the biggest problems refugees face when they leave their country?

8. Name 2 famous refugees.

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9. If you suddenly had to flee from your home, what 5 things would you take in your bag?

10. Write down one more question you have about refugees/asylum seekers.

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1. 12 million.

2. Currently: Somalia, China, Iran, Zimbabwe, Turkey, Iraq, Pakistan, India, Afghanistan, and the Democratic Republic of Congo.

It's very important to note that this list does change as situations in some countries improve and worsen in others, and for other reasons.

In particular, Sri Lanka and the former Federal Republic of Yugoslavia (now Serbia and Montenegro) have consistently provided large numbers of asylum seekers coming to the UK, although they are currently not in the top ten.

3. Fewer than 2% - in fact 1.8%.

4. For example: war, hunger, religious or political oppression...

5. Asia, which has about 4.5 million refugees.

8 out of 10 refugees actually flee one poor country to go to another.

Nearly two-thirds of the world's refugees live in Africa or the Middle East.

6. Austria, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland, Ireland... UK ranked 8th in 2002.

7. For example: staying safe, staying healthy, being lonely, missing school, lack of money, passports/visas, bullying, learning a new language.

8. Tatanka Iyotake 'Sitting Bull', Dalai Lama, Marlene Deitrich, Jesus, Albert Einstein, Michael Marks, Gloria Estefan, Tresor Lomana Lua Lua, Anne Frank...

(Quiz taken from teaching resource, 'All you need for a Refugee Assembly', Published by Reading International Solidarity Centre (RISC) – for further information see Teaching Resources available from NEAD)



The NEAD resources library carries an extensive range of materials for use in the classroom. Membership for primary schools costs £ 25.00 a year and enables all staff to borrow materials. It's a valuable resource that will give you the opportunity to enrich work in the classroom and bring a wealth of new information to your pupils. Members will also be sent NEAD's newsletter three times a year.

To become a member, simply photocopy and fill in the form opposite and return it with a cheque for £ 25.00 (or tick the box to pay by Bankers' Order – we will then send a Standing Order Mandate form).

Name: (Please PRINT)

School:

Address:

Postcode:

Telephone:

Email:

Date:

Signature:

Please make cheques payable to: NEAD.

Return to Membership Secretary, NEAD, 38 Exchange Street, Norwich, NR2 1AX

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Regional Development Education Centres (DECs)

DEEL (DevEdEssex Ltd): 12 Museum Street, Colchester, CO1 1TN. Tel: 01206 763380

Harambee Centre: Emmanuel United Reform Church, Trumpington St, Cambridge, CB2 1RR. Tel: 01223 358116

NEAD (Norfolk Education & Action for Development): 38 Exchange St, Norwich, NR2 1AX. Tel: 01603 610993