



REFUGEES INTO SCHOOLS

September 2011

Edition 6

Refugees into Schools supports refugee volunteers to visit schools in London, giving interactive presentations to help children and young people understand the impact of conflict and why people are forced to flee their

"It is more engaging for students to meet other people and hear first hand about life experiences rather than from the teacher or a book". Eastlea Community School

countries. Each refugee volunteer is matched with an experienced mentor who provides guidance and support. *Refugees into Schools* also supports schools to develop a culturally inclusive curriculum and to promote the duties of the Equality Act 2010.

Refugees into Schools returns in September...

It's going to be a busy term for Refugees into Schools, with visits planned throughout London. Since 2009, we have reached over 3,000 children, and have introduced them to refugees from 15 different countries.

We are always on the lookout for new schools, particularly in **Brent, Hackney, Redbridge** and **Richmond**. If you are a school in these boroughs, contact us soon in order to secure a free visit!

There are lots of good reasons to work with us:

From talking to the **students** at schools we have worked with, we know that **71%** (1,635) said they knew little or nothing about refugees before the session, but that **99%** (2,897) said the session helped them understand why people become refugees, and **89%** (2,897) enjoyed the session.



In our feedback from **teachers**, we were happy to learn that **98%** of them planned to further embed work on refugees in the curriculum. **95%** said they would build on their work to promote community cohesion, and **95%** said they would develop their curriculum to be more relevant and culturally inclusive.

Teachers also said that sessions with an adult refugee had had a **clear impact on children's' attitudes and empathy**, and had also given refugee and asylum seeking children **confidence to speak out** on issues they are concerned about.

Working with refugees from:

- Afghanistan
- Albania
- Burma
- Eritrea
- Iran
- Pakistan
- South Sudan
- Sudan
- Zimbabwe



...with a new resource pack for teachers!

We listened to schools' feedback on improving Refugees into Schools. The result is our new online resource pack for teachers, making it easy to integrate the visit into a wider set of lessons. The pack includes:

- A summary for teachers who just want an outline of activities;
- A variety of ideas to **prepare classes** in the weeks leading up to a visit;
- A number of **links to short videos** which tell more about the refugee journey and the impact of conflict, with accompanying worksheets for a more interactive experience;
- Suggestions for ways in which children can **continue to stay in touch with refugee issues**;
- Convenient and practical **photocopiable exercises**, which distinguish between primary and secondary levels.

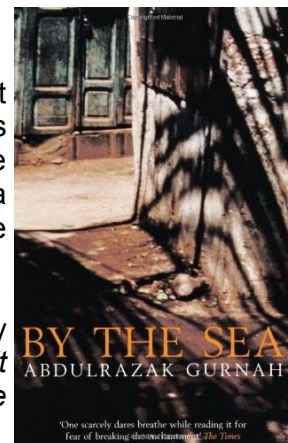


For an advance copy of the resource pack, please email: t.shakhli@employabilityforum.co.uk

Recommended read

When Saleh Omar arrives in England from Zanzibar as an elderly refugee, he hopes that he can leave behind his old life, marred by prison, death, and ruin. Instead, he meets Latif, a young professor whose family's feud with Saleh destroyed nearly everyone involved. The two men's stories unwind slowly and gracefully, bringing the reader into a darkened room with the two old foes as they call forth ghosts, only to discover that the truth is often harder to believe than lies.

By The Sea by **Abdulrazak Gurnah** is widely praised for its portrayal of everyday immigrant life. *"Rarely in a lifetime can you open a book and find that reading it encapsulates the enchanting qualities of a love affair one scarcely dares breathe while reading it for fear of breaking the enchantment"* – *The Times*



Introducing...

My name is Farah Ali. I am a refugee from Somalia and a volunteer with Refugees into Schools. Back home I was a student, but the outbreak of a civil war meant that I suddenly had to leave as I feared for my own safety. I found this in the United States, where I spent eight years as a head teacher at a secondary school established solely for East African children. I have been in the UK for almost five years now and have always been involved in issues related to schools and education. In addition to being a school governor, I set up my own voluntary organisation to train and teach English to fellow refugees with poor school results.



Despite my experience with schools, I was keen to work with Refugees into Schools because it offered something different: an occasion to shine. I recommended it to my friends, because it gives volunteers very good exposure to schools and offers them a priceless first approach to pupils that is very important to overcome shyness and gain self-confidence.

"I think that this is the sort of event that really changes children's views and makes them think deeply about issues". **Teacher**

"It has reinforced the work we already do about cultural diversity and community cohesion".
Grove Road Primary



"Meeting a 'real' person made all the difference".
Our Lady of Lourdes RC Primary School

"Our school is situated in an area of advantage and pupils do not always grasp that others' lives are not always as advantaged. This reminds them of the need to help others and get involved in the world". **Hall Mead**

Get involved!

If you are interested in getting involved in **Refugees into Schools** or would like more information about the project, please contact:
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The Employability Forum



The Employability Forum is an independent organisation that promotes the employment of refugees and the integration of migrant workers in the UK. The Employability Forum works with the voluntary sector, employers and government, using evidence from pilot projects and its network to develop practical policy recommendations.



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