



Refugee Welcome Kit

Lesson Plan

Adapt this one-period **lesson plan** for any grade level and follow it with a simple and powerful **service project**. The **reflection** brings learning and service impact together.

Anticipatory Set: (10-15 minutes)

Display a photograph from the Syrian refugee crisis without giving information to the students about the context of the photograph. One source for photos: <http://bzfd.it/2vC7U6Q>

Stand near the photo and examine it along with students in silence before asking questions. After a couple moments, ask, "What is going on in this picture?" Have students raise their hands and call on them so that they do not all talk at once. If a student makes an interpretive remark, ask, "What do you see that makes you say that?" To prompt responses from as many students as possible, ask, "What more can you find?"

Learn more about this Visual Thinking Strategy (VTS): <http://bit.ly/2uafs2S>

Part One: (15-20 minutes)

1. Explain that the people in the photograph are refugees. Ask what students know about refugees, and compile a list of background knowledge.
2. Give students the following partial definition and ask them to name some reasons a person might flee his or her country and be afraid to return. "A refugee is a person who has been forced to flee from his or her home country and is unable or afraid to return because of _____." Listen to some answers from students, then explain that **war, violence, and persecution** are three reasons a person may flee their country and be considered a refugee.

Variation for older students: Watch "The Most Shocking Day" on YouTube

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=RBQ-loHfimQ> to show students how a person's life may change rapidly when they become a refugee. Before showing the video, tell the students to watch for changes in her life (watch twice to catch parallels).

Following the video, discuss what needs she might have once she arrived in a new place and who might be able to help her. (They may mention health, clothing, friendship, emotional support.) Make a list of needs and anyone who might help with these needs. Solicit and categorize responses related to government, nonprofits, businesses, and family. Discuss how different sectors play a role.

Variation for younger students: Watch "Carly" on YouTube <http://bit.ly/2tqjANx> to build empathy for the fear and danger present in a refugee's situation. Discuss:

What are some things Carly needed? How do you think she felt being turned away by each group? Who finally offered to help Carly? What things did Mr. Friendly do to help Carly? What other things might he have done to help her?]

Part Two: (15 minutes)

1. Explain that people using their time, talent, and treasure to help others is called philanthropy. Break down what each of these (time, talent, treasure) might mean. For younger students, ask



how Mr. Friendly was a philanthropist. For older students, ask for examples of philanthropists that they know from history or books or their own lives.

2. Ask students to give some reasons they would get involved in helping refugees. What do we give up when we use time, talent, and treasure to help others? What do we gain? (For older students, this discussion may include the concepts of opportunity cost, common good, and enlightened self-interest.)

Service Project

This service project may be started in class and completed in subsequent days, either during class or with friends and family.

Project Overview: Students organize a drive to bring in items for an organization that helps refugees.

Procedure:

1. Have students locate an organization in your community that serves refugees. (Several are listed in Learning to Give's Refugee Toolkit learningtogive.org/resources/refugees-our-community-service-learning-toolkit. Have students contact the organization to see what items are needed. The students may invite a person from the organization to come to the school to speak to your class, and then collect the items later.
2. Choose a day or a week when the drive will take place and a collection point for the items. If there will be a lot of items collected, have your students ask the principal about a place in the school where items could be stored.
3. Brainstorm ways to let the school and/or the community know about this need. This could include posters, fliers, emails, or announcements at school. Be sure to include the types of items needed and how to donate. Get the word out!
4. When you have received the items, sort and pack them. Figure out how to get the collected items to the organization.

Other ideas for projects that could be completed to meet the needs of refugees:

- For schools with refugee students arriving, put together a “Welcome to Our School” book or video to help them adjust and feel welcomed.
- Research some of the reasons why refugees are coming to America, and write a letter to the newspaper or a political leader explaining what you have learned and why it is important to help.
- Find an organization that helps refugees living in other countries, and organize a fundraiser to help.

Reflection:

Follow the project with a brief reflection. Depending on age and ability, students can write or share verbally their responses to the following:

- *Empathy* means “understanding and sharing the feelings of others.” How did learning about the situation of refugees help you to have empathy? How did it encourage you to respond?
- What did you learn from our class service project? If you could do anything differently, what would you change?
- Are there other needs in our school or community you can respond to with your time, talent, and treasure? How did this experience influence the way you look at the needs around you?

