

Refuge Seekers

People around the world flee their homes to find safety for themselves and their families. Some are even forced to leave. They must leave behind all they know, often with only the things they can carry. This text set explores the topic of people on the move and their different journeys toward security and a new home.

Essential Questions

1. Why do people leave their homes?
2. What is the journey like for these people? What are some challenges they may face on their journey?
3. How is the daily life of a refugee or migrant similar to and different from yours?
4. What do refugee families seem to value most? How might this change during their journey?

Introduction to the Theme

Take a poll of the class with the following prompts: Raise a hand if you have ever moved to a new house or home., Raise a hand if you have ever moved to a new school., Raise a hand if you have ever had a new neighbor or classmate move in. Using a sticky note, have students jot words to describe their experience. After, have them post their stickies on the board and take a moment to review all words used. Bring the class together to connect their thoughts and emotions to those of individuals and families who are seeking refuge each and every day around the world.

Informational Text

These *TIME for Kids* articles can be used to discuss the theme of the journey of a refugee.

1. **“Border Fight”** (February 1, 2019) President Trump is seeking approval for resources to go toward the building of a wall, *TFK* explores the topic.
2. **“On the Move”** (November 2, 2018) A large caravan of migrants left their home countries to seek a better life.
3. **“Safe in School”** (October 5, 2018) Nearly 95,000 kids are being taught in learning centers at Rohingya refugee camps in Bangladesh.
4. **“Refugee Numbers at Record High”** (June 20, 2018) The United Nations Refugee Agency publishes a yearly report on refugees and displaced people.
5. **“A Test of Tolerance”** (October 27, 2017) Sweden has welcomed hundreds of thousands of refugees, but some people wonder if the country’s immigration policies are too generous.
6. **“The Syrians Next Door”** (December 16, 2016) Five years after fleeing Syria, Ghazweh Aljabooli and her family have settled in America.

Literary Text

These fictional texts can be used to discuss the theme of the journey of a refugee.

1. ***My Name Is Sangoel***, by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed. As a refugee in America, Sangoel is lonely and homesick until he has a creative way to teach others his name.
2. ***One Green Apple***, by Eve Bunting. Farah doesn’t speak the language of the students in her class but finds a way to relate to them on a school field trip.
3. ***Four Feet, Two Sandals***, by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed. Two refugee girls become friends when they agree to share a pair of sandals.
4. ***Home of the Brave***, by Katherine Applegate. Kek comes from Africa. Written in verse, Kek tells the story of his experiences as an immigrant in the U.S.
5. ***Sea Prayer***, by Khaled Hosseini. This is an intimate perspective on the Syrian refugee crisis, written in the form a letter from a parent to a child.

Optional Extensions

Watch the video [Tracing the Journey](#) to give students a visual of the trip many Central American migrants have made to find safety. Then have them choose one *TFK* article from the text set and identify which country the people fled, and where their trek ended. Using Google maps, ask students to illustrate the journey described in the article. They may use the satellite feature to identify the terrain they crossed, and they may do additional research.

To further explore the theme, have the class read the novel *Other Words for Home*, by Jasmine Warga. This book, written in verse, is about a Syrian refugee trying to build a new life in a place where most people don’t look like her.

This book was reviewed by TFK Kid Reporter Belle Irby. Read what she had to say [here](#).

Editor in Chief: Andrea Delbanco

Creative Director: Drew Willis

Curriculum Director: Stacy Bien

Associate Editor: Candace Dipsey

Contributing Writer: Rebecca Mordechai

Copy Editors: Mike DeCapite, Jordan Mamone