

## Teachers' Notes

These notes will give you an overview of the resources and help you prepare for teaching on the subject of refugees at KS2. It includes information to help you prepare your class and think about how children's lived experiences and learning abilities may affect their response to the topic.



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# About

**House of Illustration** is a registered charity and the UK's only public gallery dedicated solely to illustration and graphic art. Founded by Sir Quentin Blake it opened in July 2014 in King's Cross, London. Our changing exhibition programme explores historic and contemporary illustration and the work of both defining and emerging illustrators. Our learning programme was established in 2010 and offers workshops, projects, courses and programmes for schools, families and adult learners all delivered by professional illustrators.

We have developed a highly regarded **CPD and INSET** programme for teachers: Illustrating the Curriculum. These empower teachers to use a range of accessible, effective illustration techniques with their classes to teach all subjects from English to Science to PSHE and Citizenship.

**Journeys Drawn: Illustrations from the Refugee Crisis** is a House of Illustration exhibition, shown at House of Illustration (November 2018 –March 2019), and then touring to Sunderland Museum & Winter Gardens (July – September 2019) and Peterborough Vivacity City Museum (October 2019 – 10 January). It documents refugee journeys both observed and experienced first hand in recent years during the so-called Refugee Crisis. The exhibition features 40 illustrations by 12 contemporary artists, 2 of whom are themselves refugees. A selection of works can be viewed in the [gallery](#).

Illustration as an art form has the unique power to communicate complex and sensitive issues in an immediate and accessible way to a wider public. Illustrators have the unique opportunity to act as visual journalists, spending extended periods of time in situations where photography is banned or too intrusive. Some illustrations tell the story of groups and individuals living and working in refugee centres or camps, others about the journey of refugees fleeing conflict and persecution, seeking sanctuary and resettling. The exhibition includes different forms of illustration for different contexts and audiences: animations, comic strips, reportage and editorial illustrations.

Combined the illustrations reflect the complex and multi-layered nature of the refugee experience and the very personal testimonies encourage pupils to develop empathy with, and understanding of, the situations of those who experienced the crisis as refugees themselves, or as aid workers and reporters. They touch on a range of emotions and show how migration and displacement can impact on people's sense of identity at any age.

The migration stories behind the individuals and groups depicted in the artworks are various, some escaped war, discrimination and poverty in their country of origin, others came for unknown reasons. The following teachers' notes provide background information on this period to give context on the crisis and to help you to prepare and answer the children's questions.

## Learning through illustration

Illustration is a visual language which has been used by humans to communicate for millennia. It can often explain more effectively than words, and with greater depth and subtlety. Children learn to “read” pictures and communicate through drawing and mark-making long before they learn to read and write. House of Illustration’s approach to learning is to empower children with skills to communicate as illustrators, building on this primal language and putting it to use across the curriculum.

Illustration is a particularly effective way-in to sensitive and difficult subjects and by becoming illustrators, children gain ownership of their learning processes, and a positive and creative outlet for exploring complex emotions in relation to the subject.



# The illustrators

## Olivier Kugler

Olivier Kugler is a reportage illustrator. Kugler's digital portraits are of refugees arriving on the Greek island of Kos and in Calais.

## Toby Morison

Toby Morison is an illustrator and lecturer. Morison's watercolours were created in response to his visit to Germany in 2015, where he illustrated Syrian refugees starting their new lives.

## David Foldvari

David Foldvari works for the guardian, the Financial Times, and New York Times. Foldvari's bold drawings and collages illustrate the first-hand accounts he heard at a centre for refugee children in Rome.

## Kate Evans

Kate Evans is a cartoonist whose best selling graphic novels cover wide ranging social and political topics. Her graphic novel Threads is a visual account of her own journey as a volunteer in the Calais Jungle and is a vital telling of the stories of the refugees she met there.

## Asia Alfasi

Asia Alfasi grew up in Libya and moved to Glasgow at the age of seven. Alfasi's graphic novels and comics aim to represent the voice of the Muslim Arab and her illustrated short stories have won several national and international manga awards. The works in the exhibition are from her graphic novel Childhood is Hope.

## Ghaith Abdul-Ahad

Ghaith Abdul-Ahad studied architecture at Baghdad University and, as a deserter from Saddam Hussein's Iraqi army, he lived underground for six years before working as a journalist. Abdul-Ahad continues to report on current conflicts through illustration, journalism and photography.



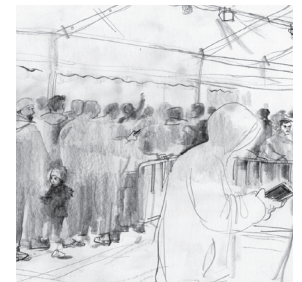
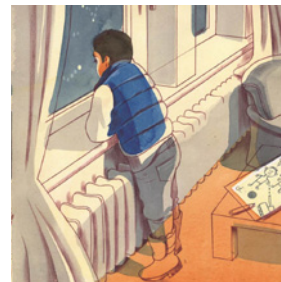
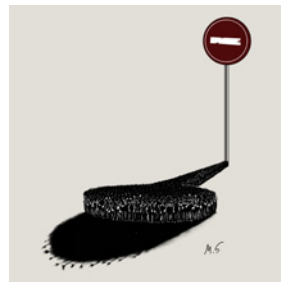
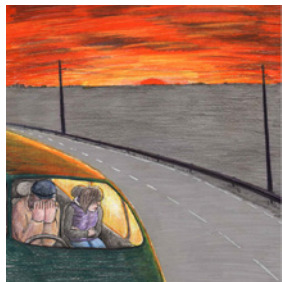
# Introduction to the resources

The framework document for the National Curriculum in England (September 2013) states that every state-funded school must offer a curriculum which is balanced, broadly based and promotes spiritual, moral, cultural, mental and physical development of students at the school, and that prepares pupils for the opportunities, responsibilities and experiences of later life.

The activities in this resource have been designed to enable teachers to offer a balanced curriculum and to tackle the subject of migration through the work of illustrators and by the children exploring aspects of the subject by illustrating them. All the activities have been designed to be accessible to teachers and pupils, regardless of confidence levels in art and include step by step instructions, materials lists, examples, templates and extension ideas. Teachers can choose one activity or use them all to support deeper understanding of the subject while developing art and design skills and confidence. All the activities lead to outputs ideal for display, which allows opportunities for whole school engagement, discussion and awareness-raising of the issues explored.

## Gallery

Browse the gallery to get a good discussion going about what being a refugee means to the children, and to begin to challenge any preconceptions and how these can be caused by how refugees are often portrayed negatively in the media.



# The activities

We have developed five activities around the work of five illustrators, with diverse styles and experiences, who highlight key themes through their work that link to the KS2 curriculum. We have also included a gallery of work, carefully selected by teachers, for you to use with your pupils. However you choose to use the resources, as a one-off art lesson, a longer class or wider school project resulting in an exhibition of work, this teachers pack aims to provide you with the inspiration, support and confidence to explore: the journeys people make; identity; aspiration; settlement; human rights and needs, media (mis)representations; and race and ethnicity, through art.

## Activity 1: Journeys Drawn

In this activity you will explore the different journeys made by refugees. Taking inspiration from illustrations by Ghaith Abdul-Ahad, Kate Evans and David Foldvari children will work with pencils, pencil crayon and fineliner to create individual parts of a myriorama (a set of cards which can be arranged in any order to create different visual narratives) of an endless journey.

## Activity 2: The Big Picture

In this activity you will begin to explore a big topic by focussing on small details. Taking inspiration from the work of Toby Morison children will create individual watercolour tiles which together will form a class display that can act as a starting point for discussion.

## Activity 3: Life in a Refugee Camp

In this activity you will explore life in refugee camps to think about the things that all humans need. Taking inspiration from illustrations by Kate Evans and Olivier Kugler children will work with collage to develop symbols for an infographic to communicate these needs. An ideal way to begin an investigation into the wider topic of human rights.

## Activity 4: Portrait of a Refugee

In this activity you will explore refugee identity. Taking inspiration from the work of Olivier Kugler children will work with words and pictures to create their own portrait of an imagined person who is a refugee.

## Activity 5: Emotional Connections

In this activity you will explore emotions and how illustrators express them. Taking inspiration from illustrations by David Foldvari, Asia Alfasi and Kate Evans children will think about the different emotions refugees experience and work with charcoal and chalk to create images expressing an emotion of their choice.

# Migration in the curriculum

Young people are exposed to an increasingly polarised debate about migration in society today. They are growing up in a world where themes related to migration are often seen as controversial. Schools are a key environment where themes and issues of migration can be explored safely and can underpin the teaching of a range of curriculum subjects. The illustrations brought together in Journeys Drawn can be used as a springboard to teaching about different forms of migration in a range of curriculum areas.

## Inclusion

The framework document for the National Curriculum in England (September 2013) states that teachers should take account of their duties under equal opportunities legislation that covers race, disability, sex, religion or belief, sexual orientation, pregnancy and maternity, and gender reassignment. Teachers must also take account of the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Monitoring of progress should take account of the pupil's age, length of time in this country, previous educational experience and ability in other languages.

The activities suggested in the pack are a good way for your teaching staff, class and school to engage with these core principles.

We have summarised where migration related themes are found in the revised national curriculum for English, Art, PSHE, Citizenship, ICT, History, and Geography, which might be useful for teachers looking to link the study of migration to a specific curriculum area:

## Art

Pupils should know how art and design both reflect and shape our history, and contribute to the culture, creativity and wealth of our nation. The national curriculum for art and design aims to ensure that all pupils: know about great artists, craft makers and designers, and understand the historical and cultural development of their art forms.

Each activity in the pack uses a different technique, thereby providing opportunities for specific art skills development. Some stages in the process of each activity can be carried out in sketchbooks and all lend themselves to classroom display and sharing with the wider school. The step-by-step instructions make all the techniques accessible for both pupils and teachers.

The gallery will support you discover, explore and compare a range of contemporary artistic responses to the refugee crisis from the perspective of illustrators working as journalists, aid workers, reporters and refugees themselves.



## English

Teaching should equip pupils to develop culturally, emotionally, intellectually, socially and spiritually and to appreciate our rich and varied heritage. In spoken language years 1–6 pupils should consider and evaluate different viewpoints, attending to and building on the contributions of others.

The **Portrait of a Refugee** activity will support you to explore characterisation and storytelling using words, pictures and labelling. The same activity will also support you to consider how refugees have been portrayed in the media. All the activities support visual literacy development for all pupils which can support literacy development, especially for those who have EAL.

## Geography

A high-quality geography education should inspire in pupils a curiosity and fascination about the world and its people that will remain with them for the rest of their lives. Teaching should equip pupils with knowledge about diverse places, people, and human environments.

Use any or all of these activities as a starting point for a wider discussion or investigation into where in the world refugees come from and the diverse experiences of migrants to the UK. The **Journeys Drawn** activity will support you to explore the different environments people have had to endure, travel through and live in.

## History

A high-quality history education will help pupils gain a coherent knowledge and understanding of Britain's past and that of the wider world. It should inspire pupils' curiosity to know more about the past. Teaching should equip pupils to ask perceptive questions, think critically, weigh evidence, sift arguments, and develop perspective and judgement, helping pupils to understand the complexity of people's lives, the process of change, the diversity of societies and relationships between different groups, as well as their own identity and the challenges of their time.

Use any or all of these activities as a starting point for a wider discussion or investigation into the portrayal of refugees in the media over time. The experience of refugees during recent years could be compared to the experience and reception of refugees seeking sanctuary in the UK throughout history.

## ICT

Computing ensures that pupils become digitally literate – able to use, and express themselves and develop their ideas through, information and communication technology – at a level suitable for the future workplace and as active participants in a digital world.

The **Life in a Refugee Camp** activity will support you to explore and combine words and pictures to create symbols and

infographics. This has deliberately been designed as a low tech activity, but if school resources allow, could be undertaken in a design program such as Photoshop.

## **PSHE & Citizenship**

PSHE & Citizenship introduces pupils to a wider world and enables them to make an active contribution to their communities. A well delivered PSHE programme should have an impact on both academic and non-academic outcomes for pupils, particularly the most vulnerable and disadvantaged. Through PSHE KS2 pupils should learn to:

- Understand that there are basic human rights shared by all peoples and all societies and that children have their own special rights set out in the United Nations Declaration of the Rights of the Child.
- Appreciate the range of national, regional, religious and ethnic identities in the UK.
- Consider the lives of people living in other places, and people with different values and customs.
- Reflect on and clarify their own values and attitudes and explore the complex and sometimes conflicting range of values and attitudes they encounter now and in the future.
- Explore and discuss political and social issues critically, to weigh evidence, debate and make reasoned arguments.

The **Portrait of a Refugee** and **Life in a Refugee Camp** activities will support you to explore; Human Rights, Children's Rights, the (mis)representation of refugees in the media, globalisation and global issues, local and national identity, the precious liberties enjoyed by UK citizens, and the ways in which people work together for communities. The Refugee Identity and Emotional Connections activities will support your work with pupils around; mental health and wellbeing; understanding and accommodating difference and change; managing emotions; and developing empathy and an understanding of themselves.

## Getting it right for your class

The illustrations and illustrators included in this pack have been carefully selected for KS2 children with the support and guidance from teachers and artists skilled at working with 7-11 year old children. Whether you have refugee children in your class or not, it is strongly recommended that you take time to think about how you will prepare all of your pupils for seeing the images. Though the activities are age appropriate and link to the KS2 curriculum, it is important to consider the individual and collective needs, abilities and experiences of the children in your class, to ensure the delivery of activities is inclusive and isn't triggering for children who may have experience of homelessness, displacement or difficulty exploring emotive material and subjects.

### **Think about how the emotion and trauma of learning about refugee stories could support or affect children with refugee experiences – themselves or in their family history - in your class.**

With forced displacement at a record high since WW2, many teachers now have refugees or asylum-seekers in their classroom. Teaching newcomers often comes with specific needs relating to language acquisition and adaptation to a new culture and environment. Some refugee children may suffer from stress or trauma preventing them from participating fully in school activities, and requiring specific support. UNHCR have a range of resources to support you to prepare for dealing with emotions and trauma associated with migration and displacement in the classroom:

<https://www.unhcr.org/uk/teaching-about-refugees.html#including>

### **Think about how learning about the wider themes associated with refugee stories and displacement could affect non-refugee children in your class.**

SEN children might need extra support with activities dealing with emotions and empathy, children in temporary accommodation may have issues learning about displacement that may be supported by learning about other people's experiences, but may also be triggering, so take care to think about the diverse needs and experiences of your class first. UNHCR have also produced these resources to help you to think about the impact of learning about these issues and are recommended for children suffering trauma or additional special educational needs:

<https://www.unhcr.org/uk/59d346de4>

### **Think about the language you are going to be using during the project/topic.**

Who is a refugee? A refugee is someone who has had to leave their home because it's unsafe due to war, political persecution, famine, economic crisis or natural disaster.

For full definitions of refugee, migrant, asylum-seeker, illegal, crisis check out:

[http://www.star-network.org.uk/index.php/refugees/who\\_is\\_a\\_refugee](http://www.star-network.org.uk/index.php/refugees/who_is_a_refugee)

The words used to describe migrants and migration can be confusing, but to those affected by the debate are incredibly important. The [Portrait of a Refugee](#) and [Life in a Refugee Camp](#) activities could be used with older children to initiate a class discussion about how the labels the media give people, and the language used to describe individuals or groups, can affect how we feel about people, their lives and experiences.

### **Consider becoming a Refugees Welcome School or a School of Sanctuary.**

Schools across the UK are signing up to the Citizens UK Refugees Welcome School scheme and the Oxfam School of Sanctuary scheme to show that refugees are welcome in their school.

Use the [Emotional Connections](#) and [Portrait of a Refugee](#) to initiate a wider school project and consider becoming a Refugees Welcome School or a School of Sanctuary. These activities require pupils to explore and imagine the individual stories, experiences, emotions and lives of a refugee to develop empathy towards individuals and groups, and to think about people embarking on new lives. All activities in this resource can support your school on its journey.

### **Think about preparing teachers for using the resources and preparing to teach the topic with their children.**

Make sure any teachers planning to use the resources receive a copy of these Teachers' Notes to help them to prepare. House of Illustration offer a full programme of CPD and INSET for teachers looking to explore social issues through illustration.

The European Refugee Crisis and Syria Explained: This 6 minute film uses infographics and summaries to remind you of the background to the crisis:

<https://vimeo.com/321061317>

### **Think about involving the wider community in your topic or project.**

Do you have migrant or refugee families or communities represented in your school or classroom? An exhibition or assembly of the children's work could be an opportunity to engage wider families and communities in inclusive activities where diversity is celebrated. These events could be an opportunity to engage harder to reach families, to challenge racism, to provide a supportive environment or welcome for newly arrived refugees and their families, or as something to support English language and ESOL learners in their studies.

## **Think about inviting people with refugee experiences to share their stories first hand in school.**

Refugee artists or local people in the wider community could be invited to take part in exhibition or assembly celebration events alongside your project, or to speak to your class before starting the project, to help the children to appreciate the stories first hand and to bring to life the stories and experiences depicted in the illustrations.

House of Illustration recommend paying people for their time, even a small honorarium, voucher or token of appreciation can go a long way, and The Citizenship Foundation have compiled 10 helpful top tips for working with non-teaching professionals as visitors in the classroom.

## **Think about using the resources and activities as a springboard to deepening the understanding of the experience of young refugees in schools.**

The NUT have produced 3 minute talking heads films with refugee children, teachers and families speaking about starting school in the UK with accompanying teaching resources, guidance notes:

<https://www.teachers.org.uk/equality/equality-matters/refugee-teaching-resources/refugee-voices>



# Teaching controversial issues

Young people are growing up in a world where they are facing issues about which there are increasingly polarised opinions. Schools are a key environment within which these issues can be explored, and teachers need to have the skills and confidence to support their pupils in this. Themes related to migration are often seen as controversial, particularly while immigration remains such a hot topic in the media and in party politics. People have been migrating to the UK from all over the world for thousands of years so it is important that children have the opportunity to learn about the wider context and the many reasons people can choose or be forced to leave their homes.

Oxfam have produced teachers' notes and a set of guiding principles about why we should teach about controversial issues such as migration, the media and fake news in the classroom: <https://www.oxfam.org.uk/education/resources/teaching-controversial-issues> and we have summarised the key points for you here:

## Why should we teach about controversial issues?

- Because they are in the curriculum
- Controversial issues present valuable opportunities for holding important conversations in the classroom as values and ideas are explored in a safe space
- Young people need to explore their values and develop their skills
- They affect young people's lives
- Young people want to know more about global controversial issues
- Exploring controversial issues can help develop thinking skills

**Moving Here** also gives the following advice and practical steps you could take to prepare your class for learning about such issues in the classroom:

1. At the start of the lesson prepare students for the issues they are going to cover
2. Consider setting ground rules collaboratively with them
3. Use inappropriate comments or questions on sources to bring the focus back to the context of the lesson
4. Don't automatically avoid contentious terms – make a point of discussing them in a safe way including why people find them offensive
5. Encourage all students to think of a time when they were treated unfairly - this can lead to a discussion about how stereotypes and prejudice arrive
6. Try and address any frustration or fears that arise within a lesson and not let pupils leave with these
7. Focussing on personal testimonies (of those within resources or those of your pupils themselves) can diminish tensions. People find it harder to argue with others' truth

We would love to hear your feedback!

Please email us at [education@houseofillustration.org.uk](mailto:education@houseofillustration.org.uk)  
and tweet pictures of your results @HOIeducation #JourneysDrawn

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Supported using public funding by  
**ARTS COUNCIL  
ENGLAND**