

Refugee Sources Activity

Note to Teachers: This is an assignment outline for students in a social studies, history, or research class who are interested in getting exposure to using sources in their work. The assignment should ideally be a long-weekend or a vacation assignment, in order to give students adequate time to explore the sources thoroughly and answer their chosen question thoughtfully. The length of the written response assignment can be adjusted to fit your class's curriculum needs.

Content warning: Please note that the resources cited contain images or personal descriptions of violence and disturbing events in the context of displacement, conflict, and genocide.

This assignment might be a good addition to your pre-established lessons or curriculum covering any of the following:

- Social Studies
- Social Awareness and Refugees
- International Politics
- Research Methods
- Primary and Secondary Sources
- Archival Research
- Geographic Area Studies

Primary Objective: Students will practice learning from primary and secondary sources in order to write their own essays in response to introductory research questions.

Additional objectives:

Students will be able to:

- Share personal reflections on what they learn about refugee experiences

Home Assignment

Instructions:

1. Begin to investigate the resources and questions listed below.
2. After exploring the resources (maybe you read some transcripts, watch parts of some videos, or listen to recordings), **select one of the questions listed below** for your response.
3. Write a two-page response using information you gather from the resources, including additional research and your interpretations as necessary.

Resources:

- <https://www.rerooted.org/archive>
- EU Resettlement Testimonials: <https://www.resettlement.eu/page/refugee-testimonies-resettlement>
 - Video: Emergency Resettlement to the Netherlands - a Refugee Family's Story
 - Video: Pathway to Protection - the Rai family's resettlement journey to Australia
 - Video: '6954 Kilometres to Home' - a refugee family's resettlement journey to Finland
 - Mahmoud in Egypt: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wQfQJrAim2k&feature=youtu.be>
 - Mahmoud in Sweden: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xZPDNS9260Q>
- Unnamed "Syrian Refugee" Interview: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=1-IkSoH1sWA>
- Hiba's Story (UNICEF): https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=7QVmXX62_H0
- Syrian Refugee Children Speak Out (UNICEF) <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=jyscRA5CY68>
- Far Away From Home: Integration of refugees in Maastricht: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=mKhusakBTmI>
- South Sudan Crisis: Nearly 4 Million People Have Fled (UNHCR): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=I-iFocVxAPo>
- Life as a Refugee - South Sudan in Focus (World Affairs): <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZP23CABZpHA>

Research Questions:

1. What does it mean to be a refugee? What can you gather about the refugee experience from these sources?
2. Investigate the sources for mentions of homeland and home. Are home and homeland usually a physical space or more of an idea, or both? Discuss.
3. What is a "home" or a "homeland"? Write your answer referencing the resources for support.
4. Is leaving your home or claiming refugee status an easy thing to do? What are some of the difficulties people face leaving their homes and adjusting to a new living arrangement?
5. How do individuals experience the same traumatic conflict differently? (Compare sources that show people who have come from the same place.)
6. Some sources include people's names and details about their lives, some don't. Do you feel differently about people whose stories are shared without hearing their names? How would you feel in their position?