

History – 9-11 years

Unit and Lesson Plans



History includes refugees

Throughout history, political turmoil has victimized many civilian families, forcing them to flee their homes. Refugee outflows and other massive displacements of people are a key aspect of many international crises. For children, in particular, looking at world events from the point of view of a refugee family can give new meaning and a sense of reality to events that may otherwise seem abstract and far away. The theme can be introduced in:

Medieval/early modern history: The religious wars.

Contemporary history: World War I, the Russian Revolution, the collapse of the Ottoman Empire, the Second World War and Nazism, colonization and decolonization in Africa, Soviet influence in Central and Eastern Europe, the Arab-Israeli conflict, the Vietnam War, the dictatorships in Latin-America – all these events and many more have victimized millions of people and forced them to flee their homes, families and communities.

UNIT PLAN FOR AGES 9-11 IN HISTORY: REFUGEES - A SPECIAL TYPE OF MIGRANT

UNIT OBJECTIVES

Knowledge

To understand that the causes of migration are many and varied.

To understand the concept of *economic migrant*.

To understand the concept of *refugee*.

To understand the concept of *asylum*.

To demonstrate to the students that there have been refugees throughout history: where there is persecution, there will be refugees.

To learn in more detail about a historical group who fled their country for safety; such people were refugees.

To locate contemporary conflicts and refugees on a world map.

Skills

To practise sensitive enquiry and reasoning skills.

To practise research skills:

a) defining a problem

b) seeking appropriate information sources



- c) identifying relevant information from the sources
 - d) organising the information to answer particular questions
 - e) clear written expression
- To be able to articulate contrasting feelings.

Values

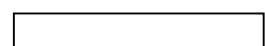
To encourage *empathy* by developing a feeling of relationship with a possible refugee in one's family tree.
 To foster a sense of *solidarity and responsibility* towards refugees.

LESSON 1

CONTENT	TEACHING METHODS/LEARNING STRATEGIES
<p>This lesson can be linked to lesson 2 of the Geography Unit.</p> <p>Causes of migration Simple presentation of pull and push factors - limit this to: Search for a better life (economic migrants) Escape from persecution and /or war (refugees) Family trees What is a family tree? Children's own family trees, including ancestors who came from other countries. Why did they come to this country?</p> <p>RESOURCES</p> <p>Activity Sheet: My family tree</p>	<p>Introduction: Teacher questions to the class: What does migration mean? (Expect answers on birds, animals, people). Why do people migrate? What might push people to leave their country? What might pull people to a particular country? Teacher presents definition of refugee.</p> <p>Development: Children trace their family trees, filling in the Activity Sheet: My family tree. If and when they come to an ancestor who came from another country, they can try to find out why that ancestor left his/her homeland. If they cannot find out the reason, with the help of the teacher or parents, suggest a reason why they ancestor may have left.</p> <p>Homework: Finish the tree as far back as possible with the aid of parents and older relatives.</p>

LESSONS 2 and 3

CONTENT	TEACHING	METHODS/LEARNING
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STRATEGIES

Family tree information.
Revision of definition of refugees.
There have been refugees throughout history: where there is persecution, armed conflict, people flee to save their lives. Causes of flight:

Prejudice (based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group) -> Discrimination -> Persecution -> Flight
War -> Flight

A library research assignment on one of the following refugee groups:

the Huguenots (16th c.)
the Pilgrim Fathers (17th c.)
Eastern European Jews (19th c.)
World War II refugees in Europe or Asia
Palestinians (since 1948)
Indochinese (since 1975)

RESOURCES

School library resources such as encyclopaedias and history reference books.

Activity Sheet: Refugees in History

Link to previous lesson: Teacher questions to the class: Who among the students has an ancestor who came from another country? Did the ancestor leave his/her homeland in search of a more prosperous life, or because there was danger in the homeland?

Introduction: Discussion questions about the causes of flight. Both teacher and students should cite examples from history.

Development: Time spent in library on guided research on the selected topic (see accompanying Assignment Sheet).

LESSON 4

CONTENT

As for previous lesson

RESOURCES

Pupils' completed assignment sheets.

TEACHING METHODS/LEARNING STRATEGIES

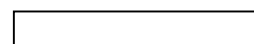
Verbal review of results of library research.

Questioning individuals, the teacher should build up a blackboard summary of reasons for flight in history.

LESSON 5

CONTENT

TEACHING METHODS/LEARNING



STRATEGIES

This lesson can be linked to lesson 1 of the Geography Unit.

The present day: Where do refugees come from? Where do they flee to?

Countries of asylum:

Definition

Is our country a country of asylum?

What asylum can mean to a refugee (safety, security, basic needs met)

Introduction: Using a world map and through questions about current world events, children are shown the locations of some armed conflict, refugee flows and refugee populations.

Development: Questions designed to encourage empathy, e.g. How would you feel if...? What would you do if...?

RESOURCES

UNHCR, The State of the World's Refugees 2000: Fifty Years of Humanitarian Action, (Oxford, OUP, 2000), 278-279.

LESSON PLANS FOR AGES 9-11 IN HISTORY: REFUGEES - A SPECIAL TYPE OF MIGRANT

Purpose

For many citizens in countries such as Canada, the United States, Australia or South Africa, their ancestry in their respective countries would only go back a few generations. If their genealogy were traced back sufficiently far, they would find an ancestor who made the decision to leave the country of his/her birthplace in search of a better life elsewhere.

This lesson aims to introduce fundamental concepts necessary for the understanding of refugees: push and pull factors of migration. Following this, the lesson's goal is to render the concepts of immigrant and refugee much more personal and immediate, by asking the students to identify migrants (and possibly refugees) among their own ancestors.

Preparation

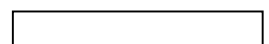
A class set of Activity Sheet: My family tree is required.

Procedure

Introduction

This first lesson could begin with the question "What does *migration* mean?" The word *migration* may stimulate responses dealing with migratory birds and animals. Explain to the children that such movements in the animal world are events repeated each year, triggered by the seasons. Although migration for people may also have a seasonal aspect, it usually involves the permanent movement from one place to another.

People migrate for many reasons. Have a brainstorming session with the students



about possible reasons for migration and let the children write down their answers on the blackboard. Although the reasons for migration are many and varied, they can, nevertheless, be divided into two broad categories - *push* factors and *pull* factors.

Push factors are causes of migration which **cause people to leave their homelands**, while *pull* factors **attract people to their new countries**.

Ask the students to decide which of the causes of migration written on the blackboard are push factors (unemployment, war, threats to freedom, threats to life, no educational opportunities, poverty, famine, drought) and which are pull factors (work, safety, better housing, possible or better education, enough to eat and drink).

Ask the students what they think the word "refugee" means. Build on their answers, leading to the presentation of the following definition:

Refugees are people who flee their country because of a well-founded fear of persecution for reasons of race, religion, nationality, political opinion or membership of a particular social group. A refugee either cannot return home, or is afraid to do so.

Explain difficult terms "well-founded", "persecution", "political opinion". Give a couple of examples of refugee groups which illustrate parts of the definition.

Let the children mull over the above definition and ask them to suggest what could be the possible *push* and *pull* factors that act upon refugees.

Development: Ask the students if they know what a family tree is. What type of information is contained in a family tree?

Hand out the Activity Sheet: My family tree and ask the students to trace their family history by filling in the tree as much as they can by themselves. For homework, the students should complete the family tree with the aid of their parents and older relatives. They should include information about any immigrant ancestors such the country of origin, and if possible, why did the ancestor immigrate.

LESSONS 2 and 3: What do you see in your mind?

Purpose

This lesson aims to consolidate understanding of the concept "refugee", through examination of historical examples of refugee groups. The students will have an opportunity to practise library research skills.

Preparation

Have ready a class set of the Activity Sheet: Refugees in History and book the school library for the class.



Procedure

Link to previous lesson: Questions about the homework concerning the students' family trees:

Who among the students has an ancestor who came from another country?

Did the ancestor leave his/her homeland in search of a more prosperous life, or because there was danger in the home country?

Revision question: What is a refugee? Do any of the students have an ancestor who was a refugee?

Introduction

There have been refugees throughout history. Where there is persecution or armed conflict, people flee to save their lives. Ask the students to suggest causes for flight and any examples that they can think of from history or from contemporary events. The history of each of the world's three great monotheistic religions includes examples of forced migration and refugee-like flight.

Moses led the Children of Israel out of bondage in Egypt to a Promised Land.

Joseph, Mary and the infant Jesus fled to Egypt, to escape the persecution of King Herod.

Mohammed and his followers undertook the Hegira ("flight") from Mecca to Medina, in 622, to escape the persecution of the Meccans. Demonstrate to the students how the causes of flight can follow a series of steps,

e.g. prejudice (based on race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership of a particular group) leads to discrimination, which in turn can lead to persecution, which often results in a flight to safety, where possible.

Where there is outright armed conflict or war, people try to escape to safety.

Development

Write on the blackboard the following list of historical refugee groups:

the Huguenots (16th century)

the Pilgrim Fathers (17th century)

East European Jews (19th century)

WWII refugees in Europe or Asia

Palestinians (since 1948)

Indochinese (since 1975)

If your library or teaching resources contain materials on other refugee groups in history, by all means add or substitute them.

Hand out the Activity Sheet: Refugees in History, informing the students that this part of the lesson will be spent in the library, where the students will use the assignment sheet as a guide as they refer to the available resources such as encyclopaedias and history reference books to research information about one of the above refugee groups.



LESSON 4

This lesson is devoted to a verbal review of the results of the library research. Systematically work through the questions of the assignment sheet for each group of refugees. As the lesson progresses, build up a blackboard summary of the reasons for flight, how the refugees coped with their predicament, and what the refugees offered their host countries.

For homework and in preparation for the next lesson, ask the children to collect newspaper articles on the various conflicts that are occurring around the world and articles about refugees.

LESSON 5

Purpose

In this lesson, the class will apply to the contemporary world, the concepts they have learnt through historical examples.

Preparation

Install a large map of the world where all the children can clearly see it . Also have ready a dictionary.

Introduction

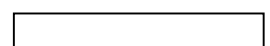
Ask the students to talk about the newspaper articles they have collected, e.g. the article is about which country? What type of conflict is happening? Who is fighting in the conflict? What is happening to the people who are not involved in the fighting? Has the fighting caused people to flee their country?

Using the world map and the information provided in *The State of The World's Refugees 2000* p278-279, show the children the location of some of the armed conflicts, the refugee flow, and where the refugees have sought safety. At this point, introduce the terms asylum and country of asylum. Perhaps, a student can look up the definition of asylum, and write down the meaning on the blackboard. Ask the students what asylum would mean to a refugee (safety, security, basic needs met).

Development

By now, the students have traced their respective family trees, and some will have discovered that they have ancestors who had migrated to this country for various reasons such as seeking a better and prosperous living, or fleeing from danger and persecution. Thus, in the past, this country has been a country of asylum. What about now? Does this country presently give asylum to those who seek it?

Referring back to their relatives from the past, ask the children how they would feel if they found themselves in similar circumstances where it was necessary for them to leave this country? Ask the children to think of a scenario where they



could be the victims of systematic persecution. How would they feel if they were persecuted? What would be their response? What would be their reaction if there were people who tried to help them, who gave them asylum from their persecutors?

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