

The Boy at the Back of the Class by Onjali Q. Raúf

Learning objective	To develop an understanding of the experiences of refugees
Outcomes	The children will begin writing persuasively in support of refugees
Key vocabulary	Refugee, migrant, asylum seeker, citizen, global, human being, belong, journey
Key questions	• What is a refugee? • What does 'to belong' mean? As human beings, where do we belong? • What does it mean to be a global citizen? • Why do you think Mrs Grimsby feels this way? How does Mr Brown react? Why? • How would it/does it feel to not speak English here? • How do you want your reader to feel? How will you do that?
Activities	Session 4: Recap what we know about the narrator and the boy • Read to the top of page 32, '... took a step to the side.' • Discuss the views of Mrs Grimsby – <i>why might she feel this way? How does Mr Brown react? Why?</i> • <i>What would you say or do in this situation? Have you ever been in a similar situation? What other views are offensive? How might we deal with them?</i> • <i>What is a refugee? How is that different from a migrant or asylum seeker?</i> • <i>What does 'to belong' mean? As human beings, where do we belong? What does it mean to be a global citizen?</i> • Explore the experiences of refugees through films of their stories – why do people flee their countries? (see resources) Mention the journeys refugees make, but briefly (see teacher guidance). There may be refugees in class so make sure that their voices are heard. • <i>How would it/does it feel to not speak English here?</i> Discuss together. • Plenary: <i>How could we change Mrs Grimsby's opinion so that she is more sympathetic? What would you tell her?</i> Session 5: Recap on last session – the key messages.

	• Writing - give the children a choice of form but be clear that the purpose is to persuade and the audience is adults who think the same as Mrs Grimsby. Their writing could be a letter to a newspaper, a leaflet, a blog on the school website, etc. It will be formal. • In pairs, children discuss the key points they want to include in their writing and some supporting details for each point. This will come from the story but also from the films and discussion from yesterday. They need to explicitly target the points that Mrs Grimsby makes. • <i>How do they want their reader to feel?</i> Discuss different feelings that will help with persuasion, such as sadness, guilt, hope. Children choose vocabulary and persuasive devices they will use to create these feelings. Share these and discuss how they will work. • Look at examples of the type of writing the children will do, to identify the success criteria (see pupil resources). • Teacher models the opening, focusing very closely on the intended effect on the reader. How does it make you feel? Do some shared writing together. • Children orally rehearse and begin writing the opening of their piece, considering the effect of it on their reader. How does it sound? • Plenary: hear some openings – with each ask, <i>did it succeed in affecting you, the reader? How did it make you feel? Would it change Mrs Grimsby's opinion? Why? What are you going to include in the next paragraph?</i>
Teacher guidance	• This session deals with offensive views so it will be important to reinforce respect for all. • Do not go in to the journeys that refugees make to escape in any detail at this point as that is more relevant in chapter 10. • This writing exercise does not need to be long. The point of it is to consolidate the children's understanding of the plight of refugees. • If possible, read chapter 5 at the end of the day or in guided reading – discuss why wars begin (p44) and what mum says about bullying – should she have been more honest with the narrator? In particular, focus on the quote, 'The world has never been kind to refugees.' Do you think it ever will? At the end of the chapter, what would their list of questions be?
Resources needed	• Stories about why refugees fled their country – https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=8bEK6gytwec

	• Refugee Council information – it is best that you choose the resources you think are most fitting for your class, but here is one option: https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/information/refugee-asylum-facts/the-truth-about-asylum/ • UNICEF school resources – again, best to choose the resources yourself, but here is one option: https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/resources/teaching-resources/refugee-crisis-europe/ • Pupil resource – Dialogue analysis • Teaching slides to aid discussion including photos of refugees
Coverage	Speaking and listening • listen and respond appropriately to adults and their peers • ask relevant questions to extend their understanding and knowledge • articulate and justify answers, arguments and opinions • use spoken language to develop understanding through speculating, hypothesising, imagining and exploring ideas • consider and evaluate different viewpoints Reading • identify and discuss themes • ask questions to improve their understanding • draw inferences such as inferring characters’ feelings, thoughts and motives from their actions, and justify inferences with evidence • discuss and evaluate how authors use language, including figurative language, considering the impact on the reader • provide reasoned justifications for their views Writing plan their writing by: • identifying the audience for and purpose of the writing, selecting the appropriate form and using other similar writing as models for their own • noting and developing initial ideas, drawing on reading and research where necessary draft and write by: • selecting appropriate grammar and vocabulary, understanding how such choices can change and enhance meaning

Below shows the dialogue from page 31 between the parents, Mr Brown (speaking first, on the left) and Mrs Grimsby (speaking second, on the right). What can you tell about their opinions of the new child in the class by what they say and how they act? How do they differ?

Have you heard about the new refugee kid that's joined the school? He's been put in Mrs Khan's class. They can't find an assistant that speaks his language. Poor little blighter!

It'll cause trouble – you mark my words. They're only coming over to take our jobs!

If he's from that awful war on the news, I feel sorry for the kid. Can't blame 'em for wanting to get out of that death trap.

Hmph! A bother, the whole lot of 'em. Wouldn't trust one as far as I could throw 'em. Just you wait and see – it's our kids who will suffer, just because these ones are coming over to do whatever they like ...