

## *Teacher's notes to accompany the 'Passport' activity booklets*

### **Background to the 'Passport' booklet**

The Passport booklet is designed to accompany the Escape to Safety exhibition and the 7 information boards that are provided by Global Link, which are for classroom use.

The Passport consists of:

- 5 activities
- a poem written by a refugee boy
- an evaluation sheet at the end of the booklet

There will be an opportunity for you to discuss how to maximise the resources and the exhibition with the Education Worker (Joe Howson, [joe.howson@globalink.org.uk](mailto:joe.howson@globalink.org.uk)) during the training workshops. Please check with your organiser (team leader, event organiser, Citizenship Co-ordinator) when the workshop(s) is/(are) taking place.

Normally the Education worker will also deliver workshops for pupils. These are normally between 50min to an 1.30h long, depending on schools' teaching periods. We advise a maximum number of 25/30 as two pupils at a time go through the exhibition every two/three minutes to minimise disruption. However, we do understand that this is not always possible due to school timetable constraints.

During the workshop, you will have to 'entertain' the pupils and we have designed activities that should help you to do just that. You will find the Notes to the Activities just below.

The workshop normally opens with a 15 minutes introduction to the topic which is aimed at the whole class. First you can ask the students to test their knowledge by taking the quiz – activity 1. Then, after the 15 minutes, you will start cueing people to go through the exhibition.

During the first 15 minutes you should try to highlight the following points as otherwise it will be **difficult** for the pupils to fill in Section A of the evaluation sheet:

- Definition of Refugees, stress the fleeing from persecution, civil war and conflict
- Stress that the commonly used term **Bogus Asylum Seekers** not only is it inaccurate but is also legally not possible for ANY asylum seekers to be bogus and/or illegal. Seeking asylum is everyone's right under international laws. See black information board titled 'What does it all mean'
- Asylum seekers and Refugees contribute to society.. Also point out that they are forced to go on benefits as they are not permitted to work until they get the Refugee Status by the Home Office
- Contrary to common public perception, Britain does not have the highest percentage of asylum seekers/refugees in Europe, nor in the world. Refer to the map information board 'Where they come from'

Do not worry if you do not manage to cover all the above points as hopefully pupils will pick them up once they got through the exhibition. Maybe to help them, you could guide them and say to look out for the above points while they go through the exhibition: who are refugees? does Britain take most of them?are they a burden?

Inside the exhibition there are 'bits' to read which should equip them to answer the questions in the evaluation sheet.

### **Notes to the Activities**

#### ***Activity 1 – Asylum Seekers and Refugees: Test your knowledge***

This is a questionnaire which is especially designed to dispel some of the myths that surround this topic and also to give a facts and definitions about who asylum seekers and refugees really are.

You can ask the students to take the test before any input from you, so that the contrast in what they knew/know is evident before and after the workshop/exhibition.

Answers:

1. a
2. c (People of Concern are anyone whose life is in danger, the majority of whom cannot leave their countries)
3. b (then Africa, then Europe, then North America)
4. b
5. b
6. b, seeking asylum is a universal human and legal right. Asylum seekers have the right to stay in the UK until a final decision has been made on their case
7. c
8. a – and remind them that asylum seekers have no other choice but to accept this as the only source of 'income' as legally banned from working, whereas British citizens can work and still claim some kind of benefits
9. b, remind them that 20% of applications are refused on 'non-compliance' grounds, usually because the solicitor has failed to submit the application on time; or because the applicant knows little English and made mistakes in completing it appropriately.
10. c, stress the fact that asylum seekers administratively detained have not committed any crimes, nor are suspected of having committed any crime
11. they are all former refugees

#### ***Activity 2 – Home***

This activity encourages pupils to explore the emotional issues of the topic, aiming at promoting a sense of empathy and sympathy within pupils towards asylum seekers/refugees.

Through a process of self-reflection, pupils should draw a parallel between 'us' and 'them', and should be encouraged to bridge the 'us/them' gap.

#### ***Activity 3 – Travel***

This activity not only does it explore the emotional side of the topic which aims at promoting a sense of empathy but also, it looks at one of the practical obstacles that refugees face. Basically, it aims at highlighting the point that most of us would probably forget to take any forms of identification, if and when fleeing in a rush. And indeed, many people who are under 18 would probably not have an ID with a photo (how many pupils in your class have passports?). The point being that UK tends to criminalise people if and when they do not, or cannot, provide immigration officers with proof of their identity. This can be enough for a person to be detained. However, **AND IT MUST BE POINTED OUT TO PUPILS**, international laws and the UNHCR recommends that no government should criminalise people for lack of documents, or indeed for travelling with false documents.

#### ***Activity 4 – Immigration***

This activity aims at pointing out the problems associated with ‘language’. In the UK the claim for asylum **must** be presented in English (Italy for example allows asylum seekers to present their evidence in their own mother tongues). This has resulted in about 20% of claims being refused on ‘no compliant’ grounds, which means that at some point the form had not been properly completed. Official language is bad enough when you do speak the language, imagine when it even is not your own language and when your life depends on it.

#### ***Activity 5 – Just like you and me***

Just like activity 1, this activity encourages pupils to explore the emotional issues of the topic, aiming at promoting a sense of empathy and sympathy within pupils towards asylum seekers/refugees. Pupils are encouraged to read the poem that a 14 year old refugee boy wrote. You could ask a pupil to volunteer to read, this normally gives more ‘voice’ to the poem. At the end, pupils are encouraged to reflect upon its content and discuss issues arising from it.

#### ***Activity 6 – Let’s take action***

This activity aims at empowering pupils to do something with and about what they have experienced. Pupils are encouraged to think of ways they can help refugees/asylum seekers feel more welcome in the community. Past ideas have included: a welcome school banner, letter writing to the local MP and/or Prime Minister, fundraising event, stop name calling ‘campaign’ etc...

### **Evaluation Sheet**

The evaluation sheet was designed to provide feedback to the Education Worker to improve and monitor the workshops. You are welcome to use it for the same purpose. In some instances, you might be asked by the Education Worker to send some of the copies to Global Link for statistical data to support the work of Escape to Safety. You will be notified in advance, if that is the case.

All question, except 3 and 4, require a subjective and qualitative response from students. Question 3 should read B (people escaping danger and persecution): and question 4 should read B (false) as Pakistan has the highest percentage according to 2004 stats.

I hope that this booklet has been of help to you. Please do not hesitate to contact Sara, the Education Worker, if you feel that something has been missed out or indeed has not been explained in a clear manner.

We welcome your suggestions.

Thank you and enjoy Escape to Safety!

## **‘MAP BOARDS’ CONTENT**

**BOARD TITLE: Where most refugee go when they are forced out their homes**

***THIS MAP SHOW WHERE PEOPLE GO WHEN THEY ARE FORCED TO LEAVE THEIR HOMES.***

At the start 2005 there were 20.8 million persons of concern to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) worldwide. They include 8.4 million refugees, 6.6 million internally displaced persons 2.4 million stateless people, 1.6 million returnees, 960,000 million others of concern and 773,000 asylum seekers. (Source [www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch) retrieved on 8/08/06)

Asia hosts more than a third of all the people of concern to UNHCR, roughly 7.4 million, 36% of the world’s total

Africa hosts roughly 5.2 million, 25% of the world’s total

Europe hosts roughly 4.7 million people, 23% of the world’s total

Latin America hosts roughly 2.2 million people, 11% of the world’s total

North America hosts roughly 1 million people, 5% of the world’s total

Oceania hosts roughly 83,200 people, 0.4% of the world’s total

Britain has the world’s fourth largest economy but ranked 9<sup>th</sup> in Europe and 22<sup>nd</sup> in the world in terms of asylum applications in relation to overall population  
<http://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/news/myths/myth001.htm>

**At the beginning of 2006 the top five refugee hosting countries in terms of numbers were:**

1. Pakistan, UNHCR estimate of 1,084,694
2. Iran, UNHCR estimate of 716,403
3. Germany, UNHCR estimate of 700,016
4. Tanzania, UNHCR estimate of 548,824
5. United States, UNHCR estimate of 379,340
6. China, UNHCR estimate of 301,041
7. United Kingdom, UNHCR estimate of 293,459 refugees, about 3.4% of the world’s 8.4 million and 0.4% of the British population.
8. Chad, UNHCR estimate of 275,412
9. Uganda, UNHCR estimate of 257,258
10. Kenya, UNHCR estimate of 251,271

(Source [www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch) retrieved on 8/08/06)

## **BOARD TITLE: This is why they leave their homes**

In 2005, Afghanistan with 23 years of war and continuing instability, was the 1<sup>st</sup> place in the world where refugees come from ([www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch))

In 2005, in Sudan civil war and human rights violations made this the 2<sup>nd</sup> place in the world where most refugees come from ([www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch))

In 2005, despite a newly elected government and an official ceasefire, Burundi witnessed an increase in torture, arbitrary arrests, summary executions and widespread rape of women and children which make it the 3<sup>rd</sup> largest place in the world where refugees come from ([www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch))

After a difficult colonial past, 40 years of a brutal regime regime, 6 years of civil war that claimed 4 million lives, there is now a ceasefire. BUT despite this, there is continued insecurity in the east of the country with both rebel groups and state authorities carrying out atrocities and grave abuse of human rights ([www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org))

In 2005, in Somalia 12 years of State collapse and internal conflict and constant human rights abuse still made this one of the top 10 refugee producing countries ([www.unhcr.ch](http://www.unhcr.ch))

Iran – Widespread human rights abuse and State limitations on freedom of expression ([www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org))

Iraq – Before Saddam Hussein's brutal regime and widespread human rights violations. Then Western forces military action and detention without trial of civilians. Now, political instability and civil unrest makes this country one of the top 10 refugee producing countries in the world

Zimbabwe – Escalation in State sponsored attacks on critics of the government, ill treatment and torture and widespread detention of civilians ([www.amnesty.org](http://www.amnesty.org))

In the North Caucasus, the conflict over Chechnya means continued violence and remains a cause of instability throughout the region. A lack of security and poor economic development compound pre-existing ethnic tensions and have the potential for increased conflict ([www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org))

Poverty in this region has risen massively since independence and economic decline, due to mismanagement of resources, has triggered considerable problems. Any wave of mass political activity is violently suppressed as it is freedom of expression ([www.international-alert.org](http://www.international-alert.org))

Colombia continues to experience a large scale and complex armed internal conflict involving the state, a loose confederation of paramilitary organizations, and two guerrilla groups which to date has caused the internal displacement of 2,400,000 people.

Palestinian refugees and internally displaced persons in Israel are one of the largest displaced populations in the world today, totalling an estimated 7 million in 2006, 70% of the total of the Palestinian population worldwide (*source [www.badil.org](http://www.badil.org)*)

The top 5 applicant nationalities in 2005/06 were:

1. Iran
2. Eritrea
3. Somalia
4. Afghanistan
5. China

(Source: [www.homeoffice.gov.uk](http://www.homeoffice.gov.uk))