

**GLOBAL  
GOALS  
CENTRE**



# **VOICES**

## **ART IS REFUGE**

**A guide for teachers**

Global Goals Centre  
[www.globalgoalscentre.org](http://www.globalgoalscentre.org)

# CONTENTS

1.	What is the Voices: Art is Refuge project?	3
2.	Aims of the teachers guide	3
3.	Curriculum links	4
4.	Glossary	4
5.	Activity 1: Watching the films	5
6.	Activity 2: Celebrating and celebrated refugees	6
7.	Activity 3: Voices: what do you want to say?	7
8.	Activity 4: Voices with rights: Moussa	8-9
9.	Activity 5: Creating home through food: Arash	10
10.	Activity 6: Photos of home: Bnar	11
11.	Activity 7: Refugees, racism and music: Ali	12
12.	Watch, listen, read: other publications to build you and your classes knowledge and awareness of refugees and migrants	13

# WHAT IS THE VOICES: ART IS REFUGE PROJECT?

Voices: Art is Refuge is about social justice. The project celebrates the work and creative resilience of Bristol-based artists in the UK's refugee and migrant community. Like migration, arts and crafts are as old as humanity. They transcend language and cultural barriers, opening doors to new possibilities for sharing and expression.

The artists – including an Iranian chef, Egyptian and Kurdish musicians, and Sudanese and Kurdish visual artists – have shared their skills and stories with children and answered their questions about their art, their migration stories and their countries of origin in [six short films \(with subtitles\)](#). This guide offers ideas of how to use these films in your classrooms and settings with young people.



## AIMS OF THE GUIDE FOR TEACHERS

The activities in this guide seek to explore the lives of six refugees and migrants who live in Bristol, UK and found refuge through their art and creative practices. These activities will:

1. Challenge and disrupt stereotypes
2. Explore human rights
3. Reflect on the place of creative practices in people's lives

Activities have been developed, delivered and evaluated with Key Stage 2 and 3 pupils (ages 9-14 years). However, we encourage you to modify these to the needs of learners within your setting.

Activities are based around the [six films](#) created for the project and can be used as stand alone lessons, a suite of learning episodes or the basis of an assembly.

NOTE: Activities concerning migration and refugees may be upsetting for some children and adults who may have lived experience of the issues either firsthand or through friends and family. Children should be encouraged to only share experiences they feel comfortable in sharing and be signposted to support in school. Should disclosures relating to safeguarding issues be made, always follow your settings' safeguarding policy.

# CURRICULUM LINKS

The activities in this guide have been designed to support National Curriculum links in England (Geography, Citizenship, PSHE, Art and Design) and Wales (Humanities, Health and Wellbeing, and Expressive Arts).



## GLOSSARY

- **Migration** – the movement of people from one part of the world to another
- **Migrant** – a person who has moved or is moving from one place to another
- **Refugee** – ‘Refugees are people who have fled war, violence, conflict or persecution and have crossed an international border to find safety in another country’ – UNHCR definition
- **Refuge** – a place or situation providing safety or shelter
- **Asylum seeker** – a person who is seeking international cooperation, in the UK this often means that they have not officially been given refugee status yet
- **Racism** – when a person, community or institution treats another person or people negatively (discrimination, prejudice and antagonising them) because of their race or ethnicity

# ACTIVITY 1: WATCHING THE FILMS

Resources: [Films](#), white board or sticky notes, pens

Time: 45 minutes

**About this activity:** This activity encourages critical thinking and discussion around the subject of seeking refuge. You may want to share all of the short films with your class/group or concentrate on one or two.

## Activity plan:

Invite individuals to jot down onto their whiteboard or sticky note a word or phrase they think about when you say the word 'Refugee' and 'Migrant'.

Gather the words into a word cloud. Discuss where the group got these words from. Was it in response to what they have seen on the news/reports, lived experiences etc.

Explain to the group they will be watching a short (5 mins) film about a refugee/migrant. During watching consider posing some or all of the following questions:

- What does home mean to you? Does having a home matter?
- How does hearing what these people say make you feel?
- What is the difference between a migrant and refugee?
- How are migrants and refugees portrayed in the media? Is it accurate?
- Will you act/think differently as a result of watching this film?
- Why did the person in the film have to leave their home?
- What does having to move to a different country feel like?
- Why is creativity important to this person - what does it do for them and others around them?
- What could schools/communities do to welcome refugees and migrants?

After watching, ask the group to jot down a word or phrase that they now think about when you say the word 'Refugee' and 'Migrant'. Again, gather the words into a word cloud and discuss how and why there may have been a change in response.

# ACTIVITY 2: CELEBRATING AND CELEBRATED REFUGEES

Resources: [Downloadable activity cards](#)

Time: 45 minutes

**About this activity:** This activity begins to challenge refugee and migrant stereotypes that can be portrayed negatively in the media and can be used both as class/group work or for an assembly.

## Activity plan:

Without saying that the people are migrants/refugees, show the group the images of the people.

- Who are these people? Can they name them?
- Why are they famous? What great things have they done?
- What connects all of these people? (they are all migrants/refugees)

Challenge individuals/small groups to find out more about the stories of their chosen person and feedback to the class. Using [‘Famous Refugees - Refugee Week’](#) may be helpful.

Ask individuals/small groups to give feedback to the class about what they have found.

- Where did the person come from and why?
- Was there anything surprising or shocking about their journey?
- How have they used their creativity/skills?

## Extension ideas:

- Create a hall of fame for the amazing lives of refugees and migrants
- Write non-fiction biographies

# ACTIVITY 3: VOICES: WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SAY?

Resources: [Films](#), [megaphone template](#)

Time: 45 minutes

**About this activity:** The Voice: Art is Refuge project looked to amplify the lived experience of migrants and refugees to the UK, their experiences and how they have used art – in its many forms – as a personal and social refuge. The exhibition invited the public to create a piece of collaborative art in response to what they saw and heard. This activity invites learners to consider what they want to say on the subject and can be used as the basis for discussion and/or a larger display.

## Activity plan:

Watch one of the films or split the group up to watch different films simultaneously.

Show the group the megaphone template and ask them to think about what they think the big messages the individual in the film is sharing. This might include: safety, love, the importance of nature, art bringing people together, feeling welcomed, feeling scared, feeling they have lost everything.

Invite the group to think about their response to the films. On a template or piece of plain paper the group should write or draw their responses.

Share your work – Global Goals Centre would love to see any work so please do share on [Twitter](#) or [Instagram](#) @GlobalGoalsCtre.

## Extension ideas:

- Invite the group to think about how these messages could be amplified, make and action a plan. Ideas might include: uploading images onto social media (use the hashtag #artisrefuge), share images on parent/carer newsletters, use the work as a basis for an assembly, write to the local Member of Parliament/Councilor to highlight the work and opinions of the group.

# ACTIVITY 4: VOICES WITH RIGHTS: MOUSSA

Resources: [Moussa's film](#), atlas, globe or world map

Time: 45 minutes

**About this activity:** This activity uses one of the short films created for the Voices project and presents Moussa, a musician from many places. Students are invited to critically reflect on the physical and symbolic nature of borders and what it means to be from somewhere.

## Activity plan:

Ask the group: where are you from?

Responses might include the place they were born, the place their families come from, the place they have spent a majority of their lives. It might also relate to the languages they and their families speak and or their religion.

Challenge the group to find where they are from on the atlas/globe/map.

Watch the short film that presents Moussa.

Moussa speaks in English and French. He talks about being from Mali, Guinea, The Gambia and Senegal.

All of these places have borders and Moussa talks about how he moved across them.

Ask the group if they have experience of crossing borders, this might include:

- Going on holiday and showing a passport, being searched
- Traveling across a country's border without knowing it (for example, across the Severn bridge from England to Wales)
- Lived experience or experiences of families and friends seeking refuge
- Seeing images of refugees on the news (for example on small boats crossing The Channel from France to England)



Pose the question, why do countries have borders? Answers might include:

- To keep people safe and protected – e.g. from crime (including terrorism), infection (such as COVID19)
- So we know who is where
- So a country doesn't get overpopulated and drain resources

Many refugees and migrants find crossing borders a huge challenge. We see reports of people being trafficked to a country and making dangerous journeys.

Pose the question, what rights should people have when moving between places and across borders?

Link responses and final reflections to [Human Rights](#) as agreed by the United Nations, which include:

- Be treated with respect and in a humane way
- Freedom from discrimination
- Equality
- Free movement
- Asylum from prosecution
- Freedom of belief
- Freedom of speech
- Work and employment
- Adequate living standards

**Extension ideas:**

- Watch more of the [Voices films](#) and compare the journeys the people have taken and how they have been treated.
- Create posters to communicate how refugees and migrants should be treated at borders and in new countries.
- Explore the [UN's Human Rights deceleration](#) and the UN's convention on the [Rights of the Child](#).

# ACTIVITY 5: CREATING HOME THROUGH FOOD: ARASH

Resources: [Arash's film](#), atlas, globe or world map, paper and pens

Time: 20 minutes

**About this activity:** Arash, a chef from Kurdistan is the inspiration for this activity with his love of food that reminds him of home. Students consider why food is important to our identities and how it might be used to welcome people to new situations.

## Activity plan:

Ask the group: What food reminds you of home? Invite learners to think about why a food reminds them of home. Responses might include:

- Food for special occasions/treats
- Food prepared by a member of the family
- Food using specific ingredients or food eaten in a specific place

As a group, watch the 5 min film about Arash, a refugee from Kurdistan who is a chef. Pose some or all of the following questions:

- Why is food important to Arash?
- Why did Arash move to the UK? What was Arash's journey to the UK like?
- What does Arash think of British food?
- How is Arash using food to help others?
- How do the homeless people respond to Arash's food?

Reflect on how food can make people feel at home and welcomed.

## Extension ideas:

- Develop non-fiction writing and create a recipe for a 'pan of love' (this may be for a food, or a recipe for welcoming people).
- Invite learners to bring in recipes from home, or ask the local community to come in and support a cooking session to celebrate the food and cultures of the area.

# ACTIVITY 6: PHOTOS OF HOME: BNAR

Resources: [Bnar's film](#)

Time: 15 minutes

**About this activity:** This short activity introduces Bnar's beautiful photos and provides space to think about why and how we can collect our memories.

## Activity plan:

Bnar is a photographer. She is also a refugee from Kurdistan. All of Bnar's photos from her childhood were destroyed. Watch her short film and pose some/all of the following questions:

- Why does Bnar not have any photos?
- Why is nature important to Bnar?
- What is the meaning of Bnar's name?
- What is the meaning of your name and how might this reflect where you are from?

Invite the group to consider why photography is a good medium to communicate the lives of people to viewers. Ideas might include:

- Being 'realistic'
- Capturing what something is like a given moment in time
- Lots of people have access to a camera e.g. on their phones

## Extension ideas:

- Explore how photos can be used to tell a story and that viewers need to be critical readers of these. A photo may be biased depending on how the image is framed and what is and isn't included within the frame. Challenge children to experiment with taking photos that don't tell the whole story e.g. an empty recycling bin may indicate that no one recycles rather than that it's just been emptied. A person crying may indicate they are unhappy rather than overjoyed.
- Invite the group to take photos of their home and display these and/or bring in a family photo album to share
- Explore Bnar's photo collection and representations of Kurdistan. What are your favourite images and why?

# ACTIVITY 7: REFUGEES, RACISM AND MUSIC: ALI

Resources: [Ali's film](#), map of Sudan

Time: 25 minutes

**About this activity:** Ali, a musician from Sudan, has experienced racism. Learn more about this in the short film and discover how music may be used to support and heal the difficulties we can encounter.

## Activity plan:

Introduce Ali, a musician from Sudan. Ali has experienced racism. Pose the group the question: What is racism?

Watch the short film.

Why do you think Ali has experienced racism? – this may relate to his story of racism between the tribes in Sudan, as well as how people in the UK may treat a refugee.

Ask the group if they have every experienced or witnessed racism. This may include reference to news reports about terrorism, football fans, police brutality as well as lived experiences they or their friends and family have had at home, school and in the local area.

Ali talks about the importance of music to his life. Discuss with the group how music can bring people together. This may include:

- Different races/cultures/ages/genders etc enjoying listening to the same music
- Lots of different people coming together at music festivals
- The use of music in peace protests and other protests for equality

## Extension ideas:

- Explore how children in Bristol envision a world without racism in the picture book [‘If Racism Vanished for a Day’](#).
- Can individuals/groups compose a short piece of music that represents Ali’s journey or a journey they have made? Can this be performed to others to amplify the journey that has been made?

# WATCH, LISTEN, READ: OTHER PUBLICATIONS TO BUILD YOU AND YOUR CLASSES KNOWLEDGE AND AWARENESS OF REFUGEES AND MIGRANTS

## Watch:

- [Seven short films](#) about refugees recommended by human rights educators.
- [Five powerful movies](#) about the refugee crisis.
- [10 films](#) that tackle migrant life from the British Film Institute.

## Listen:

- [Podcasts by and for refugees](#) that tell stories of exile, courage and resilience, recommended by the UNHCR.

## Read:

- List of books recommended for [7-11 year olds](#) and [4-7 year olds](#) from Books for Topics.
- [List of books](#) relating to Black Lives, Black History and Anti-racism.
- Jeffrey Boakye, [Musical Truth: a musical history of modern black Britain in 27 songs](#), Faber Children's 2021.
- Learn more and get involved with [Refugee Week](#).



This project was made possible with funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund and NJL Charitable Trust.

