

SNS.

Refugees and Israel and Palestine

Identity, displacement and belonging

What gives
you hope?

Why is
peace
so political?

How do you
cope with fear
or anger?

What helps
build trust
between people?

How do
you react
to hate?

In this activity you will learn how refugees are woven into the history of both Palestine and Israel and who they are today.

Whether you are doing this as an activity in class, or as homework, you can work with other people to create a short presentation based on one of the points above. Your presentation should include one personal story from a refugee, some contextual information, and your own personal reflections on the questions at the end.

You will explore the following points:

Who Jewish refugees are and where they come from

Who Palestinian refugees are and where they come from

Being a refugee in Britain and refugee identities

Engaging with refugee experiences and challenging our pre-held ideas

Warm Up

What do you think of when you hear the word refugee?

Talk with your classmates about what comes to your mind when you hear the word refugee. Perhaps you have different perceptions of this word. Read through the statements below which are things people might think or say about refugees. Do you agree or disagree with these statements and why?

Here are the citizenship curriculum topics which this activity covers:

MIGRATION AND
ITS IMPACT

IDENTITY IN
MODERN BRITAIN

PROTECTING
UNIVERSAL
HUMAN RIGHTS

TAKING ACTIVE
CITIZENSHIP

People are only refugees if they leave their country because of war.

Someone can be made a refugee more than once.

A refugee can be any race, gender or religion.

Refugees don't want to leave their homes, rather they have to. Many make long and dangerous journeys to try and find safety in another country.

Refugees are from very poor backgrounds, and most of them live in tents in refugee camps.

Refugees face a lot of prejudice and hardship in the countries they flee to.

WARM UP

What does activism mean?

The use of direct and noticeable action to achieve a result, usually a political or social one. - Cambridge Dictionary

Following on from the quotes, below are some of the ways activists try to achieve a result. Perhaps you have seen or heard about one of these actions before.

This person wants the UK to remain in the EU. People who agree might join protests outside government buildings to show that they oppose leaving.



This person believes that animal rights are as important as human rights. People who agree may hand out brochures on the street to educate others on the issue.



This person wants there to be urgent action on climate change, which is impacting the planet. People who agree might join a school strike to draw attention to this issue.



This person believes the UK should hold other governments to account for their actions. People who agree might write to their local MP to try and lobby parliament.

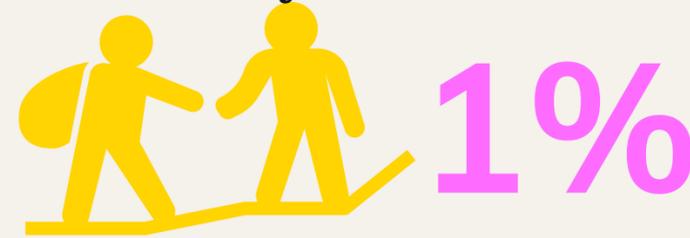
A Bit of Background

A refugee is a person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.

A refugee has had their asylum claim accepted in a country and has the right to stay there long-term.

Anyone can be a refugee if they are fleeing war, persecution or disaster. However, two thirds of the world's refugees come from Syria, Venezuela, Afghanistan, South Sudan and Myanmar.

The UK only hosts



of the world's refugee population.

57%

Of Britons feel that the government should allow more or the same amount of refugees into the country each year.

From 2010-2019



Palestinian refugees were resettled in the UK.

Who Are Refugees In/From Israel-Palestine?

Think about what you have learned about the Israel-Palestine conflict from the Solutions Not Sides workshop, why do you think people connected to this conflict are refugees? Below are some reasons to consider.

From 1941-1945 was the Holocaust in Europe where millions of Jewish people were persecuted and murdered by the Nazis. Many had to flee their homes to other countries, and hundreds of thousands came to the British Mandate of Palestine on ships.

From 1948 to the 1970s, around 850,000 Jews from Arab and Muslim countries around the world left for Western countries, including Israel, to escape persecution, antisemitism, and poverty. Many of these Jews were expelled from their home countries.

In 1948, when the State of Israel was born, over 750,000 Palestinians fled or were forced out of homes in the land that is now Israel. Most went into neighbouring countries in the hope they would soon be able to return.

Palestinians in Gaza and the West Bank have lived through violent uprisings and three wars between Gaza and Israel. Many have left their homes to escape violence, poverty, or political persecution. Others have been displaced for a second time from conflict in the countries they settled in.

Jewish Refugees and European Antisemitism

In the 19th century, many Jews were forced to flee or were expelled from Europe and Russia by violent anti-Jewish mobs in events known as pogroms. Small numbers of refugees began to immigrate to Historical Palestine.

There were always small Jewish communities in Palestine. During the British Mandate in Palestine, many Jews came to the region with a religious motivation and the hope that it could be a safe place for the Jewish people.

During the Holocaust, British rule tried to prevent Jewish immigration into Palestine. Over 60,000 Jews were smuggled into the country mainly by ships to escape the horrors of Hitler's final solution, and many more followed at the end of the war to start a new life.



**Listen to this clip of one refugee's story coming from Europe to Israel
after the Holocaust**

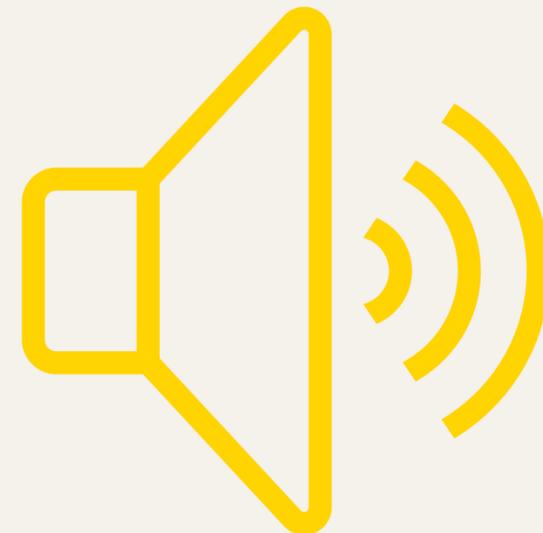
PALESTINIAN REFUGEES FROM THE NAKBA

Refugees from the Nakba have their own UN Agency (UNRWA). They provide support to Palestinians who were displaced from 1946-48 and their descendants.

Nowadays, Palestinian refugees from the Nakba number over 5 million. 1.5 million are internally displaced and live in refugee camps inside the Occupied Palestinian Territories.

There were a number of reasons why so many Palestinians became refugees in 1948. Some because of fighting, massacres and destruction of houses by Jewish militia, some because Israeli authorities had directly ordered expulsion, or because Arab leaders had ordered evacuation, whilst some chose to leave of their own accord, unwilling to live under Jewish control.

Listen to this clip of one refugee's family's story fleeing from Palestine to Egypt during the Nakba



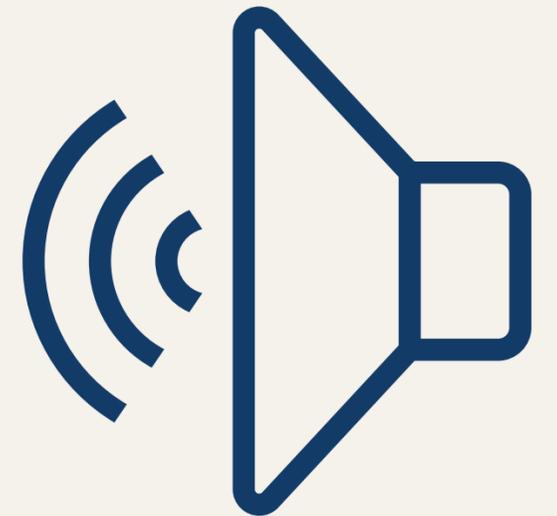
JEWISH REFUGEES FROM THE ARAB WORLD

In the late 20th Century, the approximate 850,000 Jews living in the Arab world and Iran left or were expelled from their home countries. Many faced persecution following WWII and the 1948 creation of Israel/ the Palestinian Nakba. In some countries there were violent anti-Jewish riots, whilst in others Jews chose to leave due to economic reasons and to live in Israel.

Over 90% of the Jewish population left Libya, Yemen and Iraq, and were forced to leave behind all their property and money; many still seek compensation today for their losses

A majority of Jews who left the Arab world eventually came to Israel and many were put into immigration and then transition camps. Once coming to Israel they still faced discrimination from the majority European descent population.

Click the link to hear about a family of Jewish refugees coming to Israel from Iraq

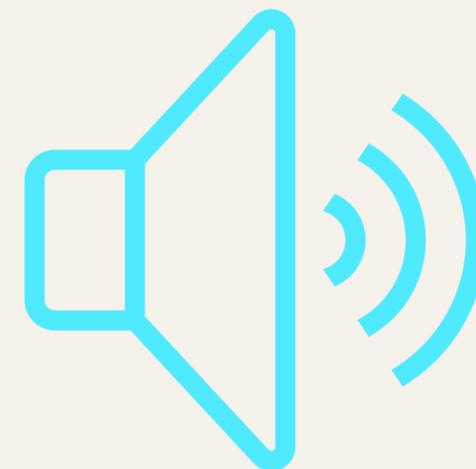


Palestinian Refugees Around the World Today

Over half of Gaza's population are refugees who were displaced in 1948, whilst 33% of Palestinians living in the Occupied Palestinian Territories live in refugee camps.

It is estimated that 120,000 Palestinian refugees living in Syria have had to flee since the start of the civil war there in 2011. Many have made their way to Europe or the surrounding Arab states. The largest number of Palestinian refugees abroad are in Jordan.

Many refugees face social deprivation, poor housing and healthcare and limited employment opportunities. War and conflict has had a negative impact on infrastructure providing further incentive to migrate out of the country. Some Palestinians also leave for political reasons. Many Palestinian refugees do not have citizenship or equal rights in the countries they reside and cannot return to Palestine.



THINKING ABOUT IDENTITY

After listening to the four sound clips in the previous pages, consider some of the questions below about identity. Remember, the clips you have just heard are individual and unique experiences and will not be the same for every person who has been or is a refugee.

What other identities might be important to the people whose stories you heard?

Imagine yourself in the position of the people in the sound clips; what would you hope to find when you came to a new country?

Why is it important that the UK accepts refugees?

How do refugees in the UK contribute to our society and culture?

What can we do as individuals to help refugees feel welcome in the UK?

What Now?

Want to explore how refugees are important to finding a solution to the Israel-Palestine conflict? Read through the Is Peace Possible website on refugees to discover why

WWW.ISPEACESTILLPOSSIBLE.COM/REFUGEES



Think about the experiences of refugees you heard and if they were different to your expectations. For each one, write down what surprised you about what they said. If you want, you can share these with SNS via the social media below.

@sns

team@sns.space

