

Syrian Refugee Crisis

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Audience: Middle School

Lesson Plan

Lesson: Syrian Refugee Crisis

Rationale for the Lesson: The Syrian refugee crisis has taken place since 2011 when the civil war took place in Syria. In general, a lot of people are oblivious or confused as to what's occurring in Syria and how the refugee crisis originated. There are a lot of complex details tied to the topic of the Syrian war and how this contributed to the aftermath of Syrian refugees resettling in parts of Europe and the U.S. As citizens of the United States, an understanding of this crisis is crucial to acknowledge since the events occurring around us are ultimately affecting us in our very own country. The Syrian refugee crisis directly impacts us and the world we live in. There will be breakdowns of political tensions between countries and goals of organizations like the United Nations and Amnesty international that are addressing the issue. The lesson plan will ensure awareness of the global crisis of our time and provide education for the youth on the Syrian refugee crisis.

Standards: Grade 9-10 History/Social Studies

RH.6-8.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary source

RH.6-8.7 Integrate visual information (e.g. in charts, graphs, photographs, videos, or maps) with other information in print and digital texts.

RH.6-8.9 Analyze the relationship between a primary and secondary source on the same topic.

Essential Question/Guiding Question: How has the Syrian refugee crisis occurred, why is it relevant to Americans and what can we do about it?

Objectives: Students will be able to understand how the refugee crisis of Syria originated, what is happening today in America regarding this situation and what is being done to address the crisis.

By the end of the lesson, all students will be able to identify how the Syrian refugee crisis occurred, the struggles of the refugees, why it's relevant to understand and what is being done to address the issue.

Lesson Opener/Anticipatory Set/ Lead-In/Do Now: Instructor introduces self, provides audience with pencil and paper and ask "What are some struggles Syrian refugees might have?" students should give their feedback based on the question.

Step-By-Step procedure:

Step 1: Hand out paper and pen, and have the audience thinking about the addressed question written on the board “What do you know about the refugee crisis in Syria? Then review a few of these together as a class. (10 minutes)

Step 2: Present brief PowerPoint on the origin of the war, and go over the map of Syria. State that the Capital of Syria is Damascus and Aleppo is one of the largest city. The PowerPoint includes pictures, video clips and news articles from primary and secondary sources. (15 minutes)

Step 3: The video portion of the PowerPoint will take 4 minutes and it will talk about a refugee living in Elizabeth New Jersey and his experience. This video by Al Jazeera will provide a close to home experience for the audience.

Step 4: After the video clip, students will write on their papers how they think refugees feel being here in America and some difficulties they are facing. Have the students think of what kind of things would be most helpful for them. This is a way for them to reflect and for the teacher to evaluate. (5 minutes)

Step 5: As a class we will review what the students wrote on this reflection (2 minutes)

Step 6: Finish the final parts of the PowerPoint slides which shows pictures of Syrian refugees. There will be questions for them to answer at the end as a class to evaluate them and brainstorm together (6 minutes). These questions will be “What is the rest of the world doing to help them?

Step 7: Have the audience separated into four groups and each group can get together and answer one of these questions. “How do Syrian Refugees in America feel? What challenges might the refugees face? How are other countries helping them? What are the top 5 things we can do to help Syrian refugees in New Jersey?” Students will then share their thought and input.

Lesson Closure: At the end of the class, have students hand in their papers. There will be a brief Q and A towards the end of the lesson so that students can have their questions addressed.

Material/Equipment needed: Paper, pencil, marker, white board, projector and projector screen.

Assignment: The students will write their prior knowledge and then answer questions after the video clip as well as the ending questions in the PowerPoint. The students will get into groups and answer each of the questions on slide 27.

Assessment: The students will answer the questions presented after and during the power point so that I can evaluate their understanding of the lesson. These questions will evaluate their prior knowledge test and will also be a post test.

Modifications for diverse learners: This lesson is lecture based and then there are in class activities and assessments. During these activities I will walk around to ensure everyone is on the same page and if there is a struggling student I will help or pair them up with someone else. There will be brainstorming as a class and also individual work to evaluate their knowledge on the topic presented.

Annotated Bibliography

Abdelaziz, Rowaida, and Willa Frej. "Syrian Refugees Face Crippling Isolation Months after Moving To America." *Huffington Post*. Huffington Post, 12 Apr. 2016. Web. 6 Oct. 2016. <http://www.huffingtonpost.com/entry/syrian-refugees-america-isolation_us_56be45d6e4b08ffac12549e2>.

This news article by Willa Frej and Rowaida Abdelaziz portrays a “close to home” example that might be more relative to students in the New Jersey area. It briefly talks about the Syrian refugees that were resettled in New Jersey and the welcoming event that was hosted by Ihsan Charity. This article gave insight on what Syrian refugees encountered when they were resettled in America. The authors states “The experience of refugee resettlement is akin to that of aliens landing on planet Earth — they hop off an airplane and into a place they had only ever envisioned through movies and television. They most often don’t speak the language. For many of the Syrian refugees, they have zero friends or family to rely upon. And yet they have to integrate somehow.” This provides a personal reflection on how the families feel when they are resettled and the hardships they encounter during their journey as refugees. It includes personal experiences from the refugees and how they are dealing with the circumstances.

"8 Ways to Solve the World Refugee Crisis." *Amnesty International*. Amnesty International, n.d. Web. 6 Oct. 2016. <<https://www.amnesty.org/en/latest/campaigns/2015/10/eight-solutions-world-refugee-crisis/>>.

This article by Amnesty international is a credible source that is reputable and well known amongst the youth. It addresses the issue of a world humanitarian crisis in 2015. The world refugee crisis has been a current and ongoing issue that is still being addressed and this article helps simplify 8 ways to help the situation. It provides images of refugees from Sudan, Myanmar, Syria etc. and presents solutions to help aide the refugees that are fleeing their country. The article states “more than 21 million people have been forced to seek sanctuary abroad. Governments have a duty to help them. But most rich countries are still treating refugees as somebody else’s problem. Hiding behind closed borders and fears of being “flooded”, they have conveniently allowed poorer, mainly Middle Eastern, African and South Asian countries, to host an incredible 86% of all refugees. And by ignoring most appeals for humanitarian aid, they have left UN agencies so broke they can’t even feed many refugees properly anymore.” Each of these 8 tactics to help solve the world refugee crisis is all relevant to the Syrian refugee crisis. This article provides global awareness to the youth.

Fernekes, Williams R. "Chapter 5." *Human Rights Education*. By Felisa Tibbetts. N.p.: Information Age, 2011. 87-117. Print.

This book by William R. Fernekes mentions human rights education as a powerful international movement in order to promote awareness. It explains how human rights education has been proposed in school systems. There are different approaches to address human rights education using existing subjects like history, social studies and humanity courses. It includes a table labeled "Methodologies: Development and conceptual framework for HRE" starting from early childhood education to older adolescents and adults. There are goals for each audience, key concepts to grasp, specific human rights issues to address, education standards and instruments for the class setting in accordance with the audience. This book also contains barriers that might hinder the ability to address human rights education such as hindrances to provide staff with a solid foundation and schools reluctant to address certain human rights issue. It provides challenges that come with teaching human rights and techniques to tackle these challenges to deliver an overall quality education on a sensitive topic like human rights education.

How One Syrian Refugee Family Is Coping in New Jersey. Al Jazeera America, 22 Dec. 2015. Web. 19 Oct. 2016. <<http://america.aljazeera.com/watch/shows/live-news/2015/12/how-one-syrian-refugee-family-is-coping-in-new-jersey.html>>.

This five minute video complements the close to home experience of students living in New Jersey since it directly talks about a local resident who was featured in the video and the experiences of Syrian refugees in Northern New Jersey. It includes their lifestyle in Elizabeth, New Jersey as well as their past in Syria. The video shows footage of the charity event hosted by Ihsan charity that took place in the North Hudson Islamic Center to raise funds for the refugees and bring them welcoming gifts. Al-Jazeera is a reputable source and this video will provide a visual portrayal and educate the audience about a more relevant insight and specific details about Syrian refugee's encounters while living in America.

Libal, Kathryn, and Scott Harding. "The Politics of Refugee Advocacy and Humanitarian Assistance." *Middle East Research and Information Project, Inc. (MERIP)* (2007): n. pag. Print.

This book is published by the Middle East Research and Information Project. It talks about the politics of refugee advocacy and humanitarian assistance. It unravels the humanitarian crisis and mentions the UNHCR active role and efforts to address refugees in Jordan, Syria, Lebanon, Egypt and Turkey. Authors Libal and Harding stated "Organizations like CARE, Caritas, Mercy Corps, Save the Children and the Near East Foundation, which have long standing operations in Jordan, have been most successful in navigating the politics of refugee relief in Jordan... They have secured funding from both private American donors and the State Department to expand their efforts. In 2006, State awarded another organization, the International Catholic Migration Commission, in a partnership with Caritas, \$3.3 million to assist the most vulnerable refugees in Jordan, Syria and Lebanon. Key to success, reports one NGO representative in Amman, is partnering with a local Jordanian organization." The book also talk about the denial stage where the State department and other US policy bodies ignored the refugee and displaced persons. There are statistics provided as far as how much money was used to support UN agencies and NGOS working with refugees. These useful statistics will provide information to the audience about relevant understandings as far as the help that refugees received and the funding etc. It exposes obstacles that were related to aiding refugees. There was insight on how the refugee crisis was ignored and there were efforts to make the issue visible. The author states "Despite these efforts, international NGOS still struggle to make this largely invisible and unpopular problem visible in the West (19)."

Percanha, Sergio, Sarah Mukhtar, and Rebecca KK Lai. "Untangling the Overlapping Conflicts in the Syrian War." *New York Times*. New York Times, 18 Oct. 2015. Web. 8 Oct. 2016. <http://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2015/10/16/world/middleeast/untangling-the-overlapping-conflicts-in-the-syrian-war.html?_r=0>.

This New York Times article is a reputable and mainstream newspaper that is popular amongst the youth. There are flow charts included which untangle the conflict of the Syrian civil war. It includes the Syrian civil war, the war against ISIS and breaks down how it occurred as well as the people or countries involved in the process. It provides a map of Syria and the territories that have been fragmented after the four years of war. There are various other maps included. It then concludes with overlapping wars and the danger of a collision like United States vs Russia, Turkey vs Kurdistan etc. Overall, this source is very relevant and it breaks down the war, politics and participants involved to provide basic details using maps and flow charts on the issue.

Tibbitts, Felisa. "Understanding What We Do: Emerging Models for Human Rights Education." *International Review of Education / Internationale Zeitschrift Für Erziehungswissenschaft / Revue Internationale De L'Education* 48.3/4 (2002): 159-71. Web.

This book by Felisa Tibbitts provides three different approaches to human rights education practice. The three models are values and awareness, accountability and transformational. These models have a target group to address the content to as well as specific strategies to implement. Tibbitts provides an overview for model 1 which is values and awareness. This overview breaks down into a philosophical and historical approach, public awareness campaigns, typical topics such as information about the content and history of human rights, common target audience, strategies like socialization, cultural consensus as well as setting expectations for a social change and creating a framework for human rights. She states "The main focus of human rights education is to transmit basic knowledge of human rights issues and to foster its integration into public values (163)." She provides details on the other two models which give great resources and support for addressing human rights. There are techniques included that will make it successful addressing a human rights topic.