



Christian
World Service
actalliance



ACTIVITY: **FINDING REFUGEE**

*Overcome challenges that face
refugees, and make it to safety.*

All instructions and
reflections included.

Optional: download and
print 'Situation Cards'.

Operation Refugee 2023 resource www.operationrefugee.nz

Classroom game

**HEAR STORIES FROM
REFUGEES, EXPERIENCE
SOLIDARITY, AND REFLECT
ON REFUGEE EXPERIENCES.**



Safe Place Activity Set Up:



Before you start:

Before you start: Consider that the 'Finding Refuge' game deals with some serious and important issues raised by the refugee crisis. It is designed as a tool to help children and young people engage with the stories of refugees, and the difficult journeys that they make. Before playing this game, spend some time with your pupils agreeing on ground rules regarding how to respect other people's opinions. Setting the scene by considering the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child and how this applies to children in a refugee situation might also be helpful. Feel free to adapt the game to suit the needs and experiences of your pupils and note that special sensitivity may be required for pupils affected by some of the issues raised. In particular, if you have pupils who are refugees or asylum seekers, we advise having a private conversation with them first to make sure they are comfortable with the purpose of the game and issues that will be covered.

Aim: Get from one side of the room, "home", to the other side, the "safe place".

Materials

- A pen and piece of paper for each student.
- Luggage list – can be written or projected on the whiteboard.
- A die or a random dice roller online.
- The 'Situation Cards' printed and shuffled or ready to pick at random from the list on page 5.

Luggage List

1. Family photos
2. Mobile phone
3. Jewellery
4. Spare clothes
5. Music player
6. Medical kit
7. Warm coat
8. Identity papers
9. Toys
10. Water bottle
11. Sleeping bag
12. Money

There are two rounds to this game. Each has a real refugee story to focus on as you begin. The first round is a more basic version with students making their way from one side of the room to the other depending: on die rolls, situation cards and their luggage. The second round has an added aspect where content is introduced that either randomly helps or hinders each student and encourages further reflection on the message in the 2nd story.

After the two rounds there is the opportunity to ask students some reflective questions to promote discourse around the challenges facing refugees and how people in Aotearoa can help.

Finding Refuge Activity Round 1

Before starting round 1, read or listen to the recording of Dimitry and Anna's story about fleeing the Ukraine war to Hungary. (5 mins)

To start the activity:

Designate one side of the room as 'home', and the other side of the room as the 'safe place' – the space in a host country that has been set up by the local Christian World Service partner to take care of refugees. In Dimitry and Anna's case, Mariupol is home, and Hungarian Interchurch Aid (HIA) in Budapest, Hungary, is the safe space.

Note, if the room is not big enough for all students to walk across it at once, you can separate the class into two groups and run the round twice, once for each group.

Starting:

The teacher announces:

"A major conflict has broken out just one city over, and it looks like trouble is heating up. All you students and your families must try and get to safety in the refuge center set up in the neighbouring country. You may have to cross oceans, go through military checkpoints, or walk over mountains to get there. You only have time to grab 4 pieces of luggage to take with you to prepare for this journey and set up in your new home once you get there so choose carefully!"

Students can choose 4 items from the luggage list and then write them down on a piece of paper. Encourage them to think carefully about what they will take and why. (5 mins)

Students then line up on the 'home' side of the room with their list of luggage and a pen. The teacher has a die and the situations ready to read aloud from the cards or the computer.

The Rules:

- The teacher rolls the die. If a 1, 2 or 3 comes up, each student/refugee takes that many (small) steps forward.
- If a 4, 5 or 6 comes up, the teacher reads a 'situation' out. The situations are either a 'helping hand' or 'sorry it's a setback' that will send students back or forward x number of steps and depend on students' luggage available according to each situation's instructions.
- Work through the die rolls and situations until some students have reached safety and finds refuge. The others may have to remain where they are, emphasising that not everyone reaches safety.

You can repeat this round if it was particularly short, or if the class had to be divided into two groups to fit in the space.

Finding Refuge Activity Round 2

Before starting round 2, read or listen to Mohammad's story, 'Twice a Refugee' about leaving Afghanistan then Ukraine to Romania. (5 mins)

Explain that this time students will randomly receive a disadvantage after choosing their luggage. These disadvantages reflect how political persecution affects everyone, and all refugees are just people. Some people live too close to zones of conflict to have warning time before they flee. Others experience extra difficulties fleeing due to a disability, a lack of money, or, like Mohammad, are already a refugee in the country they now must escape.

Students will be asked to reflect on how they felt about being ahead or behind their classmates because of these additional disadvantages, how easy it was to flee this time compared to the first round, and if the luggage they chose was as helpful as it was in the last round.

To start the Activity:

Again, line up on the home side. The teacher has a die and 'situations' ready to read aloud from the cards or the projector. Students repeat the task of choosing 4 items from the luggage list according to what they felt was missing from what they wished they had in round 1. (5 mins)

Round 2 Additional Rule:

Randomly allocate each student a number from 1 to 3.

- **1s** take 1 extra step back at each hazard.
- **2s** walk on their knees for this round.
- **Miss** the first 3 rolls.

Work through the die rolls and situations until some have reached safety and finds refuge. The others may have to remain where they are, emphasising that not everyone reaches safety.

Again, you can repeat this round if it was particularly short, or if the class had to be divided into two groups to fit in the space.

Reflections

1. How might it feel to be a refugee?

Think about having to leave your home, possessions, and perhaps some or your family, along with everything familiar to you. This leaves you with little control over what happens next. Consider some or all the following as individuals or in small groups,

- What things were out of your control during the game?
- What happened to your money and luggage?
- If you played the game again, would you choose the same items from the luggage list? Why/Why not?
- How did you feel about the journey, and about the prospect of a safe place?
- What do you think a safe place would feel like?
- How did you feel during the second round when each time the die was rolled you had to take extra steps back, walk on your knees or were able to take extra steps forward?
- How helpful were your luggage choices?

Finally, you could ask students to reflect on how deeply refugees experience loss. Think about Dimitry and Anna, Mohammad as well as the losses students experienced in the game. Refugees may lose family and friends, possessions, money, houses, and cars. It's good to remind the students that having a home is not just about your things and a warm safe place to live—its also about having a base that is your own special place in the world.

The game is finished when some players reach the safe place on the other side of the room. For many refugees, however, arriving in a safe place is not the end of the journey - just the beginning of another long process. Now they have to make another home and build their life again in a new place. Many refugees face discrimination and have problems finding work. Children have to go to a school where their first language is not spoken, and many feel lonely and homesick.

2. So how can people help refugees?

Ask students to consider and discuss:

- What do you think might make a refugee's life difficult in a new country?
- Can you list 7 things that might make it easier?
- What could students do in Aotearoa to help refugees in other countries?
- How does Operation Refugee help refugees around the world?

Optional harder extra questions that can be topics for research:

- Where in New Zealand are refugees resettled?
- How can young people help refugees who come to live New Zealand?
- Should New Zealand's annual refugee resettlement quota of 1500 be raised? Why? Why not?

Situations:

Helping hand:

1. Enough money has been raised by Operation Refugee participants in New Zealand to give you and your family a place to sleep tonight at a safety checkpoint set up by an aid organisation. You get good rest. Take one step forward.

Luggage: Take an additional step forward if you brought a sleeping bag.

2. Just beyond the border, a small group of people has formed to welcome refugees. They hand out food and water. Move forward one place.

Luggage: If you have a water bottle on your luggage list, move forward two places.

3. You have reached a small town that has cell phone reception.

Luggage: If you have a mobile phone on your luggage list, you can phone your cousin who lives nearby, and move forward two steps. If you don't, stay where you are.

4. Local churches are working together to welcome refugees into their buildings. You can settle for a day and your family can relax briefly. Move forward two steps.

Luggage: If you have toys or a music player on your list you can share these with other children in the refuge centres. You and one student either side of you move forward an extra step.

5. A local charity offers legal advice to help you become registered.

Luggage: If you have identity papers on your luggage list, move forward three steps. If you haven't, stay where you are.

6. A truck stops and offers you a ride, in exchange for money or a valuable item.

Luggage: If you want to take it, cross money, jewellery or a cell phone off your luggage list and move on four steps.

Setbacks:

1. You have boarded a boat, but it is so crowded that it may sink. Everyone on board must throw a bag of their luggage overboard. Take 2 steps back.

Luggage: cross 3 items off your luggage list.

2. Your feet have blisters from walking so far.

Luggage: If you have a medical bag on your luggage list, cross it off and stay where you are. If you don't, take 4 steps back, sit down and miss the next roll.

3. A new conflict has started where you are sheltering. Take 4 steps back.

Luggage: If you have a medical kit on your list, cross it off and you, and the person either side of you can take one step forward again.

4. You have come to a series of hills and mountains. Progress is very slow.

Luggage: If you have a warm coat on your list, cross it off and take one step back. If you don't have a warm coat, take 5 steps back.

5. You cannot find anywhere to sleep.

Luggage: If you have a sleeping bag on your luggage list, cross it off and stay where you are. If you haven't got one, take 3 steps back.

6. Some people make you feel unwelcome and shout horrible things at you. Take 1 step back.

7. The army will not let you through a checkpoint. Take 2 steps back and miss the next roll.

8. Soldiers at the border fire tear gas at you. Take 3 steps back.

9. Disaster has struck: There is a snowstorm, and the temperature drops below freezing. If you have a warm coat or a sleeping bag on your luggage list cross them off, lie down and stay where you are, and miss the next roll. If you don't have a sleeping bag, tragically the freezing temperatures get to you. You are eliminated and must sit down. Your journey cannot continue.

10. Disaster has struck: there is a bombing in the city you are transiting through.

Luggage: If you have a mobile phone, you were lucky enough to be warned early enough to take cover and move to the edge of the city. Cross the mobile off your list and take 4 steps back. If you don't have a mobile phone, unfortunately you did not find safety and have been struck. You are eliminated and must sit down. Your journey cannot continue.