



EXPEDITIONARY
LEARNING

Grade 8: Module 1: Unit 2: Lesson 9

Close Reading:

Paragraph 1 of “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison” (from “Refugee Children in Canada: Searching for Identity”)



**Close Reading: Paragraph 1 of “Refugee and Immigrant Children:
A Comparison”**
(from “Refugee Children in Canada: Searching for Identity”)

Long-Term Targets Addressed (Based on NYSP12 ELA CCLS)

I can cite text-based evidence that provides the strongest support for an analysis of literary text. (RI.8.1)
 I can determine a theme or the central ideas of an informational text. (RI.8.2)
 I can analyze the structure of a specific paragraph in a text (including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept). (RI.8.5)
 I can read above-grade informational texts with scaffolding and support. (RI.8.10)

Supporting Learning Targets

- I can find the gist of the first paragraph of “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison.”
- I can analyze how specific words, phrases, and sentences help me understand how refugee and immigrant children are similar.
- I can cite evidence to explain the similarities and differences between refugee children and immigrant children.

Ongoing Assessment

- Answers to text-dependent questions, Part A



Close Reading: Paragraph 1 of “Refugee and Immigrant Children:
A Comparison”
(from “Refugee Children in Canada: Searching for Identity”)

Agenda	Teaching Notes
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Opening <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Engaging the Reader: “Give One, Get One” about Pages 213–234 of <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i> (5 minutes) B. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes) 2. Work Time <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Vocabulary and Predictions Before Reading: Venn Diagram to Compare Refugees and Immigrants (8 minutes) B. Reading Aloud and Rereading for Gist: Paragraph 1 of “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison” (10 minutes) C. Rereading and Text Dependent Questions (15 minutes) 3. Closing and Assessment <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. Mix and Mingle: A Similarity in How Refugees and Immigrants Adapt (5 minutes) 4. Homework <ol style="list-style-type: none"> A. We discussed what <i>disruptive loss</i> means in this lesson. Complete the homework question at the very bottom of the “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison” Paragraph 1 Text-Dependent Questions. B. Complete a first read of pages 238–247. Take notes (in your journals) using the Structured Notes graphic organizer. Focus on key details and the strongest evidence that reveal the challenges Ha is facing and her dynamic character, plus new or important vocabulary that helps you understand the specific challenges she faces as a refugee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • This lesson introduces students to one section of the article “Refugee Children in Canada: Searching for Identity.” The section is entitled “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison,” which describes the similarities in the adaptation process of refugees and immigrants. This full article is very complex. Students read only this one specific section that compares refugees and immigrants. This section of the text was chosen because it best aligns with Ha’s experiences in the novel. • Across the next six lessons, students will work closely with the four paragraphs in this section, “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison.” The text is broken into three chunks: Paragraph 1, Paragraphs 2–3, and Paragraph 4. Students spend two days with each chunk. On the first day of each two-day cycle, they read closely just to understand the complex text. For homework, they think and write about one key sentence or phrase. On the second day of each two-day cycle, they revisit the text, answering additional text-dependent questions and applying the concepts to specific poems in the novel. • In advance: Review the first paragraph of the “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison” section, as well as the note-catchers in Lessons 9 and 10. • Remind students of their strong work with “The Vietnam Wars” text in Unit 1. This text is even more challenging, but many of the strategies they used to make sense of that text will serve them well here too. Remind students that close reading is a challenge. They can all do it by working at it, and they will rise to the challenge.

Lesson Vocabulary	Materials
<p>refugee, refuge, immigrant, significant, disruptive, interrupt, sense of identity, generational gap, cultural gap</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Inside Out & Back Again</i> (book; one per student) • Inside Out anchor chart and Back Again anchor chart (begun in Lesson 8) • “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison” section from the full article “Refugee Children in Canada: Searching for Identity” (one per student) • Prefixes note-catcher (begun in Lesson 3) • Similarities and Differences in How Refugees and Immigrants Adapt anchor chart (new; co-created with students in Work Time A; see Supporting Materials) • “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison”: Paragraph 1 Text-Dependent Questions, Part A (one per student and one to display) • Homework question (one per student)



Opening	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Engaging the Reader: “Give One, Get One” about Pages 213–234 of Inside Out & Back Again (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tell students that they are going to do a simple interactive activity to share some of their learning from their homework reading. • Explain “Give One, Get One.” Ask students to circulate until you give the signal (music or a hand signal), about 15 seconds later. When the music stops, they are to turn to the person closest to them and share one piece of evidence they recorded on their Structured Notes organizer from reading pages 213–234 that reveals an aspect of Ha’s dynamic character. They give one piece of evidence and receive one piece of evidence from the person they are speaking to. Repeat three times. • Cold call on a few students to share their evidence with the whole group. Invite students to suggest which anchor chart to record the evidence on—Inside Out or Back Again anchor charts. Confirm whether the rest of the group agrees and record the evidence on the appropriate anchor chart. <p><i>Note: If the above Give One, Get One activity is not appropriate for your group, consider doing the same thing but with an inner circle and outer circle. Divide the group in half—one half makes an inner circle, facing out, and the other half makes a circle around them, facing in. Students facing each other give one and get one, before the inner moves one step to the left. Students then give one and get one with the next person.</i></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use of protocols like Give One, Get One allows for total participation of students. It encourages critical thinking, collaboration, and social construction of knowledge. It also helps students to practice their speaking and listening skills. • Learning targets are a research-based strategy that helps all students, but helps challenged learners the most. • Posting learning targets for students allows them to reference them throughout the lesson to check their understanding. The learning targets also provide a reminder to students and teachers about the intended learning behind a given lesson or activity.
<p>B. Unpacking Learning Targets (2 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post the learning target for students and invite them to follow along silently as you read aloud: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “I can find the gist of the first paragraph of ‘Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison.’” * “I can analyze how specific words, phrases, and sentences help me understand how refugee and immigrant children are similar.” * “I can cite evidence to explain the similarities and differences between refugee children and immigrant children.” • Tell students that today they will be reading part of an informational text that will help them meet these targets. Ask the class to Think-Pair-Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “How might reading an informational text help us understand Ha?” • Listen for: “By reading this text we are building knowledge about the universal refugee experience of turning inside out and back again. This is what Ha is going through.” • Remind students that this information helps them learn about the world, and will be important when they write their end of unit assessment essay: Ha is just one unique (fictional) example of the more universal refugee experience. 	



Work Time	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Vocabulary and Predictions Before Reading: Venn Diagram to Compare Refugees and Immigrants (8 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Distribute and focus students on the “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison” section from the full article “Refugee Children in Canada: Searching for Identity.” • Explain that this is one section from an article about refugee children who have fled their home country and then come to Canada to make a new home. Tell students that it is a very complex piece of text, so they are going to look at only a small section of it. Today they will dig in to a single paragraph. In Lesson 10, they will think more about how the important concepts in this paragraph apply to Ha. • Point out the word <i>refugee</i>, and ask students: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “We have been talking about refugees for a few weeks now. What is a <i>refugee</i>?” * “What is a <i>refugee</i>?” • Some students may know that a refuge is a place of safety. Clarify if needed. Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “So how are these two words related to each other?” • Cold call or ask for volunteers to share their responses. Listen for: “A refugee is someone who flees his or her home to go to a place that is safe.” • Focus on the word <i>immigrant</i>. Briefly review the work students did in Lesson 3, when they studied a word that sounds very similar, <i>emigrate</i>. Ask for a volunteer to remind the class: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What did we learn the word <i>emigrate</i> means?” • Listen for the response: “To move out.” Cold call a student to answer, <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “What word root do you see in both words? What does <i>migrant</i> mean?” • Listen for a response such as: “Someone who moves.” Cold call a student to answer: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “So, what is the prefix added to that word?” • Listen for: “im-.” Probe: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • “What might the prefix “im-” mean?” • Invite volunteers to respond; listen for someone to say: “Not.” Tell them if needed. Say: “That means, when we put that prefix ‘im-,’ which means ‘not,’ with that root, ‘migrant,’ we come up with a word that specifically means someone who is not moving.” • Clarify that an immigrant is someone who has chosen to move to a new country, but this person then settles where he or she has moved—and doesn’t move again. Encourage students to add the prefix “im” to their Prefixes Note-catcher. • Paraphrase to clarify for all, saying something like: “So both immigrants and refugees move to another place, but they move for different reasons. Ask: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “So what is the difference between a refugee and an immigrant?” • Listen for: “A refugee is someone who has been forced to move—to flee. But an immigrant has chosen to move.” <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “So is Ha a refugee or an immigrant? How do you know?” • (Students should easily recognize that Ha is a refugee: She fled her home quickly, because of impending danger.) • Invite students to get into Numbered Heads groups with odd numbers pairing up and even numbers pairing up. 	



Close Reading: Paragraph 1 of “Refugee and Immigrant Children:
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Work Time (continued)	Meeting Students’ Needs
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Post questions one at a time. Invite students to Think-Pair-Share and record their suggested answers on the Similarities and Differences in How Refugees and Immigrants Adapt anchor chart: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “So what common challenges do you think refugees and immigrants both face?” * “Which challenges are unique to refugees?” * “Which challenges are unique to immigrants?” 	
<p>B. Reading Aloud and Rereading for Gist: Paragraph 1 of “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison” (10 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Display the first paragraph of the section “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison.” • Remind students that when text is really challenging, it is often helpful to chunk it into smaller sections. Today, they will hear you read just one paragraph of this section of the text, and then they will have time to think, talk, and annotate for gist. • Read just paragraph 1 in this section aloud as students read silently. • Then ask students to reread the paragraph on their own. Emphasize how important it is to reread with a text this challenging. It is fine if it’s still feeling hard. • Ask students to Think-Pair-Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “So what is this paragraph of the text mostly about?” • Invite students to annotate the first paragraph for the gist based on their pair discussion. • Invite volunteers to share their gist with the whole group. Listen for, “The similarities in the challenges immigrant children and refugee children face in a new country.” 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hearing a complex text read slowly, fluently, and without interruption or explanation promotes fluency for students: They are hearing a strong reader read the text aloud with accuracy and expression, and are simultaneously looking at and thinking about the words on the printed page. Be sure to set clear expectations that students read along silently as you read the text aloud. • To further support ELLs, consider providing definitions of challenging vocabulary in students’ home language. Resources such as Google Translate and bilingual translation dictionaries can assist with one-word translation. • Asking students to identify challenging vocabulary helps them to monitor their understanding of a complex text.



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Work Time	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>C. Rereading and Text Dependent Questions (15 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Refocus the group. Display and distribute the “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison” Paragraph 1 Text-Dependent Questions, Part A. • Reread just the first sentence of paragraph 1: “Refugee and immigrant children in Canada have significant similarities.” • Focus on the first text-dependent question. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invite students to read the question with you. 2. Direct their attention to the part of the text that the vocabulary was taken from so they can read it in context. 3. Invite pairs to discuss what they think the answer might be. 4. Invite pairs to record their ideas on their note-catcher. 5. Select a “numbered head” to share his or her answer with the whole group and clarify what it means where necessary. 6. Invite students to revise their notes where they are incorrect. • Reread the second sentence of paragraph 1: “Both groups must deal with migration, which represents a disruptive loss to one’s life.” • Invite students to Think-Pair-Share: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * “We talked about <i>migration</i> earlier in relation to the word <i>immigrants</i>. What does migration mean?” * “Let’s look at the <i>disruptive losses</i> part. So what does disruptive mean?” • Listen for: “When something is disruptive, it stops things from happening.” Point out to students that the word <i>disrupt</i> has a similar root as the word <i>interrupt</i>. “Rupt” means to break. • Focus students on the longest sentence in the paragraph. Reread this sentence as students read along silently: “Both refugee and immigrant children may encounter society’s discrimination and racism, and both have to accomplish the central task of childhood and adolescence—developing a sense of identity—while trying to bridge generational and cultural gaps.” • Focus on the remaining text-dependent questions. <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Invite students to read the question with you. 2. Direct their attention to the appropriate part of the text. 3. Invite pairs to discuss what they think the answer might be. 4. Invite pairs to record their ideas on their note-catcher. 5. Select a “numbered head” to share his or her answer with the whole group and clarify what it means where necessary. 6. Invite students to revise their notes where they are incorrect. 7. Move on to the next question. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text-dependent questions can be answered only by referring explicitly to the text being read. This encourages students to reread the text for further analysis and allows for a deeper understanding.



Close Reading: Paragraph 1 of “Refugee and Immigrant Children:
A Comparison”
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Closing and Assessment	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. Mix and Mingle: A Similarity in How Refugees and Immigrants Adapt (5 minutes)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ask students to skim the paragraph and underline every time the word both appears. Point out that the author uses this word five times in the paragraph. The author was choosing words carefully to signal to readers that there are five main similarities between how refugees and immigrants adapt. • Ask students to take a few minutes to reread and think about one similarity in how refugees and immigrants adapt that they think is the most important and why. • Mix and Mingle: • Invite students to move around the room for 15 seconds. • Use the signal (music or a hand signal) to get students to stop and share what they consider to be the most important similarity between how refugees and immigrants adapt with the person closest to them. Remind students to justify why they think that is the most important similarity. • Repeat until students have shared their similarity three times. • Distribute homework question. 	
Homework	Meeting Students’ Needs
<p>A. We discussed what <i>disruptive</i> loss means in this lesson. Complete the homework question at the very bottom of the “Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison” Paragraph 1 Text-Dependent Questions.</p> <p>B. Complete a first read of pages 238-247. Take notes (in your journals) using the Structured Notes graphic organizer. Focus on key details and the strongest evidence that reveal the challenges Ha is facing and her dynamic character, plus new or important vocabulary that helps you understand the specific challenges she faces as a refugee.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Vocabulary can be a source of difficulty for readers who struggle. Provide a brief list with explanations of the challenging vocabulary words from the reading homework. Do this only for students who need it. • Most important is to provide words that cannot be easily determined from context. There are a few of these in the novel. On pages 238–247, these words might include the following: <i>consulted</i> (seek information or advice) (237), <i>monastery</i> (a place where monks, people who take religious vows, live) (240), and <i>whim</i> (a sudden change of mind) (241).



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Supporting Materials



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Refugee Children in Canada: Searching for Identity

Ana Marie Fantino and Alice Colak

Canada is providing a new home to refugees from around the globe, who have left their countries of origin because of persecution and are seeking safety elsewhere. These families bring with them myriad stresses arising from their migration. Child refugees, in particular, have special needs that must be considered—trauma from witnessing violent crimes, language difficulties, family disruption, and adjustment to a different culture—in addition to the challenges that accompany childhood and growing up.

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Refugees are defined by the UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR) as persons (both children and adults) who are residing outside their countries and cannot return due to a well-founded fear of persecution because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion, or membership in a particular social group. UNHCR estimates that one-half of the world's 22.3 million refugees and displaced persons are children. Every day, nearly 5,000 children become refugees, with a vast number growing up and spending their entire lives in refugee camps. The majority of refugees are located in Africa, Asia, and Europe (UNHCR, 2000).

Canada as Host

Canada has a longstanding humanitarian tradition toward refugees. Since the end of World War II, Canada has resettled about 800,000 refugees from every region of the world, including Europe, Asia, Africa, the Middle East, and Central and South America. Canada is one of the few countries in the world with an active resettlement and permanent immigration program.

Nearly one in five (17.4%) persons living in Canada was born outside the country (by comparison, the U.S. ratio is one in 10) and 11.2% of the total population of 31 million identify themselves as members of a visible minority. Canada is a country with two official languages (English and French) and a national policy of multiculturalism (Statistics Canada, 1996).

In the last five years (1995–1999), more than 300,000 immigrant children have resettled in Canada; approximately 15% of these are refugees. Seventy percent of the refugee children came from non-European countries, mainly Africa, the Middle East, Asia, and the Pacific region. Most of them have settled in large urban centres in the provinces of Ontario, Quebec, British Columbia, and Alberta. The majority of the refugee children (70%) spoke neither of Canada's official languages when they arrived

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in the country (Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 1995 & 1996; Citizenship and Immigration Canada, 2000).

Refugee and Immigrant Children: A Comparison

Refugee and immigrant children in Canada have significant similarities. Both groups must deal with migration, which represents a disruptive loss to one's life. Once in Canada, they both have to endure the "push-and-pull" forces of home and school, which often work in opposite directions. At school they share with other adolescents the desire to be accepted by their peer group. At home, both groups may experience a role and dependency reversal in which they may function as interpreters and "cultural brokers" for their parents. Both refugee and immigrant children may encounter society's discrimination and racism, and both have to accomplish the central task of childhood and adolescence—developing a sense of identity—while trying to bridge generational and cultural gaps. Perhaps the greatest threat to these children is not the stress of belonging to two cultures but the stress of belonging to none (Lee, 1988).

Successful adaptation can bring with it the opportunity for growth. How well children adapt is influenced by several factors, including age at arrival, severity of previous traumatic events, family background, individual resiliency, and reception by the host community and society. One key factor in determining success is the reception of newcomers by the host society. Settlement support services, schools, health and social services, and the community at large play a crucial role in assisting and supporting children to adjust and integrate into Canadian society (Task Force on Mental Health Issues Affecting Immigrants and Refugees, 1988).

Several key characteristics affect the adaptation of refugee children to a larger extent than immigrant children. First, refugee children often have experienced the tragedy and trauma of

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war, including persecution, dangerous escapes, and prolonged stays in refugee camps. Some have witnessed killings, torture, and rape—including atrocities against family members. Others have been forced to serve as soldiers. Some have lost many members of their families and many have lost everything that was familiar to them.

Typically, immigrants can, at least, envision the possibility of returning to their countries; most refugees cannot. It is only natural that refugee children, along with their families, go through a process of mourning those losses. The grieving process in refugee children, however, is seldom recognized as such. This may be attributed to a long-held belief that children adapt quickly, bolstered by the tendency of children to not express their sadness and their mourning in words. Although these children may not know the concept of being homesick; they feel it all the same. Although some will not talk about their experience for fear of upsetting their parents, perhaps it is also true that many do not talk because we do not listen.

The Role of Social Services in Helping Refugee Children

For more than 40 years, Catholic Social Services (CSS), a not-for-profit, nondenominational social agency in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, has been welcoming and assisting refugees and immigrants from more than 100 countries with their resettlement and adjustment.

This article reports preliminary findings of an ethnographic study conducted in 2000 with 10 refugee families who came from five regions of the world and who needed additional help in their settlement process. Settlement assistance provided included first language translation services; help in locating permanent housing and accessing English language classes; a community orientation; referrals to health and social services, including professional counselling services; and other services as needed. In

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In addition, the children (ages 8 to 12) of these families participated in an application of the National Play Program for At-Risk Refugee Children, "Clearing Their Path" (YWCA Canada). The Play Program facilitates the process of healing in children who have been traumatized by the experiences of war and migration, using group counselling, play, and art.

Promoting Identity Formation in Refugee Children

The development of a personal identity includes the meaningful integration of basic notions of space, time, and social relations (Erikson, 1956). The uprooting, disruption, and insecurity inherent in migration affect psychological and social development, making the process of identity formation a more difficult balancing act between two or more sets of cultural notions and values.

It is often said "children adapt quickly." Perhaps we should ask: "To what? In relation to whom? At what price?" The perception of the resilient and adaptable refugee child needs to be reexamined. Most of the children in our group struggled to maintain and/or create a name, a voice, a space and a self (Palmer, 1997) that was adaptive to the new environment and also preserved the continuity and coherence of their experiences. One 8-year-old refugee, Miranda, explained, "Back home, I used to be blondish and the tallest girl in my class; since I came to Canada, I am the shortest and I turned dark."

In answering questions about his school life and friends, Mohammed provides insight into the challenges refugee children face:

I had lots of friends back home, and I remember all of them, we used to play soccer together. I have also friends here now, well... mostly classmates.

School is OK but there is one thing that bothers me. My name is Mohammed, no other. Here, my teacher calls me Mo, because there are five other kids with the same name.

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My friends sometimes call me M.J., which is not too bad, but I wish they will call me by my real name. I like what my grandma called me: 'Mamet.' I like how she used to say it. One thing makes me really mad. I have a pen pal called Rudy. He lives in Toronto. Once I showed his letter to my teacher and she said: 'That is nice name.' Now, all my friends call me Rudy. I hate it, because that's not me, that's not my name. My name is 'MO-HA-MMED.' Do you understand me?

The teacher back home always told us to wait and think before answering a question, here everything is fast. When all the other kids have answered, I am still translating the question in my head.

Enhancing Adaptation

Individual and family strengths and different circumstances played a role in the adaptation process of the families profiled below. The external formal and informal supports (e.g., settlement assistance, community connections, etc.) were crucial in helping the families to manage migration and adjustment challenges. Two case studies illustrate this:

Sanela (11 years) lost her father in the Balkans war during the past decade, and resettled in Canada with her mother and two younger siblings, ages 8 and 6. Sanela's mother had a serious illness that was a major concern for Sanela and her family. Sanela did not want to talk, draw, or remember the war, her father, or her former home. She only wanted to draw butterflies and happy faces. Questions about the future and memories of the past were selectively put out of mind. She had nightmares that keep her terrified for days. While her mother dealt with her own illness and losses, Sanela was placed in a position that seemed to overwhelm her. Between her practical duties of taking care of her younger sister and brother, learn-

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ing a new language, adapting to a new culture, and worrying about the future, she had neither the time nor energy to grieve. Activities and social connections outside the family were limited because of the family's recent arrival, the mother's limited mobility (relies on a wheelchair), and language barriers. This family was provided with extensive settlement support and counselling. They were connected with a Canadian "host friendship" family. As a result of this important community connection, the family began to feel supported and encouraged about their prospects for the future. Sanela has expressed a sense of relief and has shown signs of optimism.

Mary, age 12, came from an eastern African country where there have been many civil wars. Her three younger brothers (ages 10, 9, and 8) accompanied her. Their mother and father were both killed in the war. Mary had the responsibility of taking daily care of her little brothers, acting like a mother to them, nurturing and encouraging, but enlisting their cooperation with daily chores.

One of the changes noted in the Play Program was that when given permission and encouragement to play, laugh, and enjoy, Mary took that opportunity. A picture was taken showing her putting her feet up and concentrating on her drawings while singing. She was not worried about the other children's behaviour and manners. She included brilliant colours in her drawings. Ultimately, she and her brothers were connected with a distant cousin already living in Canada who became their guardian.

Helping Children to Mourn

Every culture has its ways of coping with death and losses. There are rituals and ceremonies by which the relatives, friends, and colleagues of the deceased person are supported during their

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bereavement—funerals, burials, visits to the family, sympathy cards, etc. The massive losses suffered by refugees have no prescribed rituals for healing and little social support. Society does not easily acknowledge the grief of a person who has lost everything they hold dear in their former country. In addition, refugee families may be so busy “adjusting” that they cannot give themselves permission to grieve. As David Tolfree (1997) said, referring to the effects of war on Central American refugees: “Children may have had little time for play and parents may have had little time for their children.”

Placing Children in Their Family and Cultural Context

Refugee children have witnessed horrors that they cannot comprehend. In fact, some adults have witnessed horrors that typically may only be seen in the cinema. Children and young people need the help of their parents and other significant adults in explaining and providing a safe haven for them. Some refugee parents, being survivors of torture and persecution themselves, are traumatized to such an extent that they may be unable to provide a secure psychological environment for their children. Explained Abdul, a 10-year-old refugee boy, “My mother does not want to be here...all her family is back home. She is always sad.”

Although the present study found that there were some typical characteristics and behaviours observed in refugee children, these characteristics, should not be considered in isolation.* A psychological assessment of refugee children needs to be culturally sensitive and should include background and contextual information. As a society we place much emphasis on the individual, making the refugee family and their history almost invisible. Refugee children become children without a history. When helpers and practitioners analyse the behaviour of a refugee child out

* These included: depressive mood, clinging and overdependent behaviour, sleep disorders, nightmares, regression of social habits (e.g., toilet training, speech), and repetitive drawings of the same topic (usually in dark colours).

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of context, there is a tendency to pathologize that behaviour. Many ordinary cultural practices of refugee families are often misunderstood in our classrooms, hospitals, social services, and social life.

Conclusion

Integration of refugees is a two-way street that requires tremendous efforts by both the newcomers and the mainstream Canadians to accommodate each other. The normal childhood tasks of growing up and finding an identity are greatly compounded for refugee children when they come to a new land as strangers who have already led eventful lives. Their challenge is to meaningfully integrate their history with the present and future realities of Canada.

Our goal as professional helpers should be to facilitate this process of integration with knowledge and sensitivity. As researchers, we need to ensure that we include historical and contextual perspectives to our quest. As advocates, we need to ensure that when families and children are forced to leave their homelands, there are host countries with the willingness, ability, and resources to provide them with relevant and culturally sensitive services. No doubt many of us who read this article belong to families whose histories reflect either immigrant or refugee status at some point in time. We must ensure that refugee children receive humanitarian assistance, as stated by the UN Convention on the Rights of the Child.◆

References

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GRADE 8: MODULE 1: UNIT 2: LESSON 9
Similarities and Differences in How Refugees and
Immigrants Adapt Anchor Chart
(For Teacher Reference)

Similarities	Unique to Refugees	Unique to Immigrants



Name:	
Date:	

Questions	Notes
<p>The text says, “Refugee and immigrant children in Canada have significant similarities.”</p> <p>What does <i>significant</i> mean?</p>	
<p>The text says, “Both refugee and immigrant children may encounter society’s discrimination and racism, and both have to accomplish the central task of childhood and adolescence—developing a sense of identity —while trying to bridge generational and cultural gaps.”</p> <p>What is a <i>sense of identity</i>?</p>	
<p>What is a <i>generational gap</i>?</p>	
<p>What is a <i>cultural gap</i>?</p>	
<p>Now that you have looked at individual parts of this really long sentence, reread that same sentence. Paraphrase the sentence in your own words.</p>	

