

Mapping the Refugee Crisis Lesson Plan

By Nicole Eshelman

- 1) Students read "[In Syria, Darkness Takes on new Meaning After Four Years of War](#)" and "[Syria: Fleeing Terror, Finding Refuge](#)." We identified push and pull factors, and gave context to the war.
- 2) We identified and described the goals and strategies of the leading groups in the war, and categorized them into sides—Regime: Those supporting Bashar al Assad, and Rebels: Those wanting to overthrow Bashar al Assad.
- 3) We watched a short film on PBS "[Syria's Second Front](#)" and answered movie questions and discussed what we saw.
- 4) We defined key terms such as: refugee, immigrant, host country, asylum, internally displaced person (IDP).
- 5) We formed groups and put together [National Geographic's World Political Tabletop Maps](#). We labelled and colored top host countries of refugees.
- 7) As a class, we watched "[Looking for Hany](#)" (parts 1-5 on YouTube) and discussed the many factors in Hany's story as a refugee. Students read short stories about eight different refugees and labeled their paths on the tabletop maps. Students also drew in "zoom in boxes" to illustrate key components of the refugee's travels, including how he or she adapted to a new location.
- 8) Students viewed each other's maps in a "Gallery Walk" activity. They noted the different paths that were taken and the different struggles encountered.
- 9) Students discussed the following questions. *What is the U.S.'s responsibility in providing aid to refugees from the Syrian conflict? What should the U.S. do to help create peace in Syria? How can we as students help?*

Other Resources:

[National Geographic Education, Support for Syrians](#)
[Time, Syrian Refugees in Jordan](#)
[The Choices Program, Refugee Stories: Mapping a Crisis](#)