

Understanding the experience

What does it feel like to be a refugee?

What does a refugee leave behind?

Does being a refugee make you different?

What do refugees go through when they arrive in a new country?

What do refugees need when they arrive in a new country?

Activity	Thinking skill
Provide visual images, such as those available in <i>Photolanguage</i> , and ask students to select an image which they see as representing either refugees or the experience of refugees. Students then share their images and explanations, many of which will take the form of similes, analogies or metaphors. These can be discussed, developed and turned into lists or posters for display (McGrath and Edwards p117).	Flexibility
Present students with the following scenario: You are in danger and must leave your home immediately. You have 30 minutes to pack a small bag of your belongings. What will you take and what will you leave behind? (Rutter 1992 p 32)	Fluency
Students research a country of origin of a refugee group, with particular focus on the changes those people would encounter in settling in Australia, such as language, writing script, food, weather and culture (Rutter 1992 p 29).	Flexibility
Using a refugee story ask students to select or even compose a piece of music which reflects their story or the response to it. Students may also like to set the story to music and record it.	Originality
Read students a refugee story and ask them to rewrite the ending.	Elaboration
Students read a short piece about the daily life of a refugee. They then respond to the piece and make comparisons with their own daily lives, routines and possessions.	Elaboration
Make a list of questions to ask a refugee or refugee family.	Curiosity
Students create graphs of the emotional and stressful highs and lows of a refugee story as they listen to it or hear it told. They could then graph this against some of the events in their own lives and compare the two graphs.	Imagination
Imagine your journey as a refugee or imagine your life today if you were not a refugee. Write a journal entry or draw a picture of that life.	Imagination
Read <i>Reiza's story</i> and ask students to reflect on how Reiza's day differs from theirs. Students use the model of the 24-hour clock to draw in the activities of their day and compare this with Reiza's (Rutter 1992 p 40).	Curiosity
Students reflect on and write about people who are important to them and why they are important to them. A worksheet and chart is provided in <i>Forging New Identities</i> p 6–8. Refugee and non-refugee students may like to compare their answers.	Elaboration
Students reflect on both their good and bad memories. A worksheet and proforma is provided in <i>Forging New Identities</i> p 9. Refugee and non-refugee students may like to compare their answers.	Complexity
Students discuss what would happen if Australia suddenly became an unsafe place for them to live. What would they do? Where would they go? What would they take? Structured discussion around this topic was part of the Victorian Multicultural Commission's Postcards campaign (1997).	Risk taking
Imagine and/or write about your arrival as a refugee. Compare this with stories of arrival.	Imagination
Imagine and/or write about the difficulties you might face in trying to settle in a new country.	Imagination
Design a garden to meet the needs of a refugee from a selected country who has settled in your community.	Originality
Read the extract from <i>Kiss the Dust</i> (Rutter 1992 p 26) to stimulate students to write their own stories about fear and escape.	Imagination
Read <i>Nghi Luu's story</i> and then make a list of the basic things that refugees like Nghi Luu might need when they first arrive in a new country (Rutter 1992 p 41).	Fluency
Students discuss how it feels to be new. They might reflect on their first day at school. Refugee and non-refugee students can compare experiences and feelings. Students can reflect on how the feelings would be heightened by unfamiliarity with the language, systems, food, culture and by previous experiences and expectations (Rutter 1992 p 43).	Complexity
Students write a <i>Recipe for resettlement</i> using the appropriate instructional genre.	Imagination