

Handouts

Refugees' role card

Refugees' arguments and options

You should prepare your arguments and tactics; it is up to you to decide whether to put your argument as a group or whether each member, individually, takes responsibility for putting individual arguments.

You can use these arguments and any others you can think of:

- It is our legal right to seek asylum.
- Our children are hungry; you have a moral responsibility to help us.
- I will be killed if we go back.
- I have no money.
- I haven't anywhere else to go.
- I was a doctor / nurse / engineer in my hometown.
- I only want shelter until it is safe to return.
- Other refugees have been allowed into your country.
- Where are we? The smugglers agreed to deliver us to country Z.
- I will try to bribe the officials to let me enter.

Before the role play, think about the following options:

- Are you going to apply to come in as a group, or individually?
- Will you split up if the border officials ask you to?
- What will you do if they try to send you back? Will you agree to go home? Will you ask them to let you through so that you can get to county Z?
- Do any of you have travel documents? Are they genuine or are they false?

You are to role-play a mixed group of refugees, so in your preparations each person should decide their identity: their age, gender, family relationships, profession, wealth, religion and any possessions they have with them.

Observers' role card

Your job is to observe the role-play. At the end of the role-play you will be asked to give general feedback. Choose a member to be your representative.

As you watch you should, amongst other things, be aware of:

- The different roles played by both the refugees and border officials.
- The arguments they use and how they present them.
- Look out for any infringements of human rights.

You have to decide how you are going to take note of everything. For example, you may consider dividing into two sub-groups so that one group observes the border officials and the other the refugees.

Border officials' role card

Border officials' arguments and options

You should prepare your arguments and tactics; it is up to you to decide whether to put your argument as a group or whether each member, individually, takes responsibility for putting individual arguments.

You can use these arguments and any others you can think of:

- They are desperate: we can't send them back.
- If we send them back we will be morally responsible if they are arrested, tortured or killed.
- We have legal obligations to accept refugees.
- They have no money, and will need state support. Our country cannot afford that.
- Do they have any travel documents or means of identification? Are these genuine or false?
- Do they look like genuine refugees? Maybe some are just here to look for a better standard of living?
- Our country is a military and business partner of country X. We can't be seen to be protecting them.
- Maybe they have skills that we need?
- There are enough refugees in our country. We need to take care of our own people. They should go to the richer countries.
- We could demand that they pay us a bribe to let them in.
- If we let them in, others will also demand entry.
- They don't speak our language, they have a different religion and they eat different food; they won't integrate.
- There may be terrorists or war criminals hiding among them

Before the role-play, think about the following options:

- Will you let all of the refugees across the border?
- Will you let some of them across the border?
- Will you split them up by age, profession, wealth...?
- Will you do something else instead?

Notes

This activity was adapted from *First Steps: A Manual for starting human rights education*, Amnesty International, London, 1997.

The quote, "Refugee go home! He would if he could" was a slogan used in an UN-HCR campaign.