



PEER INTEGRATION AND ENHANCEMENT RESOURCE (PIER)

REFUGEESWELLSCHOOL (RWS) PROJECT

STUDENT MATERIALS



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SUADA'S STORY (WEEK 1)

Source: *Amnesty International*

Between 1991 and 2001, conflict resulted in more than two million people fleeing Bosnia, Croatia and Kosovo. Suada, a girl from Bosnia, was 13 when she wrote this.

It was a nice morning in May. I was in my house in my home village in Bosnia. I was about to have breakfast. I often heard people talking about the war going on around us, but I could not imagine it happening to me. That morning it did and it turned my life upside down.

First I heard the sound of shooting. Then I heard our neighbour crying. 'They're taking the men away!' she said. My father came out to see what was happening. I came out as well. I saw a lot of soldiers coming towards us, screaming and using indecent words. Soldiers, tanks, the smell of shooting everywhere.

I was afraid, as I have never been in my life. The soldiers made us children and our mothers gather under a tree. They were shooting over our heads and threatening that they were going to slaughter us. I saw them take my Daddy away together with other men. I was crying. Then a dirty soldier took my cousin Nermin and killed him in front of my eyes. I was too afraid even to cry. Many houses in the village were burned down – ours as well. We were taken to Trnopolje camp. We stayed there for two weeks. We thought we would never get out.

Two weeks later they let us go to our village. Most of the houses were burned down so we stayed in those that were less damaged. Two or three families stayed in a house. My Mummy and I lived with my aunt and her daughter.

Suada, her mother and aunt made the dangerous journey through battle fields and crossed the border to Croatia. Life in the refugee camp where they had to stay was very hard. But for the children, after all the horrors they had seen, it seemed like heaven. Suada was eventually reunited with her father. Her family was then told they were going to the UK.

I am very happy now being in London with my parents and my cousin and her parents. But I often think of my friends and my toys I left in Bosnia. Sometimes I have nightmares and think that the soldiers are coming to get me again. I wish that they could never frighten and kill children and their parents again.

(From Refugees – We left because we had to, Jill Rutter, Refugee Council, 1996)

TIME TO FLEE (WEEK 3)

Source: *Amnesty International*

Dad works as a journalist on the local newspaper. Mum is a mechanic. They have recently had a baby. They have a boy and a girl at school. Granny is in a wheelchair and housebound since her stroke. Uncle Ali, who is very religious, was a political prisoner for a number of years. He walks with difficulty and a limp since prison. Mum and Dad have an old car. Dad has been a leading figure in the local journalists' trade union – an organisation that protects the rights and interests of the workers. The situation in the country has been changing quite dramatically recently.

Two months ago

A military coup took place. There was a lot of gun fire on the streets. Tanks and armoured cars were everywhere. A lot of people were killed and others arrested. A curfew has been imposed and everyone must now stay indoors after dark. The military rulers have taken over the TV and radio. It is very hard to know what is really going on.

A month ago

Dad was told that the new military rulers had arrested a number of people. Others, including religious figures, politicians, writers and trade unionists, have simply 'gone missing'. Nobody knows where they are.

A fortnight ago

An article appeared in a local newspaper (which supported the military coup). Underneath a drawing of a skull and coffin was a long list of people in the town that it said were enemies of the state. Both Dad's name and Uncle Ali's appeared on this list. It was signed: 'Friends of the Motherland'.

Last week

Soldiers came to the school looking for the dinner lady's husband. He was not there. So they took away the dinner lady and her children instead.

Four days ago

It was announced that several trade unions, including the journalists' union, had been banned.

Three days ago

A note was pushed through the door of the family home. It was made of letters cut out of newspapers. It said Dad was 'a spy and an enemy agent' and that 'his days are numbered'. It was signed 'Friends of the Motherland'.

Two days ago

Someone rang up Uncle Ali and told him he'd better get out, as some people were planning to set the house on fire.

Yesterday

Some children at the school said that snatch squads of soldiers had been searching the streets in a nearby neighbourhood and arresting people, including some members of Dad's trade union.

Today

There has been the sound of gun fire in the main square and trucks full of military have been arriving in front of the Town Hall. There are roadblocks stopping all cars. All trains are being searched. The family meets together for a hurried discussion. What are they going to do? Dad says the family should flee, and seek political asylum abroad as refugees. It is under an hour to the border by car, but that journey would be very risky. By foot would mean a whole week's journey through the desert and then the high forest across dangerous country to the border.

Now they hear the military are starting to search their street. They have 10 minutes to make their minds up, get organised and get out.

'SOMEONE LIKE ME' (WEEK 4)

Source: *British Red Cross* (adapted)

Cut up these cards to create a deck of 12.

I came to live in the UK when I was 12 years old, but I was not born here.	I am learning English as a new language and studying Maths and IT.	I like to spend time with friends.	I'd like to go to university and train to be a doctor.
I enjoy food – I'll eat almost anything!	I like to stay fit and play football in my spare time.	In my spare time I enjoy watching YouTube videos and watching action movies.	I like to listen to Eritrean music, as I don't understand the words in English music.
I enjoy playing games with friends.	I like to make films about refugees living in the UK.	I enjoy school, but I worry about if I'll get the right grades to go to university.	Sometimes I worry about what other people think about me.

STATEMENT CARDS

<p>Friends from school are there for you when you go through something</p> <p>-1-</p>	<p>My friends from school are loyal</p> <p>-2-</p>
<p>My friends help me study</p> <p>-3-</p>	<p>My friends from school support me by showing me new angles</p> <p>-4-</p>
<p>My friends at school pay attention to me</p> <p>-5-</p>	<p>My friends see if there is anything they can do for me</p> <p>-6-</p>
<p>Friends need to agree on some stuff</p> <p>-7-</p>	<p>My friends push me to do well in school</p> <p>-8-</p>
<p>My friends from school can identify with me</p> <p>-9-</p>	<p>My friends from school understand what I am going through</p> <p>-10-</p>

STATEMENT CARDS

Because my friends understand me,
they make me more successful
in school

-11-

My friends at school need
to look like me

-12-

My friends from school
keep my secrets

-13-

My friends from school
share my interests

-14-

My friends from school only
judge me positively

-15-

My friends from school share
my values

-16-

I do my best at school because
I have friends who
believe in me

-17-

I feel that my friends at school
respect me

-18-

Friends make me feel like I
fit in at school

-19-

Friends at school make me
feel better about myself

-20-

STATEMENT CARDS

I like being with friends in classes

-21-

I can be myself with my friends
from school

-22-

Friends are a big part of my
day at school

-23-

It's fun to discuss school things
with friends

-24-

Having friends at school
makes my day easier

-25-

I hang out after school with some
of my school friends

-26-

Friends make me feel more
welcome at school

-27-

Having friends makes me
like school more

-28-

At lunch, I usually sit with my friends

-29-

A small dispute between
two friends can affect the whole
group of friends

-30-

STATEMENT CARDS

At school, it's hard to float between
different groups of friends

-31-

Friends from school can be jealous

-32-

At school, I don't talk to people
outside of my group of friends

-33-

I feel stereotyped by students other
than my friends

-34-

NUMBER CARDS

-4

Most Disagree
(2 cards)

-3

(3 cards)

-2

(4 cards)

-1

(5 cards)

0

Neither agree nor disagree
(6 cards)

1

(5 cards)

2

(4 cards)

3

(3 cards)

4

Most agree
(2 cards)

