

THEIR STORY IS OUR STORY

3-5 Curriculum Unit





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CURRICULUM OVERVIEW

Significant regional differences in ethnic representation will continue into the 21st century, with diversification playing a most significant role in the make-up of classrooms and work forces. According to the 2010 US Census, 31.1 million of the nation's population were foreign-born and by 2050 the US population is projected to have no single ethnic group that constitutes a majority of the population. This is just one example of how important it is for schools to teach the value of diversity since working with diversity will be a bottom-line issue for all future business in the global marketplace. As such, from a young age, students need to recognize the importance of appreciating diversity. This curriculum focuses on helping students understand and embrace diversity through the use of culturally relevant literature.

ACROSS THE CURRICULUM STANDARDS

This elementary curriculum has been based on Common Core Standards for grades K-2 and 3-5. Common Core Anchor Standards for English/Language Arts state that students must read both widely and deeply. The literature within the lesson plans and the included book list will give teachers the opportunity to increase both the depth and width their students are reading. Understanding diverse texts will help students in a variety of ways, from gaining cultural knowledge to increasing understanding of literary elements. We posit that a focus on culturally relevant literature will increase student understanding of others and lead to a more compassionate classroom environment thus leading to the development of more compassionate global citizens in the future.



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MATERIALS NEEDED FOR THE FIVE LESSONS

Books:

- Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate
- Dreamscape video *Lost and Found Cat* (available on HOOPLA), or Lost and Found Cat: The True Story of Kunkush's Incredible Journey by Doug Kuntz and Amy Shrodes
- My Name is Sangoel by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed
- One Green Apple by Eve Bunting

Materials:

- TSOS story cards
- Chart paper
- World map
- Copies of the worksheet with suitcase image
- Picture that can be cut up into puzzle pieces



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YOUR FEEDBACK IS CRITICAL

We would love your feedback! Help us broaden the scope of our education, advocacy, and integration programs by participating in our data collection initiative. Everything we learn from the feedback can be used to evolve and advance our programming.

STUDENT PRE-TEST & POST-TEST LINKS

We hope to measure the change in students' attitudes and behaviors as they are exposed to refugee-related content. Please consider utilizing our electronic pre and post- tests with your students. All data collected will remain confidential and will be aggregated to assess overall changes. We would be happy to share all data with you that is collected from your classroom(s).

- Student Pre Test: <https://forms.gle/8vMkR6iBPfYsvbmW8>
- Student Post Test: <https://forms.gle/TWJWWyZkF36BVAcH7>

TEACHER FEEDBACK FORM

Once you have utilized the lessons within your classroom, please share about your experience!

- 3-5 Teacher Feedback Form: <https://forms.gle/Pxt7BsxvnGKM5WvH8>

LESSON 1

The logo consists of the letters "TSOS" in white, bold, sans-serif font, centered within a solid green square.

SUMMARY

Students will participate in a gallery walk of artwork about refugees. They will be introduced to the book Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate.

MATERIALS

- TSOS Story Cards
- Chart paper
- Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will be able to define the word refugee. They will be introduced to the book Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate.

LESSON 1

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INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURE

1. Set up a gallery walk with the TSOS story cards. Post cards on chart paper where students can look at the pictures and write impressions underneath.
2. Write the following questions on the board: What is going on in this picture? What is the message of the picture? What is the artist/photographer trying to tell you? If you could ask the artist a question, what would you ask?
3. Tell the students they will be walking around the room looking at the posted pictures and trying to answer the questions on the board. Have students write their thoughts on the chart paper under the picture.
4. Have each student pick a picture that is meaningful to them and stand by it. In small groups discuss the questions and answers together.
5. Have students come back to the large group and share their observations.

LESSON 1

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INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURE

6. Explain that all the pictures are of refugee children. Discuss what a refugee is. Define a refugee as someone who has been forced to leave their home because it is no longer safe. Have students consider what it would be like to have to leave their home.
7. Explain that you will be reading a new book aloud to the class this week called *Home of the Brave*, by Katherine Applegate. Give a brief synopsis of the book (read from the back cover if necessary). Share that you will be reading about Kek, a young refugee boy, and throughout the week you will be learning about other refugees.
8. Read Aloud part 1 of *Home of the Brave* (pages 1-50).

LESSON 2

TSOS

SUMMARY

Students will understand some of the sacrifices refugees are required to make and will learn the importance of kindness.

MATERIALS

- Dreamscape video *Lost and Found Cat* ([available on HOOPLA](#)), or
- Lost and Found Cat: The True Story of Kunkush's Incredible Journey by Doug Kuntz and Amy Shrodes
- World map
- Worksheet with suitcase image

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will understand that refugees make sacrifices. They will recognize what they can do to help new students feel welcome in their community.

LESSON 2

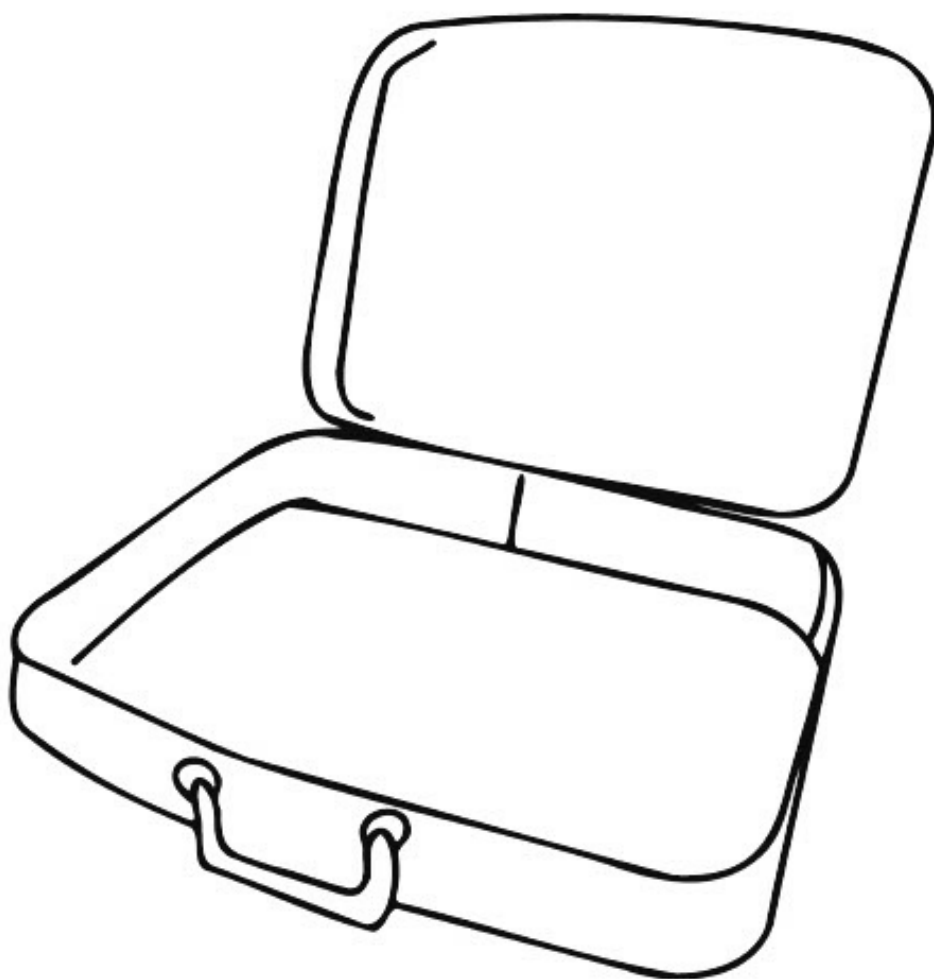
TSOS

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURE

1. Show the movie, *Lost and Found Cat* or read the book, Lost and Found Cat: The True Story of Kunkush's Incredible Journey.
2. Show a map of the world. Find Iraq and Greece on the map and let the students measure the distance between the two. Talk about how far the refugee family and Kunkush had to travel.
3. Have students imagine they are going on a long journey and they can only take a few possessions. What would they take?
4. Have students draw the items they would choose to take in their suitcase. On the back write about why you would choose those specific possessions to take.
5. Have a class discussion about different places students in the class might be from. Ask if anyone has ever had to move to a new place?
Discuss how when Kunkush was in Greece, the local cats were mean to him. How do you think this made him feel? Ask if any of the students have ever been new to a school? How did they feel? What are some things that made it easier to be new?

Name: _____

WHAT WOULD YOU PACK?





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LESSON 3

TSOS

SUMMARY

Students will read a book about the importance of names and discuss why our individual names are important.

MATERIALS

- My Name is Sangoel by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed
- Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will begin to understand the importance of names and recognize the uniqueness of individuals.

LESSON 3

TSOS

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURE

1. Read aloud the book My Name is Sangoel by Karen Lynn Williams and Khadra Mohammed.
2. Discuss the importance of our names. What does a name say about us? How often do we use a name?
3. Share the story of how your name was chosen.
4. Have students create acrostic poems using their names and words that describe them. Example: J-joyful O-optimistic H-happy N-noisy
Allow students to share their poems.
- 5..Have students go home and ask their parents how their parent's names were chosen. Allow time the next day to share anything they found out.
6. Read Home of the Brave (pages 51-98).

LESSON 4

A green square with the white text "TSOS" inside.

SUMMARY

Students will read about a new refugee student and discuss how they can befriend newcomers. They will determine several ways as a class that they can make their school more inclusive.

MATERIALS

- One Green Apple by Eve Bunting
- Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will learn the importance of being a good friend and that they can make a difference in the lives of others around them. They will come up with and begin implementing at least two things they can do to make their classroom and school more inclusive.

LESSON 4

TSOS

INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURE

1. Allow students to share their acrostic poems from Lesson 3.
2. Ask students if they have ever been new to a school? Allow a few students to share their experience as a new student.
3. Read aloud the book One Green Apple by Eve Bunting.
4. Discuss the story. Farah was new to the United States. She was worried about being new. What are some of the things she was uneasy about? (Example: new language, different clothes, looking different, sounding different, etc.) What did some of the students do that made Farah feel better? (Example: introduce themselves, smile, sit by her, talk to her, etc.)
5. Brainstorm with the class some ideas for actions they can take in their school or community to help newcomers feel more comfortable. Write their ideas on the board. Discuss what ideas are feasible to do. Are there things they can do in the community to make a difference for newcomers? Perhaps organize a book drive or clothing drive. If there are not community projects the class can take on, then what can they do in their school to help make it a friendly, inclusive place for all students?

LESSON 4

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INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURE

6. Decide on several ideas to focus on and do them as a class. This is a great way to incorporate service-learning. One suggestion is to create a classroom “welcome” kit for new students that may enter the class mid-year. Students could create a map of the school, a bell schedule, and a lunch menu. Students could donate a few school supplies to share with new students. They could create a kit to share with new students.

7. Read Home of the Brave (pages 99-159).

LESSON 5

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SUMMARY

Students will learn how important a community is and the part they each play in that community.

MATERIALS

- Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate
- Picture that can be cut up into puzzle pieces (Old calendars are great for this, or an old poster)

INTENDED LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will understand the important role they play as a member of a community and will recognize how important a good friend can be.

LESSON 5

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INSTRUCTIONAL PROCEDURE

1. Read from page 160 to the end of Home of the Brave by Katherine Applegate.
2. Discuss the role a community played in Kek's story. Who were the people who had an influence on him? List the people who befriended him on the board. What actions did they take to show that they were his friends?
3. Before starting class, cut a picture or poster into the exact number of pieces that you have class members. Pass one piece out to each student. Have the class reassemble the puzzle.
4. Discuss how like each puzzle piece contributed to make a beautiful picture, each class member plays an important part of your classroom community. Help students understand that they have an influence on the classroom culture and they can make a difference in the lives of other classmates.
5. Finish working on your classroom service-learning project and implement it. Will you share these with us? We'd love to see what types of projects you've implemented!

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VISION STATEMENT

We transform the perception and reception of refugees worldwide one story at a time. Ultimately, we envision a world where there is no "them," only us.

MISSION STATEMENT

We share stories of the refugee journey to advocate and educate, and to actuate integration.

Advocacy

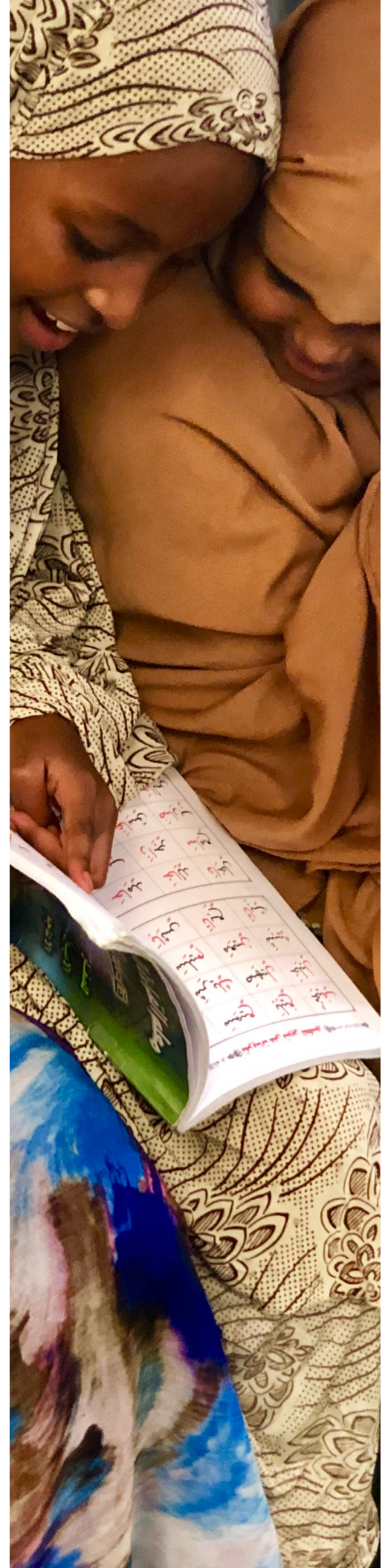
We amplify refugee voices so they can dispel misconceptions, live new lives in new lands, and contribute to their adopted communities in significant ways.

Education

Our story archive and educational curricula ignite curiosity, stir compassion, and guide toward connection. By humanizing the abstract and closing proximity, our stories also model how to build community and support initiatives that foster belonging and integration.

Integration

A strong social webwork depends on local citizens and refugees connecting with and learning from one another. Our stories are the unique fibers we all weave into one vibrant and strong fabric of community.



We began in 2015 as a handful of writers, artists, and humanitarians who wanted to put our talents to work on behalf of refugees entering Europe. By the spring of 2016, we had formed the 501c3 nonprofit, Their Story Is Our Story—or TSOS, and headed to Greece to film, photograph, interview, paint, and ultimately befriend refugees. Our plan was to capture maybe a couple of dozen stories during that week, but to our surprise, we finished with over 70 interviews encompassing nearly 200 people.

Since then, TSOS has expanded to include dozens of team members—including refugees and former refugees—across several countries. We have traveled the world documenting stories of refugees, refugee volunteers, and refugee-supporting organizations. We have gathered hundreds of stories, produced dozens of videos and painted as many works of art, taken thousands of photos, and have published our first photojournalistic hardcover volume of refugee stories, *Let Me Tell You My Story*.

We have made dozens of public presentations, including at UN gatherings, at institutes of higher education in the US, and in Europe. Our members have been guests on numerous television spots, radio shows, and podcasts. We are now launching our own podcast, educational curricula, and the Global Refugee Story archive housed at the largest private university in the USA. We have established strong partnerships and received generous grants from multiple foundations. This funding helps sustain our original but always-progressing mission of sharing first-hand stories to change the perception and reception of refugees worldwide.

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IS OUR STORY**

www.tsosrefugees.org