

53 - School and college

- Aims:
- Introduce vocabulary and expressions relating to school.
 - Inform refugees about school services in the host country.
 - Enable refugees to communicate about some school services.

Communicative situations

Communicate with school administrative staff and teachers (with the help of a school mediator, where available).

Materials

Pictures of people and places related to schools.

Language activities

1. Use the pictures (below) to:
 - Elicit what refugees know about schools, the services offered, and jobs in educational institutions in the host country.
 - Ask questions to find out whether the education system in refugees' countries is similar to or different from that of host country: e.g. At what age do children start school? What kinds of schools are there in your country? etc.
 - Show refugees pictures of some places in a school (e.g. school office, classroom, corridor, playground, cafeteria) and elicit or introduce vocabulary.
2. Ask refugees to write the new words on cards (secretary, head teacher, teachers, cleaner: parts of the school, such as the cafeteria, classrooms, playground). Then ask them to describe the pictures you have just used.
3. Introduce a dialogue like the following between a parent and a member of staff in the school:
 - A. *Good morning. How can I help you?*
 - B. *I need to enrol my daughter in primary school. Can you tell me where the school office is?*
 - A. *Yes, go straight down the corridor, it's the second door on the right.*
 - B. *Sorry, can you speak more slowly please?*
 - A. *Sorry, yes of course. Go straight down the corridor, it's the second door on the right.*

Check comprehension, focusing especially on the key expressions for:

- Asking someone to speak more slowly.
- Apologizing.
- Giving directions.

Then organise a role play in which refugees imagine they are going to the school for the first time to enrol a child.

Suggested next step:

If possible, organise a visit with refugees to an adult college or school.

In the adult education college, the purpose would be to obtain information about free courses (e.g. language courses). The aim would be to make the refugees aware of opportunities to continue their learning in the host country.

Taking refugees, especially those who are parents, to a school would be an opportunity for them to understand how schools in the host country work, and, in relevant cases, to enquire about enrolling their children.

Ideas for learners with low literacy

Ask refugees with low literacy to find on a school timetable the time children begin and finish certain lessons, asking you for help if necessary.

If refugees have children, ask them to write down the times their child begins and finishes school every day.

Sample materials

