

What is in my Bag?

My dignity and dreams!



Complexity



7-13 years



60 minutes



4-30



Migration



Discrimination



Human Rights

Type of activity

Group discussion, drawing, writing

Overview

Children discuss what they would pack in their bags if they had to leave their home suddenly because of an emergency.

Objectives

- To promote empathy and solidarity with people who are suddenly forced to flee their homes
- To improve knowledge and understanding of refugees and migrants and their rights
- To discuss ideas to promote human rights, especially for child refugees and migrants

Preparation

Prepare some key information on refugees and migrants in your country (see also the section on Migration).

Materials

- Flipchart or board with a large drawing of a bag
- A picture or drawing of an empty bag for each small group
- Markers

Instructions

1. Ask the children for all the reasons they can think of that force people to leave their home suddenly (e.g. earthquakes, tsunamis, fires, floods, war). List all the reasons on a flipchart or board.
2. Divide the children into groups of three or four and give them a copy of the drawing of an empty bag and markers. Tell them that in their groups, they should imagine that an emergency has forced them to leave their homes with their families. They have very little time to pack a bag. Ask them: "What will you bring with you?"
3. Give them some time to discuss this in groups, and to write or draw all the items they wish to take with them inside the outline of the bag.
4. When the groups have finished, ask them to present their bags to the rest of the group. While they are presenting, record all the items in your flipchart 'bag' – but do not repeat items if they are mentioned by more than one group.

Debriefing and Evaluation

1. Discuss the activity using questions such as these:
 - How did you find the activity?
 - Was it difficult to decide what to put in your bag? Why? Did you have to leave anything behind that you really wanted to take?

- Are you surprised by any of the things that others put in their bags? Why?
 - Do you think something like this could happen in real life? Can you give any examples, either in this country or in the world?
2. Relate the activity to issues of migration and discrimination, asking questions such as these:
- Have you heard about child refugees? Do you know why they might have left their homes?
 - If you had to leave your home and country, where would you go? Why?
 - Do you think that the rights of child migrants and refugees are respected in our country? Do children's rights apply to them in the same way as with the other children?
 - What do you think we could do to support them better? Could we do anything in our city or in our school?

Suggestions and follow up

'Modern Fairy Tale' can be used to explore some of the reasons for migration.

Ideas for action

Invite some refugees to meet your group of children and explain their story. You could ask them to talk about what is in their bag. They could take pictures of themselves with their bags and possessions, and you could make an exhibition for others in the community.

Support the children in carrying out some research into "famous" refugees, and do a small campaign in the school or in the wider community.

Tips for the facilitator

Some of your children may themselves be refugees or migrants with difficult stories. Be very careful not to trigger sensitive memories. Talk to them beforehand about the activity, if necessary.

When you explain the activity, tell them that they will be leaving with their families, so they are not alone! You might want to discuss in the debriefing the case of unaccompanied child migrants and refugees, if appropriate for the age and make-up of the group.

Remind the children not to judge the decisions that other children make about what they will bring. Something can be important for one person, and not important for another.

For younger children, you could ask them just to draw and not to write what they will bring. It might take more time.

Adaptation

Instead of doing the activity in groups, you could ask them first to do the task individually, and then to share in the group as a whole.

This activity was inspired by a campaign organised by the International Rescue Committee – 'What's in my bag?' <https://medium.com/uprooted/what-s-in-my-bag-758d435f6e62>



Handout

Bag example

