

in inflatable
boat = 400,000
deaths

14. Form groups and choose one photo showing refugees. Each group should choose a different photo but you will all use the same key words to make up a story related to that photo:

Suggested answer



Hasan Khaled and his little sister Amena are walking in the dusty streets of the refugee camp in Moria on the island of Lesbos, Greece. They crossed the Aegean from Turkey two months ago in a small **dinghy** wearing flimsy **life jackets** that could hardly save them from drowning in the cold waters. Their **family** was driven out of Syria, unable to **suffer** the **pain**, the **fear** and the **poverty** that the war had brought into their lives. In Moria, living conditions are hard to bear, but, at least, their lives are not in **danger**, and they are free from any **exploitation** by **smugglers**.



Ahmet Nuristani sat down on the hill overlooking his **detention centre** and started pondering on his situation. He had already spent five months waiting for his application for **asylum** to be processed. Luckily, his wife and two daughters had made it to Italy, the promised land, and they were waiting for their **reunion**. To do that, they had to buy a fake Taliban threatening letter to use as "proof" of **persecution**. That and the **smuggling** industry had robbed Ahmet of all their savings and he would have to start all over again, but being reunited with his family was all he cared about. They would start a new life and they would never **return** to Afghanistan. Ahmet knows that all he can hope for is to become cheap **labour** and he will often work under no **contract** and on a meagre salary, but he doesn't care as long as he can be reunited with his family.



When the problems started in Damascus, little Aseel's neighbourhood was among the first to see fighting. The day her **parents** saw the **army** marching under their daughter's window they decided to flee the Syrian capital. For Miran Hussein, Aseel's father, his daughter's **protection** was his first priority, so they left for Lebanon with only 160 dollars in their pockets and from there to Istanbul. With printed maps, a GPS and torches they walked along the Rezovo river until they crossed into Bulgaria, where they settled in a refugee camp. Life is difficult, but Miran believes that leaving Damascus was the only way he could give his daughter a **chance** for **education** and a better life.



When fighting erupted in Kormaganza, Sudan, Kamal Abdalla's family decided to flee to the neighbouring village of Mafot. They remained in relative safety for a few months — until artillery began shelling the village. Kamal again fled with his wife and six children — this time across the **borders** to South Sudan. UNHCR transported the family to Jamam refugee camp in South Sudan's Upper Nile state. Six months later, they were relocated to a new camp in Gendrassa, located 55 kilometers from Jamam and on higher ground, as heavy rains caused flooding, making it difficult for UNHCR to bring clean water to the camp. Their **passports** have expired and the only way they can enter another country is by means of a tourist **visa**. If they don't leave this country after their entry visas have expired, they will become "irregular migrants". If they decide to do that, they will always live in fear of **deportation**, but at least they won't be victims of **trafficking** and they will have some hopes for a better future.

Alternatively,

✦ you can write a dialogue among the imaginary people and act it out before your classmates



Suggested answer

Hasan: Do you remember our house in Daraa, Amena? I miss my friends and my school.

Amena: I miss grandpa and grandma. And the playground near our house. Mum used to take me there and let me play on the swings almost every afternoon.

Hasan: I know. There are so many things I miss! Isn't it funny?

When we lived in Syria, some days I didn't want to go to school and now I miss it so much!

Amena: Mum and Dad say that things will soon get better. We will soon make a new home in Germany or Belgium. Will that be soon, Hasan?

Hasan: I don't know. I only pray for that every night.

Amena: Me too.

✦ write an interview about their background, the difficulties they face, their dreams

Suggested answer

Interviewer: Tell us Miran, how did you get here?

Miran: When we left Syria, we went to Lebanon. From there smugglers helped us get to Istanbul. Then we used printed maps, a GPS and torches and walked along the Rezovo river until we crossed the borders into Bulgaria.



Interviewer: That's a long, dangerous and difficult journey. What made you decide to make it?

Miran: Life was simple and easy in Damascus. I had a shoe shop. I wasn't rich, but we had a comfortable life. Unfortunately, when the war started, our neighbourhood was among the first to see fighting. At the beginning, we hadn't realised how serious the situation was, but when we saw the army marching under our house, we decided to flee. Especially, because we wanted to protect our daughter, Aseel.

Interviewer: When you left Syria, did you have any money on you?

Miran: I had to sell my business and because I wanted to get out of Syria the soonest possible, I couldn't wait to get a good price. Most of that money I used to pay the smugglers that took us to Istanbul. When we left Damascus, I only had 160 dollars in my pocket.

Interviewer: What are your hopes for the future now, Miran?

Miran: I'm happy that I managed to get Aseel safe out of Syria. I know I can only hope to be cheap labour wherever we finally settle down, but I can offer my daughter a safe life and I can give her a chance for education. But we need help from all governments and people in power.

Interviewer: Thank you, Miran. Good luck.

✦ **write a letter to the international community to sensitize people about the human rights of refugees.**

Suggested answer

Open letter to the international community:

The tragedy of refugees has devastated our century. Thousands of people are driven out of their homes in an effort to escape hunger, war or persecution. Behind the statistics about the ever-increasing numbers of refugees who are trying to enter, mainly, European countries are hidden stories of individual or collective suffering. Many have lost children, siblings or parents on the way to safety, they have lost the ability to pray at their graves, they have lost their dignity, they have lost all control over their destinies. They spend their days wandering aimlessly in overcrowded refugee camps, hoping against all hope that they will be granted asylum and that their lives will take a turn for the better. They are often treated inhumanely and face racism. They are often humiliated and at the mercy of others.

The international community must not turn a blind eye to the plight of refugees. We have a moral obligation to alleviate their suffering. We have to act in solidarity and not view them as a threat to our well-being. We must overcome fear and suspicion toward refugees and sympathise with their suffering. Only by doing so, can we give our world a real possibility of living together in fraternity and peace.

FURTHER PRACTICE

Students provide their own answers. Below, you can see suggestions on books related to the topic of immigration, refugees, migrants and asylum seekers.