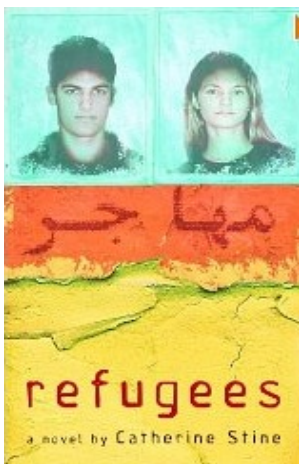


## Study Guide for *Refugees* by Catherine Stine



For Teachers, Librarians and Book Clubs

*Refugees* was selected as a Best Book for Teens by the New York Public Library

*Two teenagers on opposite sides of the globe flee everything they know. In a world turned upside down by tragedy, they are refugees.*

Sixteen-year-old Dawn runs away from her unhappy foster home in California and travels to New York City. Johar, an Afghani teenager, sees his world crumble before him. He flees his war-ravaged village and the Taliban, and makes a dangerous trek to a refugee camp in Pakistan. Thanks to his knowledge of English, Johar finds a job at the camp assisting Louise, the Red Cross doctor—and Dawn's foster mother. Through e-mails and phone calls, Dawn and Johar begin to share and protect each other's secrets, fears, and dreams, and a remarkable bond forms that gives each of them hope and the courage to find a path home.

Random House Digital, ASIN: B001TLZEZK

Two lesson plans are shown, one adapted from a Random House Teachers' Guide, the second from the United Nations Recommended Lesson Plan on Refugees. Catherine's own questions for discussion can be found at [www.catherinestine.com/wp](http://www.catherinestine.com/wp). Versions can be mixed and matched according to your classroom or group's needs.

### 1. Adapted from Random House's "World at War" Guide

Loss, Fear, Survival, Courage & Hope

Thanks to Pat Scales, Librarian, South Carolina

"War and terrorism are real, and no longer subjects limited to history books. Whether the news takes children and young adults to the Middle East, to New York, to the subway systems of London and Madrid, or to the stories of wounded or fallen soldiers, the young are forced to deal with the threats and effects of war in a different way than children of the past. Mass media and the Web have changed their lives forever.

Stine's novel, *Refugees* deals with war, the threat of war, and the toll it takes on the young adult characters. Hopefully, this guide will help you lead important classroom discussions."

#### Reading Discussion Questions: (Grade 7 to Adult)

1. Discuss the relationship between courage and fear in *Refugees*, and how Dawn and Johar each demonstrate courage.
2. Define the term refugee. Johar lives in a camp, but Dawn might also be considered a refugee. Why? Discuss the difference between mental and physical survival.
3. How is the element of hope revealed in *Refugees*?

4. In *Refugees*, how does Dr. Garland (Dawn's foster mom) help refugees? Discuss how the work of nonprofit organizations like the Red Cross, Doctors without Borders, the Peace Corp, and Unicef, is important to war-torn nations.

### **Writing Assignments:**

1. Write a paper discussing how each of the main characters in *Refugees* use their talent on their journey toward a hopeful and happier future.
2. Visit a virtual refugee camp at: [www.refugeecamp.org](http://www.refugeecamp.org). Report on the greatest needs of these types of camps, which organizations give aid, and what people can do to help.

## **2. Adapted from the United Nations School Lesson Plan on Refugees**

For Middle & High School Students:

Define the difference between refugees and internally displaced persons. Is Johar a refugee or an internally displaced person? What are the similarities, what are the differences? What factors cause people to become refugees?

Answers might include: war, famine, racial or religious persecution or political turmoil.

Read and discuss Johar and Dawn's situations in the book *Refugees*. What are the differences and similarities between their struggles? Discuss internal and external struggles. How do Johar and Dawn help each other? What dangers do they find on the road? How do they use their creativity to help get their needs met?

**Middle School activity:** Have the children cut out images from magazines to create a NEEDS and a WANTS pile (say, 10 in each pile). Ask them how they determined what was a NEED and what was a WANT? Now, tell them that rebel troops have just attacked their city and they must flee immediately. They can only carry three light items, and only from their NEEDS pile. Have the kids share about what they thought was most/least essential.

Ask: In *Refugees*, did Bija and Johar get all their needs met on the run? At Camp Suryast? What were the conditions at Camp Suryast? What might happen to a child who flees and is unable to get his/her NEEDS met?

Answers might include: forced into child labor or the military, risk illness from unhygienic camps, go hungry, feel lonely and unwelcome, separated from family or friends, lack schooling.

### **Middle & High School Activities:**

1. Have students write fictional diary entries as if they were refugees. Include the reason for leaving home, what it was like to leave family and friends, the perils they encountered on the road, and what it's like to live in a camp.
2. Research an existing refugee camp and write a report on the conditions there. (ie: Darfur, Congo, Afghanistan)

Hand out copies, read and discuss the documents: "Convention on the Rights of the Child," and "The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees." Discuss how these documents protect refugees and internally displaced peoples. ("The Convention on the Rights of the Child" can be downloaded from [unicef.org](http://unicef.org). "The Convention Relating to the Status of Refugees" can be found at [ohchr.org/english/law/refugees.htm](http://ohchr.org/english/law/refugees.htm)).

Factoids: There are approximately 10.6 million refugees in the world today, and approximately 25.8 million internally displaced people worldwide (600,000 were displaced after Hurricane Katrina, 2005). Most refugees live in Africa and Asia. Of all western countries, the U.S. accepts the highest number of refugees. In 2004, 3 million people, 8,000 people a day, left their homes to seek safety in another country.

**To view the full United Nations lesson plan document go to:**

[http://www.un.org/works/goingon/refugees/lessonplan\\_refugees.html](http://www.un.org/works/goingon/refugees/lessonplan_refugees.html)

**To view full "World at War" guide: go to [randomhouse.com/teachers](http://randomhouse.com/teachers), search for Refugees, and then download teachers' guide.**

*For further reading, Catherine recommends: Girl of Kosovo by Alice Mead and*

*Shattered: Stories of Children and War, edited by Jennifer Armstrong.*

**Use *Refugees* in your English, History or Global Studies curriculum. For autographed books at a bulk, discount rate, email Catherine at [kitsy84557 AT gmail DOT com](mailto:kitsy84557@gmail.com). Catherine does Skype visits and book talks! Email her to discuss dates, rates and your particular classroom or book club needs.**

**Random House Digital eBook: ASIN: B001TLZEZK**

**Refugees for Kindle:** [http://www.amazon.com/Refugees-ebook/dp/B001TLZEZK/ref=tmm\\_kin\\_title\\_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1349285931&sr=1-3](http://www.amazon.com/Refugees-ebook/dp/B001TLZEZK/ref=tmm_kin_title_0?ie=UTF8&qid=1349285931&sr=1-3)



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