

# SYRIA SEEN AND HEARD

**Age range: 11 - 14**

**Time: 2 x 1 hour sessions**

## Outline

These workshop activities help young people to plan how to raise awareness of the Syria conflict and build support for a wider campaign. It focuses on the skill of 'being a multiplier'. A 'multiplier' is someone whose actions get many other people involved in a campaign. Being a 'multiplier' involves excellent leadership, team work and planning skills and all successful campaigns depend on 'multipliers'. This workshop helps to develop these 'multiplier' skills in a school setting. Following an introduction the workshops begin by asking how to best raise awareness of the Syrian conflict and continues by then asking the best ways to collect as many messages as possible for the postcard petition.

## Learning Objectives

- To decide best how to raise awareness of the Syria conflict in the school community by examining the different opportunities for meeting groups of students (eg: classes, year groups etc).
- To use this knowledge to plan a postcard drive in school by engaging the maximum number of young people in the time available.

## Resources

- PowerPoint presentation: Syria Seen and Heard.
- Multiple copies of four 'Seen and Heard' postcards.
- Testimonies of Syrian refugee children.
- Posters.
- Teacher's guide.

## Curricular links

Citizenship (Rights & Responsibilities) – National Curriculum for England.

Social Studies – Scottish Curriculum for Excellence.

ESDGC (Choices and Decisions) and PSE (Active Citizenship) – National Curriculum for Wales.

## Keywords

Refugee, Multiplier, MP (including her or his role).

## Activity Outline

### Introduction

Hold this brief discussion after the group has seen the Syria Seen and Heard powerpoint presentation.

Use these questions for a guided group discussion after seeing the powerpoint:

- What are the key messages about the conflict in Syria you'd now like to raise awareness of?
- Why do you think it is important for more people to know about and understand these issues?

Give the group a minute to reflect on the questions, then go round the group and ask each member to give one idea to each question. It is fine if they have similar answers. Encourage everyone to say something.

- Were there any recurring answers, what were they?  
Allow anyone to answer and ask someone to take notes. Use these notes to plan your presentations.

Oxfam's challenge is for your group to collect between 500 – 1,000 postcard messages and then discuss them with your MP. These will help you to think about how to make your school community aware of Syria Seen and Heard.

### Activity 1 – Raising awareness of Syria Seen and Heard

If the group is large, split into smaller groups. Give each group an Activity 1 handout to discuss the benefits of each of the approaches, its weaknesses, what resources you have available, what resources you need to get or make, and who would you need to talk to for permission or help (check the Oxfam Youth Action guide to see what resources are available, e.g. PowerPoint, posters, script).

Each group should present their findings. Add in anything anyone thinks is missing.

The examples are:

- Presentations (to large or small groups)
- Workshops (to smaller groups )
- Social Media
- Newsletters
- School media (e.g.: the school website)

### Who's in our school community?

On small pieces of paper (or sticky notes) write down all the large and organised groups of people within your school e.g. the whole school, a year group, your class, sports groups, arts groups, scouts, guides, etc.

For each group think about:

- How many people are in the group.
- The best method to get them involved in understanding the issues and writing postcard messages.

Then ask them to prioritise the groups they would raise awareness with by thinking about:

- How regularly the groups meet.
- How easy it is to get a slot to talk at a group meeting.
- How receptive the members would be.
- How feasible it would be to get people to write a postcard message soon afterwards.

Keep a record of the groups and priorities to use later in the workshop.

### **Activity 2: Collecting Syria Seen and Heard postcard messages**

Oxfam is setting each group the target of collecting between 500 and 1,000 postcard messages from the school community.

Oxfam will send you as many postcards as you need. Please call your Oxfam contact or email [education@oxfam.org.uk](mailto:education@oxfam.org.uk) to let us know how many you would like.

Use the diamond-nine cards (Activity 2, worksheet 1) to decide the best way to collect the most messages. Put nine cards in order of the most do-able activities in a diamond shape. There are some blank cards for your own ideas and instructions for how to construct a diamond-nine at at

<http://www.oxfam.org.uk/~media/Files/Education/Global%20Citizenship/GCNewTeacherENGLAND.ashx> p. 15.

Get feedback from each small group about their best ideas. If there is a lot of variety you could re-run the exercise with the whole group using just their top ideas.

You may also wish to discuss now if different members of the group want to do different activities. For example, do some people want to do PSHE classes with year 9 and others want to do an assembly for year 7? Organising a postcard drive does not necessarily involve focusing all the group's energy on one strategy. Instead it means using the group's available time to follow what they feel are the most effective strategies.

Next use Activity 2, worksheets 2 and 3 to help the group decide how they are going to plan their campaigning activities, either as a full group or in smaller groups (depending on their activity decisions).

They should complete the worksheet and have activities to carry out before they next meet.

## Meeting your MP

The final stage of the project is for the group to meet their MP and hand in the postcards on or around the third anniversary of the beginning of the Syria conflict on **15 March 2014**. The teachers guide contains notes about how to contact your MP.

Before meeting their MP the group should plan what to say in the meeting.

Here are some key points:

- The number of postcard messages you have collected demonstrates a large level of solidarity for Syrian child refugees in your school.
- The UK government has been generous in its support for Syrian refugees, donating over £500 million in aid.
- The UK government has been clear about the need to support children affected by the conflict and has earmarked funding for schools, education and children's services.
- Despite this high level of support the conflict continues to escalate. Support for Syrian refugees and the drive for peace are becoming a deep and long term commitment.
- Despite the government's support, many MPs and the general public have not been especially aware of the size and long term nature of the crises caused by the conflict. There is always a risk they will be distracted by other issues. This is understandable.
- Making the government feel that it has the broad support of MPs and their constituents in this issue is important.
- MPs have a vital role to play in showing their support. They can make statements and ask questions in Parliament, use their media profile to raise awareness and demonstrate support, and engage the public through their websites and twitter.

Please get in touch with your Oxfam contact for further guidance about holding an MP meeting.

If your MP is unavailable to meet, please post your postcards with a covering letter. Oxfam has a template letter you can use.

Finally please let your Oxfam contact know:

- How many postcards you gave to your MP.
- Any actions your MP took as a result.

## Activity 1: Syria Seen and Heard Awareness Raising

### Presentation to a large group

Overview: Using the PowerPoint to present the information, find a large group of people (over 30) to tell about the challenges Syrian refugees are facing. This could be a school or year group assembly, or community meeting.

Benefits of this approach:

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Weaknesses of this approach:

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What resources will you need to do this:

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Who will you need to ask permission from to do this:

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## **Presentation to a small group**

Overview: Using the PowerPoint present the information, find a small group to tell about the challenges Syrian refugees are facing. This could be at a regular group meeting or during tutor time.

Benefits of this approach:

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Weaknesses of this approach:

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What resources will you need to do this:

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Who will you need to ask permission from to do this:

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## Workshop with a small group

Overview: With a group of no more than 30, maybe your tutor group, PSHE class or scouts/guides group plan and deliver a short workshop to help your peers understand the situation in Syria. Using the PowerPoint presentation as a basis for your information, you could break the class up into small groups and get each group to explore a different person's situation in more detail. Then hold a discussion on how they want to send a message to your MP.

Benefits of this approach:

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Weaknesses of this approach:

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What resources will you need to do this:

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Who will you need to ask permission from to do this:

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## School Newsletter or Web Article

Overview: Use the information about the Seen and Heard campaign as the basis for an article for your school or community newsletter. You will need to keep the article short (probably 200-300 words) so decide what is the key information you want to share and think about how you will collect messages from people who have read it. You could also make this into a blog for your school website.

Benefits of this approach:

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Weaknesses of this approach:

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What resources will you need to do this:

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Who will you need to ask permission from to do this:

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## Social Media

Overview: Use facebook, twitter or other social networks to alert people to the Seen and Heard campaign. You should link to the action we want people to take, and real events you are organising. It can be a great way to show your MP how many people are involved and link up with other people who are taking part. If you use twitter don't forget to share with us @OxfamEducation and use the #seen&heard hashtag.

Benefits of this approach:

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Weaknesses of this approach:

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What resources will you need to do this:

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Who will you need to ask permission from to do this:

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## Activity 2: Worksheet 1. Syria Seen and Heard Diamond Nine

**Cut out the cards.**

Hold a stall right after we do our presentation, e.g. when we have finished the school assembly.

Hold a stall at a break or lunch time after our presentation.

Visit classes at tutor time to collect the messages.

Hand out postcards during the presentation and ask people to hand them back later.

Get people to write messages as part of a workshop or lesson that includes learning about Syria.

Leave the postcards and a box in a location many people pass. Leave a sign to get them to write their messages in their own time. Empty the box

Have a stall every day for a week at a location virtually everyone visits, e.g. the restaurant or the school entrance/exit.

Divide the postcards up and give them to our favourite teachers. Ask them to collect messages in their lessons.

Have a stall at a big school event, e.g. a parents evening or drama production.

We're quite shy. So let's just ask our best friends and families to write a message.



## Activity 2: Worksheet 2. Syria Seen and Heard Planning Template

**Use these questions to plan how you will raise awareness and collect messages for the Syria Seen and Heard campaign**

What will you do to tell people about Syria Seen and Heard?

How will you collect messages?

How many people will you speak to?

How many postcard messages will you collect?

Who do you need to get permission from?

Who will take responsibility for doing this?

What date(s) and time(s) will hold your event(s)?

When will you collect your messages?

What resources will you need, and who is responsible for getting them ready?

(Different people may be responsible for different things)

What do you need to do to practice your presentation?



### Activity 2: Worksheet 3. Syria Seen and Heard task sheet

**Use this template to plan who will do what and when for Syria Seen and Heard**

#### Key Dates and Plan

Presentation/event date:

Use your answers to the previous questions to decide when you will do things.

Task	Who will do it	By what date?

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