

THINK ABOUT THE IMPORTANCE OF HOME

HOME LEARNING ACTIVITY IDEAS FOR AGES 7-14

Now, more than ever, is a time young people need support to help understand their world, reflect on what matters, and think about how they can make a positive contribution. Yet so much learning is taking place online, in their homes, and away from their peers.

We want to help. We've created a selection of themed learning content on the Oxfam Education website for use at home, in the classroom or both! Consider what we all need to thrive, explore what connects us and be inspired to make a difference.

About this resource

Being confined to our homes has prompted many of us to reflect on our personal space and the importance of our communities. But before the first lockdowns began [almost 80 million people around the world](#) had been forced to leave their homes, communities and sometimes families, and start over somewhere new.

The coronavirus pandemic has had devastating impacts everywhere, but the poorest and most vulnerable people are being hardest hit - both at home and in communities across the globe. Refugees living in camps often aren't able to leave. They will have little to protect themselves; many are sharing one tap between up to 250 people with less than 3.5 square metres of living space per person - smaller than the average UK bathroom.

Use these activity ideas to help children think about what home means to them, start to understand some of the reasons why people might move within and between countries, and develop empathy for people forced to flee their homes. This pack is for use by teachers, parents and carers alongside the [Think about the importance of home](#) activities page on the Oxfam Education website.



Photo: Giorgos Moutafis/Oxfam

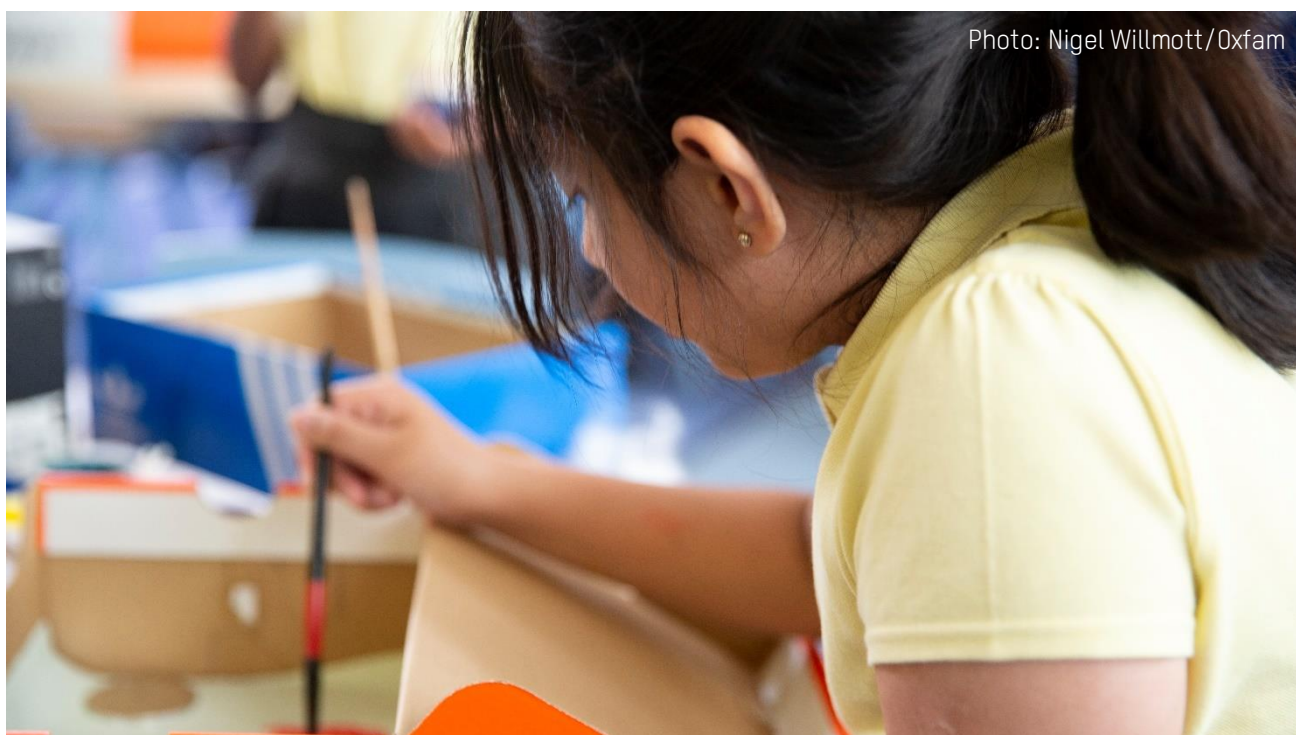
Important note

- Issues associated with migration and refugees are complex and can be difficult to unpack with children and young people. The aim of the following activities is to prompt reflection on the value of our homes and communities, as well as some initial thinking around these issues. See the [Further learning](#) section for some useful resources and links to support any teachers, parents or carers who wish to explore this topic in more detail.
- There are many children and young people in the UK who will have been directly impacted themselves by some of the issues raised in these activities. Some of these activities may therefore need adapting depending on children's personal circumstances.

What does home mean to you? (15 min+)

Learning aim: To reflect on what home means to us personally.

- Ask your child to think about what home means to them. Possible discussion questions include:
 - Is home just a building or a set of rooms, or is it something more than that? If so, what? For example, home might be associated with family and friends, the place we grew up, daily routines or feeling part of a community.
 - How does your home make you feel? These feelings might be both positive and negative, particularly with the current context.
- Perhaps your child could create an acrostic poem, where the first letters in each line spell out 'HOME IS' or an associated word or phrase.
- Or maybe they could paint or draw a picture to express their thoughts and ideas.



Make a doll's house (30 min+)

Learning aim: To reflect on what home means to us personally.

- The [Giant Dolls' House](#) project is a social arts project which aims to raise awareness of the importance of a home and community for all and to celebrate our similarities and differences. Children (and adults) of all ages are invited to take part in the project by making a doll's house in a shoe box to share their experience of staying in one space because of self-isolation and social distancing.
- All that is required is a box (it doesn't have to be a shoebox!). Ask your child to decorate it in a way that reflects their thoughts and feelings about the meaning of home. Your child could make the box on their own or together with other members of their household.
- Emphasise that home means something different to each one of us and your child is free to decorate the box however they would like. Possible things to think about include:
 - The physical structure of a home such as the roof, walls or one or more of the rooms within it.
 - The furniture and decorations within their home, as well as personal possessions that are important to them such as photographs or a favourite toy.
 - Daily or weekly routines, celebrating birthdays or festivals, or spending time with family and friends.
 - The community where we live.
- Your child can decorate the box with anything they find in their home or garden (if they have one). Encourage them to think about natural materials such as bark, plants and natural fibres or reused materials such as old magazines, fabric scraps or plastic bottle caps.
- Everyone is invited to send in photographs of their finished boxes, along with a short story or explanation about it (what they made and why) or a thought to go with their box.
- Visit the Giant Dolls' House website for lots of [creative tips on making a dolls' house](#) along with an [online form](#) for people to share their boxes as part of the next installation which is planned for June 2021. See the [Giant Dolls' House](#) on Instagram to view some of the imaginative boxes that were created last year.



What would you take with you if you had to leave home? (30 min)

Learning aim: To develop critical thinking skills and build empathy for people forced to flee their homes.

- Ask your child to think of five things that they would take with them if they had to suddenly leave their home and might never be able to come back.
- Ask your child to draw or write these items in an outline drawing of a suitcase. They could use the template provided in the [Packing my suitcase](#) activity sheet or design their own.
- Discuss their ideas.
 - What would you take with you?
 - Why did you choose these items?
 - Was it difficult to decide? Why?
 - What would you miss if you had to leave home? Encourage learners to think about other aspects of their life such as friends, school and community as well as physical objects such as things they own.
- Older children could be challenged to narrow their list down to four items, then three and so on.
 - Which item(s) were you left with?
 - Why did you choose this/these item(s)?
- Finish by asking your child how they would feel if they suddenly had to leave home? Ask them to draw or write these feelings around the outline of their suitcase.

Photo: Philip Hatcher-Moore/Oxfam



People walk along the road towards a food distribution point in Zimbabwe after Cyclone Idai caused heavy rains, flooding and landslides in 2019. Many homes, roads, bridges, schools and health facilities were destroyed.

Push and pull factors (20 min)

Learning aim: To recognise some reasons why people might move between and within countries; to develop critical thinking skills and build empathy for people forced to flee their homes.

- Explain to your child that people might leave their home and move within and between countries for many different reasons.
- Some people choose to move (for example, someone who moves to another town or country to get a better job). Some people are forced to move, (for example, someone who moves as result of war or famine). Refugees and asylum seekers fall into this second category of forced movement.
 - **Push factors** are the reasons why people leave an area.
 - **Pull factors** are the reasons why people move to a particular area.
- Discuss potential push and pull factors that might cause some people to move within or between countries. For example, push factors might include poverty or conflict; pull factors might include better work opportunities or to be near family or friends.
- You could use the [Push and pull factors](#) activity sheet to prompt this discussion. Print off and cut out the boxes and help your child to sort these into push and pull factors. If you don't have a printer, you could copy these factors onto sticky notes or small pieces of papers for your child to sort.
- With older children, you might want to discuss which of these push factors relate to someone who could be legally classified as a refugee. Under the [United Nations 1951 Refugee Convention](#), a refugee is defined as someone with a "someone who is unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion, nationality, membership of a particular social group, or political opinion."
- Finish by asking your child how they would feel if they suddenly had to leave home. Discuss their ideas. If your child completed the previous activity, they could draw or write these feelings around their suitcase outline.
- See the [Further learning](#) section for other Oxfam Education resources and useful links to investigate the topics of refugees and migration in more detail.



Further learning

- **Stand with Refugees**

With links to different subjects, this [Oxfam resource](#) supports children aged 7–14 to strengthen their enquiry skills, think critically about why some people are forced to flee, and develop empathy for others.

- **Families Together**

Oxfam is calling for a change to the rules on family reunion so that it's easier for refugees to be joined by their loved ones. See this [resource](#) for ages 11–16 to learn more about the lives and experiences of refugees before writing compelling postcards to MPs on the issue of family reunion.

- **Teaching Controversial Issues guide**

Topics such as migration and refugees can provoke strong, varied and often contradictory responses. See Oxfam's [Teaching Controversial Issues](#) guide for guidance, strategies and practical teaching activities for managing controversial issues both in and out of the classroom.

- **Dollar Street**

Developed by the Gapminder Foundation, [Dollar Street](#) is an interactive online platform which uses photographs and statistics to provide a fascinating insight into the lives and homes of people all over the world. Explore what home is like elsewhere in the world, identify similarities and differences, and think about the inequalities that exist between and within countries.

- **BBC Teach – Seeking Refuge**

These [animated stories](#) provide a unique insight into the lives of young people who have sought refuge in the UK.

- **The UN Refugee Agency (UNHCR)**

The [UNHCR website](#) has lots of teaching materials on refugees, asylum, migration and statelessness, including useful facts and figures, animations and stories.

- **Refugee Council**

See the [Refugee Council website](#) to find out more about refugees and the asylum system in the UK.

- **Refugee Week**

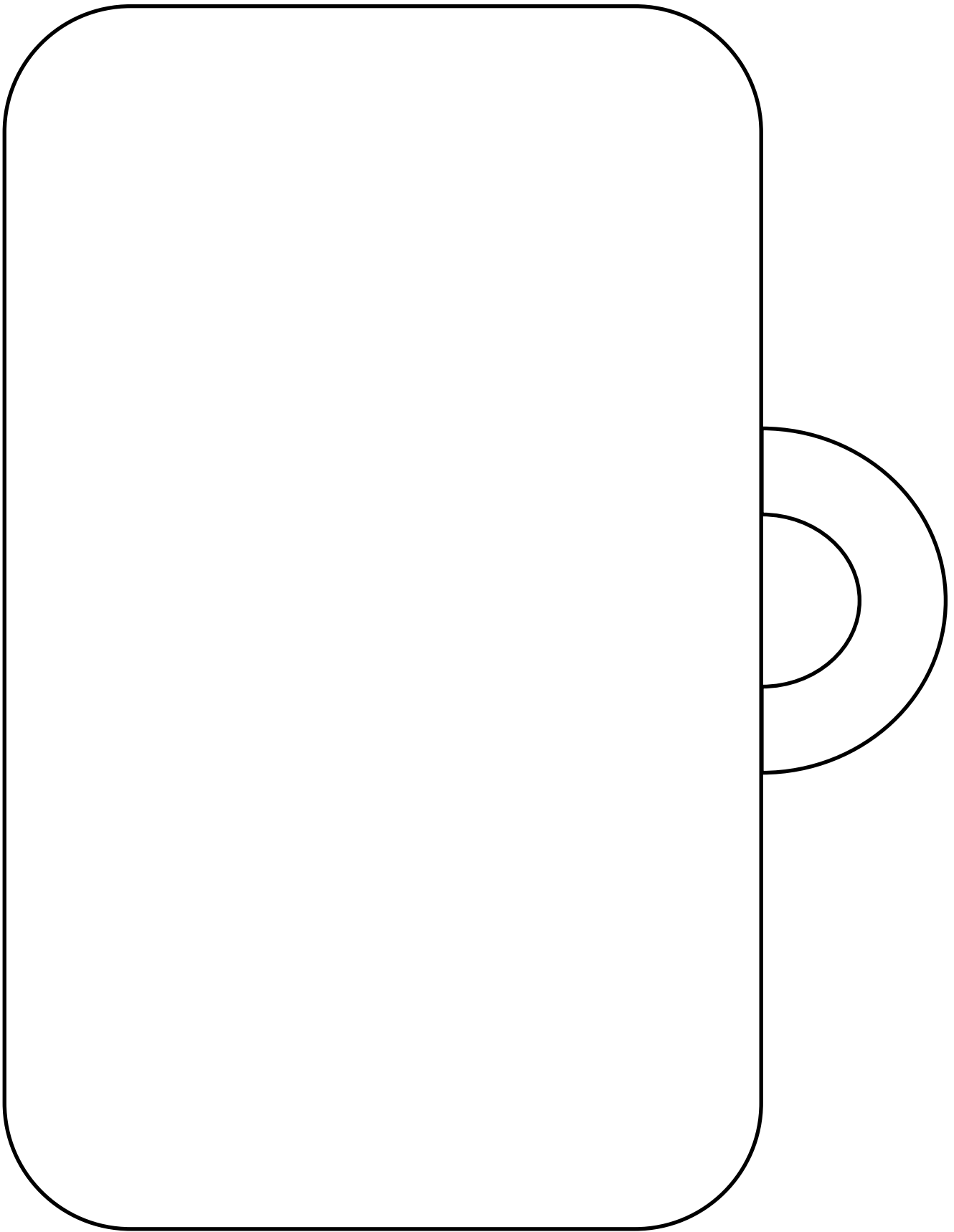
[Refugee Week](#) takes place every year across in the world in the week around World Refugee Day on 20th June. Its aim is to celebrate the contribution of refugees and encourage better understanding between communities.

- **City of Sanctuary UK**

[City of Sanctuary](#) supports groups and individuals across the UK (including schools) to help provide welcoming places of safety for all and offer sanctuary to people fleeing violence and persecution.

Packing my suitcase

Activity sheet



Push and pull factors

Activity sheet

Push factors	Pull factors
Lack of services (for example schools and health care)	Better work opportunities
Being unsafe	Better services (for example, schools and health care)
Poverty	Safer, with less crime
High levels of crime	To be nearer family or friends
Crops failing	Political stability
Disasters such as earthquakes, flooding or drought	More fertile land for growing crops
Conflict	Less risk from disasters such as earthquakes, flooding or drought