

World Refugee Day

Every day thousands of people are forced to leave their homes and find a safe place to live. World Refugee Day celebrates the strength and courage of refugees around the world.

Before reading

Do the preparation task first. Then read the article and do the exercises.

Preparation task

Match the definitions (a–j) with the vocabulary (1–10).

Vocabulary

1. asylum
2. devastating
3. to flee
4. fundraising
5. a landmark
6. overcrowded
7. persecution
8. to raise awareness
9. to settle
10. solidarity

Definition

- a. cruel or unfair treatment over a period of time because of race, or religious or political beliefs
- b. causing a lot of damage and destruction
- c. to make people know that a situation exists and help them understand it
- d. to make a place your permanent home
- e. to leave somewhere quickly to escape from fear or danger
- f. safety and protection for people who have to leave their country
- g. containing too many people or things
- h. an important or famous building, statue, etc.
- i. support by one person or group of people for another
- j. collecting money for a special purpose

World Refugee Day

Every moment of the day, people are leaving everything behind to escape war, persecution or the devastating effects of climate change and natural disasters. These people are called refugees – people who have to leave their home country because they aren't safe there.

Of course, it's important to protect and improve the lives of refugees every day of the year, but having a special day helps raise awareness of the dangerous and difficult situation refugees are in and offers opportunities to support them.

Why is World Refugee Day important?

Across the world, more than 100 million people have been forced to leave their homes to find a new, safe place to live. Over 35 million of them are below the age of 18. Some have settled in new countries; many more are living in refugee camps, waiting to get permission to stay or for it to be safe enough to go home. The United Nations decided that refugees should have a

special day, when we learn about and understand the problems they face, and celebrate their strength and courage. The first World Refugee Day was in 2001, and it's been celebrated on 20 June every year since then.

What happens when people flee their countries?

When refugees flee their homes, they often have to go on very long and dangerous journeys. Some walk for many days, others travel by lorry, car or boat, and many don't have enough food or water for the journey. Sadly, a lot of refugees never reach their final destination.

When refugees arrive in a safe country, they can ask for permission to stay in the new country. People who are waiting to get permission to stay are called 'asylum seekers'. A lot of people have to live in refugee camps while they are waiting. A camp is often like a giant city of tents, with thousands of people living in it. The camps provide food and shelter, clothes and medical help, and some camps even have schools. But many camps are overcrowded, and conditions for refugees can be very poor.

What happens on World Refugee Day?

There are a lot of events on 20 June in different countries. These events are often organised by, or involve, refugees themselves. Many cities light up landmarks in blue to show solidarity with refugees, such as the Tokyo Tower in Tokyo and the Empire State Building in New York. Some places hold concerts, art exhibitions or food festivals. In many countries there are charity walks, runs, swims and bike rides to raise money for refugees. Walking or running a long way helps make us aware of the distance some refugees have to travel to safety.

What can you do?

You could search online to find a fundraising event near where you live and help raise money. If there are no events planned, why not organise one? If you're active on social media, you could help raise awareness by posting messages of solidarity. There are lots of ways to get involved in World Refugee Day. What will you do?

Tasks

Task 1

Are the sentences true or false?

- | | | |
|---|------|-------|
| 1. Refugees are people who leave their home country to escape danger. | True | False |
| 2. Many refugees are children. | True | False |
| 3. The United Nations started World Refugee Day in 2022. | True | False |
| 4. All refugees arrive safely in a new country. | True | False |
| 5. People who are waiting to get permission to stay in a new country are called 'asylum seekers'. | True | False |
| 6. On World Refugee Day, lots of people walk or run to raise money to help refugees. | True | False |
| 7. Some cities light buildings up in red to celebrate World Refugee Day. | True | False |
| 8. World Refugee Day is only celebrated in a few cities around the world. | True | False |

Task 2

Complete the sentences.

asylum	awareness	climate	courage
flee	fundraising	overcrowded	persecution

- Refugees leave their homes to escape and war.
- Sometimes people have to leave their homes because of the effects of change.
- World Refugee Day celebrates the strength and of refugees worldwide.
- When they their homes, refugees often have to go on long and dangerous journeys.
- When refugees reach a safe country, they can ask for
- Often refugee camps are and conditions in them are bad.
- There are lots of events on World Refugee Day.
- You could help raise of World Refugee Day on social media.

Discussion

What did you learn from the article?

Answers

Preparation task

1. f
2. b
3. e
4. j
5. h
6. g
7. a
8. c
9. d
10. i

Task 1

1. True
2. True
3. False
4. False
5. True
6. True
7. False
8. False

Task 2

1. persecution
2. climate
3. courage
4. flee
5. asylum
6. overcrowded
7. fundraising
8. awareness