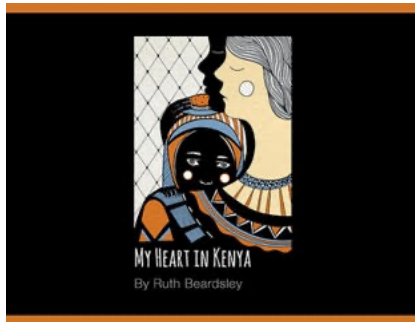


Teachers Guide

My Heart in Kenya

By Ruth Beardsley

For readers 8+



About the Book

My Heart in Kenya is a true story about family separation and reunification in the context of the refugee experience, written from a child's point of view.

Nasteha tells the story of the tough decisions her mother had to make and her journey to be reunited with her family.

Teaching Notes

These background notes have been created to support students aged 8+ to explore the characters, storyline, and issues in the book including refugees, human rights, family separation, resettlement, social justice, and grief.

The book aims to raise awareness of issues related to refugees, in classrooms and community programs across the country.

Family separation is a devastating reality for refugees around the world, with reunification a dream many families never realize.

The notes include:

- Characters- questions and talking points
- Themes-discussion questions on the themes and their importance
- Activities
- Resources

Talking Points Characters

Nasteha

What would it be like to learn you have another family?

What is it like for Nasteha to say goodbye to her Aunt Ebla?

Do you think they will ever see each other again?

Zeynab

Why did Zeynab leave her baby behind?

What must it have been like to leave her baby behind?

When you look at the family photo what do you see?

Ebla

What is it like for Aunt Ebla to say good bye to Nasteha?

Do you think they will ever see each other again?

Abdullahi

Why is dad not allowed to stay with his family?

What do you think he had to do when he was turned away from the refugee camp?

Explore what having identification means in another country and why we have passports and visas to travel in another country

Woman who brought Nasteha to Canada/Ruth Beardsley

How difficult would it have been to travel with Nasteha when she did not speak her language or know her very well?

Themes and Activities

Geography

Research the various countries mentioned in the book
Compare lifestyles in those countries

Environmental Studies (Geography/Science)

Research how the environment has changed over the years
Are these changes sustainable without international aid and changes?

Activity/Pack your bags

Think of three different scenarios, if you had to pack for:

- Vacation
- Migrating or choosing to move to a new country
- Fleeing

What would you include in your bag? what are the most important items?

Describe why each item is important.

What are you leaving behind?

- home
- family members
- possessions

Describe how would this change your sense of belonging.

Treatment of Refugees

Discussions could include:

Lack of water

Lack of food

No chance to go to school

Myths about refugees

What have you heard or read

Is it fact or opinion

How could you find out if the facts are true

Why is there fear of the police or figure of authority?

Review Human Rights – Convention on Rights of the Child

Right to safety – Article 3

Right to an identity -Article 6

Right to a family – Article 16

Right to own property – Article 17

Right to a home – Article 25

Right to healthcare – Article 25

Right to food and water – Article 25

Right to an education – Article 26

These rights are further defined in the Convention on the Rights of the Child

Or download [Simplified Rights of the Child - Unicef](#)

Call to Action

What could governments do to make sure families are kept together upon resettlement?

Is there an organization in your community that works with newcomers? Find out what they do and is there a way you could contribute as a class.

Random acts of kindness you could consider for refugees:

Learn how to say a person's name correctly.

Let a refugee know they are not alone

Volunteer to teach your language or learn a few words in their home language

Share refugee stories and spread awareness

Speak out for refugee rights

Support a refugee owned business

Encourage other schools to teach about refugees

Help refugees integrate by offering your friendship

Current facts about refugees

Source: UNHCR

117.2 million people will be forcibly displaced or stateless in 2023, according to UNHCR's estimations.

Children make up 50% of the refugees in the world

Source Countries for Refugees: Syria, Afghanistan, Ukraine, Venezuela, South Sudan, Myanmar

Children account for 30 per cent of the world's population, but 41 per cent of all forcibly displaced people.

September, 2023