

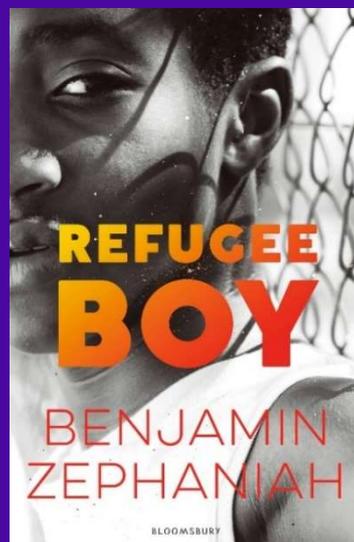
THE
DUSTON ^{TDS} ₄₋₁₉
SCHOOL

Knowledge Organiser

Year 8: Unit 4

Refugee Boy

by Benjamin Zephaniah



Name:

Class:

Big Questions

The big question for the unit is: **How are voices reflected in Zephaniah’s *Refugee Boy*?**

Our study of *Refugee Boy* will follow the structure below:

Week 1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How are voices reflected in <i>Refugee Boy</i>? • What is the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea? • How does Alem react to the cultural difference?
Week 2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does displacement affect the character of Alem in <i>Refugee Boy</i>? • What does a reader learn from the beginning of <i>Refugee Boy</i>? • How is Alem presented as an outsider?
Week 3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does family create a sense of identity? • How can school provide security? • Why does Alem have to rely on others for security? • How does Alem’s loss affect his identity?
Week 4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How does the concept of asylum affect characters in <i>Refugee Boy</i>? • Why are allies important?
Week 5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • What conditions do Alem and his father face? • Why do people protest?
Week 6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • How do characters discover identity in <i>Refugee Boy</i>? • How does Alem’s identity change throughout the novel?

Chapters in *Refugee Boy*

For each chapter in the book, here is a brief summary of what happens:

1	Welcome to the Weather – Alem and his father, Mr Kelo, arrive at Heathrow and go to a hotel in the village of Datchet near Reading. They spend the next day seeing the sights in London.
2	Alone in the Country – Alem wakes up the following morning alone in the hotel room. The hotel manager gives him a letter from Mr Kelo. It says that his father has gone back to Ethiopia but that it is best that Alem stays in Britain for now where he will be safe. Two women from the Refugee Council called Mariam and Pamela come visit Alem and ask to hear his story.
3	This is War – Alem tells about the difficulties he and his family faced because of the conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea. They are not welcome in either country.
4	Asylum Seeking – Alem leaves the hotel with Mariam and Pamela and is taken to their office where they fill in his application form for asylum. They have arranged for him to stay a children’s home.
5	Welcome Home – Alem arrives at the home and meets some of the staff and children. He is threatened by a tough boy. Another boy, called Mustafa, tells him that the bully is called Sweeney. Alem shares a room with a boy called Stanley who has a nightmare during the night.
6	Meet the Lads – At breakfast Mustafa gives Alem more advice. Alem gets into a fight with Sweeney.
7	The Road to Nowhere – That night, Alem runs away from the home. The next morning, he finds he has been walking in circles and is back near the home again. He goes inside. She has a social worker called Sheila with her. They have arranged for Alem to visit a foster family. On the way to see the family, Alem is taken to the Home Office for a screening as part of the asylum application process.

8	The Family's Fine – Alem meets Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald and their daughter, Ruth, and decides he would like to stay with them. He spends a couple of weeks settling in and then asks if he can go to school.
9	First Class – Alem starts school and makes friends with a boy called Robert. That evening, Mariam comes to see Alem, bringing a letter from his father. It contains bad news; Alem's mother is missing.
10	What the Papers Say – Alem goes back to school. He makes another friend, called Buck. Mariam comes to see him again. She says that the Home Office is not happy with his application for asylum. They will have to go to appeal. She gives him a folder full of newspaper cuttings complaining about asylum seekers.
11	A Way with Words – Alem is told the date of his appeal hearing. It will be early in the New Year. He continues to work hard at school the rest of the term. He spends his Christmas money on a bike.
12	Court in Action – Alem explores the local area on his bike. He goes to court for his appeal hearing and meets Nicholas Morgan, his barrister. The hearing is adjourned until February to allow time for further reports to be prepared.
13	Loved and Lost – Mariam comes to the house with another letter from Mr Kelo. Alem's mother has been murdered.
14	Life After Death – Sheila and Nicholas visit Alem to discuss his appeal. After a few days off, he goes back to school. He brings Robert home to meet the Fitzgeralds.
15	The Africans – The next day, after school, Alem and Robert go to see Buck's band rehearse then visit a friend of Robert's called Asher, a Rastafarian. Alem and Robert plan to go on a bike ride
16	Guess Who's Coming to Dinner – Alem and Robert enjoy their ride but Alem's bike is stolen on his way home. Unexpectedly, Mr Kelo comes to see him. He and Alem go out to dinner together.
17	Campsfield – The next day Mr Kelo is supposed to be coming to dinner at the Fitzgeralds' house but he has been arrested and taken to a detention centre. Nicholas will be appearing in court with Mr Kelo and will ask for bail.
18	Real Men Cry – Mr Kelo is given bail and moves into a shabby hotel used for asylum seekers. Alem visits him. After a trip to see the Millennium Dome, Mr Kelo takes Alem to the offices of the East African Solidarity Trust.
19	Court Again – Alem goes to his hearing. His application for asylum is turned down. He and Mr Kelo must go back to Ethiopia. They are allowed to put in another appeal.
20	This is Politics – Robert wants to organise a protest about the treatment of Alem and his father. Sheila comes to say that Alem must leave the Fitzgeralds and live in the hotel with Mr Kelo. Alem and Mr Kelo go to a meeting of the protest group and are amazed by the support they have.
21	The Freedom Dance – Alem moves into the hotel. The protest group has a campaign meeting. There is a benefit gig at the school.
22	The Word on the Street – Hundreds of people attend a rally in support of Alem and Mr Kelo and present a petition to the local MP.
23	This is War Too – Alem is awarded a Positive Pupil Certificate at school. Alem goes back to the hotel to show his father his certificate. He is not there. Sheila and Mariam arrive to say that Mr Kelo has been shot dead in the street. Alem goes back to live with the Fitzgeralds. He has a date for his new appeal.
24	The News – There is a news report about Mr Kelo's death. The police think the killing was political.
25	Judgement Day – Alem is granted leave to stay in Britain.
26	The End? – Ethiopia and Eritrea sign a peace treaty.
27	Let Me Speak – Alem makes a personal statement.

Prior knowledge

Before you begin learning about and reading *Refugee Boy*: What do you know about asylum or why someone might be referred to as a refugee?

Knowledge learned throughout the unit

As you are learning about *Refugee Boy*, add any new knowledge in a brainstorm below.

Context of *Refugee Boy*

Disclaimers in the text

You will come across 2 derogatory terms and a swear word whilst reading the book. Your teacher will discuss these terms with you in class but please be prepared to be involved in a discussion about these words. These words are offensive and should not be said to another person; look at the effect these words had on Alem and his friends.

You will also be discussing some challenging themes such as asylum, migration and being in care. Please talk to your English teacher if you feel anxious, worried or unsure about any of these topics.

Ethiopia and Eritrea

Alem's family is caught up in the war between Ethiopia and Eritrea.

The conflict between the two countries began in 1998 in the border region of Badme, where Alem was born. The Ethiopians accused the Eritrean army of occupying land there that belonged to Ethiopia, but the Eritreans claimed the land belonged to them.

Eritrea was ruled as a province of Ethiopia from 1962 to 1993. When Eritrea first gained its independence, ownership of Badme did not seem to be of interest to either side. However, as relations between the two neighbours deteriorated, the border dispute escalated into a war in which hundreds of thousands of people died.

The Eritreans' claim to the disputed territory was based upon a treaty drawn up in 1902 between the Italian government and the Ethiopian Emperor Menelik II. At that time Eritrea was an Italian colony while Ethiopia was an independent state. During the nineteenth century, the most powerful European countries had divided much of Africa up into colonies so they could claim the gold, cocoa, diamonds, palm oil, ivory and other valuable goods produced there. Although the colonies are now independent, the divisions created then can still lead to conflicts and people being forced to live as refugees.

Asylum Seekers

The word 'asylum seeker' is used to describe someone who has entered a country and asked for protection by applying for refugee status. Refugees are people who have been forced to leave their own country. They might have been at risk because of their race, religion, nationality, political opinion or some other thing that made them a target. If the authorities in the country they flee to do not believe they are at risk and therefore do not recognise them as being genuine refugees, their application for asylum will be turned down. When this happens, they are usually sent back to the country they came from.

Some people in Britain worry that there are too many people seeking asylum here and the country cannot afford to support these newcomers. They fear that Britain may be seen as a 'soft touch' by accepting applications, and that more and more people will come here to take advantage of our health and education systems. While they are waiting for their applications to be processed, asylum seekers are often sent to live on housing estates where the local people may resent them because they think they are getting special treatment. Those whose applications are unsuccessful are frequently called 'bogus' by the press and this label is then used to describe any asylum seeker, as if they are all trying to trick their way into the country with false claims.

It is fears like these that lead to the headlines in Mariam's folder.

Coming to Britain

People have been living in Britain for about 12,000 years. People did live here before that time – maybe as much as 700,000 year ago – but they died or moved away because of the coming of the Ice Ages. The first ever human beings on Earth lived in Africa about five million years ago. Then, very slowly, they gradually spread out across the rest of the world. That is why in 'Refugee Boy' Robert tells Alem: 'I'm an African too.'

Many different groups of people have come to Britain and settled here. Some have chosen to come because they wanted a better life or were invited to work here. Many have had no choice but were forced to leave their own homes and become refugees.

Among the people to come to Britain have been:

- Jewish people escaping persecution in Russia in the nineteenth century and from the Nazis during the 1930s.
- Irish people driven from Ireland by the famine of the 1840s and by mass unemployment in the 1920s.
- Indian labourers who helped to rebuild the bombed cities of Britain after World War Two.
- Pakistani workers recruited to the textile mills of Yorkshire and Lancashire in the 1960s.
- Ugandan and Kenyan Asians forced to leave Africa in the late 1960s and early 1970s.
- Tamils escaping the fighting in Sri Lanka that erupted in the 1980s.
- Somali people escaping the civil war in Somalia, which began in 1991.

The Transatlantic Slave Trade

One of the biggest migrations in history was the forced movement of around 15 million enslaved Africans who were transported by ship to the European colonies in America and the Caribbean. This was the Transatlantic Slave Trade.

The Transatlantic Slave Trade had three stages.

Stage 1: European traders took goods such as pots and pans, guns and cloth to trading centres on the African coast. There they met with African traders who exchanged people they had enslaved for the goods.

Stage 2: The enslaved Africans were transported by ship across the Atlantic to colonies owned by Europe in North and South America, and around the Caribbean Sea.

Stage 3: Having sold the slaves, the traders loaded their ships with goods that had been produced in the colonies using slave labour and took these back to Europe to sell.

2007 is a special year because it marks the 200th anniversary of the passing of the Act that ended the British slave trade. Britain still used enslaved people to work in the colonies and this did not end until the 1830s. However, from 1807 British merchants could no longer trade for slaves in Africa and British ships could no longer carry slaves across the Atlantic.

All the places taking part in Small Island Read 2007 can be linked to the Transatlantic Slave Trade. Slave ships left for Africa from Liverpool, Glasgow, Bristol and other ports in the South West. Hull was the

home of William Wilberforce who was among the many people working to bring an end to the slave trade. Anyone living in these areas at that time is likely to have used something produced through slave labour – tobacco, sugar, rum, cotton, cocoa and coffee – and might also have been involved in producing the goods that were taken to Africa to trade for slaves.

The slave trade was ended for a number of reasons. One of these was that thousands of people joined together to protest about the treatment of enslaved people. The people who campaigned against the slave trade were called abolitionists. In Britain protest meetings were held, speeches were made in parliament, posters and pamphlets were produced describing the terrible conditions on board slave ships, and people refused to buy goods produced by enslaved people. Out on the plantations the enslaved Africans refused to work, sabotaged equipment, escaped or rose up against their owners. Benjamin Zephaniah's description of the campaign organised to help Alem and his father in 'Refugee Boy' is an example of the kind of movement that can develop when people want to make a change.

Children's Home and Fostering

What is a children's home?

A children's home is a large house where young people who cannot be with their own families live together. This could be temporary or long-term. The home provides shelter, food and opportunities for recreation. Children are looked after by professional staff.

Children might be placed in a home because social services judges that their parents are unable to look after them. Their parents could be mentally, emotionally or physically unwell, and a decision may be reached that a period of separation is in the best interest of the children. A minor cannot legally be left to fend for themselves.

What is a foster home?

Young people can be placed with a foster family, like the Fitzgeralds, as an alternative to a children's home. Sometimes, foster parents go on to adopt a child they foster. The foster do not get paid a wage for fostering a child, but they do get paid expenses.

Social services employ staff to find suitable foster homes, depending on the needs of the child and the situation of the parents. Foster parents know from the start that the arrangement may be temporary, as it is intended to be with Alem.

<p>Alem</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A teenage boy brought to England by his father to claim asylum from a warzone. • He is polite, strong and enjoys reading. • He finds the transition to British culture difficult and wishes to go back home to be with his parents. • Alem displays courage, adaptability and determination to fight for peace and equality. • Alem respects his elders and seeks advice from many adults in the novel. • He is thrilled when his father joins him in the UK. 	<p>Mr Kelo</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alem’s father who takes Alem to England. • He is Ethiopian but his wife, Alem’s mother, is Eritrean. • He returns to the war and leaves Alem in England where it’s safe. • He is wise and teaches Alem many life lessons. • Mr Kelo is grateful to Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald. • Mr Kelo is sceptical when Alem’s school friends devise a petition for the government to give Alem and his father asylum. • Mr Kelo is killed whilst in the UK.
<p>Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alem’s foster parents; they are experienced fosterers. • Both Irish, got married in 1977 and are kind people. • They give Alem everything he needs and treats his fairly, with love. • Mr and Mrs Fitzgerald keep Alem safe and continue to support Alem even when his father arrives in the UK. • They offer Alem, and his father, advice and make it their mission to ensure that they both find peace. • Alem and his friends are always welcome into the Fitzgerald’s home. • They give Alem fair boundaries and offer Alem a routine, stability and fairness during his time in foster. 	<p>Ruth</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alem’s 17-year-old foster sister. • She initially has little interest in Alem but, the longer he stays with the Fitzgerald family, Ruth becomes another support network for Alem. • She has a fractured relationship with her biological parents. • Ruth’s love for Alem grows as the story progresses. • Ruth is desperate for Alem and his father to be given asylum. • Ruth is one of the main characters behind the petition proposed to a local MP. • Ruth is eager for Alem to keep his cultural identity and encourages him to display a photo of his parents.
<p>Sheila</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alem’s social worker. • She frequently checks in with Alem and ensure that he is safe. • She liaises with the Fitzgerald family to ensure that Alem has everything that he needs. • Sheila has to instigate difficult conversations with many characters; she is often the bearer of bad news. • Sheila remains professional throughout the novel and is the mediator between the law and the characters. • Sheila works closely with Mariam and Pamela and often they are all seen together in the novel. • Sheila is a calm and logical character. 	<p>Mariam and Pamela</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Both work for the Refugee Council and help Alem when his father first leaves Alem alone in the UK. • They continue to be a big part of Alem’s journey and frequently visit him at his foster home. • Mariam is Ethiopian so speaks the same native language as Alem. • They both remain professional and supportive towards Alem and Mr Kelo throughout the novel. • They work closely with Sheila and the Fitzgerald family. • They are both characters whom Alem learns to trust and respect. Alem relies on both Mariam and Pamela for answers.
<p>Robert and Buck</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Alem’s first school friends in England. • They make an effort with Alem and don’t judge him for being the new boy. • They encourage Alem to socialise with other children from his school. • They are interested in Alem’s culture and introduce him to other African people within the community. • They are the instigators for a petition to give Alem and Mr Kelo asylum in the UK. • Mr Kelo and the Fitzgeralds like Robert and Buck for their kindness and friendship towards Alem. • They are mature and build a strong following. 	<p>Nicholas Morgan</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Nicholas is Alem’s barrister (lawyer) and tries to get Alem’s refugee status. • He is a fair character who supports Alem and his father. • He represents the law, stability and justice. <p style="text-align: center;"><u>Characters in Refugee Boy</u></p>

Key Terminology

	Term	Definition
1	Ally	One that is associated with another as a helper; a person or group who provide assistance and support in an ongoing effort, activity, or struggle.
2	Asylum	The protection granted by a state to someone who has left their home country as a political refugee.
3	Barrister	A person (usually a lawyer) who is entitled to practise as an advocate, particularly in the higher courts.
4	Bigot	A person who strongly and unfairly dislikes other people, ideas.
5	Conflict	A serious disagreement or argument, typically a protracted one.
6	Civil War	A war between citizens of the same country.
7	Culture	The ideas, customs, and social behaviour of a particular people or society.
8	Derogatory	Showing a critical or disrespectful attitude.
9	Eritrea and Ethiopia	Countries in Africa. The Eritrean–Ethiopian War was a major armed conflict between Ethiopia and Eritrea that took place from May 1998 to June 2000. The war has its origins in a territorial dispute between the two states.
10	Homeland	A place where a cultural, national, or racial identity has formed, or one's country of birth.
11	Identity	The fact of being who or what a person or thing is.
12	Marginalised/ Outsider	To treat (a person, group, or concept) as insignificant. To feel like you don't fit into or belong within a community.
13	Nationality	The status of belonging to a particular nation.
14	Ostracized	To be excluded from a society or group.
15	Protest	A statement or action expressing disapproval of or objection to something.
16	Refugee	A person who has been forced to leave their country in order to escape war, persecution, or natural disaster.
17	Refugee Council	The Refugee Council is a leading charity working with refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK . Founded in 1951, following the creation of the UN Refugee Convention, we exist to support and empower people who have fled conflict, violence and persecution in order to rebuild their lives here in the UK.
18	Security	The state of being free from danger or threat.
19	Solidarity	Unity or agreement of feeling or action, especially among individuals with a common interest; mutual support within a group.
20	Stereotype	A widely held but fixed and often incorrect image or idea of a particular type of person or thing.

Additional Terminology

	Term	Definition
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Example analytical writing

How do characters discover identity in *Refugee Boy*?

Conflict and identity are at the heart of the novel. Its inciting incident is Mr Kelo leaving Alem alone in a London hotel in order to keep him from the threat posed by the longstanding and ongoing conflict between neighbouring Ethiopia and Eritrea. In 1998, just three years before the publication of Zephaniah's novel, this became a full-out war. The town Alem comes from, Badme, was on the border and therefore much disputed. As Alem calmly and impartially says, "Some people think that this area is part of Ethiopia and some people think this area is part of Eritrea", he personally thinks that "fighting over ... a border that is mainly dust and rocks" is pointless. The reader is left with this as the novel's viewpoint as no other character questions it.

The nature of the conflict and identity is represented in two flashbacks – one in each country – in which young soldiers break into the family's home and threaten them with ultimatums to leave that country "or die". The Ethiopian soldier is known to the family, showing how a border conflict turns neighbours against each other.

Key to the family's plight is the fact that Mr Kelo is Ethiopian and his wife, Eritrean. Both soldiers think a mixed marriage is a betrayal. Similar racist prejudice and disgust are shown by Stanley, the bully who abuses and attacks Alem on the pretext of claiming Alem is insulting his family. When he assaults Alem and threatens him, it seems, ironically, that Alem is a little better off in England than in Africa.

Alem experiences a more formal type of conflict in the UK's legal system, which is adversarial, with the aim being that lawyers argue for and against a case. With an asylum application, one side argues that the applicant would be in danger if sent home; the other that they would be safe. In Alem's case, the lawyer for the Secretary of State considers that the "risk to the lives of the appellants is minimal", the abstract language emphasising the depersonalising process.

The novel shows that conflict exists within loving families. The Fitzgeralds argue about foster children, and Alem argues with his father about the asylum process. Perhaps reflecting his cultural background, Mr Kelo is outraged when Alem argues with him about the protest campaign. It is also a generational issue: Mr Kelo has a naïve faith in the UK legal system, while Alem sees it as out of touch with the real situation of refugees.

The ultimate message of the novel, however, is that Mr Kelo was right when he wrote that "peace is better than war, wherever you live". Alem shows that he agrees by finally urging the younger generation to create "a culture of peace".

KS3 READING MARK SCHEME [Y7, 8, 9]

Success Criteria	Nothing to reward (0 marks)	(1 mark)	(2 marks)	(3 marks)
1 – Task and Big Ideas	<i>Not evidenced</i>	Some relevance to big ideas and task. Simple approach to task and discussion.	Clear, relevant and supported approach to task and big ideas.	Thoughtful, developed approach to task and big ideas. Engages fully with the task.
2 – Quotations and references	<i>Not evidenced</i>	Some quotations and/or references used but will be limited.	Relevant, clear quotations that are embedded into sentences.	Fully embedded, judicious quotations and consistent references with more than one explored per paragraph.
3 – Subject Terminology and writers’ methods	<i>Not evidenced</i>	Identification of some methods used by the writer with some possible use of subject terminology.	Subject terminology is used to explore a range of writers’ methods.	Sophisticated and ambitious use of subject terminology to explore writers’ methods. Consideration of language, structure and form.
4 – Zoom on key words + discuss effect	<i>Not evidenced</i>	Some exploration and discussion exploring single words.	Clear exploration and discussion considering the connotations of single words.	Perceptive and insightful exploration linked clearly to the big ideas.
5 – Analysis of writer’s purpose/ intentions	<i>Not evidenced</i>	Some understanding although often explains rather than analyses. Simple comment on writer’s intentions.	Clear understanding and analysis shown. Clear and relevant ideas and comments on writer’s intentions.	Developed interpretation of the text. A considered and exploratory approach where layers of meaning and links between context and text are consistent.
6 – Focus on the question	<i>Not evidenced</i>	Little focus on the argument throughout – tends to drift off topic at times.	Some clear focus on the argument throughout – although this is not sustained and can lose focus at times.	Consistent focus on the argument throughout – clearly addresses the question.

Example analytical writing: the reading mark scheme

Homework Tasks

Knowledge is power, so the more you know, the more secure you will be in your learning.

Year 8: Unit 4 Homework: <i>Refugee Boy</i>		
<p>Task 1:</p> <p><u>Week 2</u></p>	<p>Due date:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Using the key information on pages 15- answer the 10 knowledge retrieval questions on page . These questions will be peer assessed in class and your teacher will check that you have completed your homework.
<p>Task 2:</p> <p><u>Week 4</u></p>	<p>Due date:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Read the article “The truth about Asylum” (wider reading) on pages 20-22 Answer the 10 knowledge retrieval questions on page 23 . These questions will be peer assessed in class and your teacher will check that you have completed your homework.
<p>Task 3:</p> <p><u>Week 6</u></p>	<p>Due date:</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Based on your knowledge of “The Refugee Boy” unit so far, answer the 10 knowledge retrieval questions on page24 . These questions will be peer assessed in class and your teacher will check that you have completed your homework.

If you have ‘no homework’, or you have finished all of the above, try these tasks on a weekly basis to ensure your understanding of the poems is secure.

1. Research Benjamin Zephaniah and make some revision notes on him and his works.
2. Research the characters from *Refugee Boy*, the plot and the themes.

Homework Task 1 – Use the following information to answer the 10 questions on page .

Benjamin Zephaniah:

1 Benjamin Zephaniah's background seems unlikely for a poet: a dyslexic who left school
2 unable to properly read and write; a black British Brummie whose teenage years of petty
3 crime culminated in a prison spell. He moved out of the family home with his mother after
4 his father became physically abusive. Women's Centres wouldn't help his mother because
5 she was black. His first real public poetry performance was in church when he was 10 years
6 old, by the time he was 15 he had developed a strong following in his home town of
7 Handsworth where he had gained a reputation as a young poet who was capable of speaking
8 on local and international issues. Zephaniah openly admitted to committing burglary,
9 pickpocketing and robbery after being pressured to join a gang. He has said that, at the time,
10 being in a gang made him feel like Robin Hood "redistributing wealth". He was sent to
11 borstal (an informal name for a detention centre in which offenders aged 15 to 21 could be
12 detained for corrective training) at age 14 and later spent two years in prison. Zephaniah
13 sadly died in December 2023. However, Zephaniah has ended up the people's poet. He holds
14 a handful of honorary degrees. Zephaniah's work is often described as dub poetry, a form of
15 oral performance poetry that is sometimes staged to music and which typically draws on the
16 rhythms of reggae and the rhetoric of Rastafarianism. He published his first collection of
17 poetry at the age of 22 and poems are often inspired by political causes. Zephaniah has said
18 that he 'lives in two places, Britain and the world'. Zephaniah writes gritty, realistic novels
19 about the lives of teenagers, these novels are directed to adults as much as they are to
20 teenagers. He believes that for the most part teenagers know what they are going through,
21 but adults need reminding, they have short memories.

22 "My life went off the rails, but I turned it round. I learned not to steal.
23 I learned to be trustworthy. I learned to help other people."



Ethiopia and Eritrea:

- The Eritrean-Ethiopian War took place from May 1998 to June 2000, between Ethiopia and Eritrea, forming one of the conflicts in the Horn of Africa. The conflict between the two countries began in 1998 in the border region of Badme, where Alem (our main character) was born.
- The Ethiopians accused the Eritrean army of occupying land there that belonged to Ethiopia, but the Eritreans claimed the land belonged to them.
- Eritrea was ruled as a province of Ethiopia from 1962 to 1993. When Eritrea first gained its independence, ownership of Badme did not seem to be of interest to either side. However, as relations between the two neighbours deteriorated, the border dispute escalated into a war in which hundreds of thousands of people died.
- Eritrea and Ethiopia—two of the world's poorest countries—spent hundreds of millions of dollars on the war. Both states suffered the loss of tens of thousands of their citizens killed or wounded as a direct consequence of the conflict, which resulted in minor border changes.
- For both countries, whose people needed education and development and health care, to spend so much money and to waste so much life on wars is a tragedy of immense proportion.
- *Refugee Boy* ends with the signing of the peace treaty between Ethiopia and Eritrea in December 2000.
- Despite the peace treaty, tensions remain between the two countries. Both nations have been accused of supporting the dissents and armed opposition groups against each other. The border dispute has not yet been resolved.

The Refugee Council:

- The Refugee Council is a leading charity working with refugees and people seeking asylum in the UK. Founded in 1951, following the creation of the UN Refugee Convention, we exist to support and empower people who have fled conflict, violence and persecution in order to rebuild their lives here in the UK.
- We work with over 13,000 women, men and children each year who are desperately seeking safety. From the moment refugees arrive in the UK – we are here:
- We provide crisis advice, mental health counselling and practical support to help people settle and integrate into their new community.
- We are specialists in working with refugee children who arrive in the UK alone
- We work with refugees and our partners to fight for improvements to the asylum protection system.
- We inspire change in attitudes towards refugees and people seeking asylum – speaking out for compassion fairness and kindness.



1 In 2020, worldwide, 21,000 children applied for asylum having arrived in the country of refuge alone, with no parent or guardian, according to the most recent global figures published by UNHCR.

2 In the year ending June 2022, the UK received 4,896 applications for asylum from unaccompanied children.

3 Many of them come from Sudan, a country facing political instability following years of civil war, children, in particular, are at risk. Sudan is the 29th highest nation in the world for child marriage where girls as young as 10 years of age can be legally married.

4 We usually refer to these children as separated, as it better describes the ongoing separation from their parents and family members.

5 As well as Sudan, they come from countries including Iran, Eritrea, Afghanistan, Vietnam, Iraq, Albania, Ethiopia and Syria.

6 The majority are aged between 14 and 17 years of age but we do work with younger children.

7 Children are also regularly trafficked into the UK to be forced into domestic servitude, sexual exploitation and other forms of forced labour including cannabis cultivation. We are there for them.

Children in Care:

Where would a child in care live?

1. **Foster care.** This means you live in a normal home with a specially trained person called a foster carer. They might have children already and they will look after you like a member of their own family. Foster care can last a short time while plans about your future are being made, or it can be for longer. In some situations, children stay with a foster carer just for one night while a more suitable place is arranged.
2. **Residential home.** Also called a children's home, this is a large house where several children can stay. There will be staff there all the time who work in shifts and are trained to make sure you are looked after properly. You will have a keyworker who can answer your questions and help you with any problems.

*Whilst reading **Refugee Boy**, we are going to look at these two types of safety. There are other places a child could live whilst being in care, but Alem (the main character in the novel) lives with a foster family and in a care home.*

Children's Homes and Foster Care:

- A children's home is a large house where children and young people live together as a group, with professional staff to look after them.
- Children's homes aim to make sure that they meet the needs of children who can't live with their own families. That means that as well as providing food, shelter, and space for play and leisure in a caring environment, they also act as a place where children can grow and develop.

Foster care is a way of offering children and young people a home while their own family are unable to look after them. This can be for a variety of reasons, from temporary illness to issues such as abuse within their home or the death of a primary carer.

What is a social worker?: ThA Social Worker is a professional trained to help children and their families when they are going through difficulties. Every child and young person in care has a Social Worker until they are 18 years old or leave care. Some of the things they do for you are:

1. Listen to you: they have a phone just for their work and should give you the number.
2. Explain things to you so you understand what's going on.
3. Talk to other professionals to make sure everybody is working together for you.
4. Make sure you have contact with your family and friends, as long as it's safe.
5. Visit you regularly and make sure that you have everything you need.
6. Create your Care Plan, which sets out everything you need and plans for your future.
7. Keep records about what happens in your life.

Homework Task 1: Wider Reading

	Write your answer in the box below each question.	✔ ✘
1	When did Zephaniah give his first real poetry performance?	
2	What characterises all of Zephaniah's writing to date?	
3	List 3 things the Refugee Council do to help refugees.	
4	In the year 2022 how many applications did the UK receive for unaccompanied children?	
5	How long did the war between Eritrea and Ethiopia take place for?	
6	When was the peace treaty signed between Eritrea and Ethiopia?	
7	What is a children's home?	
8	What do children's homes provide for children in care?	
9	What is a foster carer?	
10	List 3 things a Social Worker might do for a child.	
TOTAL		

The truth about asylum

<https://www.refugeecouncil.org.uk/information/refugee-asylum-facts/the-truth-about-asylum/>

People seeking asylum and refugees – who's who?

1 **Refugee**

2 The definition of a refugee according to the 1951 United Nations Convention Relating to the Status of
3 Refugees is:

4 *"A person who owing to a well-founded fear of being persecuted for reasons of race, religion,*
5 *nationality, membership of a particular social group or political opinion, is outside the country of his*
6 *nationality and is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to avail himself of the protection of that*
7 *country; or who, not having a nationality and being outside the country of his former habitual residence*
8 *as a result of such events, is unable or, owing to such fear, is unwilling to return to it."*

9
10 In the UK, a person becomes a refugee when government agrees that an individual who has applied for
11 asylum meets the definition in the Refugee Convention they will 'recognise' that person as a refugee
12 and issue them with refugee status documentation. Usually refugees in the UK are given five years'
13 leave to remain as a refugee. They must then must apply for further leave, although their status as a
14 refugee is not limited to five years.

15

16 **Person seeking asylum**

17 A person who has left their country of origin and formally applied for asylum in another country but
18 whose application has not yet been concluded. Wherever possible, we prefer to describe someone as a
19 person seeking asylum as we feel that the term asylum seeker is dehumanising.

20

21 **Refused asylum applicant**

22 A person whose asylum application has been unsuccessful and who has no other claim for protection
23 awaiting a decision. Some people who have their case refused voluntarily return home, others are
24 forcibly returned. For some, it is not safe or practical to return until conditions in their country change.

25

26 **Migrant**

27 Someone who has moved to another country for other reasons, such as to find work.

28

29 **Developing countries – not the UK – look after most of the world's refugees**

30

31 At the end of 2021 around 89.3 million people were forcibly displaced across the world. Of these, 27.1
32 million were refugees, whilst 53.2 million were internally displaced within their country of origin.

33

34 72% of the world's refugees are living in countries neighbouring their country of origin, often in
35 developing countries.

36

37 Over 6.8 million people have fled conflict in Syria, and many more are displaced inside the country.
Türkiye is the biggest refugee hosting country in the world. At the end of 2022 Türkiye was providing

38 safety to 3.7 million Syrian refugees. By the end of February 2021 the UK had resettled 20,319 refugees
39 from Syria under the Vulnerable Persons Resettlement Scheme (VPRS). This includes 239 refugees who
40 were resettled prior to the target of 20,000 being set.

41 The UK is home to approximately 1% of the 27.1 million refugees who were forcibly displaced across
42 the world.

43

44 **People seeking asylum are looking for a place of safety**

45

46 41% of displaced people across the world are children.

47

48 The top ten refugee producing countries in 2021 all have poor human rights records or on-going
49 conflict. People seeking asylum are fleeing from these conflicts and abuses, looking for safety.

50

51 In 2021, more than two-thirds of the refugees and Venezuelans across the world came from just five
52 countries: Syria (6.8 million), Venezuela (4.6 million), Afghanistan (2.7 million), South Sudan (2.4 million)
53 and Myanmar (1.2 million).

54

55 There is no such thing as an 'illegal' or 'bogus' asylum seeker. Under international law, anyone has the
56 right to apply for asylum in any country that has signed the 1951 Convention and to remain there until
57 the authorities have assessed their claim.

58

59 It is recognised in the 1951 Convention that people fleeing persecution may have to use irregular
60 means in order to escape and claim asylum in another country – there is no legal way to travel to the
61 UK for the specific purpose of seeking asylum.

62

63 **Refugees make a huge contribution to the UK**

64

65 About 1,200 medically qualified refugees are recorded on the British Medical Association's database. It
66 is estimated that it costs around £25,000 to support a refugee doctor to practise in the UK. Training a
67 new doctor is estimated to cost between £200,000 and £250,000.

68

69 Children in the UK asylum system contribute very positively to schools across the country. This in turn
70 enables more successful integration of families into local communities.

71

72 **The majority of asylum claims are successful**

73

74 The UK asylum system is strictly controlled and complex. It is very difficult for people seeking asylum to
75 provide the evidence required to be granted protection. Despite these challenges, the majority of
76 asylum claims are successful. In the year ending March 2022, 75% of initial decisions resulted in a grant
77 of asylum or other form of protection.

78

79 The Home Office can take months or even years to make decision on asylum case, and there is a
80 growing backlog of cases. At the end of March 2022, there were over 109,000 people awaiting an initial
81 decision on their asylum case.

82

83 Since 2005 most people recognised as refugees are only given permission to stay in the UK for five
84 years. This makes it difficult for them to make decisions about their future, to find work and make
85 definite plans for their life in the UK.

86

87 **People seeking asylum do not get large handouts from the state**

88

89 People seeking asylum are often living on Home Office support equivalent to under £6 per day.

90

91 People seeking asylum do not come to the UK to claim benefits. Most know nothing about welfare
92 benefits before they arrive and had no expectation that they would receive financial support.

93

94 Most people seeking asylum are living poverty and experience poor health and hunger. Many families
95 are not able to pay for the basics such as clothing, powdered milk and nappies.

96

97 Almost all people seeking asylum are not allowed to work and are forced to rely on state support – this
98 is as little as £5.64 a day to live on.

Homework Task 2

	Write your answer in the box below each question.	✓✗
1	In the UK, when does a person become a refugee?	
2	Typically, how many years are refugees given when they arrive to the UK?	
3	Why is it politically incorrect to call a person seeking asylum an 'asylum seeker'?	
4	When might a person be considered a migrant?	
5	At the end of 2021, how many people were thought to be refugees?	
6	Who makes up 41% of the world's refugees?	
7	What are those fleeing from conflict looking for?	
8	Why can the Home Office be slow in making decisions on asylum cases?	
9	What is the reality for most people seeking asylum? Name 2 realities.	
10	"Almost all people seeking asylum are not allowed to work", so how do they survive?	
TOTAL		

Homework Task 3: Complete the knowledge quiz based on everything you have learnt.

Write your answer in the box below each question.		✓ ✗
1	What is a refugee?	
2	Which country is Alem's mother from?	
3	What does it mean to feel marginalised/like an outsider?	
4	What does displacement mean?	
5	What were the biggest differences Alem noticed between Eritrea and England?	
6	Does Mr Kelo have a realistic understanding of the UK justice system?	
7	Why are the Fitzgerald's such significant characters in the book?	
8	Give two examples of when Alem faced discrimination.	
9	What is the difference between nationality and ethnicity?	
10	Give 3 reasons why someone might protest.	
TOTAL		



Wider reading list

Other books by Benjamin Zephaniah

- **'Gangsta Rap'** – Benjamin Zephaniah draws on his own experiences with school and the music business to create a novel that speaks with passion and immediacy about the rap scene. Ray has trouble at home, and he has trouble at school – until he's permanently excluded and ends up sleeping on the floor of a record shop
- **'Windrush Child'** – Leonard is shocked when he arrives with his mother in the port of Southampton. His father is a stranger to him, it's cold and even the Jamaican food doesn't taste the same as it did back home in Maroon Town. But his parents have brought him here to try to make a better life.
- **'Teacher's Dead'** – Murdered by two of his students in front of the school. In front of Jackson. But Mr Joseph was a good man. People liked him. Respected him. How could those boys stab him and jog away like nothing had happened? Without any sense of having done something wrong? Unable to process what he has seen.

Non-Fiction books about asylum and conflict

'The History of the African and Caribbean Communities in Britain' by Hakim Adi

'Coming to England' by Ioella Benjamin

'Black and British' by David Bygott

'What's at Issue? ... Citizenship and You' by Katrina Dunbar

'World Issues: Refugees' by Clive Gifford

'Britain and the Slave Trade' by Rosemary Rees

'Events and Outcomes: The Slave Trade' by Tom Monaghan

'Past and Present: Refugees' by Carole Seymour-Jones

'Refugees' by Rachel Warner

'What's at Issue? ... Prejudice and Difference' by Paul Wignall

Fictional books about asylum and conflict

- **'The Arrival'** by Shaun Tan – This is a graphic novel and wordless story of illustrations to highlight an immigrant man's journey told through an imaginary world.
- **'Welcome to Nowhere'** by Elizabeth Laird – Before long, bombs are falling, people are dying, and Omar and his family have no choice but to flee their home with only what they can carry. Yet no matter how far they run, the shadow of war follows them – until they have no other choice than to attempt the dangerous journey to escape their homeland altogether.
- **'Boy 87'** by Ele Fountain – Fourteen-year-old Shif and his best friend Bini are ordinary boys with big ambitions, but their world implodes when they attract the attention of the military "giffa". Wrenched from their families, they're sent to a remote desert prison, where their cellmates are barely clinging onto life.
- **'The Real Plato Jones'** by Nina Bawden – Thirteen-year-old Plato Jones comes to terms with his mixed heritage when he visits Greece and finds out about his Welsh grandfather, a World War II hero, and his Greek grandfather, who is rumoured to have been a traitor.
- **'The First of Midnight Barn Owl'** by Marjorie Darke – The year is 1797 and in Bristol a slave called Midnight works as a bare-knuckle boxer. Midnight can't see any way in which he

will ever be able to shake off the chains of slavery. However, he feels some hope when he meets the orphan Jess, whose existence is almost as bleak as his and love enters his life.

- **‘Hope Leaves Jamaica’** by Kate Elizabeth Ernest – This collection of stories looks at childhood in rural Jamaica in the 1960s - a time when parents had to go to England to find work and leave their children with their grandparents until they could send for them.
- **‘The Colour of Home’** by Mary Hoffman – On Hassan's first day at school he paints a colourful picture of his home and family in Somalia, but then adds soldiers, flames and bullets. A Somali translator helps him to explain that the painting shows his feelings about the death of his uncle, and his family's flight from Mogadishu to dreary England.
- **‘The Fox Girl and the White Gazelle’** by Victoria Williamson – Reema runs to remember the life she left behind in Syria. Caylin runs to find what she's lost. Under the grey Glasgow skies, twelve-year-old refugee, Reema, is struggling to find her place in a new country, with a new language and without her brother. But she isn't the only one feeling lost. Her Glaswegian neighbour, Caylin, is lonely and lashing out. When they form a wary friendship, they are more alike than they could have imagined.
- **‘Dark Shadows’** by Joan Lingard – The magnificent Joan Lingard rarely fails to please in her work and Dark Shadows – an exploration of friendship and family ties amid the troubles of Northern Ireland – is no exception. The Magowan and the O'Shea families are torn apart by their beliefs.
- **‘Petar's Song’** by Pratima Mitchell – Petar loves music, and his violin keeps the whole village dancing. But when war breaks out, Petar, his mother and his brother have to leave the valley and flee across the border to safety, leaving their beloved father in the village with the other men.
- **‘The Other Side of Truth’** by Beverley Naidoo – When twelve-year-old Sade's mother is killed, she and her little brother Femi are forced to flee from their home in Nigeria to Britain. They're not allowed to tell anyone - not even their best friends - as their whole journey is secret, dangerous - and illegal.
- **‘The Boy at the back of the Class’** by Onjali Q Rauf – There used to be an empty chair at the back of my class, but now a new boy called Ahmet is sitting there. He is a refugee who has run away from a war. A real one. With bombs and fires and bullies that hurt people. And the more his classmates find out about him, the more they want to help him.
- **‘Rebel Cargo’** by James Riordan – Abena is a rebellious Ashanti girl sold into slavery on the notorious Transatlantic route from West Africa to Jamaica. Mungo is an English orphan who becomes a cabin boy, only to be kidnapped and sold as a white slave. Fate brings the two together and Mungo, risking life and limb, saves Abena from a terrible death.
- **‘Smash!’** By Robert Swindells – Steve and Ashraf are friends. But as new developments for the town bring out underlying racism, the boys are gradually forced to take opposing sides.
- **‘Boy, Everywhere’** by A. M. Dassu – It describes the harrowing journey taken by Sami and his family from privilege to poverty, across countries and continents, from a comfortable life in Damascus, via a smuggler's den in Turkey, to a prison in Manchester. A story of survival, bravery and family.
- **‘The Bone Sparrow’** by Zana Fraillon – Born in a refugee camp, Subhi has never seen the outside world. At night, he dreams that the sea finds its way to his tent, bringing with it unusual treasures. And one day it brings him Jimmie: an illiterate young girl who lives near the refugee camp.
- **‘Now is the Time for Running’** by Michael Williams – Deo's family life is destroyed when government forces kill most of the inhabitants of his rural Zimbabwean village, including his beloved mother and grandfather. He escapes with his older brother, Innocent, and together they flee across country in search of the South African they believe to be their father.
- **‘The Crossing’** by Manjeet Mann – Sammy has fled his home in Eritrea to avoid being conscripted into an endless war. Soldiers have already killed his Baba for not joining up. He has no choice but to leave, to travel to Europe in the hope of a better life.
- **‘Illegal’** by Eoin Colfer and Andrew Donkin – Ebo, a 12-year-old boy, flees grinding poverty, zero opportunities and a drunken uncle in his small village in Africa. Before he can

even hope to find a boat to get him to Europe, Ebo has to make the perilous journey across the Sahara Desert.

- **'One Crow Alone'** by Sophie Crockett – In the midst of a seemingly never-ending winter, Magda gradually loses all the things that give her life direction and meaning. Her grandmother is dead, the other inhabitants of her small Polish village has been evacuated and her mother is hundreds of miles away in London. She eventually finds a way to reach London but it isn't as she expected and instead of finding her mother's welcoming arms, she finds herself walking into a nightmare.

Instructions for the Star Reading Test



Step 1: Log on the Computer

- Username will be your school username: Example: 23CRobinson
- Enter your password (you created this in your IT/Computing lesson)

If you have not had a computing lesson

- Password: **dustonp456** OR **Duston1234** (these are default passwords if you have not had an IT/Computing lesson.
- Create a new password (this step is for students who have NOT had IT lessons)

Your password must include: 8 letters, 1 capital letter, 1 number and 1 special character. Don't forget to write down your new password!

Step 2: Search the Renaissance website

- In the search box on the desktop type: **TDS**
- Click on the link that says: **TDS Accelerated Reader**

Step 3: Log into the Renaissance website

- Enter the username and password that your teacher has provided to you

Step 4: The Star Reading Test

- Click on the blue icon that says Star Reading and begin the reading test.