Displacement Due to Violence and War

**Picturebooks**

Friends like to play war on the playground until a refugee child tells of losing his family in a real war.

The paths of four unaccompanied children from Central America through Mexico toward the U.S., and their reasons for their perilous journeys.

A young boy in Syria is forced to stay inside due to the war around him.

True story of a young boy and musician who survives the Khmer Rouge killing fields and work camp.

True story of a boy who lost his leg in a land mine during the Russia/Chechyna war and became a refugee.

Manhattan Beach, CA: East West HF
A boy separated from his family by the Khmer Rouge tries to survive when forced to work in the fields.

A girl is orphaned when her village in Vietnam is bombed, comforted by her mother’s final words.

**Chapter Books**

Forced to become a child solider, a 16-year-old Somali refugee confronts his painful past.

Short stories of children who escaped war and persecution in their countries to seek asylum. RF

Nonfiction graphic novel on the harsh realities of living in, and trying to escape, a war zone in Syria.

After an attack on his Sudanese village, an orphaned boy struggles to survive and escape the violence.

DeWoskian, Rachel (2019). *Someday We Will Fly*. Viking. YA HF
A Jewish family is separated and flees Poland for Shanghai during WWII as conflict increases in Japanese-occupied China.

Ellis, Deborah (2009). *Children of War: Voices of Iraqi Refugees*. Toronto, ON: Groundwood. NF
Interviews with 20 Iraqi refugee children about how the U.S. War on Terror affected their lives.

A teen is forced to flee to Canada and survive by himself when his father is arrested in Ethiopia.

A well-to-do family loses everything in the Somalian civil war, struggling to survive violence, poverty and years of cycles of conflict. Finally the teen wins a lottery to come to the U.S., facing racism and challenges.

Tara and her Kurdish family must flee from Iraq into Iran as they face an uncertain future.

In 1931 during the Depression, the U.S. “repatriated” Latinx citizens, sending them back to Mexico. When Estrella organizes a protest, she is dumped over the border and must find her way back to her family.
True story of a boy in a Cambodian labor camp who is forced to kill and survives by playing an instrument.

First-hand accounts of children forced to flee their war-torn homelands as refugees. Global

Perkins, Mitali (2010). *Bamboo People*. Watertown, MA: Charlesbridge. YA RF
Two Burmese boys on opposite sides of a conflict, one a Karen refugee and the other the son of a doctor, meet in the jungle and must learn to trust each other to survive.

Amira’s Sudanese village is attacked, and she flees to a refugee camp, expressing her dreams in drawings.

Amra’s ordinary life changes at age 16 with the Serbian siege on her city in Bosnia in 1992. As a Muslim, she faces the cruel realities of violence and war, comforted by a stray cat.

Nadia flees snipers in Aleppo during the civil war in Syria to meet her father at the Turkish border.

Refugees trying to escape at the end of WWII find themselves aboard a ship in danger of being torpedoed.

A memoir of a Congolese teen who survived a massacre to come to the U.S. as an activist and artist.

Collection of firsthand narratives stories from teens forced to flee from Central America to the U.S.

Deo goes on the run with his brother after his village is attacked in Zimbabwe, trying to get to South Africa.

**Journeys of Hardship, Loss, and Hope**

**Picturebooks**

A bird and a young girl from southern Africa travel across the world, meeting at the common end of their journeys in northern England. Parallel migration story.

A girl coming from Greece to the U.S. is separated from her favorite dress, which travels the world.

Poems of the lives of children fleeing their homes in Central America to seek refuge in the U.S.

A young girl and her father travel by foot through Mexico toward the border with the U.S.

After his home is destroyed by the war in Bosnia, a boy finds hope in the survival of two goldfish.

A family flees a dictator in Portugal as political refugees to Communist Czechoslovakia in the 1960s, finding a way to resist the societal conformity reflected in everyone wearing sweaters in the same three colors.

A child forced to flee when war destroys her world and family is told there is no room in her new school.

A small sad boy joins a caravan of people to flee war in the Middle East, hoping one day to return.
Anh’s story of traveling to Australia as a child with his family as refugees from Vietnam.

Petra’s father is imprisoned during the 1913 Mexican Revolution and so Petra must travel north with her
young siblings across the desert with the goal of keeping her family safe and holding her dreams close.

Eerdmans. Translated from Spanish. HF
In 1937, a ship with 456 refugees, all children, sails to Mexico during the Spanish Civil War for what was
supposed to be a short stay but extended into years with many children never seeing their families again.

Torben Kuhlmann. San Francisco: Chronicle. HF.
Based on true story of a family who escaped across the Berlin Wall in 1979 in a homemade hot air balloon.

Forced to flee a civil war in Nicaragua, Jose and his mother struggle to create a new life in Canada.

A girl and her mother come by boat as asylum seekers from the Middle East to Australia.

War forces a child and his mother to flee a country in Africa, as he clings to his lucky charm, a marble.

A boy tries to squeeze a whale in his suitcase, a symbol of fitting his life in a suitcase before fleeing.

Migrants drown in a boat navigating treacherous seas, an indictment of society’s treatment of migrants.

A family of refugees traveling from Iraq to Greece loses their treasured cat in the midst of their journey.

A family escapes from Vietnam on a small boat, intertwined with the journey of an ant colony.

A young girl and her family make a dangerous journey by boat from Iraq to Australia.

Accordion frieze of a Mexican boy’s journey to the U.S. with his family, in the style of a Mayan codex.

Two ducks have a difficult time finding a new place to live after their swamp is destroyed.

Milner, Kate (2017). *My Name is Not Refugee*. Edinburgh: The Bucket List. RF
A young boy and his mother must leave town and walk and walk to find a safe place.

Navarro. Cambridge, MA: Barefoot RF
Alfredo and his father must cross the border on a difficult journey from Mexico to the U.S.

Each double-page spread tells the life story of an escape in different parts of the world by walking,
swimming, biking and flying. A focus on flights to freedom both historical and contemporary.

A young girl wonders what life would be like if she lived elsewhere or was a refugee.

A child escapes from North Korea to join her father, leaving her mother behind. Based on mother’s life.

Frances Lincoln. NF
A Congolese girl and her father flee violence and war to the UK, living in uncertainty as refugees.
- A boy journeys from Iraq to the UK, after his father is taken away by soldiers.

- A young girl and her family flee from the civil war in Syria toward Europe. Stone artwork by Syrian artist.

- A mother and her children journey into the unknown with fear and hope from the Middle East to Europe.

- A boy escapes hunger and misery by studying his father’s world map as a Polish refugee during WWII.

- Tuan and his family survive bullets and a leaking boat in long days at sea, fleeing Vietnam.

- A man flees his homeland and sets off for a new country and a new life in a wordless graphic novel.

Temple, Kate & Joi (2019). *Room on Our Rock*. Illus. Terri Baynton. Tulsa, OK: Kane/Miller/EDC. Fantasy
- There are two ways to read this story, either with seals rejecting or accepting room for others on their rock.

- Pancho Rabbit goes on a dangerous trek in search of his father in El Norte, guided by a coyote.

- A little paper boat journeys across the ocean along, encountering wonder and danger.

- A visually powerful narrative in which a group of animals are migrants are forced on a dangerous journey.

- A family travel at night on a donkey fleeing bombs and violence to the safety of a refugee camp.

- A boy travels across the sea in a rowboat in search of a new home, with a teacup of dirt from his home.

**Chapter Books**

- After their home is bombed in Syria, Tareq and his family seek refuge with a militant group and then escape to Greece. Resilience in the face of darkness

- Kek, a young Sudanese refugee, is haunted by guilt and a sense of dislocation in snowy Minnesota.

- A Salvadoran boy and his family join a caravan heading north, includes why they leave and their sadness at having to leave.

- Poni must run for her life due to the Sudanese war in a long and dangerous trek to a camp in Kenya.

- A boy with a mysterious past flees with a woman across Caucasus and Europe, facing many hardships.

- A family from Bangladesh in New York City flee fearing deportation after 9-11 when their visas expire.

- Ebo is on a dangerous journey from Ghana across the desert and ocean to find his family and a better life.

- A boy makes a treacherous journey from Guatemala when his cousin is murdered by the drug cartel.
A refugee ship from Nazi Germany is given entry to Cuba as a refugee boy befriends a Cuban girl.
Three refugee stories connect across time and place in harrowing journeys occurring in 1930s Germany, 1994 Cuba, and 2015 Syria.
A girl forced to flee with her Hindu family during the 1947 partition of India keeps a diary.
Miguel and his sister leave their Mexican village in a dangerous journey across the desert and border.
A boy must travel on a dangerous trek from Mexico to Los Angeles to reunite with his brother.
A family flees war-torn Syria, enduring refugee camps, ocean crossings, and swindlers to seek safety.
Lee, Julie (2020). *Brother’s Keeper*. Holiday House. HF
Two children flee from North Korea, trying to reach South Korea and safety during the Korean War.
Two Japanese sisters whose family are settlers in Japanese-occupied Manchuria are forced to flee at the end of WWII when the Soviet Union invades China, leading to a journey of hardship and suffering. 1945.
A teen’s dangerous journey from Honduras through Mexico to the U.S. in search of his mother.
In Kosovo, Meli and her family flee the civil war, moving from one refugee camp to another.
A boy and his family migrate to the planet Choom but must change the minds of the inhabitants who no longer welcome the “violent” humans who have already destroyed their own planet.
The author/illustrator recounts his childhood as a Polish Jew whose family flees from Warsaw to the Soviet Union and Turkestan, where they face continuous threats and tremendous hardships.
Torres Sanchez, Jenny (2020). *We Are Not from Here*. Philomel. YA RF
Three Guatemalan teens run from violence in a desperate journey through Mexico to reach the U.S. border.
Wilkes, Sybella (1994). *One Day We Had to Run! Refugee Children Tell Their Stories in Words and Paintings*. Millbrook Press. NF
Collection of personal stories and paintings by refugee children from Sudan, Somalia, and Ethiopia.
Orphaned by the Sudanese civil war, a boy leads other “lost” boys on a long walk to Ethiopia and Kenya.

Life in Refugee Camps and Detention Centers

**Picturebooks**

First-person accounts from 61 migrant children, ages 5-17, based on interviews with children in detention centers on the border between the U.S. and Mexico.
Abia is the self-proclaimed queen of a refugee camp in Ethiopia, where she has spent her childhood. When her family is resettled, she takes her story of resilience and strength with her.
Saya takes action for her mother who is in a US detention center as an undocumented Haitian immigrant.

Mango Moon. Illus. Sue Cornelison. Whitman. RF
A family faces many challenges when a father is taken to a detention center to face deportation to Mexico.

My Beautiful Birds. New York: Pajama Press. RF
In a refugee camp, Sami worries about the safety of the pet pigeons he left behind in Syria.

The Island. Crows Nest, Sydney: Allen & Unwin. RF
A stranger washed ashore on a remote island is put in a pen, rejected as different by the inhabitants.

An Afghan boy struggles with life in a refugee camp, finding comfort from bombs in weaving carpets.

A young girl misunderstands the word alien on her Latinx mother’s immigration card.

Sent to a labor camp during the Chinese Cultural Revolution, a girl risks everything to play the piano.

An imagined devastating scenario in which a middle-class Australian family must flee to a refugee camp.

Lubna’s best friend in a refugee camp is a pebble who brings her comfort, but someone else needs it.

The Banana-Leaf Ball: How Play Can Change the World. Toronto: Kids Can. NF
When gangs become a problem in a refugee camp in Tanzania, a coach organizes soccer games.

An Hmong girl in a Thai refugee camp finds the story within herself to create her own pa’ndau story cloth.

Four Feet, Two Sandals. Illus. Doug Chayka. Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans. RF
Two Afghan girls in a refugee camp in Pakistan share a precious pair of sandals brought by relief workers.

Internment. Little Brown. YA Fantasy
A dystopia in which Muslim Americans are forced into internment camps and organize against silence.

A mother and child forced to flee El Salvador are separated at the U.S. border and imprisoned.

We Are Not Free. New York: HMH. YA HF
Interconnected stories of 14 teens about the injustice experienced by Japanese Americans imprisoned in camps during WWII. Integrates different media types, such as telegrams and drawings.

Santiago’s Road Home. New York: Simon & Schuster. RF
Fleeing abusive relatives and extreme poverty in Mexico, Santiago’s harrowing journey leads to a detention camp at the U.S. border and an uncertain future.

The Bone Sparrow. New York: Hyperion. RF
Subhi, a Rohingya refugee from Myanmar, has spent his entire life in a refugee camp in Australia. His contained world expands when a girl arrives on the other side of the fence.

A stray dog befriends an orphaned Syrian boy in a refugee camp on a Greek island. Told from the dog’s perspective in a story based in a real event.

Displacement. New York: First Second. YA FN GN
A contemporary Japanese American teen travels back in time to the camp where her grandmother was imprisoned during WWII.
Omar, a Somali refugee, who has spent most of his life in a refugee camp in Kenya, gets an opportunity for an education, but that would mean a separation from his nonverbal brother.

When Betitia’s father is deported to Mexico, Betitia struggles to survive in inhumane conditions in a detention camp outside of Los Angeles, expressing her feelings in picture poems. Verse novel.

Two teens are paired as pen pals, one in a Sudanese refugee camp and the other in Richmond, Virginia.

**A Sense of Belonging through Relationships and Language**

**Picturebooks**
During a storm, the animals turn away two strangers, who later come to the rescue for the fox family.

Ana helps her mother adjust to their move from Mexico to the U.S. and helps her learn English.

A refugee from Kenya in Canada is determined to ride a bicycle, leading to an unexpected friendship.

Azzi leaves her country due to war and must learn a new language and start a new school in the UK.

A Syrian refugee, still feeling trauma from the war, visits a park near his new home, finding a new friend.

An orphan reluctantly leaves China on a sea voyage to undergo an examination at Angel Island.

An Arabic quilt connects Kanzi to her old home in Cairo and to acceptance of her language in school.

Pictures tell the story of new immigrants to the U.S. who struggle with the challenges of starting a new life.

Biography of a Chinese immigrant whose love of art led him to become an animator for Disney.

Mei Mei moved from Hong Kong to New York, finding it difficult to adjust to school and to learn English.

Three children from Somalia, Guatemala, and Korea struggle to adjust to their new home and school.

When a young girl moves countries and starts at a new school, her Fear tells her to be alone and afraid.

**Chapter Books**
Julie helps two Mongolian brothers trying to survive in their new UK context as they hide from authorities.

Sami must recover a treasured Afghan instrument stolen from his grandfather but has no money and so begins trading to get it back – a tale about living with fear, being a friend, and finding a new home.

A Syrian refugee boy and an American boy have their lives intertwine in Belgium when terrorist attacks lead to suspicions of Muslims and refugees.
Esperanza and her mother are forced to leave their life of wealth in Mexico to become migrant workers.

Escaping from Afghanistan, Fadi’s family heads to the U.S., accidentally leaving his little sister in a camp.

**Home as Two Places in the Heart**

**Picturebooks**

An immigrant boy brings the green warmth of Africa into his new cold urban world in the UK.

A Sudanese girl clings to an old blanket when she is sad, but a friendship helps her create a new blanket.

A memoir on the power of story and the gifts that migrants bring with them when they leave their homes.

A Bengali immigrant feels caught between her family’s Bengali traditions and her new country’s culture, trying to figure out how to live “in-between” and navigate the space between cultures.

When a refugee boy is homesick for the sounds of Lebanon, his grandfather helps him hear the silence.

A grandson connects with his grandfather’s feelings of being torn by a love for two countries.

A young girl visits her grandmother in Vietnam, learning she can call two places home. English/Vietnamese

**Chapter Books**

Pinochet’s takeover of Chile sends an unwilling Celeste to the U.S. and her parents into hiding.

After moving from Haiti to Brooklyn, Gabrielle is bullied and feels out of place. She tries to fit in as a “perfect” American with the help of a clever witch, but risks losing herself in the process.

When Efren’s mother is deported, he must care for his young siblings, taking on many responsibilities. Unsure of who to trust, he is supported by the kindness of the Latinx community.

The story of a Vietnamese girl and her family who are settled as refugees in Alabama in 1975.

Two stories in alternating sections connecting a “lost boy” of the Sudan in 1985 with a girl in the Sudan in 2008 who must walk long distances for water.

A Somalian teen’s life in London is turned upside down when her father returns from Mogadishu after 12 years, expecting the family to live by his rules.

Two Jewish sisters leave Austria during WWII and find refuge in Sweden with new families.
The Power of Story

**Picturebooks**

A story cloth chronicles the journey of a Hmong family from Laos to a refugee camp to the US
A lotus seed holds the memory and the story of a Vietnamese refugee family's homeland.
A struggling refugee boy shares his story through drawing a picture of his old home in Somalia.
Desta’s father needs to return to his Ethiopian homeland and shares his memories with his daughter.
Children traveling with a group of refugees use their imaginations and story to create hope.
Zoe draws a map of good memories of the city she needs to flee with her family during a war.
A Hmong girl in a Thai refugee camp finds the story within herself to create her own pa’ndau story cloth. HF
An artist carries her memories within her as she escapes the war in Laos and starts a new life.
When a library is bombed, Peter’s father saves a beloved book that is buried under a tree during their flight as refugees. Peter returns as an adult to dig up the box containing the treasured book.

**Chapter Books**

A short, illustrated book in the form of a letter from father to son on the eve of a dangerous sea crossing.
A boy learns about his family history and the Partition of India from his great uncle through stories told over a beloved old teacup
Refugees huddle in a rubber dinghy as one uses his violin to weave their stories together to give hope.
In a fictional Latin American country, Max realizes that the stories his grandfather tells him about a gatekeeper who guides travelers on a journey into tomorrow are related to his mother’s disappearance.

Immigration and Refugees Across Time and Place in Nonfiction

**Picturebooks**

Minneapolis, MN: Carolrhoda. NF
Photos explore the experiences of immigrants, celebrating the diversity and hope they bring to the U.S.
A simple and graphic introduction to the term refugee for young children,
Photos of refugee children from around the world forced to flee due to war, hunger, and natural disasters.
Explores the history of refugees around the world and the effects of never-ending war and conflict.

Discusses what it means to be a refugee and why would people leave their homes.

**Chapter Books**

Discusses cases from across the history of immigration of denying or deporting immigrants in the U.S.

Makes a case for unrestricted immigration in a fact-filled graphic nonfiction.

Fifty artists from around the world created postcard images of birds along with messages of hope.

Five true stories about young people across history who lived through harrowing boat journeys as refugees.

Essays by prominent refugee writers from around the world to explore and illuminate their experiences.

Explores government policy and popular responses to immigrant groups between 1800-1965 in the U.S.

Traces the lives of 22 immigrant teens in Denver as they adapt to American culture and a new language.

Collection of poems by poets from around the world on the many issues facing teen refugees.

Celebrate the genius, diversity, and grit of immigrants and refugees to the U.S.

Survival stories of female refugees from around the world, including her own story.

**RELATED TEXT SETS**

**Significance of Names**

Unhei debates whether to change her name to an American one when she moves from Korea.

When an army invades his village in Bulgaria, a Muslim boy and his family must take Christian names.

A boy from El Salvador helps his classmates understand a Latinx cultural tradition with names.
When Alma complains about her long name, her father tells the story of her names and Peruvian heritage. Also available in a Spanish edition.

Yoon dislikes how her name is written in English, compared to the beauty of her name in Korean.

Thompkins-Bigelow, Jamilah. (2020). *Your Name is a Song*. Illus. Louisa Uribe. Innovation Press. RF
A young girl does not want to return to school because no one can pronounce her name.

Sangoel is proud of his Sudanese name but no one in his school in the U.S. can correctly pronounce it.

Shares terms of endearments parents use to express love to children in fourteen different languages.

**Walls and Borders**

A foolish knight is certain that his side of the wall is the safe side; wall is in the gutter of the book.

Arturo’s family is separated by a line, so he dreams of flying through the open sky, free of barriers.

A boy and his family try to reunite with his father caught on the other side of the Berlin Wall.

The chickens build a huge wall to keep out the “prickly invaders,” actually a friendly hedgehog.

A war-ravaged country is separated by a wire fence from the streams and hills of peace and privilege.

A South Asian child finds a way to take down the wall the keeps the sun from reaching her village.

Giuliano, Ferri (2016). *Brick by Brick*. Hong Kong: Miniedition. Fantasy
Animals take down the wall that divides them to construct a bridge that joins their islands.

Two lonely creatures live in lands of either darkness or light until one day they meet at the border.

Pig builds a wall to keep Tortoise from bothering him, but traps himself inside, keeping out the sun.

Badger has built a wall in the forest, sending anyone who can’t do badger things to the other side.

A description of walls around the world, from the Great Wall of China to the Berlin Wall.

Lionni, Leo (2014). *Tillie and the Wall*. Dragonfly Books. Fable
Tillie is curious about the wall that has always been in their world and what lies on the other side.

A king banishes anyone who differs from him and builds a wall to keep them out. Cutouts create a wall.

A guard follows orders without question, not allowing anyone to cross the line, then a ball bounces across.

Maria and her family search for a way to send their gifts across the border wall to their Abuela in Mexico.
Siers, Sophie (2019). *Dear Mr. President*. Illus. Anne Villeneuve. Toronto: Owlkids. RF
Sam decides to build a wall in his bedroom to keep out his brother after hearing about the border wall.

Sis describes life in Czechoslovakia under Soviet rule, the loss of freedom, and his escape to the West.

A mouse wonders what lies beyond the Red Wall, but his friends are too afraid to travel to the unknown.

White, Dianne (2020). *Sometimes a Wall….* Illus. Barroux. Owlkids. RF
Children on a playground build walls that exclude and walls that invite others into play.

In Bobville, all the Bobs are the same, but when one Bob feels different, the community builds a wall to keep him out.

A fence divides two neighborhoods based on race, during the time of segregation in the U.S.

Grandfather yearly visits the demilitarized zone, a barrier separating families in North and South Korea.

Bio = Biography
GN = Graphic Novel
HF = Historical Fiction
NF = Nonfiction
NV = Novel in Verse
RF = Realistic Fiction
FN = Fantasy
VN = Visual Narrative (wordless book)
YA = Young Adult