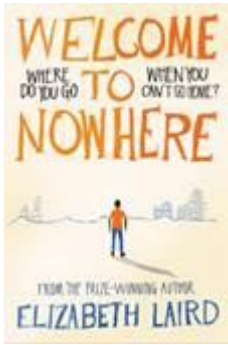


Refugee – Reading List

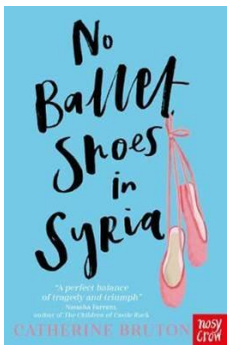
Welcome to Nowhere by Elizabeth Laird 10+



Twelve-year-old Omar and his family live in the beautiful and bustling city of Bosra, Syria. Omar doesn't know much about politics, nor does he care, he just wants to grow up to be a successful entrepreneur. However, when his older brother, Musa, throws his lot in with the student opposition to the government, everything changes. Soon bombs are falling, people are dying, and Omar and his family have no choice but to flee their homes, and after that their country.

While clearly about the Syrian civil war and refugee crisis, this book is perfect for developing understanding amongst children and teenagers regarding conflict and the resulting exodus of people anywhere.

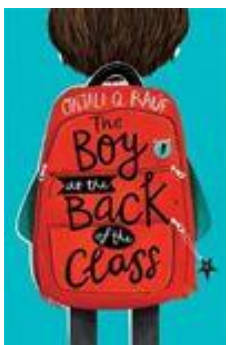
No Ballet Shoes in Syria by Catherine Bruton 10+



Aya is eleven years old and has just arrived in Britain with her mum and baby brother, seeking asylum from war in Syria. When Aya stumbles across a local ballet class, the formidable dance teacher spots her exceptional talent and believes that Aya has the potential to earn a prestigious ballet scholarship. But at the same time, Aya and her family must fight to be allowed to remain in the country, to make a home for themselves and to find Aya's father - separated from the rest of the family during the journey from Syria.

Beautiful, captivating writing, wonderfully authentic ballet detail, and an important message championing the rights of refugees.

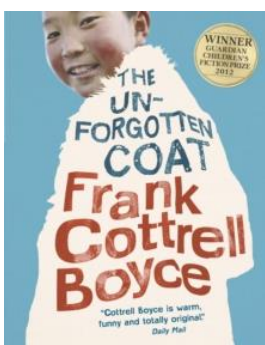
The Boy at the Back of the Class by Onjali Q Raúf 10+



There used to be an empty chair at the back of my class, but now a new boy called Ahmet is sitting in it. He's nine years old (just like me), but he's very strange. He never talks and never smiles and doesn't like sweets - not even lemon sherbets, which are my favourite! But then I learned the truth: Ahmet really isn't very strange at all. He's a refugee who's run away from a War. A real one. With bombs and fires and bullies that hurt people. And the more I find out about him, the more I want to help. That's where my best friends Josie, Michael and Tom come in. Because you see, together we've come up with a plan. . .

An inspiring tale that will help children think about what it is to be a good person whatever your circumstances and challenge prejudice and push for fairness, whenever possible.

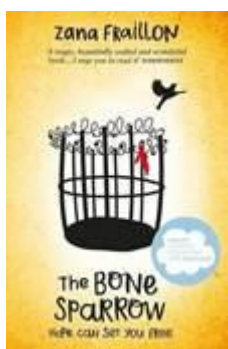
The Un-Forgotten Coat by Frank Cottrell Boyce 10+



This is a stunning magical story of a summer of friendship with darker undertones of the plight of refugees. Two refugee brothers from Mongolia are determined to fit in with their Liverpool schoolmates, but bring so much of Mongolia to Bootle that their new friend and guide, Julie, is hard-pressed to know truth from fantasy as she recollects a wonderful friendship that was abruptly ended when Chingis and his family were forced to return to Mongolia.

Based on a true story this is an unforgettable and moving account of one girl's vivid memories of two Mongolian brothers briefly at her school. This magical and compelling story is enriched by stunning and atmospheric Polaroid photos.

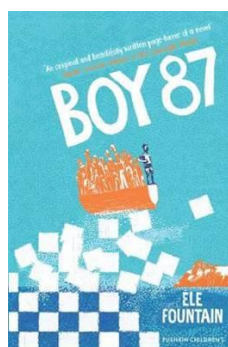
The Bone Sparrow by Zana Fraillon 11+



Born in a refugee camp, all Subhi knows of the world is that he's at least 19 fence diamonds high, the nice Jackets never stay long, and 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. Carrying a notebook that she's unable to read and wearing a sparrow made out of bone around her neck - both talismans of her family's past and the mother she's lost - Jimmie strikes up an unlikely friendship with Subhi beyond the fence. As he reads aloud the tale of how Jimmie's family came to be, both children discover the importance of their own stories in writing their futures.

The Bone Sparrow is one of those rare, special books that will break your heart with its honesty and beauty, but is ultimately hopeful and uplifting.

Boy 87 by Ele Fountain 11+



Shif is just an ordinary boy who likes chess, maths and racing his best friend home from school. But one day, soldiers with guns come to his door - and he knows that he is no longer safe. Shif is forced to leave his mother and little sister and embark on a dangerous journey; a journey through imprisonment and escape, new lands and strange voices, and a perilous crossing by land and sea. He will encounter cruelty and kindness; he will become separated from the people he loves.

Boy 87 is a gripping, uplifting tale of one boy's struggle for survival; it echoes the story of young people all over the world today and illuminates the realities of life as a refugee.

Refugee by Alan Gratz 11+



JOSEF is a Jewish boy living in 1930s Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world . . . ISABEL is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety in America . . . MAHMOUD is a Syrian boy in 2015. With his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek toward Europe . . . All three kids go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers -- from drownings to bombings to betrayals. But there is always the hope of tomorrow. And although Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, shocking connections will tie their stories together in the end.

This action-packed novel tackles topics both timely and timeless: courage, survival, and the quest for home.

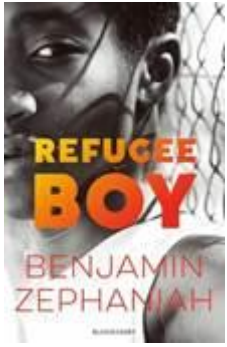
In The Sea There Are Crocodiles by Fabio Geda 12+



An incredible story and a true one, this is an exceptional novel which gives an inside view of one boy's struggle for survival and a better life. Having fled their village home in Afghanistan, ten year old Enaiatollah and his mother are struggling for survival at the border of Pakistan. One morning he wakes up to find his mother has gone; with no idea how to find her, Enaiatollah travels from Afghanistan through Iran, Turkey, Greece and finally Italy and the chance of a better life. His courage and resilience in the face of so much adversity is remarkable and awe inspiring.

On the way he does all kinds of jobs from selling sweets on the roadside to working on building sites in terrible working conditions and travels in various dangerous ways, under lorries, in inflatable dinghys and walking across mountains. He meets all sorts of people, those who try to stop him and a few that help him on his way.

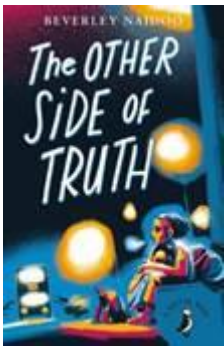
Refugee Boy by Benjamin Zephaniah 13+



Alem's father is Ethiopian and his mother is Eritrean, and there is a dangerous conflict raging between the two countries. For his own safety, Alem's father brings him to England to escape the dangers at home. At first, Alem is delighted to be having a holiday with his dad, until he wakes up one morning to find his father has left him in England alone. Although Alem is heartbroken and everything about English culture is very confusing, he tries to see the positives of living in a cold, alien environment far from his home and family.

Alem's moving story helps the reader understand the difficulties refugees face coming to England from a child's perspective, but also points out the huge advantages we all take for granted – free education, no war, a support system that tries to help and a legal system that tries to bring justice and security to refugees. It also shows how the British press constantly stirs up hatred against refugees and minorities, and how difficult that is for Alem.

The Other Side of Truth by Beverley Naidoo 13+



This is the story of 12 year-old Sade and her brother Femi who flee to Britain from Nigeria. Their father is a political journalist who refuses to stop criticising the military rulers in Nigeria. Their mother is killed and they are sent to London, with their father promising to follow. Abandoned at Victoria Station by the woman paid to bring them to England as her children, Sade and Femi find themselves alone in a new, often hostile, environment. Seen through the eyes of Sade, the novel explores what it means to be classified as 'illegal' and the difficulties which come with being a refugee.

This is a story of terror, loss, love and humanity seen through the eyes of two brave, but frightened, children.

Boy, Everywhere by A. M. Dassu 13+



Sami is a very ordinary 13-year-old boy, attending school, playing football, PlayStation and has his own iPad – the only thing different about Sami is that he lives in Damascus. As the war in Syria creeps closer, until a bombing of a local mall affects his family, everything has been good. Now Sami and his family have to leave their home, their friends and their beloved Jadda (grandmother) – not just to move to another town but to start a long and perilous journey to the safety of the other side of the world – to England.

Timely and honest, and with a deep understanding and meticulous research into similar journeys this is a book that will not leave you for a very long time.

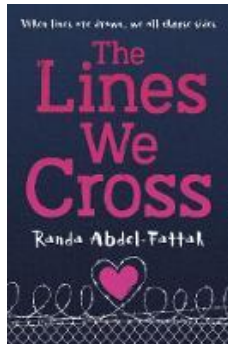
Looking at the Stars by Jo Cotterill 13+



Amina is headstrong and outspoken; sometimes she speaks before she thinks things through and can get lost in her own imagination. This sounds harmless enough but Amina and her family are living under a dangerous dictatorship through a time of national crisis. These actions are seen as rebellion, even a stray smile can get you noticed for the wrong reasons so Amina can't hide her excitement when the 'liberation' arrives to take the power from the Kwana and restore it to the people. She is sure that a new life is just around the corner, but when her brother goes missing and is feared to have joined the rebels Amina and the rest of her family get a visit from the officials that will tear their lives apart. Amina and her sister set out for one of the country's aid camps that promises security and refuge, but the reality is that too many people are seeking the same things and the camp is just another type of a limited life.

A truthful story which doesn't duck the truth of the terrible situations endured by refugees around the world.

The Lines We Cross by Randa Abdel-Fattah 14+



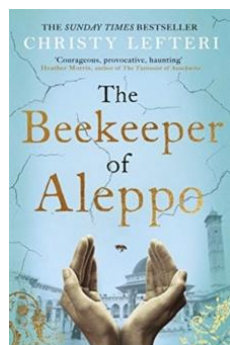
Michael likes to hang out with his friends and play with the latest graphic design software. His parents drag him to rallies held by their anti-immigrant group, which rails against the tide of refugees flooding the country. And it all makes sense to Michael. Until Mina, a beautiful girl from the other side of the protest lines, shows up at his school, and turns out to be funny, smart -- and a Muslim refugee from Afghanistan. Suddenly, his parents' politics seem much more complicated. Mina has had a long and dangerous journey fleeing her besieged home in Afghanistan, and now faces a frigid reception at her new prep school, where she is on scholarship. As tensions rise, lines are drawn. Michael has to decide where he stands. Mina has to protect herself and her family. Both have to choose what they want their world to look like.

The End of Time by Gavin Extence 16+



Beneath the stars, on a stony beach, stand two teenage brothers. They are wearing lifejackets that are too big for them and their most precious belongings are sealed in waterproof bags tucked inside the rucksacks on their backs. Turkey is behind them and Europe lies ahead, a dark, desperate swim away. They don't know what will come next, but they're about to meet a man who does. He calls himself Jesus, the Messiah. He is barefoot, dishevelled and smells strongly of alcohol. And he doesn't believe in chance meetings. He believes he has information about the future - information that will change three lives forever . . .

The Beekeeper of Aleppo by Christy Lefteri 16+

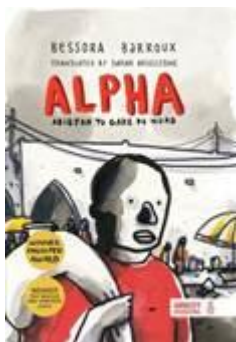


Nuri is a beekeeper; his wife, Afra, an artist. They live a simple life, rich in family and friends, in the beautiful Syrian city of Aleppo--until the unthinkable happens. When all they care for is destroyed by war, they are forced to escape. But what Afra has seen is so terrible she has gone blind, and so they must embark on a perilous journey through Turkey and Greece towards an uncertain future in Britain. On the way, Nuri is sustained by the knowledge that waiting for them is Mustafa, his cousin and business partner, who has started an apiary and is teaching fellow refugees in Yorkshire to keep bees.

The Beekeeper of Aleppo is a testament to the triumph of the human spirit.

Graphic Novels

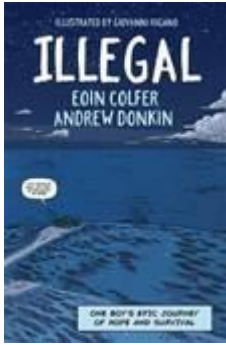
Alpha: Abidjan to Gare du Nord written by Bessora and Illustrated by Barroux 13+



Alpha is leaving the Ivory Coast where he has lived all his life. He hasn't made the decision lightly, but the dangerous journey to another country is still a better choice than staying where he is. His wife and child have already left, and they've agreed to meet at Gare du Nord in France, where he has friends they can stay with while they start a new life. But Alpha's journey with people traffickers, through inhuman refugee camps and on the overcrowded boats across perilous waters, is unimaginably awful.

A powerful, terrible and essential story, Alpha should be required reading for everyone. It highlights the terror and hopelessness experienced by someone forced to leave their own country in search of a future.

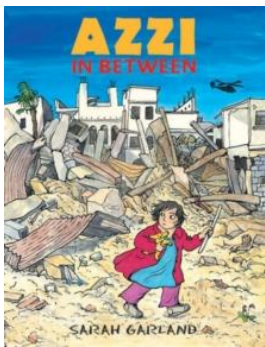
Illegal written by Eoin Colfer, Andrew Donkin and Illustrated by Giovanni Rigano **11+**



Illegal tells the story of Ebo, a 12-year-old boy who flees grinding poverty, zero opportunities and a drunken uncle in his small village in Africa. His brother Kwame and sister Sisi have already left in the hope of a better life in Europe and he's determined to find them en route. Before he even can hope to find a boat to get him to Europe, Ebo has to make the perilous journey across Sahara desert. And then the boat he manages to find passage on (for a small fortune) is a small six-person rubber dinghy, now carrying 14 passengers...

Although Ebo's story is fictional, every element of it has been inspired by facts, based on extensive interviews and research. An absolute must-read, this graphic novel is thought-provoking, profound, sensitive and totally gripping.

Azzi in Between by Sarah Garland **7+**



Azzi and her parents are in danger. They have to leave their home and escape to another country on a frightening journey by car and boat. In the new country they must learn to speak a new language, find a new home and Azzi must start a new school. With a kind helper at the school, Azzi begins to learn English and understand that she is not the only one who has had to flee her home. She makes a new friend, and with courage and resourcefulness, begins to adapt to her new life.

This is a moving tale of a refugee family told in graphic novel style and so appealing to a wide range of younger readers. Beautifully illustrated, it conveys perfectly Azzi's feelings of loss and displacement in an absorbing, and ultimately uplifting, adventure story.

Illustrated books

The Journey by Francesca Sanna **7+**



What is it like to have to leave everything behind and travel many miles to somewhere unfamiliar and strange? Told through the eyes of one of the children, the story follows their journey across hills and through forests, over enormous walls and stormy seas, encountering things both wondrous and scary in their search for a new home.

This incredibly poignant story introduces the concept of refugees with straightforward language, tackling this difficult subject with truth and clarity.

Sea Prayer written by Khaled Hosseini and illustrated by Dan Williams **12+**



Sea Prayer is composed in the form of a letter, from a father to his son, on the eve of their journey. Watching over his sleeping son, the father reflects on the dangerous sea-crossing that lies before them. It is also a vivid portrait of their life in Homs, Syria, before the war, and of that city's swift transformation from a home into a deadly war zone.

Hosseini was impelled to write this story after seeing the haunting image of Alan Kurdi, the three-year-old Syrian boy whose body washed upon the beach in Turkey in September 2015.