

Poems with classroom activities for primary schools

Introduction

From Poems for Primary Schools on the CAPSA site share something of the story of Hani Abdile*, with a focus on the fact that her family had to keep moving because of the war, and the consequent fact that they did not belong anywhere in particular. Depending on the age group, the path of Hani's journey as a person seeking asylum could be described or traced on a map.

Hani's facebook page and website have some up to date information and you may find a photograph of her.

*Clearly Warsan Shire as in Poems for Primary Schools in the CAPSA site or any other refugee or person seeking asylum could be the basis for these strategies.

The Poem

Share one or two short passages suitable for the age group from Hani's poem I Will Rise, or alternatively from the Thoughts on Freedom posted on facebook December 20 2018. Note that she is talking not just of her own experience but that of other people seeking asylum or fleeing from really difficult, unsafe situations.

Gospel message

Share a gospel story or saying that gives some direction as to a response that is fitting for

people who follow in the footsteps of Jesus. For example:

- I was a stranger and you invited me in Matthew 25: 35
- Let the little children come. Matthew 9: 14
- The story of the Good Samaritan Luke 10: 25 - 37
- 'You must love the Lord your God with all your heart, all your soul, all your mind, and all your strength.' The second is equally important: 'Love your neighbour as yourself.' No other commandment is greater than these. Mark 2: 30 – 31
- Do to others as you would like them to do to you Luke 6: 31

Reflection questions

Some possible questions to pose to children:

- What do you notice about the kind of person Hani is?
- What do you think Hani is wanting for herself and other people seeking asylum?
- What do you think would be a really hard part of leaving family and a country like Somalia and coming to a new place like Australia?
- In addition what would be some of the good parts? In other words what opportunities are now available that were not possible in Somalia?

Activities

Some possible activities:

- Drawing Hani's path on a map (or for older children perhaps a possible route for someone coming from another country like Syria).
- Draw/paint a picture of a child or young person in a situation like Hani's while still in Somalia or another country and now living in Australia.
- Imagine you and your family had to leave your home. Draw / write / talk about what you would hate to leave behind, and what you would take if it all had to fit in your school backpack.
- Write a poem or a piece of prose about Hani, refugees generally or people seeking asylum.
- Write a short letter to the people of Australia telling us all what you think we should be thinking about people seeking asylum and what we should be doing for them.
- Prepare a prayer time using a passage from the gospel, some prayers for and a statement of support for people seeking asylum, and a song.