

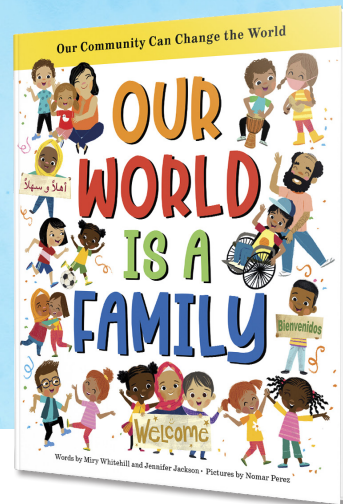
OUR WORLD IS A FAMILY

Our Community Can Change the World

Words by Miry Whitehill and Jennifer Jackson • Pictures by Nomar Perez

EDUCATOR GUIDE

Guide prepared by Keisha Rembert



Our World Is a Family shows young readers how important it is to create safe and welcoming spaces for refugees across the world. Its vivid illustrations celebrate differences. Its words in many languages and its kind gestures guide young readers to specific ways they can create familial bonds for refugees who have to start anew. This picture book is best suited for pre-k to 2nd graders.

LEARNING FOR JUSTICE STANDARDS

The diversity and justice focus of this picture book aligns well with the Learning for Justice standards. The Learning for Justice standards are divided into four domains: Identity, Diversity, Justice, and Action.

Identity.ID.K-2.5. *I see that the way my family and I do things is both the same as and different from how other people do things, and I am interested in both.*

Diversity.DI.K-2.6. *I like being around people who are like me and different from me, and I can be friendly to everyone.*

Diversity.DI.K-2.8. *I want to know about other people and how our lives and experiences are the same and different.*

Justice.JU.K-2.14. *I know that life is easier for some people and harder for others and the reasons for that are not always fair.*

VOCABULARY

While some of the following vocabulary words may seem complex for young children, it is important to introduce children to accurate language even if the words are challenging based on the concepts they represent.

refugee

migrate

safety

community

family

kindness

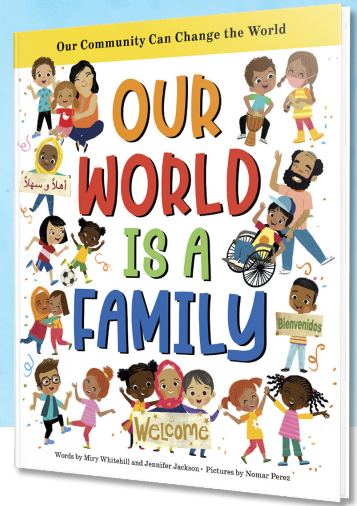


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PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Our World: It is important for young children to realize how vast our world is and yet, also, how connected we are. *Our World Is a Family* shows the beauty when we are connected.

To demonstrate this for children:

1. Show children a picture of a world map or globe. Point to a place and tell students about that place. Ask children if they know about any places on the map or globe.
2. Ask children if they know about any places on the map or globe. Have a discussion about how large and special our world and its people are.
3. Make a connection to the special people in students' lives, i.e. friends and family. Ask children what makes people friends and what makes people family, and get them thinking about the ways our world is a family.

Here is a helpful resource to help guide the conversation: <https://www.globetrottinkids.com/countries>

Picture Walk: The first five pages of the book feature illustrations of different people from different cultures around the world. These illustrations are powerful tools to teach children about our differences and similarities.

- Start by showing children the pictures from the first five pages of the book.
- Talk through the pictures, inviting students to notice any details, actions, and emotions.
- Engage children in a conversation about what they see as the same and what is different from themselves and what makes them happy when they see the pictures.
- Celebrate the differences and the happiness that seeing the different people brings.

CLOSE READING

There is much that will excite students in the pages of this book. It is the type of book that will need to be read to students more than once. Engage students in learning around the following excerpts of the book during a second reading.

"Sometimes it becomes so unsafe that children can't go to school and parents can't go to work and no one can play outside."

Teacher Talk: Sometimes children live in places that are not safe. It might be because the place they call home is at war, or there is not enough food to eat, or of something like a tornado, hurricane, flood, or earthquake or because some people are not welcome anymore. All people should be safe.

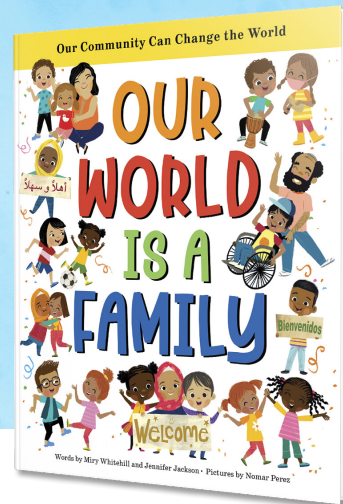


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Discussion Prompt: Where do you feel safe? Tell me about your feelings in that space.

“When they finally arrive, they might miss their old home. Maybe they had to leave behind special things. And special people.”

Teacher Talk: A refugee is a person who has to leave their country, their home.

Discussion Prompt: What is something special to you? Who is special to you? Would you miss that thing or person if you had to leave them and move away?

“When we see someone new in our neighborhood, how can we help them feel safe and loved and important? How can we tell them you’re not alone?”

Teacher Talk: Refugees move to places that sometimes are nothing like the home they left. Maybe it looks different or sounds different or smells different or maybe it is different in all those ways. Differences can be uncomfortable.

Discussion Prompt: What does kindness mean to you? What can you do to make new neighbors feel welcomed? How can you show your kindness?

ACTIVITIES

Many Ways: In the book, students learn there are many ways to show kindness and community. The book suggests some simple things like a smile, a hand, a gift, or a greeting. Teachers can chart student responses to how those many ways lead to kindness and community.

- How can **a smile** show kindness?
- How can **a hand** show community?
- How can **a gift** make a person feel special?
- How can **a greeting** make a person feel safe?

Look for the Helpers: Because refugees are leaving places they have called home to feel safe, students may be concerned about bad things happening and their own safety. To help ease this concern, teachers can show this clip from Mister Rogers to students. <https://www.misterogers.org/videos/look-for-the-helpers>

- After viewing, lead students in a conversation about helpers and how they can help us to see our world as a family.

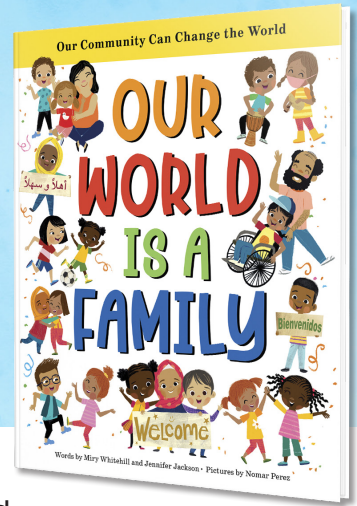


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A Place for Everyone: Students can create welcome cards for new neighbors and refugees. As students learned that even though people move (migrate) to other places around the world, there is a place for everyone. This activity will reinforce that everyone should feel welcomed wherever they are in the world. As a class, start a list of things that the community can do for refugee families.

My name is _____,

I am excited you are here.

Here is a picture that I drew for you:



Welcome to our community. The things that make me and our community special are _____

I can't wait for you to add your specialness here.

RESOURCES

<https://www.unhcr.org/en-us/teaching-about-refugees.html#words>

<http://elisegravel.com/en/blog/whats-a-refugee>

