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*2016 Teachers Guide:  
Immigration Part II*

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**Written for the National Student/Parent Mock Election**

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## Teachers Guide to Immigration Part II

Michelle Innis, International journalist for the New York Times, wrote, “The Australian government is commissioning the abuse of these people.”

*Why has Australia been accused of encouraging abuse to deter refugees?*

“Anna Neistat, a senior director for research at Amnesty International, who spent five days in Nauru, an Island near Australia, in July, said by telephone from Paris recently, ‘Australia pays for the companies that detain refugees, it pays for the guards, and it fails to provide adequate medical care. Australian taxpayers are funding it, and the world does not know this place exists...’”

“Australia’s policy of exiling asylum seekers who arrive by boat is cruel in the extreme,” Ms Neistat said. “Few other countries go to such lengths to deliberately inflict suffering on people seeking safety and freedom.”

*How can the internet and social media be used to alert the world to the injustice suffered by the refugees on Nauru? Elsewhere?*

*What International organization, if any, could help in Nauru? How can your generation, the first to be born into a digital world, “change the world?” If there is a “global economy” can there be a “global standard of justice”? What could bring “liberty and justice for all” to the immigrants all around the world?*

The story of America has been called, “the story of an ever expanding democracy,” (Dr. Peter Odegaard). We have gone from a day when only free white men with property, over the age of 21, could vote, to a day when any American citizen over the age of 18 can vote.

In a June 30, 2016 article in the Arizona Daily Star, Jay Reeves wrote, “Yet, today the KKK is still alive and dreams of restoring itself to what it once was: an invisible white supremacist empire spreading its tentacles throughout society. As it marks 150 years of existence, the Klan is trying to reshape itself for a new era.

“In a series of interviews with the Associated Press, Klan leaders said they feel that U.S. politics are going their way, as a nationalist, us-against-them mentality deepens across the nation. Stopping or limiting immigration — a desire of the Klan dating back to the 1920’s — is more of a cause than ever. And leaders say membership has gone up at the twilight of President Obama’s second term in office.”

“The Klan seemed relegated to history until World War I, but it was resurrected as waves of immigrants arrive from Europe and elsewhere, and grew more as the NAACP challenged the South’s Jim Crow laws in the 1920’s.”

*Why do Klan members still “gather by the dozens under starry Southern skies to set fire to crosses in the dead of the night?”*

*Why have KKK leaflets been showing up in suburban neighborhoods from the Deep South to the Northeast in recent months?*

*Why is stopping or limiting immigration more of a cause than ever for the KKK?*

*Why did KKK leader Brent Waller, Imperial Wizard of the United Dixie White Knights in Mississippi, tell the Associated Press in 2016 that “stopping immigration — not blocking minority rights — is the Klan’s No. 1 issue”?*

*Can you indentify some of the groups around the world who are stepping up to expand democracy?*

*Some who are seeking to destroy it?*

*Why must a democracy permit “freedom for the thought that we hate”?*

*Can you give some examples in the 2016 election?*

*How can we protect ourselves from the haters who are willing to destroy our democracy while, at the same time, we protect the principles and values of our democracy?*

“When he was 9, Ahmad Suleiman watched his father die from a battlefield wound in Syria,” the New York Times reported on June 4, 2016. “Four years later, he now puts in 12-hour shifts at a damp and squalid textile factory in Istanbul as the primary breadwinner for his family, which fled to Turkey. Thousands of children, like Ahmad, are in sweatshops, factories or vegetable fields instead of in a classroom, members of a lost generation who have been robbed of their youth by war,” the Times reports.

“Like many other in his situation, while he toils for his family, Ahmad is paying a steep price. ‘I want to send Ahmad to school because he does not know how to read and write and can’t understand the bus signs,’ said his mother, Zainab Suleiman, 33. ‘But I have no choice. He has to work to survive.’”

*Why were more than 90,000 Syrian refugee children unable to attend school in Jordan last year? Why have schools in Jordan just agreed to accept them? Why were hundreds of thousands in neighboring refugee host countries?*

*How is international funding our now changing the dangers of a “last generation in Syria?”*

*What hazards are there that it will not continue? If it does not, what will happen to adolescent boys who can barely write their name? What child labor laws are there in countries like Syria and Jordan?*

*When were child labor laws first enacted in the U.S.? Why? How do we make sure the laws are obeyed? Where can single mothers find help in the United States? What happens to single mothers and their children in Syria, Jordan, and their neighboring nations today? Why? What has been happening to Turkey’s democracy? How will it affect Turkey’s children and their parents?*

“The Democratic convention stirred the conscience”, Leonard Pitts Jr., a columnist for the Miami Herald, wrote in a recent headline.

“With his wife at his side, Khizr Khan, a Pakistan-born immigrant, addressed the crowd. ‘Tonight,’ he said ‘we are honored to stand here as parents of Captain Humayun Khan and as patriotic American Muslims with undivided loyalty to our country.’”

“‘Have you ever been to Arlington Cemetery?’ demanded the grieving father. ‘Go look at the graves of brave-patriots who died defending the United States of America. You will see all faiths, genders, and ethnicities. You have sacrificed nothing, and no one’ he cried, voice rising in barely suppressed outrage.”

“‘We cannot solve our problems by building walls, sowing division.’”

“And one is reminded that no one believes in America’s promises — liberty and justice for all — quite as fiercely as the immigrant does, “Leonard Pitts points out.

“November, then, is not just an election, but a moment of truth,” Leonard Pitts continues. We are called to decide whether to affirm our nation’s promises, and thus validate the faith and sacrifice of families like the Khans, or whether to burn it all to ash in the fire of our own anger and fear.”

*Do you agree with the Pulitzer Prize winning columnist? If so, why? If not, why not?*

*Can you write a column explaining your position?*

Scott Pelly, anchor and managing editor of “CBS Evening News” and a member of the board of the International Rescue Committee, when asked in an interview with “Parade”, what had affected his thinking on the refugee crisis in Europe, replied, “One very influential thing in my early life was reading ‘The Grapes of Wrath’. It’s about my people, the Okies in the Dust Bowl, moving to California, but it’s really a parable for all times about the dispossessed. You can replace the Joad family name with Serif, and you’re in Syria. In our country, which is inhabited almost exclusively by refugees of one kind or another, I think we need to keep those doors open. We need to

have safety, of course; it's a new age since 9/11. But how can your heart not break? America is the most generous country in the world.

“I believe very strongly in having a humanitarian heart when it comes to refugees.”

President Barrack Obama has warned against abandoning “the pluralism and the openness, our rule of law, or civil liberties, the very things that make this country great... The very things that make us exceptional. Americans of good will understand: we've gone through moments in our history before when we acted out of fear and we came to regret it. We have seen our government mistreat our fellow citizens and it has been a shameful part of our history.”

*Will the Americans of tomorrow regret or be proud of what we have done today?*

At the Olympic Games in Rio de Janeiro ten athletes were chosen for a team that would represent the world's refugees.

The group would be “a symbol of hope for refugees worldwide and bring global attention to the magnitude of the refugee crisis,” the International Olympic Committee said.

*Research the story of the five South Sudanese runners who grew up in the Kakuma refugee camp in Kenya. They are five of the 65 million refugees across the world that have been displaced from their homes and they were participating in the Olympics, the globe's biggest sports event.*

*How many Einsteins, Hawkings, Muhammad Alis or other gifted people might be hidden among the refugee population of the world? Whether it is mental prowess, physical prowess or simply their capacity to love their fellow human beings, should we be trying to save them? How can we do it and save ourselves?*

*How can we not do it and save ourselves?*

In an article in the New York Times on June 24<sup>th</sup>, 2016 titled “My mom, America's Housekeeper,” Luba Carter wrote... “One of the earliest memories I have in New York City is of scrubbing toilets alongside my

mother. She worked as a housekeeper for wealthy families and because she could not afford a babysitter, she would often take me with her... “

“My mother and I moved from Puebla, Mexico, to the United States in October 1999, and we have lived in New York ever since. My little sister was born here. In Puebla, my mother was a lawyer. Here she is part of the pool of undocumented immigrants who facilitate the lifestyles of so many people in the country that she calls home. It feels like we have spent more time in other people’s home than our own, cleaning, dusting, scrubbing, cooking, and the same tasks that many women who migrate to the United States subsist on... “

“Her jobs required her to use cleaning products that burned her skin and blurred her vision. Her knees have scars from all the years scrubbing floors. Housekeepers are the heroes of the immigrant economy — they do their work silently, efficiently, and find money on the table after the job is done. There is no exchange of stories. None of the people whose houses my mom has cleaned know that she was a lawyer, that she is an intellectual and passionate person; they don’t know that she crossed a treacherous border, or that she lives with the constant fear of deportation.”

*Why has the Supreme Court deadlocked on the issue of immigration?*

In June, 2016 the United Nations stated that its global development goals for 2030 were at risk of failure, and estimated that, if current trends continue, nearly 70 million children will die from mostly preventable causes, and that 750 million girls will be married while still children. The United Nation also projects that more than 60 million primary school-aged children will be out of school, more than half in sub-Saharan Africa.

The annual United Nations Children’s Fund report, “The State of the World’s Children 2016,” reflected what UNICEF officials said were widening disparities between rich and poor areas, with some of the poorest increasingly at risk.

The report noted that the poorest children in the study were about twice as likely to die before their 5<sup>th</sup> birthday as the richest.

“In parts of South Asia and sub-Saharan Africa, children born to mothers with no education were found to be almost three times as likely to die before age 5 as those born to mothers with a secondary education.

In an introduction to the report, Anthony Lake, the executive director of UNICEF, pointed out that the report “was issued against a backdrop of rising nativism and xenophobia among countries of the West to an influx of migrants and refugees fleeing conflict and poverty mostly in the Middle East and Africa.”

He added that “the immigration trend is driven by poverty and inequality and inequity, and unless you deal with those root causes, you’re not going to stop that huge flow of people.”

*How would your class suggest that world leaders deal with the tremendous challenges of today’s world while trying to deal with the challenges in their own countries?*

*Does the digital age make international communication easier? Does it make the world’s problems more evident?*

*What responsibility are you willing to take, as you grow to adulthood in America, to help the other children of the world, who are so desperately in need of help?*

What do you think you should do, as a citizen, or citizen-to-be, of the world's longest lasting democracy to help solve some of the problems of your democracy? (Check as many as you wish)

- A) Nothing?
- B) Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper?
- C) Contact your local radio or TV station?
- D) Contact the authorities responsible for the area of your concern and ask what they are doing and what help they need?
- E) Use social media and the internet to find others who are concerned?
- F) Put together a group who share your views to work for change?