

# New Scots: 5 Short Films by Young Syrian Refugees

**THE SCHOOL STUDY PACK**



THE UNIVERSITY of EDINBURGH  
The Alwaleed Centre

**Syrian Futures**



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# About this Project

**A unique series of 5 short films created by young Syrian refugees in Scotland exploring their aspirations, journeys, challenges, dreams, fears, and futures.**

## Syrian Futures

Syrian Futures at The University of Edinburgh is an outreach programme helping Syrian refugees navigate the education system in the UK and supporting them to accessing higher education and employment.

Syrian Futures works closely with charities, local authorities and the Scottish Government offering advice, co-delivering projects, providing translation and interpreting services, and evaluating projects post-delivery.

## Media Education

Media Education is a Scottish media company that works with 'people who want to share their lived experiences'. They strive to influence social change by passing the mic and camera to unheard voices and allowing stories to be told from the source.

They teach technical and practical filmmaking and media skills as well as real-world experience all through allowing individuals to express their creativity.



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# About this Project

DURING COVID SYRIAN FUTURES IN PARTNERSHIP WITH **MEDIA EDUCATION** SECURED FUNDING FROM AMIF: ASYLUM, MIGRATION AND INTEGRATION FUND TO SUPPORT 8 YOUNG SYRIANS IN CREATING FIVE SHORT FILMS TACKLING STEREOTYPING, AND PREJUDICES AND ACKNOWLEDGING REFUGEE CHALLENGES HERE IN SCOTLAND. THESE FILMS CELEBRATE THE NEW SCOTS ACHIEVEMENTS, HONOUR THEIR CREATIVITY AND DIVERSITY TO POSITIVELY CHANGE MISCONCEPTIONS.

**CHANGING THE NARRATIVE** IS A SERIES OF SHORT FILMS CREATED BY YOUNG SYRIAN REFUGEES TO TALK ABOUT THEIR ASPIRATIONS, JOURNEY, CHALLENGES, DREAMS, FEARS, AND FUTURES. THESE DIGITAL TEACHING MATERIALS WERE DESIGNED TO AID TEACHERS AND EDUCATORS IN CONNECTING SCOTS WITH NEW SCOTS.



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# Using these in Class

THESE FILMS CAN BE USED IN SECONDARY SETTINGS TO GENERATE CONVERSATION AND CURIOSITY AND TACKLE BULLYING, AND RACISM, REDUCE ISLAMOPHOBIA, AND RAISE UNDERSTANDING AND AWARENESS OF THE REFUGEE CRISIS.


## Learning Objectives



Understand what migration is, the reasons for it, how these journeys occur, and the social and emotional impact it can have on young people.



Gain a better understanding of the personal cases of Syrian refugees, in order to humanise their experiences and understand the challenges they faced.



Practise using many skills and subjects such as Geography, Film Studies, Modern Studies, Politics, and Religious Education to understand the social experiences of migrants.



Gain inspiration and bridge connections with people from different backgrounds in order to promote the Human Values of Respect, Tolerance, and Individual liberty.

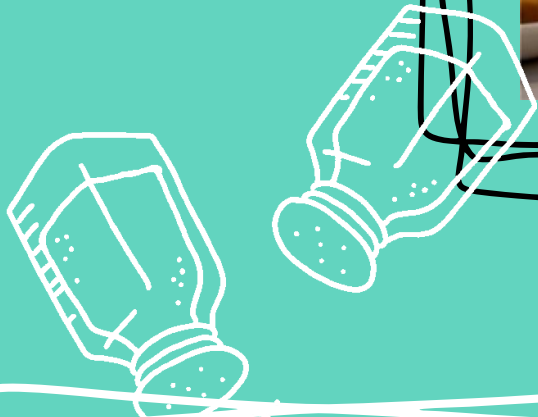


# Ammar's Story



## **Themes**

Cooking, Culture, Identity, Dreams, Hopes/Aspirations, Family, Social life, and Friendship



## **Brief**

This movie follows Ammar Albawab, an aspiring Chef who tells us the story of his passion for cooking whilst he visually guides us through a traditional Syrian recipe. This movie is aesthetically pleasing, with inspiring music and close-shot angles that bring us closer to Ammar's past, the challenges he faced, his passion, and how arriving in the UK he is now able to dream big.

## **Questions**

How does Ammar trace his story of arriving in Scotland?

Why do you think Ammar has such a strong connection to cooking?

How does cuisine link to culture and identity?

What is Ammar's dream, who does he mention and why do you think this is significant for a new migrant?

What is the importance of family in this film, especially the relationship with his mother?

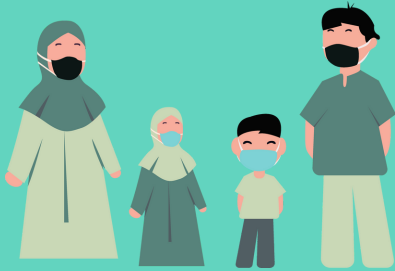
Was it easy for Ammar to make friends when arriving in Scotland?

# Our Life can change in one second



## **Themes**

Girl's Education, Poverty, Family Separation, Language Barrier, Stereotypes, and Migration Journeys.



## **Brief**

This film uses shadow puppets to recount Rawaa's journey from Syria, to Lebanon and finally Scotland. The focus of the film is her school life, which could resonate with students anywhere. It addresses themes such as family separation and family responsibilities in new environments as well as counteracting stereotypes of girls' education in Arab countries.

## **Questions**

What is the link between the title and the film's message?

Why do you think the production team did not try to correct the English grammar in the film?

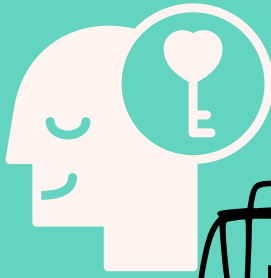
Who in the family had to leave school and provide for Rawaa? How does that counteract stereotypes that Muslim girls are not educated?

What is the symbolism of the shadow puppets in telling this story?

How do you think family separation still impacts Rawaa and her family today?



# In Conversation with GTS



## **Themes**

Reflection, Memories, Hope,  
Future & Past, Education,  
Aspirations, Dreams and  
Stereotypes



## **Brief**

This short film puts forward a private conversation between three girls asking each other questions about their experiences as refugees and arriving in Scotland. The girls pick questions out of a glass bowl and pour their hearts out. It addresses many themes of moving, hopes and education, language barriers, making friends and social life, and funny expectations before arriving.

## **Questions**

What is the impact of the camera being angled from the back?

Everyone has misconceptions and stereotypes, what were their stereotypes about Scotland? What does that imply about human nature and how we can learn through experience?

The girls expected everyone to have blue eyes and short hair, what kind of funny, similar expectations did you have for Syrians?

How do you think their journeys influenced their future aspirations of being a policewoman and working in psychology and biomedicine?

# Portrait of Change



## **Themes**

Emotions, Experiences, Family, Language Barriers, Anxieties, Hijab and Future Dreams



## **Brief**

This short film follows a group of 8 Syrian friends in Edinburgh on a sunny afternoon. As the visuals show them socialising, playing football, and conversing the voiceover goes into the details and the emotions of their personal experiences arriving in Scotland. They address many themes such as family, friendships, language barriers, anxieties, future dreams, and the hijab.

## **Questions**

What do you think the link is between the title and the stories told in this movie?

Why do you think there is a filter on this film and what is the impact?

What is particularly relatable in this film to viewers?

How is the idea of 'Outsiders' mentioned in the film?

What is the importance of friendship in this film?

Why are these New Scots separated from their families?

What stands out about the Hijab (Veiling)?

What emotions do you sense from these young individuals?

# My Stand



## **Themes**

Careers, Challenge, Hijab, Memories, Femininity, Modesty, Beauty, Morals and Resilience



## **Brief**

This film sheds light on the feminine experience of beauty, appearance, and modesty. My stand is Esraa's story of trying to balance her right to religion and her passion for being a hairdresser. It explores how being steadfast with her morals and staying kind and respectful she was able to pursue her dreams.

This film explores invisible Islamophobia, the type of hate of Islam that is not violent but impacts refugees and British Muslims more commonly.

## **Questions**

Why do you think Esraa faced the challenge of being asked to remove her Hijab?

What do you think about the way she handled the situation?

Where do you think Esraa has more memories from? Where would she feel she belongs?

Do you think this audio was done in one take or edited? Why?

What kind of culture shock do you think Esraa experienced?

Have you ever had to stand for what you believe in and be steadfast in your morals?

What examples of invisible Islamophobia can you think of?

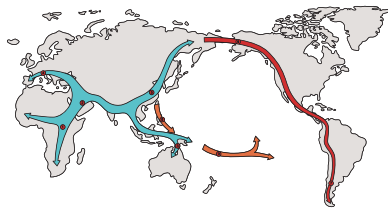


# Classroom Activities, Questions and Exam Questions



# GENERAL TOPIC QUESTIONS

## Migration



**What is migration?**

**What is the difference between emigration and immigration?**

**Why do we see the word immigration in the news more?**

**What is the last thing you heard about migration from the news?**

**What is the history of migration?**

**Does your family have any migration stories?**



## Refugees

**What is a refugee? Where does the word come from?**

**What are the causes of becoming a refugee?**

**What do you know about a refugee's journey?**

**Do you know any famous refugees?**

**What is an asylum seeker?**

**What are the differences between asylum seekers and refugees?**

## History of Migration



**What is the history of migration, immigration and emigration?**

**What major historical events included voluntary or forced migration?**

**What movies or books feature migration?**

**How has migration changed or stayed the same over time?**

## Getting involved



**Why would refugees feel isolation or loneliness?**

**How can individuals demonstrate empathy for refugees?**

**What services exist to help refugees?**

**How do refugees show proof of resilience?**

# QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

The following Questions can be used in discussions, beginning of lessons, to generate debates or for simple reflection.

## Personal Questions for Students to Consider

- What role can I play as an individual in welcoming young refugees?
- What did I learn about Syria?
- What similarities are there between Scots and New Scots?
- How did my assumptions change from the beginning of the session to now?
- Can I relate to any of these young Syrians or the messages in the film?

## Thematic Questions for Students to consider

- What are some of the differences across the short films?
- What does it mean to be Scottish or a Scot or a New Scot?
- What Stereotypes are proven wrong through these films?
- What is implied about a woman's right to wear what she wants?



# Classroom

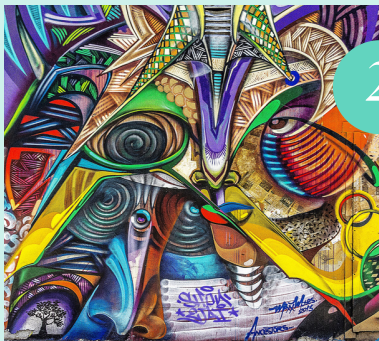
## ACTIVITY IDEAS

The following ideas can be worked on individually or in groups.



### 1 Preparing and conducting interviews (Drama)

Using the film as a starting point, students can prepare questions about aspects not answered in the video, questions that show sensitivity to the social issues refugees face and enact these conversations to further empathy



### 2 Creating a piece of art inspired by one or more films. (Art)

Considering the film's artistic intentions, visuality and message, students can create a collage, video, or art piece (drawing, painting) sculpture that speaks to the chosen short film.



### 3 Analyse and explain the artistic choices in one of the films. (English/ Modern Studies)

A written task using skills required in English on topics present in Modern Studies. Students can analyse, critique and improve the films by considering meaning and techniques.

# Classroom

## ACTIVITY IDEAS



4

### Research, Planning and Presentation

The presentation should show students have followed a clear line of argument to reach a substantiated conclusion and that they have used and referenced a range of sources including the films, pictures and written sources both primary and secondary.



5

### Dragon's Den\*

Students can work together in groups to create an initiative, project, or product that will help refugees feel welcome, and encourage community building. Aspects of this activity can be to research, present the research proposals, brainstorm and create a visual representation, and present to a panel.



6

### The right to wear the Hijab activity\*

Using Article 9 of the Human Rights act: the right to freedom of religion and belief is one of the rights protected by the Human Rights Act. Students can create a presentation or write on the issues surrounding a woman's right to wear the hijab if they want. This can also be linked to issues and case studies across Europe.

- There is a worksheet attached to this exercise below.



# Fill in the map of the Middle East

Did you know that the Middle East has countries in Africa and Asia, this is because the Middle east is not a continent, but a region used to identify these countries:

Bahrain, Palestine (Gaza Strip/Westbank), , Iran, Iraq, Israel, Jordan, Kuwait, Lebanon, Oman, Qatar, Saudi Arabia, Syria, Turkey, United Arab Emirates, and Yemen.

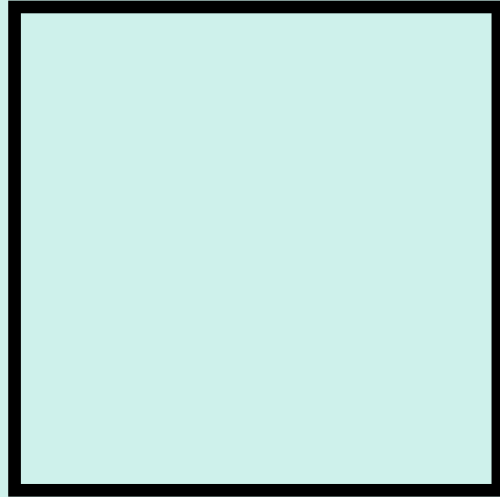
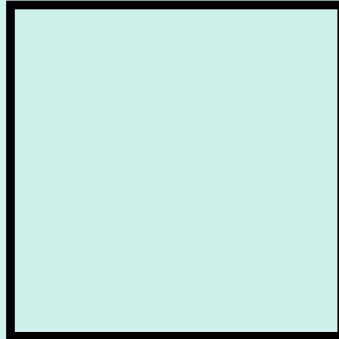


# Country Fact file

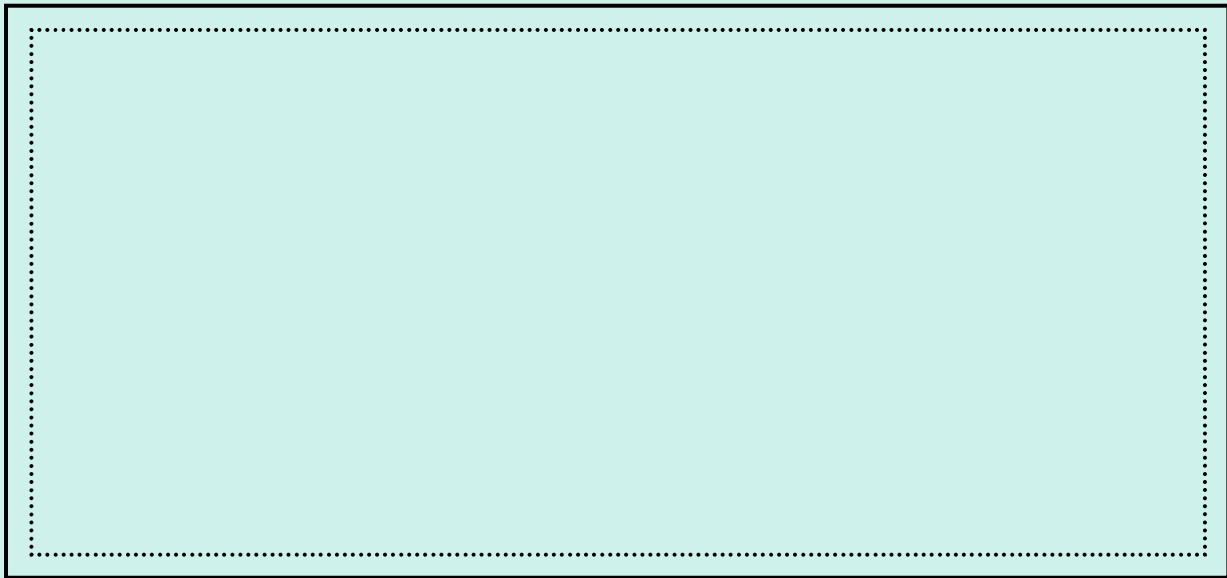
Flag

Map

Capital:  
Population:  
Language:  
,Currency:



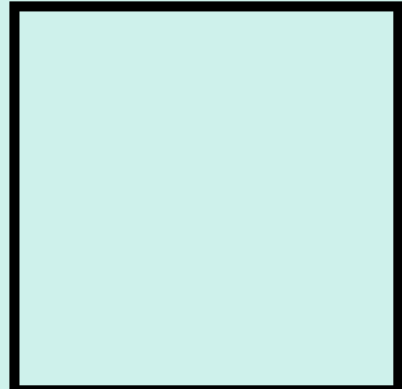
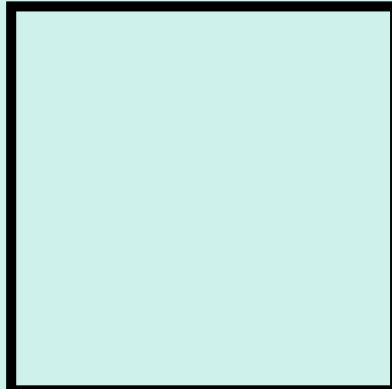
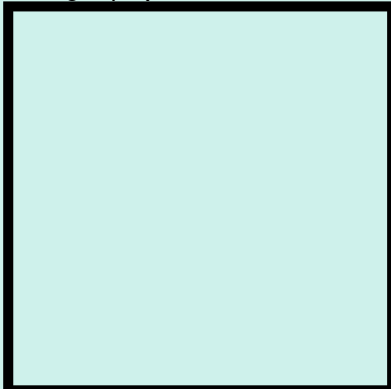
## Country details



Geography

Foods

Landmarks



# Dragon's Den Team Challenge

## Presentation Details

The presentation must contain the information listed below, this list is not exhaustive and it is encouraged that more information is included:

1. Company Name
2. Company Structure
3. Slogan/ Tag Line
4. Jingle- Catchphrase
5. Product Name
6. Target Market
7. Unique selling Points
8. Product Price
9. Benefits
10. Predicted Turnover



## Skills required

Creative thinking  
Time management  
Presentation skills  
Cooperation  
Planning and delegation

## Top Tips

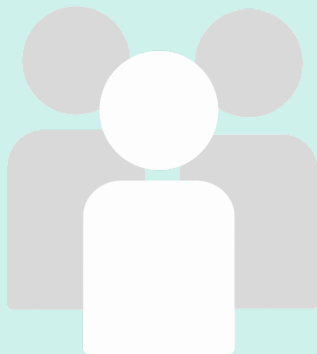
### Brainstorm ideas as a group

Think about the problems that exist? Which would you like to solve? Who would you like to help  
Which idea do you think has the most potential? Think of reasons why this is useful or needed.

**Words of Wisdom** -Think of important lessons/tips/knowledge that will make this product/idea/ initiative useful.

### The proof is in the Pudding

Look at the real world and see what is working, succeeding, is there anyway you can adapt these ideas to your purpose or problem you are trying to solve?



# Dragon's Den Team Challenge

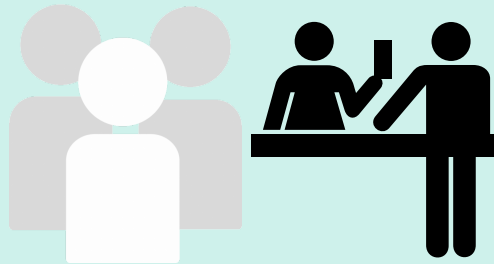
**Questions you must consider:**

**What are you selling, presenting?**

**What is the purpose or problem it is trying to solve?**

**How will you hook the buyers or audience?**

**What is the brand or products theme? Think meaning and aesthetics**



## **Oral Persuasion Techniques**

Facts and Statistics  
Humour and Mood  
Analogies, Allegories  
Sensory Language  
Repetition, Alliteration  
Similes and Metaphors

## **Potential Roles required (some roles can have more than one)**

**Cultural Awareness Expert**- responsible for being an expert in the sales etiquette of your country and the **country of the people you are helping**

**Market Analyst** - responsible for researching, and presenting products similar to yours, finding out what succeeds and what fails. Researching the target audience's expectations, running focus groups etc..

**Public Relations Expert**- Creating the presentation speeches, being the main speaker and structuring the way the team will present it's ideas and products to buyers and audiences.

**Marketing Specialist**- Creating the visuals, and presentations to accompany the presentations to audiences or buyers.

# The Right to wear the Hijab

**Article 9: Everyone has the right to freedom of thought, conscience and religion;**

1. This right includes freedom to change his religion or belief and freedom, either alone or in community with others and in public or private, to manifest his religion or belief, in worship, teaching practice and observance.

2. Freedom to manifest one's religion or beliefs shall be subject only to such limitations as are prescribed by law and are necessary in a democratic society in the interests of public safety, for the protection of public order, health or morals, or for the protection of the rights and freedoms of others.

## Main Questions to consider for your debate or argument

How will you state your position?

What points will you make?

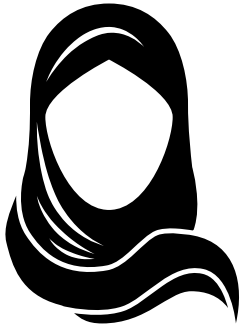
How do you expect your opponent to refute you?

How will you re-affirm your position?

How will you rebut your opponent's main points?

How will you summarize your position and be convincing?

# The Right to wear the Hijab



Remember debates are about confidence and gestures as well as the arguments and words you use.

Make sure that your team is on the same page and you all have the same knowledge and understanding of the research.

**Opening Statement:**

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Point you will make	How you expect to be refuted	How you will Rebut/Argue

# Charity Event

## FUNDRAISING IDEAS

Teachers, Departments or classes can research organisations that help Syrian refugees and organise different fundraising events. This is a great way to merge the classroom to real world issues, training students and children to have a positive impact on the world around them. Here are some ideas:



1

Bake sales



2

Art Exhibitions



3

Games Night



4

Auctions



5

Dress up Days



6

Karaoke



7

Craft Fairs



8

International Food Day



9

Hikes and Trials

# EXPLORE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNT



## Modern Studies

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- Understand the social issues surrounding New Scots in the UK and Scotland
- Bridge the gap between Scots and New Scots, encouraging similarities.
- Expose students to critical thinking of primary and secondary sources



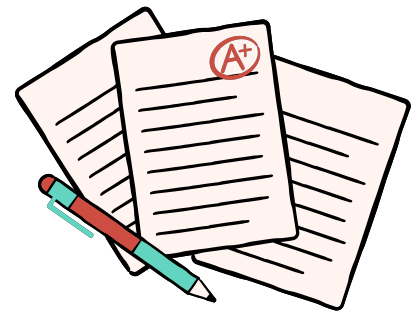
## Explain, in detail...

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- How a Syrian leaving behind family members may feel?
- Explain, in detail, what social issues young Syrians may experience when starting at a new school in Scotland.
- Explain, in detail, how Syrian refugees may struggle entering the world of work or finding employment upon arriving.
- Explain, in detail, how the language barrier may affect a refugee's life when arriving in Scotland.



## EXPLORE WHAT YOU'VE LEARNT



Using more than one of the short films, what conclusions can be drawn about

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- Lack of understanding around the Syrian war and Syrian refugees
- The experience of a refugee arriving in Scotland
- The position of Syrian women
- The dreams and hopes of the New Scots



## THE UNIVERSITY *of* EDINBURGH The Alwaleed Centre

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### **Syrian Futures**

The Edinburgh Alwaleed Centre is committed to encouraging a better understanding of Islam and the contemporary Muslim world through ground-breaking research, dynamic teaching and innovative outreach projects.

Based in the University of Edinburgh's School of Literature, Languages and Cultures and affiliated with Islamic and Middle Eastern Studies, the Alwaleed Centre is inherently interdisciplinary, connecting different schools and departments across the University of Edinburgh through its focus on contemporary Islam and the Muslim world.

The Edinburgh Alwaleed Centre is one of six academic centres based at leading universities in the UK, USA and Middle East, all endowed by Alwaleed Philanthropies.

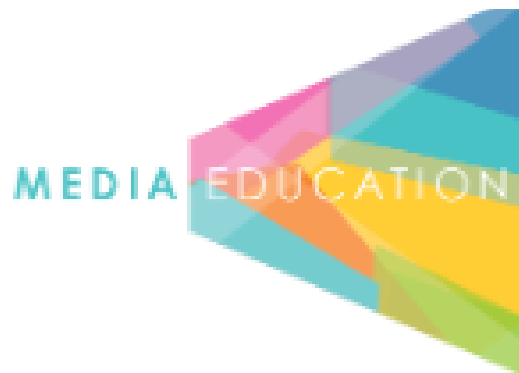
IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GET IN TOUCH OR CONTRIBUTE  
CONTACT US VIA EMAIL:

[syrian.futures@ed.ac.uk](mailto:syrian.futures@ed.ac.uk)

OR REACH OUT TO OUR PROJECT COORDINATOR:

[nadin.akta@ed.ac.uk](mailto:nadin.akta@ed.ac.uk)

0131 650 4165



Media Education collaborates with other organisations to get people and their lived experiences seen and heard in order to influence social change.

This creative media organisation based in Edinburgh uses films and podcasts to build bridges between people from all walks of life. Media Education teaches both technical and practical skills for media making and the real world of work. Participants further their learning and their confidence, giving participants a sense of belonging and allowing them to express their creativity for the sake of an equitable society.

## IF YOU WOULD LIKE TO GET IN TOUCH OR WORK ON A PROJECT



0131 313 8900



[info@mediaeducation.co.uk](mailto:info@mediaeducation.co.uk)



183 Dalry Road, Edinburgh, EH11 2EB

# OTHER USEFUL RESOURCES



## BRITISH RED CROSS- REFUGEES AND MIGRATION

[HTTPS://WWW.REDCROSS.ORG.UK/GET-INVOLVED/TEACHING-RESOURCES/REFUGEES-AND-MIGRATION](https://www.redcross.org.uk/get-involved/teaching-resources/refugees-and-migration)

**AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL UK**

## AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

[HTTPS://WWW.AMNESTY.ORG.UK/EDUCATION-RESOURCES-REFUGEE-ASYLUM-IMMIGRATION](https://www.amnesty.org.uk/education-resources-refugee- asylum-immigration)



## UNICEF UK

[HTTPS://WWW.UNICEF.ORG.UK/RIGHTS-RESPECTING-SCHOOLS/RESOURCES/TEACHING-RESOURCES/GUIDANCE-ASSEMBLIES-LESSONS/REFUGEE-CRISIS-EUROPE/](https://www.unicef.org.uk/rights-respecting-schools/resources/teaching-resources/guidance-assemblies-lessons/refugee-crisis-europe/)



## UNHCR- TEACHING ABOUT REFUGEES

[HTTPS://WWW.UNHCR.ORG/UK/TEACHING-ABOUT-REFUGEES.HTML](https://www.unhcr.org/uk/teaching-about-refugees.html)

