



UNHCR
The UN Refugee Agency

Teaching About Refugees

TEACHING ABOUT STATELESSNESS

AGES
15-18

Lesson plan for
the video ‘I Belong’

Watch the video story on

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tmVLD8uyJOk>

Before teaching this topic, take a look at our set of videos for teachers on statelessness. They explain the basics of what statelessness is and will help you answer questions your students may have.

https://www.youtube.com/playlist?list=PL9g_yp_6cf6qtjeDpQpabw0JGpFpFnDrl

UNHCR, the UN Refugee Agency, protects people forced to flee their homes because of conflict and persecution. We save lives, protect rights and help build better futures.

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ACTIVITY 1

What is statelessness?

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Students will understand that the word ‘statelessness’ means you have no nationality. They will understand some ways that someone could become stateless and will explore some consequences of being stateless.

STEP 1: Write the word ‘Statelessness’ on the board for students to see. Ask them to think about words and ideas that come to mind when they think of the word ‘stateless’, for example ‘country’ or ‘nationality’.

If necessary break the word down in two parts (‘State’ and ‘Less’) and explore what it could mean. Write these words or ideas down. If you are unable to elicit the meaning from the other words and conversation then tell the students what the word means.

‘Somebody who is stateless is someone who has no nationality. They will likely live in one country but they do not have a national identity or passport in that country, nor in any other country.’

STEP 2: First ask the students to discuss in groups or pairs the following questions for 5-10 minutes:

Which nationality do you have? How do you know you have it? How did you obtain it? Could you lose your nationality? How do you think people end up with no nationality?

Watch the video [Causes of Statelessness](#) with your pupils.

Afterwards ask students to write down in a group three different ways people could become or be born stateless. Ask them to share all their responses in the wider group and add any they have forgotten.

Possible responses:

If their father is not recognized at birth and their mother does not have the right to transfer her nationality to them.

If they come from an ethnic, religious, cultural, gender or social group that is being discriminated against by their government and the government takes away their nationality.

If they come from a country that breaks up into smaller countries and they do not meet the requirements of any of the new countries to have the nationality of that country.

As a child, if they are born to stateless parents.



ACTIVITY 2

Life, work and education

LEARNING OUTCOMES

Understand that Levan is an ordinary young man who has been born into an extraordinary situation. Empathize with the situation his life has put him in.

STEP 1: Watch the [I Belong video](#) with the students

Ask the students to write down how many things Levan misses out on because he is stateless.

STEP 2: Ask them to write down some of their favourite experiences in their lives and then look back and think about whether they would have been able to do them if they were stateless. Ask them to consider all the things Levan has not been able to do because he is stateless. (For example, travel to another country, go to school or university, have a well-paid job.)

STEP 3: Choose an activity on statelessness from the [Activity Guide for 15-18 year olds](#) to further embed the learning about this topic.