

Book List for Secondary Schools

Don't Stop Thinking about Tomorrow / written by Siobhan Curham

An uplifting story of friendship, unity and hope that highlights the important and topical issues surrounding young carers and young refugees.

Fourteen-year-old Stevie lives in Lewes with her beloved vinyl collection, her mum ... and her mum's depression. When Stevie's mum's disability benefits are cut, Stevie and her mother are plunged into a life of poverty. But irrepressible Stevie is determined not to be beaten and she takes inspiration from the lyrics of her father's 1980s record collection and dreams of a life as a musician. Then she meets Hafiz, a talented footballer and a Syrian refugee. Hafiz's parents gave their life savings to buy Hafiz a safe passage to Europe; his journey has been anything but easy. Then he meets Stevie... As Stevie and Hafiz's friendship grows, they encourage each other to believe in themselves and follow their dreams.

Either The Beginning or The End of the World / written by Terry Farish

For sixteen years, it's been just Sofie and her fisherman father living along the New Hampshire coast. Then Sofie meets Luke, an army medic back from Afghanistan. Sofie's dad orders her to stay away from him, but the pull is too strong: they can't obey. When her father decides to go south to find a better winter catch, he asks Sofie's estranged mother to stay with her. Sofie had been bitter at her mother's absence, denying any part of her mother's Cambodian heritage. Now she's forced to face her family's history. Luke and Sofie discover they both have their secrets, their ghosts, their wars. Together, they need to choose if they're at the beginning or the end.

Channeary / written by Steve Tolbert

When the Khmer Rouge attacks her small Cambodian fishing village, Channeary has to flee for her life, and eventually reaches the safety of a Buddhist monastery in Thailand, where she is offered a chance to come to Tasmania, another step into the unknown.

The Happiest Refugee / Ahn Do

A memoir about his life and about his family. The story follows Do's life beginning when he was a little boy who escaped Vietnam with his family and continuing to talk about his current success as a law graduate, comedian and media celebrity.

Dark Dreams: Australian refugee stories by young writers aged 11–20 years / edited by Sonja Dechian, Heather Miller and Eva Sallis

This unique anthology of essays, interviews, and stories is written by children and young adults. The stories are the finest of hundreds collected through a nationwide schools competition in 2002. The essays and stories represent many different countries and themes.

Currently out of print but used copies often available online.

For Every Child / adapted by Caroline Castle; illustrated by John Burningham; forward by Desmond Tutu

Drawing from the fifty-four principles adopted by the UN Convention of the Rights of the Child, this photo essay provides an in-depth look at fourteen of the declarations that affect a child's everyday existence.

A UNICEF publication – Rights for Every Child – uses illustrations from For Every Child with simple text which refers to many of the Rights as in the convention. It is available as a pdf - <https://www.unicef.org/rightsite/files/rightsforeverychild.pdf>

Jumping to Heaven / written by Katherine Goode

Children from Bosnia, Cambodia, El Salvador, Herzegovina, Iraq, Sudan, and Vietnam who have come to Australia to escape persecution are given a voice in this collection of short stories compiled from interviews with refugees. The stories evoke the sad, scary, thought-provoking, and sometimes amusing experiences of children and families who have displayed extraordinary courage and hope. This collection offers insight to bridge the gap between refugees and those permanently settled and gives youth a global perspective on the refugee experience.

Though written in 1997 so out of date with later government processes, this non-fiction work provides insight into the refugee experience for mature young people.

Walk in My Shoes / written by Alwyn Evans

This book tells of an Afghan refugee Gulnessa who struggles to make a life for herself and her family in Australia. The family is taken to a detention centre where they must prove their refugee status.

This book is described as suitable for secondary students.

A Country to Call Home: An Anthology on the Experiences of Young Refugees and Asylum Seekers / edited by Lucy Popescu

Focusing on the fate of refugee children and young adults, this book is aimed at children and adult readers alike, and features work from many. There are tales of home, and missing it; poems about the dangerous journeys undertaken and life in the refugee camps; stories about prejudice, but also stories of children's fortitude, their dreams and aspirations. The book implores us to build bridges, not walls. It is intended as a reminder of our shared humanity, seeking to challenge the negative narrative that so often cloud our view of these vulnerable young people, and prevent us giving them the empathy they deserve. It includes commissioned stories, flash fiction, poetry and original artwork.