1 million Syrian child refugees

24th August, 2013

There are now over one million child refugees because of the war in Syria. The United Nations called this number "a shameful milestone". The children were forced to leave Syria because it is too dangerous for them to stay in the country. Most of them are in Jordan, Turkey and Lebanon. They have recently started escaping to Europe and North Africa. The United Nations said: "This one millionth child refugee is not just another number. This is a real child ripped from home, maybe even from a family, facing horrors we can only begin to comprehend." Another 2 million children in Syria have no home. Half of Syria's 2 million refugees are children. Over 740,000 of these are under the age of eleven.

Syria's civil war started in March 2011. The UN says it is the worst refugee crisis for 20 years. The last situation as bad as Syria was the 1994 genocide in Rwanda. The UN high commissioner for refugees, Antonio Guterres, told reporters: "The youth of Syria are losing their homes, their family members and their futures. Even after they have crossed a border to safety, they are traumatised, depressed and in need of a reason for hope." The UN warned the world that the children face many dangers. Many are now used illegally for child labour. Others are sold for early marriages or for the sex trade. Very few of the children can go to any kind of school. The UN said just 118,000 of the children are in education.

Sources: *BBC / The Independent*

Writing

Foreign countries need to act now to stop the war in Syria. Discuss.

Chat

Talk about these words from the article.

child refugees / war / shameful / forced to leave / escaping / horrors / have no home / crisis / genocide / crossed a border / safety / traumatised / depressed / dangers

True / False

a) The UN said it was shameful there were so many child refugees. T / F

b) Most of the children have escaped to North Africa and Europe. T / F

c) The UN said the on millionth child refugee is just another number. T / F

d) A quarter of Syrian refugees are children. T / F

e) The UN said Syria's refugee crisis is the world's worst in two decades. T / F

f) The last crisis as bad as Syria was in Rwanda. T / F

g) The UN said the children are in danger even after they leave Syria. T / F

h) Just under 12,000 of the child refugees go to school. T / F

Synonym Match

1.	because of	a.	running away
2	shameful	b.	schooling
3.	escaping	c.	emergency
4.	comprehend	d.	due to
5.	under	e.	mass murder
6.	crisis	f.	young people
7.	genocide	g.	shocking
8.	youth	h.	sad
9.	depressed	i.	below
10.	education	j.	understand

Discussion – Student A

a) What do you know about the 1994 Rwandan genocide?

b) What did the commissioner mean when he said children are losing their futures?

c) How can doctors help children who are depressed and traumatised?

d) How can the world keep the children safe?

e) What do you think of a world in which such terrible things happen?

f) What will Syria be like this time next year?

g) What advice could you give to the children?

h) What questions would you like to ask the head of the UN?

Phrase Match

1. because of
2. The United Nations called this number
3. They have recently started
4. facing horrors we can only
5. 740,000 of these are under
6. civil
7. the worst refugee
8. after they have crossed
9. child
10. just 118,000 of the children are

a. begin to comprehend
b. in education
c. "a shameful milestone"
d. the war in Syria
e. crisis for 20 years
f. a border to safety
g. escaping to Europe
h. labour
i. the age of eleven
j. war

Discussion – Student B

a) What do you think about what you read?
b) How could the world let the number of child refugees rise to a million?
c) How shameful is this milestone?
d) How can the world help the child refugees?
e) How many more child refugees do you think there will be?
f) What do you think it is like for the children going to other countries?
g) Is the one millionth child really just another number?
h) What can you do to help the child refugees?

Spelling

1. a <u>muleafhs</u> milestone
2. The children were <u>ordcef</u> to leave
3. They have <u>nyrtlcee</u> started
4. <u>egnicasp</u> to Europe
5. facing <u>rrrohso</u>
6. begin to <u>mcepndheor</u>
7. Syria's <u>iilvc</u> war
8. the worst refugee <u>ssicir</u>
9. the 1994 <u>necdeigo</u> in Rwanda
10. <u>epdeerssd</u> and in need of a reason for hope
11. used <u>alglielyl</u> for child labour
12. sold for early <u>argeairsm</u>

Role Play

Role A – The USA
You think the USA is the best place for the refugees. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Lebanon, Saudi Arabia or inside Syria.

Role B – Lebanon
You think Lebanon is the best place for the refugees. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): the USA, Saudi Arabia or inside Syria.

Role C – Saudi Arabia
You think Saudi Arabia is the best place for the refugees. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Lebanon, the USA or inside Syria.

Role D – Inside Syria
You think inside Syria is the best place for the refugees. Tell the others three reasons why. Tell them things that are wrong with their places. Also, tell the others which is the worst of these (and why): Lebanon, Saudi Arabia or the USA.

Speaking – Syria dangers

Rank these and share your rankings with your partner. Put the best at the top. Change partners often and share your rankings.

- chemical weapons
- disease
- depression
- being shot
- being sold as a child worker
- not going to school
- joining an army
- losing touch with family

Answers – Synonym Match

1. d	2. g	3. a	4. j	5. i
6. c	7. e	8. f	9. h	10. b

Answers – True False

a T	b F	c F	d F	e T	f T	g T	h F

Answers to Phrase Match and Spelling are in the text.