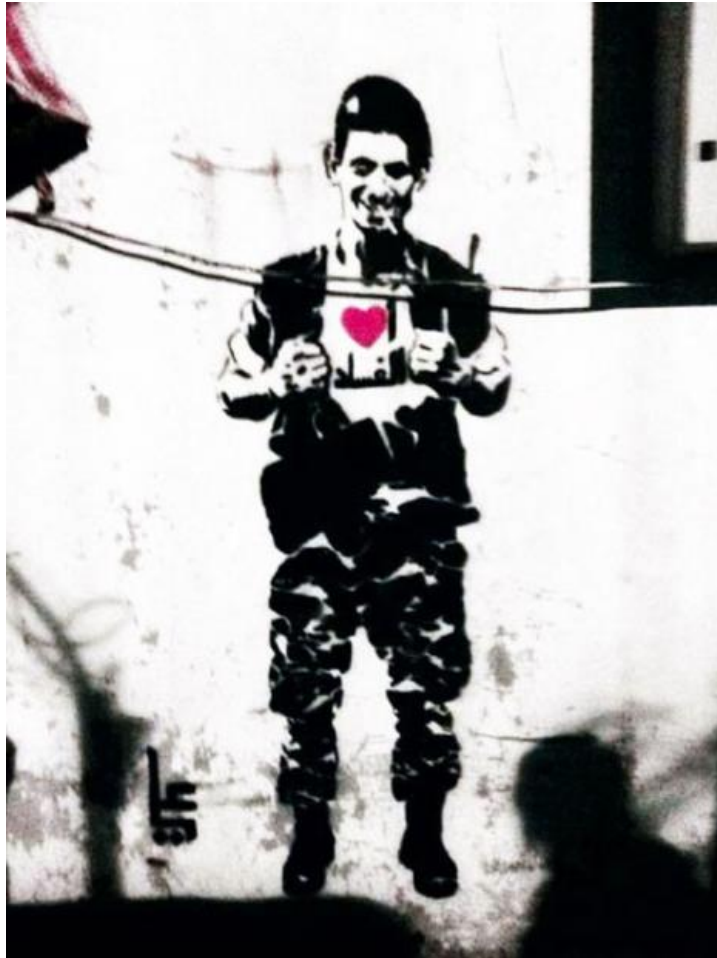


# *Who is involved in the Syrian Civil War? What are the consequences? Who are the refugees?*



*Lebanese policeman wearing an “I love corruption” shirt under his uniform*

## **Table of Contents**

Lesson on Syrian Civil War and *Refugee*  
Answer Key and Standards for H-SS  
Biography of Alan Graz

pages 2-32  
pages 33-35  
page 36

## Who is involved in the Syrian Civil War? What are the consequences of the war? Who are the refugees?

### Introduction: The Arab Spring. Why did political uprisings occur in Muslim countries all at once?

On a December day in 2010, a produce vendor named Mohamed Bouazizi in Tunisia stood in front of a government office and set himself on fire in protest, killing himself. The police and authorities harassed Bouazizi over his small business, and he was denied a hearing with the governor to address his complaints. His feeling of desperation and hopelessness drove him to make such a drastic public protest. His death became an inspiration for others to oppose the corrupt government, sparking a national revolution. Protestors armed themselves with political signs and phones—modern technology playing the key role with spreading news widely. Social media both fueled protests and communicated people’s democratic goals to the outside world. By the next month, their leader had quit, leaving the path open for radical governmental change. In turn, other nations followed the call to uprising, and their movements became today known as the “Arab Spring” or “Arab Awakening.” The word *spring* has a historical connotation and has been applied to other periods in history when revolutions resulted in government changes and increased democracy—such as 1848 in France and Germany, or 1968 in Czechoslovakia. Not limited to one nation, the people of North African and the Middle Eastern states led uprisings against their governments, because they wanted solutions to the chronic problems of corruption, unemployment and poverty they encountered in their lives. Though the protestors had high hopes, their movements were not always successful.



The original movement in Tunisia was able to topple its powerful leader and usher in a fairer government. However in other states, the results were not always so favorable. The political systems may have changed or altered, or in the worst-case situations, new political players stepped in to fill the void, leading to destructive civil war. The map above demonstrates the many different situations.

The Arab Spring also took place in Syria, but instead of bringing about radical transformations, a violent and bloody civil war broke out. The people of Syria today are still trying to bring stability to their homeland. The novel *Refugee* presents us with three situations of refugees, one concerns a



Syrian family who escapes from the civil war tearing their country apart for a better life in Europe. This lesson will work through the difficulties of the problems that they face but examining in detail the complexities of the violence and destruction brought about by political instability and civil war.

**Source 1: Tamir Sukkary, “Arab Awakening Explained,”**  
**September 25, 2013**



[bit.ly/Source1Awakening](https://bit.ly/Source1Awakening)



Tamir Sukkary is a community college professor who teaches political science in northern California. His classes are on American Government, International Relations and the politics of the Middle East. In this clip, he explains the history of the Arab Spring, including its origins and the legacy.

1. What led Mohamed Bouazizi to lead his protest against the government? Give specific details.

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2. How did technology and social media play an important role in popular uprisings?

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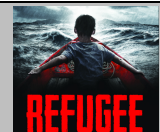
3. What was the situation in a different country? (He explains about Egypt or Libya, for example).

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**Source 2: Alan Gatz, *Refugee* Pages 32-33, 49**



Mahmoud is a young Syrian living a normal life with his family in Aleppo. He has the typical interests of any kid. While at home one afternoon, the violence of the civil war raging in his country reaches him and his family, forever marking their lives and pushing them to leave the country for their safety.

Mahmoud was just starting a new equation when he heard a sound over the Teenage Mutant Ninja Turtles theme song. A roar like a hot wind rising outside. In the second it took for the sound to grow from a breeze to a tornado, Mahmoud dropped his pencil, put his hands to his ears, and threw himself under the kitchen table.

By now he knew what an incoming missile sounded like.

*ShhhhhHHHHHH—THOOOOOOM!*

The wall of his apartment exploded, blasting broken bits of concrete and glass through the room. The floor lurched up under Mahmoud and threw him and the table and chairs back against the wall of the kitchen. The world was a whirlwind of bricks and broken dishes and table legs and heat, and Mahmoud slammed into a cabinet. His breath left him all at once, and he fell to the floor with a heavy thud in a heap of metal and mortar.

Mahmoud's ears rang with a high-pitched whine, like the TV when the satellite was searching for a signal. Above him, what was left of the ceiling light threw sparks. Nothing else mattered in that moment but air. Mahmoud couldn't draw a breath. It was like somebody was sitting on his chest. He thrashed in the rubble, panicking. He couldn't breathe. Couldn't breathe! He flailed wildly at the debris, digging and scratching at the wreckage like he could somehow claw his way back to a place where there was air.

And then his lungs were working again, raking in great gulps. The air was full of dust, and it scratched and tore at his throat as it went down, but Mahmoud had never tasted anything so sweet. His ears still rang, but through the buzz he could hear more thuds and booms. It wasn't just his building that had been hit, he realized. It was his whole neighborhood.

Mahmoud's head was hot and wet. He put a hand to it and came away with blood. His shoulder ached and his chest still seared with every hard, desperate breath, but the only thing that mattered now was getting to his mother. His sister. His brother.

Mahmoud pulled himself up out of the rubble and saw the building across the street in raw day light, like he was standing in midair beside it. He blinked, still dazed, and then he understood.

The entire outside wall of Mahmoud's apartment was gone...

Through the huge hole that used to be the wall of his apartment, Mahmoud saw gray-white clouds from missile strikes blooming all around. He shook his head, trying to clear the ringing, and spied his little brother. Waleed was sitting right where he had been before the attack, on the floor in front of the TV.

Only the TV wasn't there anymore. It had fallen five stories to the ground below, along with the outside wall.

**mortar:** plaster from the building

**rubble:** broken concrete  
**debris:** loose material, like rock or broken concrete

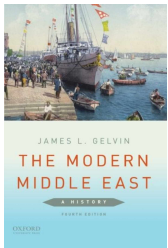
4. How could Mahmoud and his family have prepared themselves for the violence that entered their lives so shockingly?

5. As you read this passage, what shocks you most about the outbreak of violence? Explain.

## Part 1: Who is involved in the Syrian Civil War?

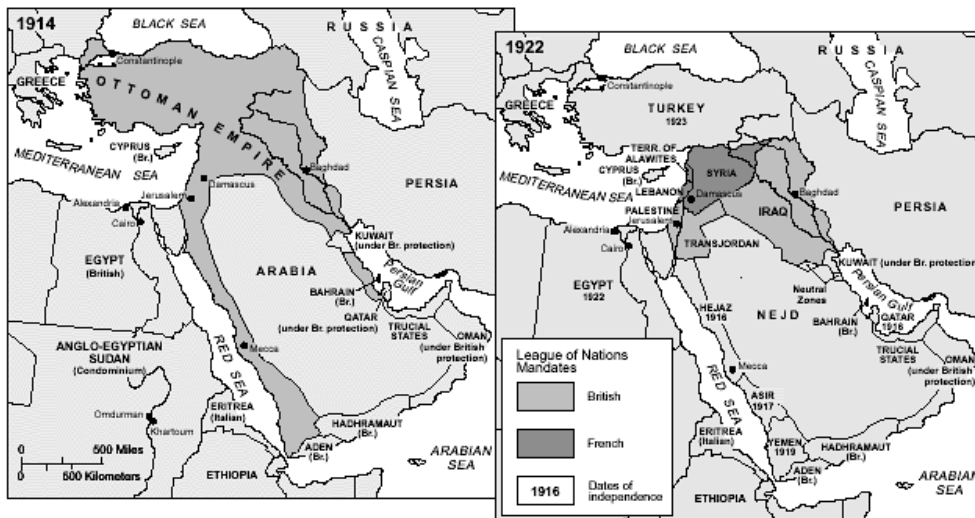
One place where the Arab Spring changed the situation radically is in Syria. The protests ignited a fire which led to a tragic situation. The unending instability and destruction have made normal life impossible for the everyday people who cannot escape the intense suffering in their lives. However, the problems in Syria did not simply result from the events of the last decade. By studying the long-term historical influences, we can see how a range of different problems (even from competing international interests) have contributed to the chaotic internal conflict. This part explores the war through three stages: the historical background, the multiple interests in competition, and an example of fighting the bloody siege of Aleppo.

### Source 3: James Gelvin, *The Modern Middle East: A History*



James L. Gelvin is a scholar of Middle Eastern history and a professor at UCLA. In this textbook, he explains how European intervention into the region resulted in the creation of Syria and other nations. They drew the borders according to their colonial interests and not necessarily according to the needs of the people in those lands. Before you starting the passage below, think about this question: What do you already know about the effects of European colonialism? As you read, consider how Dr. Gelvin explains the consequences of European colonialism in the Middle East.

The Middle East Before and After World War I Settlements, 1914–1922



The states that emerged in the Middle East in the wake of World War I were created in two ways. In the Levant and Mesopotamia, the site of present-day Syria, Lebanon, Israel/Palestine, Jordan, and Iraq, France and Britain constructed states. Guided by their own interests and preconceptions, the great powers partitioned what had once been the Ottoman Empire and created states where states had never before existed. The wishes of the inhabitants of those territories counted for little when it came to deciding their political future...

**Levant:** western part of the Middle East, such as Lebanon, Palestine, Israel

To understand the origins of the states that emerged in the Levant and Mesopotamia, it is necessary to return to World War I... European states divided themselves into two alliances. Britain, France, and Russia (and, after 1917, the United States) formed the core of the entente powers. Germany, Austria, and the Ottoman Empire formed the core of the Central Powers.

As soon as it became clear that the war would not be over quickly, each of the entente powers began to maneuver to be in a position to claim the spoils it desired in the Middle East in the event of victory... Starting in 1915, the entente powers began negotiating secret treaties that pledged mutual support for the territorial claims made by themselves or their would-be allies. By negotiating these treaties, entente powers hoped to confirm those claims...

Accordingly, after World War I, France got the mandate for the territory that now includes Syria and Lebanon while Britain got the mandate for the territory that now includes Israel, the Palestinian territories, Jordan, and Iraq... The states known as Syria, Lebanon, Israel, Jordan, and Iraq had never before existed, but were created under the auspices of France and Britain... Mandates were to be temporary “colonies” with equal access for all in trade.

But conciliation was not for everyone... the inhabitants of the region were never seriously consulted about their future. For example, the elected parliament of Syria that met after the war, the Syrian General Congress, declared that it wanted Syria to be independent and unified. By unity, they meant that Syria should include the territories of present-day Syria, Lebanon, Israel/Palestine, and Jordan. If Syria had to have a mandatory power overseeing it, a majority of the representatives declared, it should be the United States. Their second choice was Great Britain. For the representatives to the congress, France was unacceptable as a mandatory power. Nevertheless, a geographically diminished Syria went to France as a mandate...

The mandatory powers had absolute administrative control over their mandates. They could sever and join the territories under their control as they wished. Thus, the French took their geographically diminished Syria and rubbed salt into the wounds of those who had put their faith in the League's pledges. The French created what they thought would be a permanent Christian enclave on the coast by severing Lebanon from Syria. They included in Lebanon just enough territory to make it economically viable and strategically useful, but not enough to threaten Christian dominance—at least for the time being. They then divided and redivided the territory of present-day Syria into up to six ethnically and religiously distinct territorial ministates. While the French soon abandoned their ministate experiment, the local leaders they supported in each of them would remain a thorn in the side of Syrian governments for almost half a century.

Pages 186-194

**entente powers:** the alliance of Britain, France, and Russia

**conciliation:** stop of arguing, end of conflict

**mandatory powers:** the European powers who controlled the Middle Eastern mandates

**enclave:** a place or territory that is set apart

6. France and Britain were involved in the creation of the different nations of the region after World War I. How and why did their participation matter?

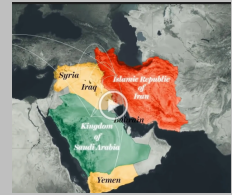
7. The peoples themselves did not have a say in their own nation-building processes. Why was it a problem to not include them?



**Source 4: Vox, “The Middle East’s Cold War, Explained,”**  
**July 17, 2017 (original video: 0:00 to 1:10, 1:35 to**  
**1:43, 8:23 to 10:05)**



[bit.ly/Source4ColdWar](https://bit.ly/Source4ColdWar)



As we learned above, the colonial interests of European nations were crucial over 100 years ago with the birth and creation of these countries. However, other outsider meddling has taken place. At the same time, the religious and political rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran has also affected and influenced the countries as well. This video explains how these two rivals have created a type of “Cold War” between them. The “Cold War” name here refers to the political economic “Cold War” between the United States and Soviet Union to see if capitalism or communism would become dominant around the world. With this type of “Cold War” between the Saudis and Iranians, they used other Muslim nations as proxies to attack each other. Instead of seeking a political economic dominance with the world order, they have sought to define Islam itself and become the religious center for Muslims around the world. This video provides an introduction to the history of this rivalry, and of course the violent results that it has produced.

8. This video speaks about the rivalry between Saudi Arabia and Iran. Explain it in your own words. What is the reason for tensions between these two nations?

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9. How has the Saudi-Iranian rivalry led to clashes and violence elsewhere? List the ways that they intervene in the politics of other countries.

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10. Consider the nations of the region. They have been subjected to the rivalries of European colonialism. They have also been caught between the rivalry of Saudi Arabia and Iran. In what ways could these outsider tensions lead to major problems in each of the nations? Do you think it is a big problem to be caught between these rivalries?

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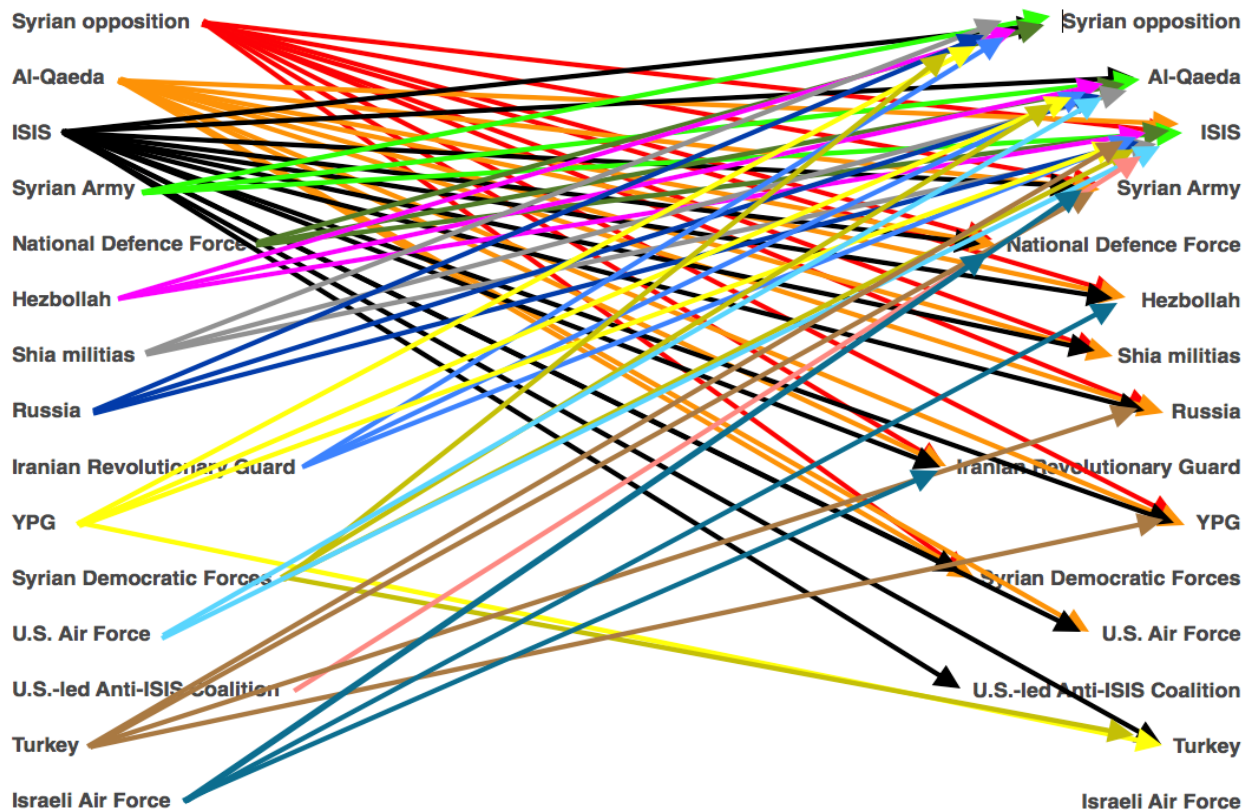
11. As Americans, we value our independence. How would you feel if so many foreign influences and rivalries intervened in our politics and economy?

**Source 5: Charles Lister, “This \*simple\* chart shows all states of hostility currently being played out on #Syria’s territory,” February 13, 2016**



The Syrian Civil War started out as a part of the Arab Spring. Local rebels began fighting against the repressive government of Bashar al-Assad for control of their country. Over the years, however, several other players have joined the fight, and the sides involved have become unbelievably complicated. The chart below shows just how complex the situation is with all of the different participants and their stakes. The arrows point from a group to everyone it is currently fighting. It demonstrates how the historical interference of foreign powers continues in Syria today in their civil war. The chart was created by Charles Lister, a fellow and director of the Middle East Institute—a research group that provides information and analysis on the region. His goal is to promote greater understanding between the peoples through expert research. Study the chart try to make sense of this interlocking web of conflicts in Syria.

[https://twitter.com/Charles\\_Lister/status/698609742155919364](https://twitter.com/Charles_Lister/status/698609742155919364)



12. Before you start to analyze the details here, explain how complex the war is. How do you feel trying to make sense of what you see?

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13. Which group seems to have the most enemies in Syria? Which one has the least?

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14. This chart attempts to explain a complex situation as simply as possible to us as foreigners, but in the end it is quite confusing. What might this chart look like for the daily life of Syrians? Who might they feel are their allies or their enemies?

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**Source 6: Alexander Pearson and Lewis Sanders, "Syria conflict: What do the US, Russia, Turkey and Iran want?" January 23, 2019**

**Website**  <http://bit.ly/Source6Want>



Alexander Pearson and Lewis Sanders are journalists for *Deutsche Welle*, Germany's international broadcaster. In this article, offer four case studies and examine the position where the major international players of the Syrian civil war stand. Open the page and choose one country to read (US, Russia, Turkey or Iran). Use the information from their article online to answer the questions below. You can then share your findings with your classmates to compare your conclusions about foreign intervention into Syria.

15. Which country have you chosen to examine?

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16. Which side (or sides) does this country support in the war? What is their reason to support?

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17. Who is this country against? Why do they see them as the enemy? Go back to the chart in the previous section above and use it to help explain your answer.

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18. What do they want to gain from their participation the war?

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19. How do you feel about this country (and others) participating in the Syrian Civil War? Explain your position citing evidence from the article.

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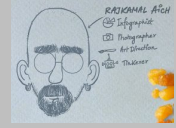
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Fill out the chart based on what you learn about each country's foreign intervention.

	<b>United States</b>	<b>Russia</b>	<b>Turkey</b>	<b>Iran</b>
Which side does this country support and why?				
Who is this country fighting against?				
What do they gain from their participation?				
How do you/your fellow students feel about this country's participation?				



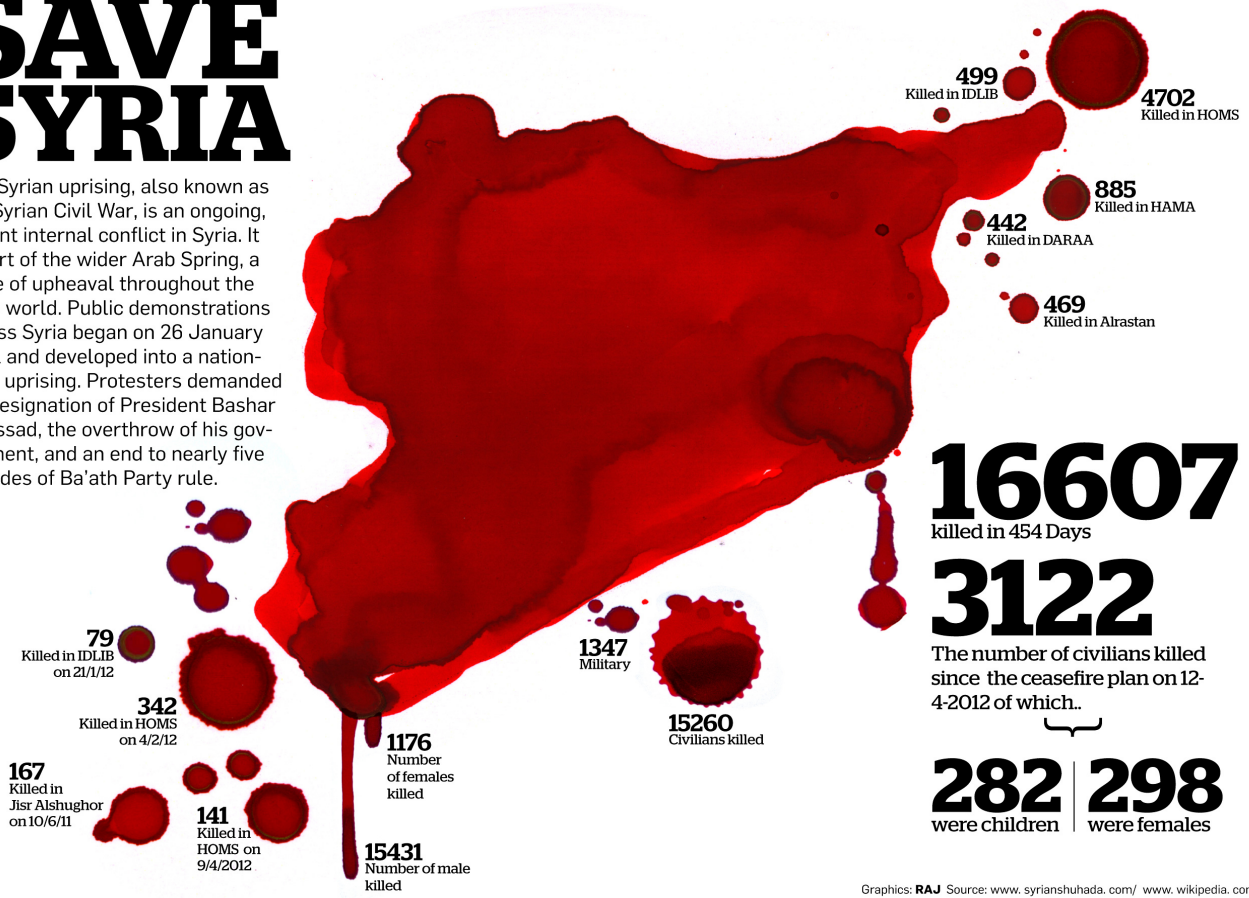
Source 7: Raj Kamal, “Save Syria,” June 16, 2012



Raj Kamal is a “data visualizer” and photographer based in India. He creates infographics and visual presentations to explain current issues and trends. In this image, Kamal makes explicit the bloody devastation that has engulfed Syria because of the civil war that began in 2011. These numbers are from a year after the fighting began, so sadly, they have grown only higher today. Study these numbers to get a sense of how intense the devastation was from the very start.  
<https://www.flickr.com/photos/rajkamalaich/7378956030/in/album72157600514123/>

# SAVE SYRIA

The Syrian uprising, also known as the Syrian Civil War, is an ongoing, violent internal conflict in Syria. It is part of the wider Arab Spring, a wave of upheaval throughout the Arab world. Public demonstrations across Syria began on 26 January 2011 and developed into a nationwide uprising. Protesters demanded the resignation of President Bashar al-Assad, the overthrow of his government, and an end to nearly five decades of Ba'ath Party rule.



Graphics: RAJ Source: www.syrianshuhada.com/ www.wikipedia.com

20. The infographic mentions the ancient city of Homs. This was the “capital of the revolution” from where the local Arab Spring began. In the course of the war, the town has been obliterated, and the rebels have completely withdrawn from this stronghold. Today, few people have returned, and large parts of Homs are still abandoned and destroyed. What do these numbers from Homs tell you about the fighting there?

21. At that time, over 15 thousand civilians had been killed, and among them, nearly 600 were women and children. What does it mean that so many non-combatants have lost their lives in the civil war?

22. Bashar al-Assad has a reputation for being a brutal and violent ruler. What does it mean when the government of Syria kills so many of its people? Consider what would happen if the same thing were to happen here.

**Source 8: Brice Hall, “The siege of Aleppo,” February 21, 2016**



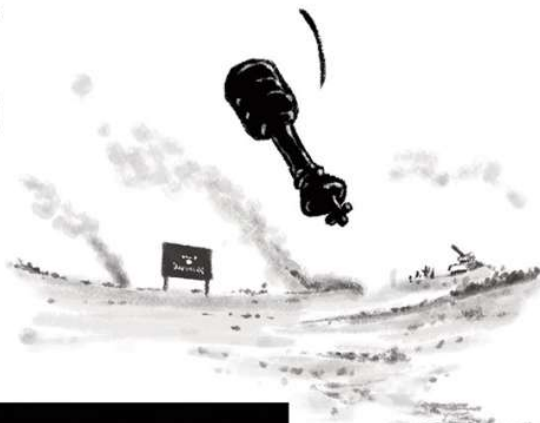
Brice Hall is an artist and multimedia designer at the *National Post*, a Canadian newspaper from Toronto. He uses his illustrations to tell stories across print and digital platforms. In this infographic, he describes one of the most destructive battles of the Syrian Civil War: the siege of Aleppo. Before the war broke out, Aleppo was the largest and most prosperous Syrian city. Hall explains the positions of the different national groups fighting (Assad’s government army, Syrian rebels, Kurdish militias and the Islamic State) and the results from the long state of war. The map also shows how territory is divided among them. As probably already know, the players involved are really complex!

<https://nationalpost.com/news/aleppo-is-under-siege-its-fall-could-be-a-turningpoint-in-the-syrian-civil-war>



# THE SIEGE OF ALEPPO

The Syrian regime is set to encircle and besiege Aleppo. Previous sieges in other rebel-held towns have seen a mass exodus of refugees, a campaign of starvation, and a humanitarian crisis. The battle for Aleppo is perhaps the most important fight in a five-year civil war, and one that could hand ultimate victory to Bashar al-Assad.



## THE KURDS

Kurdish militias have exploited what is happening around Azaz by pushing eastwards from their enclave in Afrin. Turkey has accused the Kurdish Popular Protection Units (YPG) of advancing on Azaz and has responded by shelling militia units.

"Azaz is a symbol for Turkey. If the Kurds take Azaz, then they could join the land gap between their two enclaves, Kobane and Afrin," said Balanche. The Kurds are also preparing to move in on ISIL-held areas, starting with Jarablus just east of the Euphrates.

## RUSSIA

Russian airpower has been helping Assad forces by attacking anti-opposition forces while claiming to be targeting ISIL. Jets have also protected Russian bases in Latakia and Tartus from rebels.

## THE AZAZ CORRIDOR

A vital weapons supply route from Turkey to Aleppo for the rebels. On Feb 2, Syrian forces — backed by Russian airpower — severed the northern road from Turkey to Aleppo. "It may prove to be a turning point in the war," wrote analyst Fabrice Balanche from the Washington Institute for Near East Policy think tank.



Urban area Areas of control As of Dec. 2015

## TURKEY AND SAUDI ARABIA

Both countries have been frustrated by Western failures in the region and the intervention of Russia and Iran. Balanche said they could respond by setting up a new rebel umbrella group, send anti-aircraft missiles to certain brigades, or open a new front in Northern Lebanon threatening Assad's Alawite heartland. "The question is, do Riyadh and Ankara have the means and willingness to conduct such a bold, dangerous action?" wrote Balanche.

## ISIL

In the midst of the civil war looms the Islamic State of Iraq and the Levant (ISIL). Subject to intense bombing by the U.S. and the West, the group has been operating independently of other jihadist groups in Syria with the intent of setting up its own caliphate.

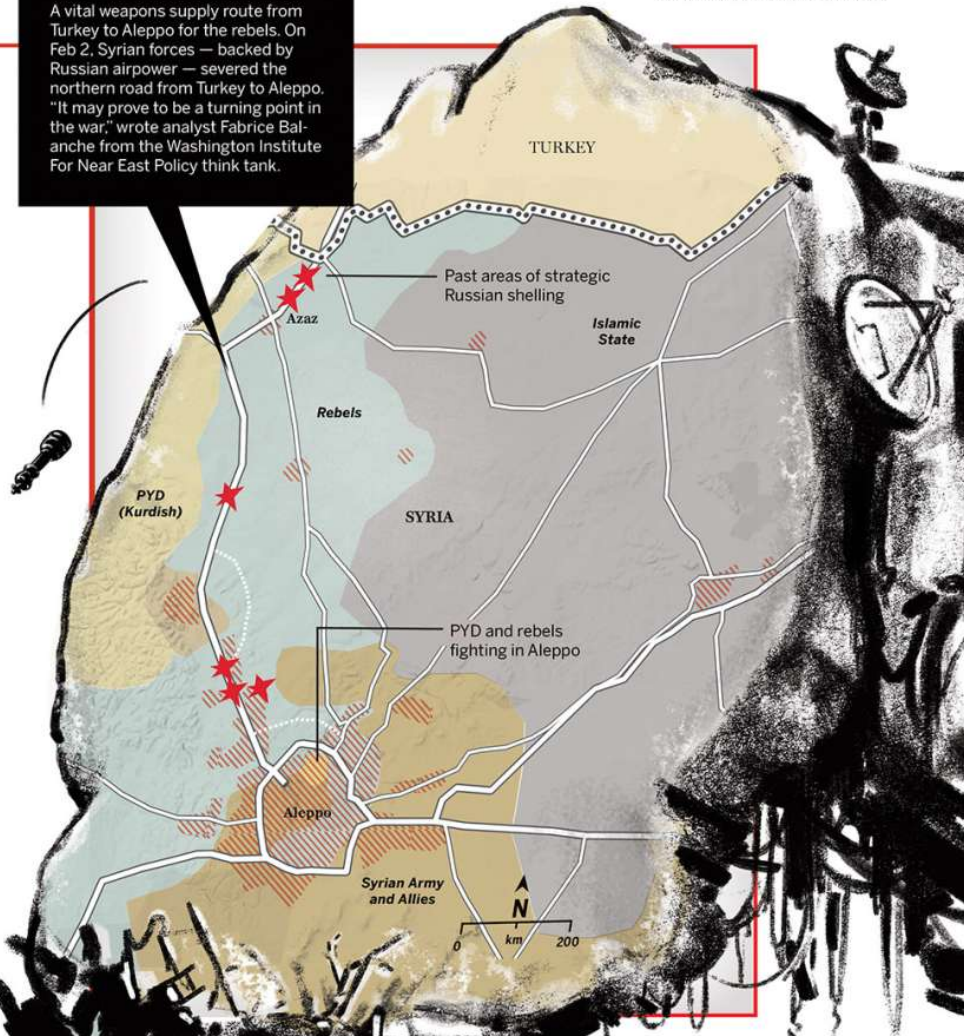
## ENCIRCLING ALEPPO

With the northern road cut, the next target could be the road from Aleppo to the rebel-controlled western border crossing of Bab al-Hawa. Meanwhile, northern suburbs of Aleppo are under attack by Hezbollah forces in a bid to close the road called "Castello" by which rebels in the east of the city are supplied. Syrian and Russian efforts are expected to focus on the countryside west of Aleppo.

"The regime and its allies will not try to retake this area quickly, since the risk of heavy losses from urban warfare is too great. The best solution is to surround it and wait," wrote Balanche. Syrian aircraft recently dropped leaflets over parts of Aleppo, warning militants that "the belt is tightening around you" and urging their surrender.

## REFUGEES

Aid groups estimate that more than 100,000 people have left Aleppo in the past two weeks. The UN believes the fighting could displace another 150,000 who would pour toward the Turkey border.



## SIEGE AND STARVATION

There are fears 300,000 people could be trapped in Aleppo. The Syrian regime has used siege warfare against Homs and the border town of Madaya. In January this year, it was reported that residents of Madaya — under siege for seven months — had resorted to eating their pets and grass.

The regime has used barrel bombs and cluster munitions on Aleppo and Leon Wieseltier, an expert with the Brookings Institution think tank, and former Liberal leader Michael Ignatieff recently warned that the city was about to become the new Sarajevo or Srebrenica.

"If we do not come to the rescue of Aleppo, if we do not do everything we can to put a stop to the suffering that is the defining and most damaging abomination of our time, Aleppo will be a stain on our conscience forever," they wrote in the Washington Post.

23. Study the map. Which group controls Aleppo? Who has more territory outside of the city?

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24. Thousands of civilians are trapped in Aleppo. These people face battles coming in from all sides. Why would it be hard for them to choose sides in the war?

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25. Why would refugees from the siege want to escape to Turkey? Study the map and give an answer why this a path to choose.

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**Source 9: Alan Gratz, *Refugee* Pages 87-89**



After a long and dangerous car ride north, Mahmoud and his family finally have made it to the border with Turkey. This country represents a safe haven to escape to and leave the violence behind. Mahmoud describes to us the scene as many families wait there hoping to cross and find new lives.

It was hard to see for all the people. He stood in a long line with his family, waiting at the border to gain admission into Turkey, near the city of Kilis. Around them were countless more Syrian families, all hoping to be let in. They carried everything they owned with them, sometimes in suitcases and duffel bags, but more often stuffed into pillowcases and trash bags. The men wore jeans and T-shirts and tracksuits; the women wore dresses and *abayas* and *hijabs*. Their children looked like miniature versions of them, and acted like miniature adults too—there was very little crying and whining, and none of the kids were playing.

They had all walked too far and seen too much.

After leaving the car behind, Mahmoud and his family had followed the map on their phone, skirting cities held by Daesh and the Syrian army and the rebels and the Kurds as best they could. Google Maps told them it would be an eight-hour walk, and they split the journey up by sleeping in a field. It was hot out by day but it got cold at night, and Mahmoud and his family had left all their extra clothes in the car in their haste to escape.

The next morning they had seen the people.

Dozens of them. Hundreds. Refugees, just like Mahmoud and his family, who had left their homes in Syria and were walking north to Turkey. To safety. Mahmoud and his

**abayas:** a full-length dress worn by Muslim women  
**hijab**—a head-covering worn by Muslim women

**Daesh:** ISIS, Islamic State of Iraq and Syria, the term *Daesh* is used to discredit the terrorist group as they are not the official state of Iraq and/or Syria



family had fallen into step with them and disappeared among their ranks. Invisible, just as Mahmoud liked it. Together the shambling throng of refugees was ignored by the American drones and the rebel rocket launchers and the Syrian army tanks and the Russian jets. Mahmoud heard explosions and saw smoke clouds, but no one cared about a few hundred Syrian people leaving the battlefield.

And now they were in line with him, all those hundreds of people and thousands more, and they weren't invisible anymore. Turkish guards in light green camo gear with automatic weapons and white surgical masks over their faces walked up and down the line, staring at each of them in turn. Mahmoud felt like he was in trouble. He wanted to look away, but he was worried that might make the guards think he was hiding something. But if he looked right at them, they would notice him, maybe pull him and his family out of line.

Mahmoud stared straight ahead at his father's back instead. His father's shirt was stained at the armpits, and with a quick sniff of his own shirt Mahmoud realized he stank too. They had walked for hours in the hot sun without a bath, without a change of clothes. They looked tired and poor and wretched. If he were a Turkish border guard, he wouldn't have let in any of these dirty, squalid people, himself included.

Mahmoud's father kept their papers tucked into his pants under his shirt, along with all of their money—the only other things they owned now besides two phones and two chargers. When Mahmoud and his family finally got to the front of the line, late in the day, Mahmoud's father presented their official documents to the border agent. After what seemed like an eternity of looking over their papers, the border guard finally stapled temporary visas onto their passports and let them through.

They were in Turkey! Mahmoud couldn't believe it. Step after step, kilometer after kilometer, he'd begun to think they would never, ever escape Syria. But as relieved as he was, he knew they still had so very far to go.

Pages 87-89

**shambling throng:** a group of people having a difficult time walking

**wretched:** a person feeling very badly

26. How did the family know how to make it to Turkey? What tools and technology did they use?

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27. There are numerous families beside them waiting at the border crossing. Put yourself in their position. What kinds of worries would they be feeling? Why would they be nervous?

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## Part 2. What are the consequences of the war?

The civil war in Syria has continued to this day since 2011. The results have been extremely negative. The country has lost all stability and its people suffer daily. In this part, we consider the consequences of such intense, chaotic and continuous warfare within the country.

**Source 10: David W. Lesch and James Gelvin, “Assad Has Won in Syria. But Syria Hardly Exists,” January 11, 2017**



David Lesch and James Gelvin are both university professors who teach classes on and research about Middle East history. In this op-ed (newspaper essay written to express their professional opinion), they show the reality of the war that is still ongoing today. Even though President Assad may be winning, the nation that he rules over does not exist as it once did. The citizens are poor, the infrastructure destroyed, and the economy in ruins. Syria needs more help than just weapons war funds. Its people need a lot of help to recover and reconstruct.

<https://www.nytimes.com/2017/01/11/opinion/assad-has-won-in-syria-but-syria-hardly-exists.html>

Now that forces supporting the Syrian government have completed the takeover of Aleppo, and Russia, Turkey and Iran have negotiated a tenuous cease-fire, it is more than likely that President Bashar al-Assad and the regime he oversees will continue to govern Syria, in one form or another. In an interview with French media published last week, Mr. Assad stated that Aleppo signaled a “tipping point in the course of the war” and that the government is “on the way to victory.”

**tenuous:** weak, not long-lasting

But if that is the case, what will Mr. Assad actually win?

Let’s take a look at the numbers. (While the following statistics are estimates, they will, if anything, get worse with the continuing matrix of wars in Syria.) More than 80 percent of Syrians live below the poverty line. Nearly 70 percent of Syrians live in extreme poverty, meaning they cannot secure basic needs, according to a 2016 report. That number has most likely grown since then. The unemployment rate is close to 58 percent, with a significant number of those employed working as smugglers, fighters or elsewhere in the war economy. Life expectancy has dropped by 20 years since the beginning of the uprising in 2011. About half of children no longer attend school — a lost generation. The country has become a public health disaster. Diseases formerly under control, like typhoid, tuberculosis, Hepatitis A and cholera, are once again endemic. And polio — previously eradicated in Syria — has been reintroduced, probably by fighters from Afghanistan and Pakistan.

Upward of 500,000 are dead from the war, and an untold number of Syrians have died indirectly from the conflict (the price for destroying hospitals, targeting health care professionals and using starvation as a weapon). With more than two million injured, about 11.5 percent of the prewar population have become casualties. And close to half the population of Syria is either internally or externally displaced. A 2015 survey conducted by the United Nations refugee agency looking at Syrian refugees in Greece found that a large number of adults — 86 percent — had secondary or university education. Most of them were under 35. If true, this indicates that Syria is losing the very people it will most need if there is to be any hope of rebuilding in the future.

<p>The cost of reconstruction will be astronomical. A March 2016 study estimated that the total economic loss as a result of the conflict was \$275 billion; industries across the country are decimated. Added to this will be the cost of needed repairs to infrastructure, which the International Monetary Fund estimates to be between \$180 billion and \$200 billion. Paying for rebuilding would require uncharacteristic generosity from the international community, but there is no reason to believe other countries would want to reward Mr. Assad for out-brutalizing the other side. His allies Russia and Iran have their own economic woes and are unlikely to be of much help.</p> <p>And how would Mr. Assad rule the rump state? Pre-existing patronage networks have been shattered and replaced by semi-independent warlords, militias or local governing bodies. This is even the case in government-controlled areas, where pro-regime militias and gangs who remained loyal would expect rewards. Indeed, the Syrian leadership grossly underestimates how far the Syrian population as a whole has moved away from it. Syrians by and large have for years now been empowered by living, surviving and governing on their own. It is an utter delusion if the regime thinks it can return to anything close to the status quo ante.</p> <p>The Syrian government may have a representative to the United Nations, have embassies in some countries, stamp passports and print currency, but it is hardly a state. Mr. Assad's control, power and legitimacy have been severely circumscribed, whether he and his supporters know it or not. He will have to depend on continuing large-scale assistance from outside if he wants to restore even a portion of what Syria was. But it is a new Syria. He is the one who will have to reshape his political system to fit this new reality, rather than the other way around.</p>	<p><b>International Monetary Fund:</b> a global organization that provides loans and other economic aid</p> <p><b>circumscribed:</b> limited</p>
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28. What are the real-life problems that the people of Syria face? List here at least three problems that you can identify, and give a reason why each are so detrimental.

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29. Why will the future Syria need so much money? Consider what needs to be rebuilt and what the government would spend the money on.

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30. The [Global Policy Forum](#) defines a *failed state* as a country which “can no longer perform basic functions such as education, security, or governance, usually due to fractious violence or extreme poverty.” After reading this article, what evidence can you cite to show that the Syria of today meets this definition?

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**Source 11: Sheena McKenzie and Mark Oliver, “How seven years of war turned Syria’s cities into ‘hell on Earth,’” March 15, 2018**



In this CNN report, Sheena McKenzie and Mark Oliver share photographs of different cities to show the extent of the war’s destruction. Architectural masterpieces dating back centuries have been annihilated. Bustling marketplaces turned ghostly quiet. Necessary mosques, hospitals, schools, roads have all been turned into dust. Their survey takes us to different locations, such as the national capital of Damascus, the Syrian commercial heart of Aleppo, and the Zaatari Refugee Camp in neighboring Jordan. Review a selection of their pictures –before-and-after satellite images and a photograph of the destruction– and consider the toll that this civil war has taken on Syria by answering the questions. <https://www.cnn.com/2018/03/15/middleeast/syria-then-now-satellite-intl/index.html>





**Damascus** is one of the oldest continually inhabited cities on Earth and the seat of power of Assad's government. Its historical heart has been saved, but the outer suburbs have been pounded to near oblivion. The Jobar neighborhood, on the eastern border, has suffered some of the worst damage.

Before 2009:



In 2018:



31. Compare the two satellite views of Jobar. Describe the differences that you notice.

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A scene from the ground:



32. Study the on-the-ground image of the city. What would life be like for the residents there?

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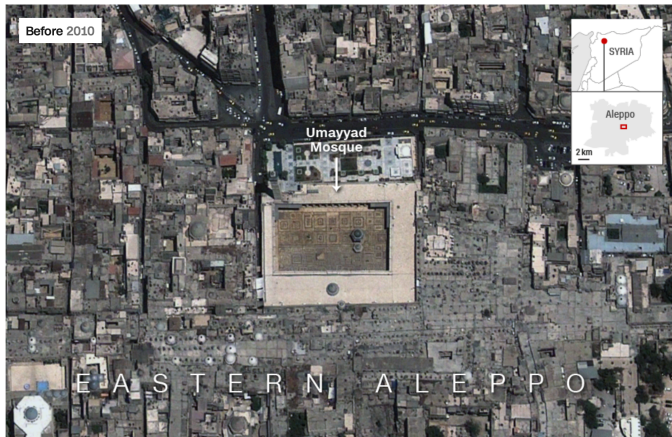
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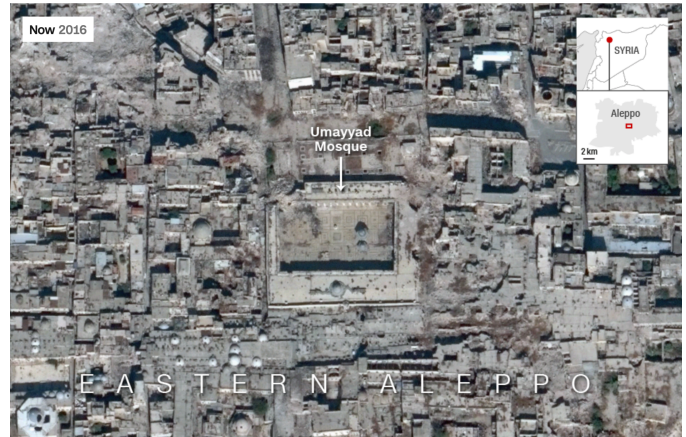


**Aleppo** was once the commercial heart of Syria with more than 2 million residents. It experienced the fiercest battles of the war and today is a crumbling and bloodstained site of ruins. Most areas still require reconstruction on a grand scale. The scene below is from the old city and its 12th century Umayyad Mosque which was a protected cultural site (UNESCO World Heritage).

Before 2010:



In 2016:



33. Compare the two satellite views of Aleppo. Describe the differences that you notice.

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A scene from the ground:



34. Study the on-the-ground image of the mosque. How do you think that Muslim worshipers feel upon seeing the destruction of their holy site?

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**The Zaatari Refugee Camp** is a brand-new city in the desert created in 2012 in the neighboring Jordan, just 7.5 miles from the border. It is home to almost 80,000 Syrian refugees, making it the fourth-largest city in that country. This semi-permanent settlement has its own schools, hospitals and even a collection of shops. For its residents, this camp is not a permanent solution, but they are left with few other options. Their hometowns have been destroyed by war and unlikely to be rebuilt soon. With millions of Syrians fleeing their homeland, the humanitarian burden is overwhelming Jordan.

Before 2010:



In 2018:



35. Compare the two satellite views of Zaatari. Describe the differences that you notice.

A scene from the ground:



36. Study the scene of the refugee camp. How would it feel to live in this type of conditions?





Mahmoud and his family are stuck in Turkey, hoping for a smuggler to take them from Izmir in Turkey on a boat to Greece. They have only a limited amount of money and they are trying to make it all the way to Germany. From here they still have a long way to go on their journey. This passage details their interactions with the smuggler who keeps them with hope but provides no solutions.

Mahmoud stood in a wet parking lot with his family, a light drizzle making everything slick and damp. Down past a pebbly brown beach, the Mediterranean Sea churned like a washing machine. A huge black-and-red cargo ship slid by on the horizon.

“No. No boat today,” the Syrian man who was working for the Turkish smugglers told them. “Tomorrow.”

“But I was told it would be today,” Mahmoud’s father said. “We hurried to get here today.”

The smuggler raised a hand and shook his head. “No, no. You have money, yes? Tomorrow. You will get a text tomorrow.”

“But where are we supposed to go?” Mahmoud’s mother asked the smuggler.

Mahmoud couldn’t believe it. They had spent two long days in cars and buses, trying to get here on time for the boat Dad had hired to take them across the sea to Greece. And now there was no boat.

“There’s a hotel on the next block,” the smuggler said. “They take Syrians.”

“We’re trying to save money. We’re going all the way to Germany,” Dad told him.

“There’s a park nearby,” the smuggler said.

“A park? You mean sleep outside? But I have a baby...” Mom said, gesturing to Hana in her arms.

The smuggler shrugged as if it didn’t matter to him. His phone rang and he turned away to take it. “Tomorrow,” he told Mahmoud’s parents over his shoulder. “You will get a text tomorrow. Be ready.”

...

The smuggler had just told them their boat wasn’t leaving tonight. Again. “No boat today. Tomorrow. Tomorrow,” he’d told Mahmoud’s father.”

It was exactly the same thing he’d told Mahmoud’s father the day before. And the day before that. And every day for the last week. A text would come, telling them to hurry—hurry!—out to the beach, and every time they would pack up what few things they owned, grab the life jackets, and rush through the streets of Izmir to this parking lot, and every time there would be no boat waiting for them.

First it was the weather, the smuggler said. Then another family that was supposed to go with them hadn’t arrived yet. Then it was the Turkish Coast Guard patrols. Or the boat wasn’t ready. There was always some reason they couldn’t leave. It was like some cruel school-yard game of keep away.

Mahmoud and his family were at their wits’ end. This off-and-on-again business was tearing them apart.

37. Mahmoud and his family must spend a lot of money to make it to safety. Consider what you have read here. What are the expenses that they must cover on their journey to Germany?

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38. What are the reasons why the smuggler's ship has not arrived?

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39. Why didn't Mahmoud's father give up hope? Why was it necessary to remain optimistic in this situation?

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### **Part 3. Who are the refugees?**

In this final part, we see the human tragedy that follows war: people fleeing the violence as refugees. They leave their hometowns, often stateless without passports or other documents, without any certainty of their future. Yet faced with the constant death and violence, escape becomes the only means for survival.

**Source 13: Beverly Crawford, “Why don’t refugees fly?” February 11, 2016**



Beverly Crawford is a retired professor of political science from UC Berkeley. She studies conflicts around the world and in particular the movement of refugees fleeing violence. In this blog post, she explores the inescapable problems that refugees face when trying to find better lives. They do not have the luxuries of travel that most Americans do—simply that of buying an airplane ticket to fly! She also demonstrates how airline companies and countries actively put up barriers to movement.

<https://blogs.berkeley.edu/2016/02/11/why-dont-refugees-fly/>

On Feb. 11, 2016, efforts to stop refugees from entering the safety of the European Union were militarized. The NATO alliance will immediately move three warships to the Aegean Sea to stop the flow of refugees to Europe. “This is not about stopping or pushing back refugee boats,” NATO’s commander assured us, but rather “to help counter human trafficking and criminal networks.”

In fact, the effort clearly is about denying refugees their legal right to seek asylum. The human traffickers, or smugglers, do not generally travel in the flimsy and overcrowded boats with refugees; they furnish boats and motors, stand on Turkish shores, point to the lights on nearby Greek islands, wish refugees good luck, and pocket their money.

The global refugee crisis of 2016 is unparalleled. Sixty million people have been forced from their homes, and of these 21 million have fled their homeland. 1,060,518 have sought refuge in Europe, more than 50,000 arriving in the dead of this January’s winter. The European Commission estimates a million more each year are likely to arrive in Europe in the coming years.

During my time in Izmir, Turkey in the fall of 2015, I wondered how the refugees there had survived. Waiting for a smuggler to arrange for a boat to Greece, they sleep in the street on their life jackets or in squalid hotel rooms crammed tightly together with others.

Women tell of sexual abuse by smugglers, male refugees, and government officials. With life savings hurriedly pulled together for the journey to safety, mothers have little money to buy diapers for their babies or clothes for their children. I saw children comfort their parents. I saw fearful young boys traveling alone, for the first time in their lives, sent by their families as the ones deemed strong enough to weather the journey.

Almost half of all refugees are under 18, and half of those are under 11. They have all lost their childhood. Most have never seen the sea. All refugees tell of the brutal death of children, mothers, fathers, sisters and brothers, the complete destruction of homes; they tell of hunger and illness; they speak of the ongoing trauma of death and destruction. They tell of devastating isolation, loneliness, suffering, and fear.

If a cat has nine lives, a refugee is required to have at least three. The first is spent fleeing death, rape, and torture. In Syria, both the government and opposition have laid siege to

cities and villages, blocking access to food, water, and medical aid. ISIS wages a campaign of terror and mass killings. Both Russian and U.S.-led forces have dropped bombs, killing civilians. Those who survive, as one mother said, are “just living on the edge of life.”

The lucky ones who manage to flee war and persecution are granted a second life. But soon they find that it too, is in peril. They cross the border on foot at night; many are injured. They often manage to reach a camp; more often they don’t, seeking any shelter they can find.

More than 80 percent of the refugees in Turkey live outside the camps — more in Jordan and Lebanon, where, if they are lucky, they receive one meal a day from a nearby mosque. In the camps, World Food Program rations are 50 cents per person per day. Although no bombs are falling, no rockets are being launched, people face illness, hunger, and winter cold. Even in the camps, children are exposed to polio, and there aren’t enough vaccinations for all. Although thousands of organizations are bringing aid and myriad acts of kindness abound, there is simply not enough of anything to go around.

The three countries bordering Syria do not offer refugee status. In their camps, people wait for years for asylum applications to be processed; sometimes they remain in limbo there for generations. Only 1 per cent of all refugees will be resettled from refugee camps. Under these conditions, thousands of people per day are leaving the camps, and many bypass them altogether, looking for permanent refuge that can offer food, shelter, work, education, and a home until they can return to their homeland. To reach asylum, they must pick up and move on.

If refugees are able to spare their lives by fleeing the massacres and bombing, and if they survive the vagaries of the camps and streets where the bombs don’t fall, they are forced by the countries promising to grant them asylum to risk their lives again on the journey to reach them. They travel in flimsy boats, on foot, and hidden in trucks.

The lives of many will not be spared. More than 4,000 died in 2015 trying to find asylum. In the last 15 years, 31,478 migrants heading for Europe have died or gone missing; most either drowned or died from exhaustion.

The tragic irony of this life-threatening journey is that refugees do not have to take it! The 1951 Geneva Convention on Refugees — created after the shameful turning away of those fleeing Nazi Germany — obliged its signatories to accept refugees, even if they have no documents, no visa, no passport, and no resettlement authorization. There is no such thing as an “illegal asylum seeker.” People have a right to refuge if they are forced from their homes by persecution and war. The United States and the countries of Europe have signed this convention or its 1967 Protocol. Turkey has not signed. It only offers temporary refuge.

“Why don’t refugees fly to safety?” you might ask. Why do they pay more than \$1,000 to risk their lives to a smuggler in order to reach a country that finally promises asylum? A flight from Istanbul to Berlin or from Amman to Munich costs about \$300.

As Hans Rosling, who also asked that question, says, “they can reach the airports, they can afford to buy a ticket, but they cannot leave.” This is because the airlines will be fined if they allow anyone to travel to Europe or the U.S. without a visa.

“But,” you might say, “asylum seekers don’t need visas!” Indeed they do not. The same EU directive that orders airlines to pay fines if they allow anyone to board a plane without a visa, also states that the rule does not apply to refugees! But a refugee cannot get past the ticket agent. Airlines are afraid of fines, and countries who promise refuge are shamelessly using the airline-ticket agents to deny refugees a chance to safely seek asylum. This is the reason so many people drown in the Mediterranean Sea.

**ISIS:** Islamic State in Iraq and Syria, a terrorist organization

**vagaries:** unexpected changes

**obliged its signatories:** required states that signed the document, Geneva Convention on Refugees

**EU:** European Union

<p>It's a catch-22. The central goal of the EU policy (as well as U.S. policy) is to turn a blind eye to refugees trying to reach asylum. There are no regular ways for refugees to reach Europe. Only when they touch land can they apply for asylum.</p>	<p><b>catch-22:</b> a difficult situation from which there is no escape because all options lead to disaster  <b>funds:</b> money in a budget</p>
<p>Most EU migration policy funds are devoted to preventing all migrants — including refugees — from touching the safety of Europe. In 2008, the Italian government paid Moammar Gadhafi \$5 billion to stop refugees and other migrants departing from Africa. The EU has promised Turkey \$3 billion if it would seal its borders. But better policing does not deter migrants; it just makes it more likely that they will be killed. NATO will soon discover this fact.</p>	<p><b>seal:</b> close</p>
<p>The United States is no better than Europe. It has built walls and it patrols its borders to keep refugees out of the country. When undocumented people are captured attempting to gain entry, they are put in a prison (called a detention center) behind chain-link fences topped with razor wire to await a hearing for asylum. Conditions there are often unsafe and unsanitary. Migrants have few rights. The wait will last months or even years. Many people have died in these centers.</p>	<p><b>patrol:</b> to guard and monitor</p>
<p>Thousands die attempting to enter the U.S. illegally. If, however, like refugees traveling to Europe, they dare to cross the border and manage to escape the border patrol, once they step foot on U.S. soil, they are free and their rights are protected. They can then apply for asylum and live in freedom until it is granted. For the refugee, the risk of dying while fleeing from death is preferable to certain death and persecution at home.</p>	<p><b>persecution:</b> being attacked physically or through discrimination</p>
<p>The shameful and deadly hypocrisy — a promise of refuge and the attempt to deny it — is killing people, and it must stop. Migrants could be vetted and screened in field stations in Turkey, Jordan, and elsewhere, outside of the camps. Those who are refugees can then be offered safe passage to asylum.</p>	

40. Why can't refugees simply fly away to escape? List the various barriers to their movement.

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41. Why would someone ever make the decision to become a refugee? Cite evidence from the blog to explain what is happening.

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42. In what ways do refugees face threats and challenges when they escape their home countries? Give at least two and explain them.

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43. In what ways do the governments of Europe and the United States prevent refugees from reaching their countries? List the actions that they take.

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44. After reading this blog, how do you feel? How has this information changed or influenced your perspective on the situation of refugees?

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**Source 14: Alan Gratz, *Refugee*** Pages 232-234, 247-248



Mahmoud and his family are on the move, going from country to country as they travel northward to Germany. Here they are in eastern Europe (specifically Hungary and Serbia), moving through these countries not to stay there but to continue to transit. They have money saved and use it to hire taxis—the fastest way to move across long distances.

“The train station looks closed,” Mahmoud’s father told him. “We’ll have to find someplace to sleep. We’ll come back in the morning and see if we can buy tickets.” ...

A car came up behind them, and this time Mahmoud didn’t jump out in front of it. But it slowed down and stopped beside them anyway.

“You need taxi?” the man said in broken Arabic.

“No,” Mahmoud’s father said. “We’re just going to the hotel.”

“Hotel much money,” the man said. “You go to Serbia? I take you in taxi. Twenty-five euros each.”

Mahmoud did the math. A hundred euros was a lot of money—almost 24,000 Syrian pounds. But a taxi ride straight to Serbia, without spending the night—or longer—in Macedonia? Mahmoud’s parents huddled together, and Mahmoud listened in. Train tickets were likely cheaper, and Mom worried about accepting a ride from a strange man in a country they didn’t know, but Dad argued there wasn’t another train until at least tomorrow, and there were already so many people waiting for the train at the station.

“We’re all tired, and a taxi gets us closer to Germany. Sleeping on the ground doesn’t,” Mahmoud threw in.

“That’s the deciding vote, then,” Dad said. “We’ll take the car.”

It was a good decision. Two hours and one hundred euros later, they were at the Serbian border. It was still dark, but there were no border guards where the driver dropped them off. No roads, either. Mahmoud had slept a little in the car, but he felt like a zombie as he

shambled with his family along the railroad tracks that would take them across the border from Macedonia to the nearest Serbian town. Since they were traveling, they were permitted to skip their early-morning prayers.” ...

Dad found another taxi driver who promised to take them the two hours farther to the Hungarian border.

Taxis were expensive, but so was trying to stay overnight in a city that didn't want you.

The silver four-door Volkswagen was driven by a middle-aged, olive-skinned Serbian man with a neatly trimmed black beard. He promised to get them to Hungary and keep them away from the police for thirty euros apiece—more than it had cost them to cross all of Macedonia...

And the taxi driver was leaning over the backseat with a pistol aimed straight at them...

The Serbian taxi driver waved the pistol at Mahmoud's family. "You pay three hundred euros!" he demanded.

This wasn't a dream. It was real. Mahmoud had been groggy just seconds before, but now he was wide-awake, his heart hammering. His eyes felt dry even though his shirt still clung to him with sleep-sweat, and he blinked rapidly as he looked at his parents. They were already awake, his father hugging the still-sleeping Waleed protectively.

"Don't shoot—please!" Mahmoud's father said. He threw one of his arms protectively across Mahmoud and his mother.

"Three hundred euros!" the taxi driver said.

Three hundred euros! That was more than twice what they had agreed to pay the driver!

"Please—" Dad begged.

"You not die, you pay three hundred!" the taxi driver yelled. His arm shook, and the gun danced between the two front seats. Mahmoud's mother closed her eyes and shrank away.

Mahmoud's father threw up his hand. "We'll pay! We'll pay!" They were being held at gunpoint in the middle of nowhere in a foreign country. What else could he do? Mahmoud's heart thundered in his chest as his father handed Waleed to Mom and fumbled with the money hidden inside his shirt under his belt. Mahmoud wanted to do something. To stop this man from threatening his family. But what could he do? Mahmoud was helpless, and that made him even madder.

With shaking hands, Mahmoud's father counted out three hundred euros and shoved them at the taxi driver. Why he didn't demand the whole stash of money, Mahmoud didn't understand.

"You get out. Get out!" the taxi driver said.

Mahmoud and his family didn't have to be told twice. They threw open the car doors and scrambled outside, and before the doors were even fully closed again the Volkswagen tore off down the dark road, its red taillights disappearing around a curve.

Mahmoud trembled with anger and fear, and his mother shook with quiet sobs. Mahmoud's father pulled them all into a hug.

Pages 232-234, 247-248



45. The value of one euro (25€) is about 1.1 American dollars (\$1.1). Do the math. How much in dollars have Mahmoud and his family spent just to cross these two countries?

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46. The Serbian taxi driver clearly has taken horrible advantage of the family. He uses violence to prey on refugees because they are weak, confused and lacking language skills. Put yourself in their position. What would have been your response? Would you have paid him to avoid violence? What options do you have as a foreigner and refugee?

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## Final Project: Personal Stories of Syrian Refugees

The following section highlights the intimate experiences of individuals and families who left Syria as refugees. There are five cases of people who settled in a foreign country to escape the war. Watch and listen to their stories. To each one, you will write a short personal letter to them. In it, you should:

- Recognize and show empathy for the experiences that they have gone through. You can ask questions or comment about what they say.
- Tell them about yourselves and try to find things in common with your lives. Sharing the similarities between you two only brings you closer.
- Encourage them to do well in their new countries. What advice or tips can you offer?
- Ask to learn more about them. What do you want to know?

<b>Hiba Al Nabolsi</b>	<b>Zeina Aboushaar</b>	<b>Hadhad Family</b>	<b>Majed Abdulraheem</b>
			
10 year old refugee at a center in Macedonia	Escaped with her family to a suburb of Detroit	Arrived to Canada and created a chocolate business	Lives now in Washington DC and works as a chef
<a href="https://bit.ly/FinalHiba">bit.ly/FinalHiba</a>	<a href="https://bit.ly/FinalZeina">bit.ly/FinalZeina</a>	<a href="https://bit.ly/FinalHadhad">bit.ly/FinalHadhad</a>	<a href="https://bit.ly/FinalMajed">bit.ly/FinalMajed</a>
			

**Source #: UNICEF, “Hiba’s Story: Ten-Year-Old Syrian Refugee,” November 28, 2016**



[bit.ly/FinalHiba](https://bit.ly/FinalHiba)



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**Source #: Mashable “From Damascus to Detroit, a Young Syrian Refugee Shares Her Story,” November 20, 2015**



[bit.ly/FinalZeina](https://bit.ly/FinalZeina)



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Source #: CBC News, "Sweet taste of success for Syrian family,"  
January 7, 2017



[bit.ly/FinalHadhad](http://bit.ly/FinalHadhad)



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Source #: Washington Post, "Syrian refugee builds a new life in the  
US by cooking," December 7, 2017



[bit.ly/FinalMajed](http://bit.ly/FinalMajed)



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# *Answer Key and Standards*

## Introduction

### Source 1

1. Harassed by local authorities, humiliated by a female police officer, unable to get justice.
2. News spread fast through the region, people uploaded images and videos using mobile phones.
3. [Depends on students]

## Introduction

### Source 2

4. Impossible to do so.
5. [Depends on students]

## Part 1

### Source 3

6. They drew the lines that created the borders of the modern states.
7. Their voice was denied when it came to creating their own nations.

## Part 1

### Source 4

8. [Depends on students] Essentially about dominance in Islam.
9. [Depends on students] Mostly in funding proxy wars.
10. [Depends on students]
11. [Depends on students]

## Part 1

### Source 5

12. [Depends on students]
13. Most enemies: ISIS. Least: maybe USA.
14. Anyone trying to kill them.

## Part 1

### Source 6

15. [Depends on student choice of country]
16. [Depends on student choice of country]
17. [Depends on student choice of country]
18. [Depends on student choice of country]
19. [Depends on student choice of country]

## Part 1

### Source 7

20. It was brutal and bloody without mercy.
21. No one is spared from the violence.
22. [Depends on students]

## Part 1

### Source 8



23. Mostly the Syrian Army controls it. ISIS and the Rebels are holding strong right outside.

24. The ruling group might change so they could be considered enemies too!

25. [Depends on students]

#### Part 1

##### Source 9

26. Phones, Google maps, car.

27. [Depends on students]

#### Part 2

##### Source 10

28. Massive poverty, huge unemployment, no schools, rampant diseases, many dead, internal and external displacement.

29. Needs infrastructure, rebuild the economy.

30. Clearly Syria is a failed state.

#### Part 2

##### Source 11

31. Massive destruction, no more trees, few buildings saved.

32. Hell on earth, no reason to live here, everything is reduced to rubble.

33. Massive destruction, mosque too.

34. Their religious home is now a wasteland.

35. Pure desert to a city.

36. Looks better than the destroyed cities.

#### Part 2

##### Source 12

37. They need to pay for travel, food, lodging... on top of any other expenses that will surprise them.

38. [Depends on students] Probably just excuses but maybe also they need to sneak into port.

39. They need hope to move on and find success.

#### Part 3

##### Source 13

40. Airlines are assessed a fine if someone flies without a proper visa.

41. They need to escape their chaotic home country situations.

42. Attacked, harassed, death, killed, disease, hunger.

43. Like #40.

44. [Depends on students]

#### Part 3

##### Source 14

45. The two taxi trips cost them 400 euros or 440 dollars.

46. [Depends on students]

<p><b>HSS Content Standard</b></p>	<p><b>10.5</b> Students analyze the causes and course of the First World War.</p> <p>4. Understand the nature of the war and its human costs (military and civilian) on all sides of the conflict, including how colonial peoples contributed to the war effort.</p> <p>5. Discuss human rights violations and genocide, including the Ottoman government’s actions against Armenian citizens.</p> <p><b>10.9</b> Students analyze the international developments in the post–World War II world.</p> <p>8. Discuss the establishment and work of the United Nations and the purposes and functions of the Warsaw Pact, SEATO, NATO, and the Organization of American States.</p> <p><b>10.10</b> Students analyze instances of nation-building in the contemporary world in at least two of the following regions or countries: the Middle East, Africa, Mexico and other parts of Latin America, and China.</p> <p>1. Understand the challenges in the regions, including their geopolitical, cultural, military, and economic significance and the international relationships in which they are involved.</p> <p>2. Describe the recent history of the regions, including political divisions and systems, key leaders, religious issues, natural features, resources, and population patterns.</p> <p>3. Discuss the important trends in the regions today and whether they appear to serve the cause of individual freedom and democracy.</p>
<p><b>ELA Common Core State Standard</b></p>	<p><b>RH 1.</b> Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.</p> <p><b>RH 2.</b> Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.</p> <p><b>RH 3.</b> Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused late ones or simply preceded them.</p> <p><b>RH 6.</b> Evaluate authors’ differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors’ claims, reasoning, and evidence.</p> <p><b>RH 7.</b> Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g. visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.</p> <p><b>RH 8.</b> Evaluate authors’ differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors’ claims, reasoning, and evidence.</p> <p><b>RH 9.</b> Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.</p> <p><b>WH 4.</b> Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development and organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.</p> <p><b>WH 6.</b> Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products in response to ongoing feedback, including new arguments or information.</p>

## Alan Gratz Biography

Alan Gratz was born in Knoxville, Tennessee in 1972. He studied creative writing (bachelor's degree) and earned a master's in English Education. He has been a writer-in-residence around the world. For example, he has stayed in Tokyo, Japan teaching historical fiction-writing students, living and writing in the attic of James Thurber (a fellow writer) in Columbus, Ohio, and Jakarta, Indonesia as a writer.



Gratz has written over a dozen books, plays, magazine articles, TV episodes and more than 6000 radio commercials. He currently lives in Asheville, North Carolina with his wife and daughter.

Many of his works are historical fiction. This novel, *Refugee*, takes an alternating-story approach to join three distinct lives around the world and show how deeply connected they are. It takes the readers to Syria (including Turkey and Western Europe to Germany), Cuba (to Bahamas and Florida), and Germany (crossing the Atlantic Ocean to Cuba and back to France).