Grace Mentry

**Lesson Activity: ‘Hmong Refugees’**

**Grades 4-5**

**Objectives:**Students will….

* Discuss Hmong history by watching a video.
* Demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be a refugee through written response (double entry journal).

**Vocabulary:**Hmong, refugee

**Snappy Launch:**State the objectives. Explain to students that today they will be learning about the history of Hmong people and how they got to the United States. They will discuss and imagine what it would be like to be a refugee. Play video.

[http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLHgbr1aIj0](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=qLHgbr1aIj0)

**Procedure:**

1)      State the objectives. Activate background knowledge by asking students what they know about the Hmong culture (this would be a good time for Hmong students to share if comfortable). Guide discussion as needed.

2)      Co-create a chart with students with notes about Hmong history/culture *and*what it means to be a refugee.

3)      Play video.

4)      Turn & talk: tell a partner one new thing that you learned about Hmong history and one new thing that you learned about a refugee’s experience. Have a few partnerships share with the whole group and add to the chart as understanding deepens.

5)      Have each child draw a note card from a paper bag without looking. Each note card should have the name of a different country on it. For this writing assignment they will be required to write two short responses; one from the perspective of a refugee, and one from their own perspective.

*Imagine that you are a refugee like many of the Hmong people. You are being forced to leave your country and go to the country that you have been assigned (on note card). Write a reflection in response. How would you feel? What fears might you have?*

*Now imagine that you are meeting a refugee in your own country. They were forced to leave their home and they are new. Write a reflection in response. How would you treat them? How could you learn more about their culture?*

6)      Clarify directions. Make sure that every student has a note card with a country assignment. Tell students that they do not need to know anything about the country that they are being assigned to for their first reflection, that’s the whole point! They need to focus on the experience of going from familiar to unfamiliar. For the second reflection, they need to focus on the process of raising their own cultural awareness.

7)      Leave co-created chart posted as students work. Allow 30-40 minutes of writing time. May be broken up into two sessions if needed.

**Assessment:**

40%  First reflection: each question in the prompt is fully  and thoughtfully addressed.

40%  Second reflection: each question in the prompt is fully and thoughtfully addressed.

19% Reflections collectively demonstrate an understanding of what it means to be a refugee.

1%  WOW factor! Responses demonstrate critical thinking and practical ways students may advocate for cultural awareness from either perspective.