

OBJECTS AND STORIES

One of the art forms featured in *CARTOGRAPHY* is called devised documentary theater. The show was created by two people who interviewed many different refugees in Munich, Germany, and Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates. They wove those stories together to create the piece you saw on stage at the New Victory! Using this activity, have your students try out this art form by connecting stories to specific objects and by interviewing each other.

1. As a class, research what types of objects refugees have taken with them when they were forced to leave their homes.* Then, why people would bring those items with them. *Do they have practical value? Sentimental value? Why would this particular object be among the few things they carry with them?*
2. Over the course of a few days, have students take time to look at the objects they have in their place of residence, and choose one that they would take with them if they had to leave. Have them bring it with them to class. Let them know that they will be speaking and writing about this object, so they should be comfortable discussing it with their peers.
3. Next, have students pair up and have them share out about their objects. They should interview each other, asking questions like:
 - *Can you describe your object to me using all of your senses?*
 - *What emotion(s) does this object make you feel?*
 - *Why is this object important to you?*
 - *Can you tell me a specific story about this object?*
4. After both partners have had time to share, have students work individually to write a monologue based on the answers their partner gave. **Note:** *Their goal should be to capture the importance and story of the object, and to fully explain why it would be the one thing their partner would take with them.* The monologue should be written in the first person, with the student writing from the perspective of their partner.
5. Have each partner share the monologue they developed from their partner's story with the original partner themselves. Give them the opportunity to provide each other feedback by using the sentence starters "I like...", "I notice...", and "I wonder..."
6. Let students incorporate each other's feedback as they wish.
7. Finally, have a group discussion to reflect on the experience of interviewing their peers, listening to personal stories and writing monologues!

* Teacher Tip:

For Step 1, feel free to use the link listed here to guide your discussion: "[Syrian Refugees—What They Carried](#)" from CBS News

Reflection Questions:

What was your favorite part of this activity?

How did it feel to interview your partner?

How did learning about an object important to someone else help you learn more about them as a person?

What was it like to take on someone else's experience and embody someone else's perspective?

What was challenging about this activity?

**"I KNOW MY PASSPORT HAS EXPIRED,
SO HAS MY COUNTRY."**

CARTOGRAPHY

