

# I Live in a Refugee Camp

Bilan, 15, lives in the Kobe refugee camp in Ethiopia. This is her story.

## About the Story

**Lexile:** 930L

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

## Learning Objective:

to learn what it is like to live in a refugee camp and to write an essay about the refugee crisis and how it could be solved

## Key Skills:

author's craft, text structure  
key ideas and details,  
inference, interpreting text,  
tone, text features

## Essential Questions:

- What forces people to leave their homelands?
- What challenges do refugees face?
- What can be done to help refugees?

## Standards:

This article and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards: **R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, R.6, R.7, W.2, SL.1, L.4, L.5, L.6**  
*For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.*



## Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of materials at  
**[scope.scholastic.com](https://scope.scholastic.com)**.

**Video:** Beyond the Story: Into the World of Bilan

### Audio:

- The article (English and Spanish)
- Vocabulary

### Differentiated articles:

- Lower-Lexile version (printable)
- Spanish version (printable)

**Literature Connections:** ideas for connecting to curricular texts

### Skill Builders to print or project:

- Vocabulary
- Video Discussion Questions
- KWL Chart
- Close Reading and Critical Thinking
- Preparing to Write: Understanding Refugees
- **Core Skills Workout:** Central Ideas & Details\*, Summarizing\*, Text Features
- Quiz\*
- Nonfiction Elements\*
- Contest Entry Form

*\*Available on two levels*

# Step-by-Step Lesson Plan

## Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

### 1 Preparing to Read

#### Do-Now: KWL chart (5 minutes)

Hand out the KWL Chart from Scope Online or have students make their own KWL Chart. Have them fill in the first two columns: What I Think I Know About Refugees and What I Wonder About Refugees. Invite them to share their lists.

#### Watch the video.

(15 minutes)

Project or distribute the **Video Discussion Questions** and preview as a class. Then watch the **Beyond the Story** video and discuss the questions.

#### Preview vocabulary.

(8 minutes, activity sheet online)

Project or distribute the **Vocabulary Words and Definitions**. Review as a class. Highlighted words: *arduous, durable, famine, inadequate, integrate, landmark, nongovernmental organizations, perilous, relishes, remote, resettled*

### 2 Reading and Discussing

#### Read and discuss the article.

(45 minutes, activity sheets online)

- Have a volunteer read aloud the As You Read box on page 4.
- Play the audio at Scope Online while students follow along in their printed magazines.
- Have students work in groups to discuss the following close-reading questions.

#### Close-Reading Questions

In the introduction, why might author

Kristin Lewis switch from third person to second person? (author's craft) *The author*

*may switch to second person to help readers imagine themselves as refugees in each of the scenarios the author describes. This draws readers in by evoking empathy.*

On page 6, Lewis writes that Bilan was a “typical kid” who went to school and had many friends. Why might Lewis introduce Bilan in this way? (author's craft) *Lewis may introduce Bilan this way in order to make Bilan more relatable and to help readers feel connected to her.*

Describe the structure of the first paragraph of the section “Crisis After Crisis.” How does this paragraph connect to the article's introduction? (text structure) *The author lists three examples of refugees through time. Each group fled its homeland for a different reason—war, persecution, famine. These are the same reasons listed in the introduction.*

What is the purpose of “Crisis After Crisis”? (text structure) *The purpose is to show that there have been refugees throughout history as well as to explain how the UNHCR was formed.*

Based on information in “Life in the Camp,” how does life in the Kobe camp compare with life in other refugee camps? (key ideas and details, inference) *Life in the Kobe camp seems to be safer and more comfortable than life in other camps. Lewis writes that some camps have food and water shortages, insufficient bathroom facilities, and outbreaks of diseases. In comparison, Lewis writes, the Kobe camp is clean and well organized, and it has durable shelters and sufficient food and water (7-8).*

▶ **On page 9, Lewis writes that refugees who live in camps are “trapped in a world of uncertainty.” What does she mean?**

(interpreting text) *Lewis means that they are not sure what is going to happen to them. They are mostly waiting to find out when—if ever—they can return home or be resettled somewhere else. Many are not able to get an education or a job, which likely adds to the uncertainty.*

▶ **In the section “World of Uncertainty,” what is Lewis’s tone, or attitude, as she talks about how Ethiopia treats refugees?** (tone)

*Lewis’s tone is approving. After ticking off the ways Ethiopia helps refugees, Lewis writes, “But Ethiopia is unusual in the way it treats refugees. Unfortunately, many countries with large refugee populations do not allow refugees to integrate into society.” This statement shows that she approves of how Ethiopia treats refugees.*

▶ **What does the sidebar on page 8 help the reader understand?** (text features)

*The sidebar helps the reader understand what a refugee is by providing the definition of the word. The sidebar also provides the definitions of two related terms that often get confused.*

- Reconvene as a class to discuss the following.

### Critical-Thinking Questions

▶ **Consider Bilan at the end of the article. Is her situation hopeful?**

*Students may say yes because she is doing well in school, has friends, and plans to be a doctor. On the other hand, she faces challenges, including uncertainty about her future and lack of a permanent home.*

▶ **Why is it important to learn about refugees?**

*Students may say that it is important because refugees are people in crisis who need help. Learning more about their lives can evoke empathy and kindle support.*

- Have students fill in the last column of the KWL Chart: What I Learned About Refugees. Invite students to share their lists.

## 3 Skill Building and Writing

(15 minutes, activity sheet online)

Have students complete **Preparing to Write: Understanding Refugees**. This key ideas activity will prepare them for the prompt on page 9. For alternate tasks, see the box below.

## Differentiate and Customize

### For Struggling Readers

In a well-organized paragraph, explain one challenge that refugees face and how that challenge can be overcome.

### For Advanced Readers

In a well-organized essay, explain at least three challenges that refugees face and how those challenges can be overcome. Support your ideas with details from “I Live in a Refugee Camp” and at least one additional source.

### For Humanitarians

Research careers that involve working with refugees. Pick three to five careers and create a presentation. Include the education required and what the jobs involve.

### For Future Policy Makers

Research a refugee resettlement program. In the form of an essay, podcast, or video, explain what the program does, how effective it has been, and what its future should be.