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(Choose a Title for Your Book)

A Book Illustrated by:

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There are a lot of people in the world! Some of us are tall, others of us are short. Some of us are big. Others of us are small. People come in different colors and different shapes. They speak different languages and eat different foods.

What are some of your favorite foods? What kinds of things do you think people might eat in other places around the world?

Draw a picture of people enjoying their favorite foods from around the world.

Even though there are a lot of different kinds of people in the world, we are also a lot alike! We all have heads and bodies. We all eat and sleep. We all need shelter to protect us from bad weather and keep us safe.

What are some of the other things that all people have in common?

Draw a picture of different kinds of people and their similarities.

Many of us have a lot of food and safe places to live, but some people don't. Some people only have enough food for one meal every day or two – some don't even have homes to keep them dry when it rains or protect them from danger.

How would you feel if you could only eat one meal a day or if you didn't have a place to live?

Draw a picture of someone who is very hungry or doesn't have a safe home.

Moving from one place to another in the hope of having a better life is called “migrating.” Some people migrate to cities and states where everything is very familiar. Others migrate to countries where they speak different languages and act very differently. Migrating can be very exciting, but it can also be very scary.

Have you ever migrated? What are some of the feelings people might have when they migrate?

Draw a picture of people expressing their feelings about moving to a new and different place.

People migrate for many reasons. Many people migrate to get away from war or famine. A war is when large groups of people fight against one another. A famine is when there isn't enough food to feed everyone and some people have to go hungry for days – even weeks!

When people migrate because of danger, they are called “refugees” – people seeking refuge.

When seeking refuge, most people can only bring a few of their favorite things with them. What are some of your favorite things? If you had to migrate and could only take one bag with you, what would you put in it?

Draw a picture of what you would take with you and what you might do with the things you left behind.

Even though people usually migrate hoping for a better future, the journey can be difficult and dangerous. Sometimes they have to walk long distances carrying everything they own. Sometimes they have to drive through dangerous places. Sometimes they crowd into small boats where there isn't even enough space to lay down at night!

Recently, 233 people migrated to Italy on a 33-foot long boat! Can you count to 33? How about to 233? See if you can figure out how long 33 feet is and try to imagine fitting 233 people in a boat that small.

Draw a picture of a boat and see how many people you can fit into it.

When arriving in a new place, it can be difficult to find a home, get a job, and make friends. In some cases, multiple families end up living in the same house at the same time so that they can save money or because there aren't enough places for everyone! Sharing is fun, but it can also be difficult and frustrating.

Imagine what it would be like if your family had to share the same house with 3 or 4 other families! What if there were only a couple of bedrooms or a single bathroom? What are some of the fun things about sharing a home and some of the things you wouldn't like?

Draw a picture of your family living together with someone else – see if you can include both fun parts and difficult parts in your picture.

When people migrate, they often need help finding churches, hospitals and schools. In many cases they even need to learn a new language! Sometimes it takes months or years to figure out everything and settle into a community. Even simple things – like buying food or clothing – can be challenging.

Think of each of the things you and your family do each day and imagine what it would be like if you had to learn a new language to do them? Do you know what stores sell your favorite foods and clothing? What might it be like to get sick and not be able to tell a doctor what was wrong?

Make a list or draw a picture of the things you do during a normal day.

In many places, social workers and pastors work with people who migrate, helping them deal with all the changes they're experiencing. They can sometimes help find jobs, homes, and doctors. They also help connect those who need help with those who can help them.

Social workers and pastors cannot do everything though. They need the help of churches, schools, hospitals, and people like you!

What do you know how to do that someone moving into the community might need help with? What kind of help would you want if you moved to a new city or country.

Draw a picture of you helping someone new in the community connect with a new friend or job.

JJ TenClay, LMSW, is a missionary and Refugee Ministries Coordinator for RCA Global Mission, with 11 years of dedication to sharing the love of Christ with refugees and other people on the move or living in diaspora. After spending four years in Italy serving people on the move from Africa and the Middle East to Europe—many who experienced forced displacement, human trafficking and exploitation—JJ now works with local, national, and global partners to provide compassionate, Christ-like care for refugees and displaced people worldwide. She also facilitates conversations on global migration & forced displacement, the people affected by displacement worldwide, and equips individuals, faith leaders, congregations, and beyond to live out the biblical mandate to care for those seeking refuge.

Click on the QR code below to learn more about JJ and her ministry:

