Refugees

A refugee is a person living outside of their home country because they have fear of suffering or have suffered persecution based on political affiliation or opinion, race, famine, and constant violence. Refugees have often had to escape without family members or personal belongings.

Refugees in Scranton, Pennsylvania

Since the early 1990’s, refugees from approximately 30 countries have resettled in Pennsylvania. After the fall of the Soviet Union, Russians fled to the United States and many settled in Scranton. In 2009, Catholic Social Services of the Diocese of Scranton began resettling Nepali refugees in the city. These are just two examples of Scranton’s diverse refugee population.

Meeting Refugee Children and their Families

- Some refugee children may have never attended school.
- If school was attended in a refugee camp, it is likely that resources were scarce.
- Student’s academic information may be limited or nonexistent.
- Refugee children may be experiencing the ability to express opinions in public for the first time.
- Refugee parents were often discouraged from communicating with teachers.
- Some refugee students may be nervous with the presence of law enforcement in the school.
- Even with the assistance of an interpreter, refugee students may have difficulty absorbing academic material while adjusting to their new environment.
Brazil

Brazil is the largest country of both South America and the Latin American region. It is the world’s fifth largest country, both by geographical area and by population.

Immigration History

Economic and political instability in Brazil in the late twentieth century prompted emigration from the country, many coming to live in the United States. In the 1980s, many Brazilians immigrated to the U.S. seeking economic opportunity.

Religions of Brazil

The major religions of Brazil are Roman Catholicism (65%), Protestantism (22%), No religion (8%), Other (3%), and Spiritualism (2%).

Languages of Brazil

The official language of Brazil is Portuguese (99%). Other languages include indigenous languages and languages of more recent European and Asian immigrants to Brazil.

Holidays

Brazil’s Carnival festival is the most popular secular festival which is celebrated in February. Brazilians also celebrate Independence Day in September and the Anniversary of the Proclamation of the Republic in November.
Customs and Etiquette

STUDENTS

- For students, the needs of the family come before independence. For instance, a student may miss school if a family member is sick.
- A Brazilian student may look down out of respect of the authority figure while being reprimanded instead of maintaining eye contact.
- Brazilians rarely touch food with their hands and may use cutlery to eat even fruit.
- Brazilians are casual about time; being late is not unusual.
- Brazilians are expected to defend themselves, which may result in fighting.

FAMILIES

- The Brazilian family is the foundation of the social structure and forms the basis of stability.
- Families tend to be large and the extended family is very close.
- Men shake hands when greeting one another while maintaining steady eye contact. Women generally kiss each other, starting with the left and alternating cheeks.
- Physical contact is part of simple communication, for instance, touching arms, elbows and backs. Brazilians also often stand close to one another.
- Family, respect, education, and socioeconomic backgrounds are highly valued for Brazilians.

Greetings and Helpful Expressions

Olá = Hello
Bem-vindo = Welcome
Socorro = Help
Toalet = Toilet
Eu preciso = I Need
Point to what you need

**Pencil** – Lapis

**Paper** – Papel

**Nurse** – Enfermeira

**Food** – Comida

**Water** – Agava

**Toilet** – Banheiro
China

China, officially the People's Republic of China (PRC), is a sovereign state in East Asia. It is the world's most populous country, with a population of over 1.35 billion. Covering approximately 9.6 million square kilometers, China is the world's second-largest country by land area.

Immigration History

In the 1970's China opened its global trade market which began the emigration of Chinese to America. The Chinese are now the 3rd largest immigrant group in the United States.

Religions of China

The major religion of China is Buddhism. Other religions include Taoism, Confucianism, Islam and Christianity. Confucianism is also an indigenous religion in China.

Languages of China

The predominant language in China, which is divided into eight major dialect groups, is known as Hanyu and its study is considered a distinct academic discipline in China. The languages most studied and supported by the state include Chinese, Mongolian, Tibetan, Uyghur and Zhuang. China has 292 living languages according to Ethnologue.

Holidays

Chinese New Year is celebrated in the First Day of the First Month.
Customs and Etiquette

STUDENTS
- Children from urban settings rarely have siblings.
- Children may have spent up to 8 hours a day in school.
- Chinese children are expected to obey their parents without question.
- Children may have come from a home where they lived with 5 generations.
- Children are expected to perform well academically.
- Chinese children learn basic etiquette in elementary school.
- In modern/urban China, girls and boys are typically treated equally.

FAMILIES
- Parents expect their children to perform well in school.
- Chinese parents often make big decisions with the help of elders.
- Teaching is a publicly respected profession in China.
- Showing emotions in public is frowned upon.
- In urban Chinese families, both parents are the head of household, but the father is expected to be the main provider.

Greetings and Helpful Expressions
Nǐ hǎo = Hello
Xiè = Thank you
Qǐng bāngbāng wǒ = Please help me
Mǎtòng = Toilet
Wǒ xūyào = I Need
Point to what you need

Pencil – 鉛筆

Paper – 紙

Nurse – 護士

Food – 食品

Water – 水

Toilet – 馬桶
Cuba

Cuba, officially the Republic of Cuba, is the largest island in the Caribbean.

Immigration History
Cuban immigration to the United States has been mostly for political and economic reasons. Many Cuban immigrants have family members in the United States, giving them a base on which to begin their life. Since the beginning of 2015, the number of Cuban immigrants has risen significantly in the United States.

Religions of Cuba
Cuba has a multitude of faiths reflecting the island's diverse cultural elements. Catholicism is the most prevalent faith. After the revolution, Cuba became an officially atheistic state and restricted some religious practice. Afro-Cuban religions are also practiced in Cuba.

Languages of Cuba
The official language of Cuba is Spanish and the vast majority of Cubans speak it. Spanish as spoken in Cuba is known as Cuban Spanish and is a form of Caribbean Spanish. Haitian Creole is the second most spoken language in Cuba.

Holidays
January 1 in Cuba is celebrated as Liberation Day. There is a national carnival in Cuba for several weeks during the summer. Christmas has only been celebrated in Cuba since 1997. Gifts are not part of the Cuban Christmas tradition.
Customs and Etiquette

STUDENTS
- A large part of Cuba's education system focuses on alternative forms of education such as mechanics, farming, etc.
- Cuban students are required under Cuba's education system to spend at least part of each year working the land.
- Emphasis is placed on teaching the values of collective cohesion in the interest of the group versus individual needs.
- Positive social skills are valued in Cuban schools.
- Personal property and privacy may be new concepts for Cuban students.

FAMILIES
- Parents may not be accustomed to the educational model that encourages participation with the school.
- It is common in Cuban families for the grandmother to meet all child-rearing needs.
- Older siblings in a family are given a position of respect and authority by younger siblings.
- It is considered bad manners to discuss Cuba's political history or leaders.
- Cuban adults have a 97% literacy rate.

Greetings and Helpful Expressions
- *Hola* = Hello
- *Adios* = Goodbye
- *Ayuda* = Help
- *El bano* = Toilet
- *Necesito* = I need
Point to what you need

Pencil – Lapiz

Paper – Papel

Nurse – Enfermera

Food – Comida

Water – Agua

Toilet – Bano
Hispanics and Latinos are often grouped together despite having two separate identity meanings and dictionary definitions. For this reason, neither term should be universally used to the exclusion of the other. People in Latin American are all Latino, but not all are Hispanic. For instance, Portuguese is spoken in Brazil, making Brazilians Latino but not Hispanic.

**Hispanic**
- Hispanic refers to language; people are considered Hispanic if they or their ancestors come from a country where they speak Spanish.
- The term Hispanic has been used in the U.S. census since 1980. It was first adopted by the U.S. government during Richard Nixon’s administration.
- “Hispanic” comes from the Latin word for Spain (Hispania, which later became España.)
- It is used to denote the culture and people of countries formerly ruled by the Spanish Empire.

**Latino**
- Latino refers to geography; specifically to Latin America, the Caribbean, South America and Central America.
- The term “Latino” is shortened from Spanish Latino Americano (Latin American), thus narrowing the scope to meaning Central and South America and Spanish speaking Caribbean Islands.
- Latino refers specifically to people living in the U.S. who are of Latin American nationality.

*this map also includes Spain*
Haiti

Haiti, officially the Republic of Haiti, is a Caribbean country. It occupies the western, smaller portion of the island of Hispaniola in the Greater Antillean archipelago, which it shares with the Dominican Republic.

Immigration History

Haitians began arriving in the United States in larger numbers after Haiti descended into chaos following the collapse of the dictatorship in the late 1980s. The rate of emigration to the United States has steadily increased since, particularly following the country’s 2010 earthquake.

Religions of Haiti

Religion is an important part of Haitian life. The majority of Haitians practice Roman Catholicism (80%), followed by Protestantism (16%). This breaks down to 10% Baptist, 4% Pentecostal, 1% Adventist, and 1% other Christian. Other religions such as Islam, Bahá’í Faith, Judaism, Buddhism make up 3%, and 1% practice no religion.

Languages of Haiti

Haitians are culturally distinct from other West Indians, most of whom speak Spanish or English. French is the official language of Haiti, but many rural Haitians speak only Haitian Creole, which isolates them linguistically.

Holidays

Haiti has a vast and diverse cultural heritage, drawing from French, Spanish and African traditions as well as its Caribbean island culture. January 1 is celebrated as Independence Day. There is a three day national carnival prior to Easter.
Customs and Etiquette

STUDENTS
- Tremendous importance and prestige are attached to education in Haitian culture.
- The concept of sharing among children is a primary Haitian value.
- Children are expected to complete household chores from a very young age.
- It is common in Haitian culture for children to be raised by non-parental relatives.
- Haitian children are not allowed to speak or look at adults when they are being corrected.
- Haitian children are hesitant to speak to an adult prior to being spoken to.

FAMILIES
- Parents may not be accustomed to the educational model that encourages participation with the school.
- Western medicine may not be as valued as traditional herbal remedies in many Haitian homes.
- Good manners are highly valued in Haitian society.
- It is considered an insult to point at another person.
- In Haiti, it is important to say a formal goodbye after a meeting; to fail to do so is discourteous.

Greetings and Helpful Expressions
- Bonjour = Hello
- Au revoir = Goodbye
- Aidez-moi = Help
- Toilette = Toilet
- J'ai besoin = I need
Point to what you need

Pencil – Crayon

Paper – Papier

Nurse – Infirmière

Food – Aliments

Water – Eau

Toilet – Toilette
India

India is a country located in South Asia. It is the seventh largest country by area, the second most populous country in the world, and the most populous democracy in the world.

Immigration History

Many people from India immigrated to the United States for educational and economic opportunities. Others immigrated as political refugees during the struggle for India's independence from Britain.

Religions of India

The major religions of India are Hinduism (80%), Islam (13%), Christianity (2%), Sikhism (2%), Buddhism (1%), and Other (2%).

Languages of India

The major official languages of India are Hindi and English. There are numerous regional languages which vary by state, aside from various dialects. There are 22 "official" regional languages.

Holidays

There are three national holidays in India: Independence Day on August 15, Mahatma Gandhi’s birthday on October 2, and Republic Day on January 26. Many regions of India also have popular religious festivals.
Customs and Etiquette

STUDENTS
- Children may live with numerous family members, including their parents, grandparents, uncles, aunts and cousins all in one house.
- Education is highly valued for Indian children; however parents might not be accustomed to the American education system.
- Crossing the street and following traffic laws may be unfamiliar to students.
- It is a sign of disrespect to point the soles of your feet at other people.
- Standing tall with hands on your hips or pointing your finger can be perceived as rude.
- Using cutlery to eat may be a new concept for students.

FAMILIES
- India is a patriarchal, hierarchal society influenced by religion, education and social class, so greet the eldest or most senior person first.
- Many Indian people do not like to say “no” or offer any negative answers. Look for non-verbal cues.
- Men and women should not initiate handshakes or engage in other public displays of affection with the opposite gender.
- Family relationships, rules and structures are highly valued to Indian people.
- Indian people often eat and pass things with their right hands, and may take offense if this is done with the left hand.

Greetings and Helpful Expressions
Namaste = Hello
Svāgata = Welcome
Madada = Help
Saucālāya = Toilet
Mujhē jarūrata hai = I Need
Point to what you need

- Pencil – पेंसिल
- Paper – कागज़
- Nurse – नर्सी
- Food – भोजन
- Water – पानी
- Toilet – शौचालय
Nepal

Nepal is a landlocked country located in South Asia. The mountainous north of Nepal has eight of the world’s ten tallest mountains, including the highest point on Earth, Mount Everest.

Immigration History
In the early 1990s, the country's ethnic Nepali population was forced to leave due to political unrest. Many Bhutanese moved to refugee camps in Nepal. In 2009, Scranton Catholic Social Services began resettling Nepali refugees under a contract with the United States State Department. Many of the refugee residents in Scranton were born in Bhutan.

Religions of Nepal
The major religions of Nepal are Hinduism (90%), Buddhism (5%), Muslim (3%), and other (2%).

Languages of Nepal
The major language of Nepal is Nepali (44%). Other languages include Maithili, Bhojpuri, Tharu, Tamang, Nepal Bhasa, Bajjika, Magar, Doteli, Urdu, and Sunwar.
Nepal is home to at least four indigenous sign languages.

Holidays
Most Nepalese celebrate Buddhist and Hindu Holidays. Nepalese Americans celebrate December 28 to commemorate King Birendra Bir Bikram Shah Dev's birthday.
Customs and Etiquette

STUDENTS
- Children are taught to look down, especially with adults.
- Children may find it difficult to remain seated while learning because they may have been in an environment without desks and chairs.
- Students may be unfamiliar with expressing opinions and thinking creatively in school.
- Crossing the street and using a school bus may be unfamiliar to students.
- It is a sign of disrespect to point the soles of your feet at other people while seated.
- Using cutlery to eat may be a new concept for students.
- Eighteen is the age of independence for Nepali children.

FAMILIES
- Parents may not be accustomed to the educational model that encourages participation with the school.
- Nepal is a patriarchal society with emphasis on gender boundaries. Men and women should not initiate handshakes with the opposite gender.
- Eye contact may be seen as aggressive, even among adults.
- Speaking loudly is considered inappropriate.
- Conversation topics to avoid include politics, religion, caste, and community differences.

Greetings and Helpful Expressions
Namaste = Hello; good morning; goodnight
Namaskaar = More formal Namaste
Bhaat khaayo = “Have you eaten rice?”
   (the most common greeting)
Madata = Help
Saucalaya = Toilet
Malai (object needed) Chahincha = I Need
Point to what you need

Pencil – पेंसिल

Paper – कागज

Nurse – नर्स

Food – खाद्य

Water – जल

Toilet – शौचालय
Romania is a unitary semi-presidential republic located in Southeastern-Central Europe, bordering the Black Sea, between Bulgaria and Ukraine. It also borders Hungary, Serbia and Moldova.

Immigration History
Many Romanian immigrants came to the United States for economic opportunity. There were a few waves of Romanian immigrants to the U.S., the most recent being after WWII. At that time, reasons for immigration the United States included political persecution.

Religions of Romania
Romania is a secular state and has no state religion. A majority of Romanians identify as Eastern Orthodox Christian (87%). Other religions include Protestantism, Roman Catholicism and Greek Catholicism.

Languages of Romania
The official language of Romania is Romanian (85%). Other languages include Hungarian, Vlax Romani, Ukrainian, German and Turkish in small populations.

Holidays
There are 12 non-working public holidays celebrated in Romania. Great Union Day is celebrated in December to commemorate the 1918 union of Transylvania with Romania. Romanians also celebrate Christmas and New Year’s.
Customs and Etiquette

STUDENTS
- Historically, the Romanian education system has been unstable and insufficient.
- Children from rural Romanian families may have had limited access to education.
- It is common for many generations of Romanians to live in one house.
- Traditionally, greater emphasis has been placed on rote-learning rather than inquiry based or critical thinking.
- Romanian exams are typically taken orally so a written test may be a new concept for students.

FAMILIES
- Romania is a hierarchical, patricarchal society. Age and position are respected and the father is the head of the family.
- Romanians are formal and reserved with a strong need for privacy.
- Initial greetings are formal; a handshake, direct eye contact and polite greeting are expected.
- People are addressed by their formal title (Mr., Mrs., Dr., etc.).

Greetings and Helpful Expressions
Salut = Hello
Bun venit = Welcome
Ajutor = Help
Toaleta = Toilet
Am nevoie = I Need
Point to what you need

Pencil – Creion

Paper – Hârtie

Nurse – Asistentă

Food – Alimente

Water – Apă

Toilet – Toaleta
Russia

The official name of Russia is The Russian Federation. In terms of land area, Russia is the largest country in the world. It is located in Northern Asia, bordering the Arctic Ocean, between Europe and the North Pacific Ocean.

Immigration History

Russian immigrants have been coming to the United States for the past three centuries. In the past, many immigrants were escaping the Communist government of the former Soviet Union. After 1985, the more liberal policy of the Soviet government allowed anyone to leave the Soviet Union, and thousands of Russians immigrated to the United States.

Religions of Russia

The chief religion of Russia is Russian Orthodox Christianity, which is practiced by about 75% of the country. Christianity, Islam, Buddhism, and Judaism are also religions practiced in Russia.

Languages of Russia

More than 81% of Russians speak Russian as their first and only language. Most speakers of the more than 100 minority languages in the country are also bilingual speakers of Russian.

Holidays

New Year's Day is a favorite holiday in Russia, celebrated with feasts and presents. Russian Christmas is celebrated on January 7 each year.
Customs and Etiquette

STUDENTS

- Russian students are generally taught by the same teacher for a four year period.
- Students may need encouragement to take risks and experiment academically.
- Students may be unfamiliar with expressing opinions.
- Tests are generally taken orally in Russia, so written tests may be new.
- Students may expect short breaks throughout the day.
- Students may not be accustomed to explaining how they arrived at an answer, as opposed to just being correct.

FAMILIES

- Russia has one of the best mass-education systems in the world with a 98% literacy rate.
- Initial meetings with families may not be overly friendly in tone or body language.
- A handshake is expected when saying hello and goodbye, regardless of gender.
- Punctuality is expected and appreciated.
- Making an “OK” sign with the hand is considered a rude gesture.

Greetings and Helpful Expressions
(English pronunciation)

Zdrastrooyet = Hello
Paka = Goodbye
Po-masch = Help
Unitaz = Toilet
Point to what you need

- Pencil - карандаш
- Paper - бумага
- Nurse - медсестра
- Food - еда
- Water - вода
- Toilet - туалет
The Republic of Turkey

Turkey is at the northeast end of the Mediterranean Sea in southeast Europe and southwest Asia. Turkey’s location at the crossroads of Europe and Asia makes it a country of significant political importance.

Immigration History
The history of Turkish immigration to the United States is not well documented. Although some Turkish immigrants came to America to flee religious or political persecution, the primary motivation of many Turks was economic or educational opportunity.

Religions of Turkey
Almost 98 percent of the population of The Republic of Turkey is Muslim. However, Turkey is a secular state and others can fully practice their religious faiths.

Languages of Turkey
The country’s official language is Turkish. It is spoken natively by approximately 85 percent of the population.

Holidays
The Republic of Turkey marks many holidays with festivals. April 23 is National Sovereignty Day, which is dedicated to children. August 30 is Victory Day to celebrate the country’s armed forces.
Customs and Etiquette

STUDENTS
- Corporal punishment is accepted and routine in Turkish classrooms.
- Group work may be an unfamiliar concept to students.
- Turkish education is primarily rote memorization.
- Students in Turkey are not expected to read directions. Teachers read to students.
- Taking tests may be a new experience for students.
- Giving another student an answer is considered helpful, not cheating.

FAMILIES
- Parents may not be accustomed to the educational model that encourages participation with the school. Expect male relatives to interact with the school as the family's spokesperson.
- Conservative dress is the norm for Turkish women.
- Good eye contact is viewed as a sign of sincerity.
- Communication tends to be direct in Turkish culture.
- Physical contact between adults of opposite genders should be avoided, including shaking hands.

Greetings and Helpful Expressions
Merhaba = Hello
Elveda = Goodbye
Yardım = Help
Tuvalet = Toilet
İhtiyacım var = I need
Point to what you need

Pencil – Kalem

Paper – kâğıt

Nurse – Hemşire

Food – Gıda

Water – Su

Toilet – Tuvalet