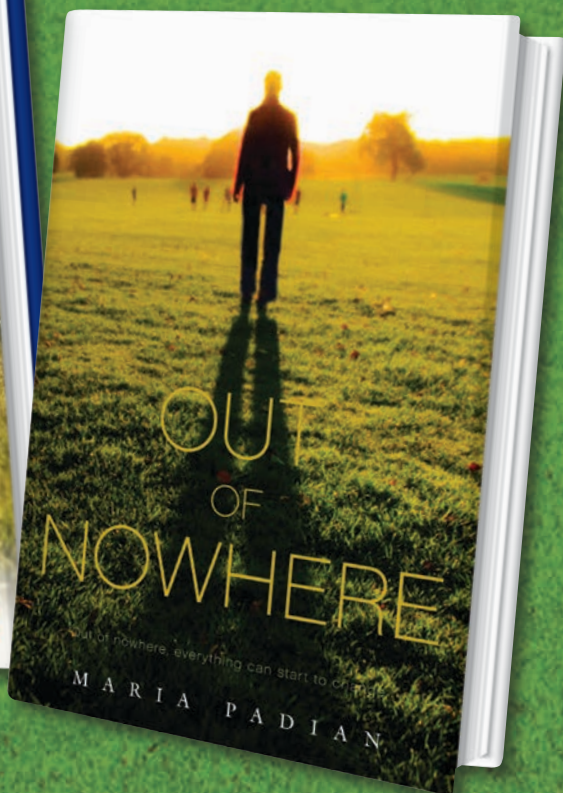
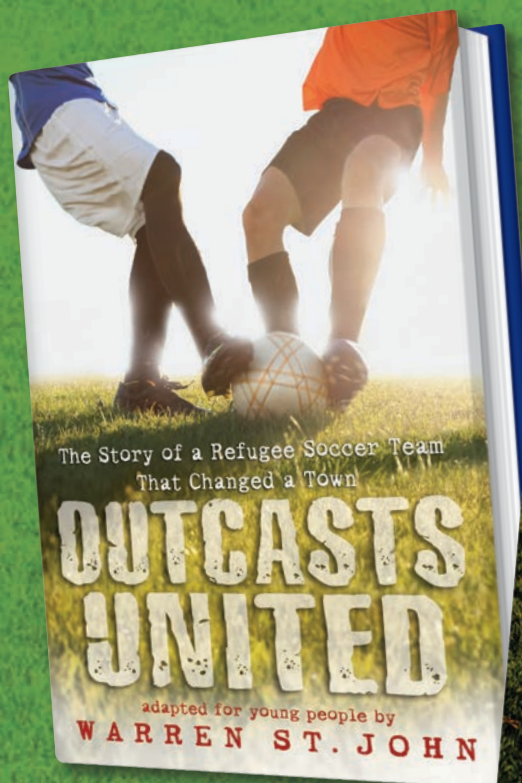


OUTCASTS UNITED • OUT OF NOWHERE



EDUCATOR GUIDE

Includes Common Core State Standards Correlations



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ABOUT THE BOOKS

Nonfiction
Grades 7 up

OUTCASTS UNITED

The Story of a Refugee Soccer Team that Changed a Town

This young people's version of the adult bestseller, *Outcasts United: An American Town, a Refugee Team, and One Woman's Quest to Make a Difference*, is a complex and inspirational story about the Fugees, a youth soccer team made up of diverse refugees from around the world, and their formidable female coach, Luma Mufleh.

Clarkston, Georgia, was a typical southern town until it became a refugee resettlement center. The author explores how the community changed with the influx of refugees and how the dedication of Luma Mufleh and the Fugees soccer team inspired an entire community.

★ “Respecting cultural differences, building a global community, and the importance of getting involved are powerful, motivating messages that will resonate with teen readers, not just soccer fans.” —*School Library Journal*, Starred

Fiction
Grades 7 up

OUT OF NOWHERE

At Enniston High School, Tom Bouchard has it made: captain and star of the soccer team, boyfriend to one of the prettiest, most popular girls, and third in his class, likely to have his pick of any college, if he ever bothers filling out his applications. But life in his idyllic small Maine town quickly gets turned upside down after the events of 9/11.

Enniston has become a “secondary migration” location for Somali refugees, who are seeking a better life after their country was destroyed by war—they can no longer go home. Tom hasn't thought much about his Somali classmates until four of them join the soccer team, including Saeed. He comes out of nowhere on the field to make impossible shots, and suddenly the team is winning, dominating even; but when Saeed's eligibility is questioned and Tom screws up in a big way, he's left to grapple with a culture he doesn't understand and take responsibility for his actions. Saeed and his family came out of nowhere and vanish just as quickly. And Tom may find himself going nowhere, too, if he doesn't start trying to get somewhere.

★ “With complex national issues solidly grounded in a thoroughly credible plot, this could be an outstanding vehicle for classroom and book club discussions.” —*The Bulletin*, Starred

ABOUT THIS GUIDE

The 21st-century learner must be able to read and analyze texts from different genres and apply knowledge of those genres in oral and written discussions and arguments. In *Outcasts United: The Story of a Refugee Soccer Team that Changed a Town* and *Out of Nowhere*, students have the opportunity to compare and contrast the style, tone, content, format, and organizational patterns of a fiction and nonfiction book on a similar subject. Each activity listed is tied to Common Core State Standards, which can be found at CoreStandards.org.

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Ask students to define the term *refugee* and to investigate the responsibilities of a refugee once they arrive in the United States, the government's responsibility to the refugees, and the response of citizens who have had refugees relocated in their community. Have students report their findings to the class.

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS: QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

HUMAN RIGHTS: What are basic human rights and what do they protect? How does the lack of human rights laws affect the refugees that flee war-torn countries? What impact do human rights issues have on Clarkson, Georgia, in *Outcasts United* and Enniston, Maine, in *Out of Nowhere*?

CULTURAL IDENTITY: What issues does the experience of living in a new country present to the refugees in both books? How does the move affect the refugees' identity? What do the refugees cling to as a lifeline? How does soccer help define the refugees' identity? What stereotypes were formed by superficial views of both the American culture and the refugees' culture?

RACISM AND PREJUDICE: What is the difference between racism and prejudice? In *Out of Nowhere*, how do Tom and other community members fight the racism in Enniston? How do Cherisse and her friends contribute to the problem of racism? What is the difference between Enniston's soccer team (*Out of Nowhere*) and the Fugees soccer team (*Outcasts United*)? How do the differences affect each team and how they play together?

DISCRIMINATION: In what ways do the refugees experience discrimination? How do they react? Why are they so fearful to stand up for themselves? How does Luma help fight the discrimination that affects her team (*Outcasts United*)? How does the mayor's letter in Enniston's paper fuel discrimination (*Out of Nowhere*)? In what ways do the actions of the refugees and the citizens convey their underlying values and beliefs in both books?

COMMUNITY: How does Luma work to create a community with her diverse players? What do the refugee families have in common that helps create a sense of solidarity? How does the community of the "old" Clarkson citizens react to the refugees and the changes they bring? What role does the school play in building community in both Clarkson and Enniston?

FRIENDSHIP: What role does friendship play in Tom's relationship with Saeed? Why does Saeed's sister refuse to be friends with Tom? How does Myla help Tom and Samira bridge the gap (*Out of Nowhere*)? How does the friendship between the players on the Fugees have a negative impact on the team (*Outcasts United*)?

All discussion questions correlate to Common Core Standard Speaking and Listening: Comprehension and Collaboration: SL 9-10.1 and SL 9-10. 4. Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL 9-10.1 and RL 9-10.3. Reading Informational Text: Key Ideas and Details: RI 9-10.1. Language: Convention of Standard English: L 9-10.1

CURRICULUM CONNECTIONS AND WRITING PROMPTS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS—GENRE COMPARISON: After reading *Outcasts United* and *Out of Nowhere*, ask students to compare and contrast the differences in style, tone, content, organizational patterns, and format. Have students work in small groups to create a presentation highlighting the differences between the two authors. Examples could include an interview of the two "authors," a Critic's Corner of the two works, an awards program recognizing the work of the two authors, etc. All presentations should include textual evidence to support the presentation.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL 9-10.1 and Reading Informational Text: Key Ideas and Details: RI 9-10.3.

GEOGRAPHY—THE WORLD OF A REFUGEE: In small groups, ask students to create a world map of the locations from which the refugees emigrated: Vietnam, Cambodia, Somalia, Ethiopia, Afghanistan, Burundi, Liberia, Bosnia, Kosovo, Sudan, and others. Assign each group a country and ask students to research and to write an explanation of the conflict that necessitated the families to flee. Assign one group the Somali Bantu and ask students to explain why their resettlement in America is particularly difficult. Have groups post their explanations on a world map. Then have students assume the identity of a refugee and write a letter to the editor of a local newspaper exploring one or more aspects of their refugee experience in assimilating into a new community. Have students share and post their letters along with the map.

Correlates to Common Core Standard English Language Arts: Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge: W 9-10.7.

GLOBAL STUDIES—GLOBAL ENVIRONMENT: The refugees from war-torn countries around the world brought about a global environment in Clarkson and Enniston. Ask students to define *global environment* and to write an essay on how Clarkson or Enniston adapted to the refugees, how the community changed in the areas of business and politics, how the public school system was affected by the influx of students who spoke little or no English, and how the housing situation helped and hindered the recent refugees. Have students also include their own personal reflections on how the lessons of Clarkson or Enniston apply to their own communities. Have students use their essays as a springboard to small group or panel discussions on the implications for all communities facing change.

Correlates to Common Core Standard English Language Arts: Writing: Research to Build and Present Knowledge: W 9-10.7.

SOCIAL STUDIES—HISTORY OF REFUGEES IN THE UNITED STATES: Ask students to trace the history of the refugees in the United States since 1970. Have them work in small groups to create a mural time line showing the flow of refugees from each country since this time. On their time, lines they should also address the changing role of the United Nations in selecting and assisting refugee families. Have each group present and share the information on their assigned part of the time line before posting as a classroom display.

Correlates to Common Core Standard History/Social Studies: Key Ideas and Details: RH 9-10.3.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION—COACHING STYLES: As a whole class, ask students to compare and contrast the coaching styles of Luma and the coach at Chamberlin High using a Venn diagram. Students should consider the environment, the players and staff, the rigors of their leagues, the pressure from the community, and other factors students consider important. Also important is each coach's background and upbringing. Based on the whole class discussion, have each student write a personal reaction to the qualities displayed by each of the coaches. Students should include qualities they would like to emulate and qualities they would like to avoid in their own lives, examples from the book for each, and lessons about life they can glean from the examples of the two coaches. Have students share their pieces in small groups.

Correlates to Common Core Standard Reading Literature: Key Ideas and Details: RL 9-10.3.

ART—COLLAGE OF FACES: Ask students to find photos of refugees across the country and to use the photos to create a story. Have students assemble the photos and accompanying stories into a photo collage. Students should also include a list of organizations that are available to assist refugees and websites or contact information for those organizations. Have students display the photo collage in a community library, community center, or meeting facility.

All Curriculum Connections correlate to Common Core Standard English Language Arts: Writing: Text Type and Purposes: W 9-10.1 and W 9-10.2; Production and Distribution of Writing: W 9-10.4; Research to Build and Present Knowledge: W 9-10.9.; Reading Informational Text: Key Ideas and Details: RI 9-10.1.; and Language: Convention of Standard English: L 9-10.1.

POST-READING ACTIVITY

As a class, brainstorm a list of the new information students possess about refugees and discuss ways in which they can help refugees in their school and community. On page 226 in *Outcasts United*, Tracy says, "I need to look around myself and see my neighborhood, and what is going on here and five streets over, and what I can do in terms of investing myself and my time, to be present for the people around me, and to do something positive for change in my community." Following Tracy's advice, ask students to plan and implement a community service project to help a refugee community.

INTERNET RESOURCES

THE UNITED NATIONS REFUGEE AGENCY

unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home

THE UNIVERSAL DECLARATION OF HUMAN RIGHTS

un.org/en/documents/udhr

REFUGEES INTERNATIONAL

refugeesinternational.org

THE U.S. COMMITTEE FOR

REFUGEES AND IMMIGRANTS

refugees.org

WORLD RELIEF—STAND FOR THE VULNERABLE

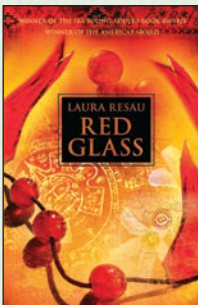
worldrelief.org

ABOUT THE AUTHORS

WARREN ST. JOHN is the author of the national bestsellers *Rammer Jammer Yellow Hammer: A Journey into the Heart of Fan Mania* and *Outcasts United: An American Town, a Refugee Team, and One Woman's Quest to Make a Difference*. A former reporter for the *New York Times*, he has also written extensively for *The New Yorker*, *The New York Observer*, and *Wired*. He was born in Birmingham, Alabama, attended Columbia University and now lives in New York City.

MARIA PADIAN is the author of *Jersey Tomatoes Are the Best* and *Brett McCarthy: Work in Progress*, which was an ALA-YALSA Best Book for Young Adults. A graduate of Middlebury College and the University of Virginia, she has also attended Oxford University and the Bread Loaf Writers' Conference. Born in New York but raised in New Jersey, she now lives in Maine and was inspired by the events in her community to write *Out of Nowhere*.

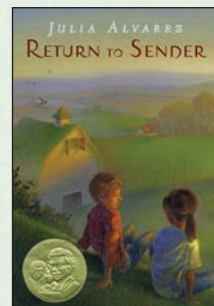
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