



***Outcasts United***  
by Warren St. John  
[ITEM # 54T3](#)

## ***Outcasts United*—Lesson 1**

### One Town, Multiple Perspectives: Response to Refugee Resettlement

#### **Objective**

Students will be able to articulate how different personal experiences impact the Clarkston townspeople’s reactions to the refugee resettlement.

Students will be able to cite textual evidence to identify the sources of some of the townspeople’s resentments and the town’s complicated response.

#### **Overview**

1. Whole Class Read-Aloud (1 min.)
2. Class Discussion Launch
3. Small Group Discussion
4. Town Hall Meeting
5. Independent Reflection Exercise
6. Share Out
7. Wrap-Up

Recommended Grades

**5–8**

Lesson(s) Run Time

**2 x 50 min.**

#### **Materials**

- *Outcasts United* by Warren St. John
- Small Group Scenario Slips
- Independent Reflection Worksheet

### **Time Frame**

### **Instructional Activity**

#### **PART I** (50 min.)

30 min.

**Whole Class Read-Aloud**—Read chapter 3 together as a class. Stop throughout the chapter to ask guided questions:

- Why does the mayor call himself the “champion of ‘old Clarkston’”? What does this suggest about his perspective?
- What was the source of the resentment? Are the refugees of Clarkston becoming scapegoats?
- What were the different reasons many Clarkston townspeople opposed the resettlement?

20 min.

**Class Discussion Launch**—Reread the last page of chapter 3 and ask students to try to imagine what was taking place in this town hall meeting. Pose these questions to set up for group discussions:

- Why did some people want to keep refugees out?
- Why did some people believe these residents were “uncaring, even racist”?
- What is complicated about Rita Thomas’s response: “I certainly am [happy I saved a life]....But I would have liked for it to have been my choice.”

#### **PART II** (50 min.)

10 min.

**Small Group Discussion**—Break students up into small groups. Give each group a street name and a character slip that lists who they are representing on their street.

Ask each group to represent its assigned street and answer the question below, using textual evidence to back up answers:

- Do you support the continuation of the refugee resettlement?

20 min.

**Town Hall Meeting**—Bring small groups back together. Students will now reenact what took place in the town meeting at the auditorium.

Each group will present its street’s argument from the perspective of their street scenario, using textual evidence to back up its street’s opinion (if they were not able to reach a decision because of differing opinions, they can present on that as well).

10 min.

**Independent Reflection Exercise**—Now it is the students’ turn to express their own opinions from their own individual points of view. Have students write a brief response to the town hall meeting from their own perspectives.

5 min.

**Share Out**—Have students share their reflections with the class.

5 min.

**Wrap-Up**—Ask students: How did the different perspectives of the townspeople affect their opinions about the refugee resettlement?

**Teacher Directions:** Hand these slips out to the small groups of students. Consider asking students to jot down character descriptions from the text before starting their discussion.

### Oak Street

Luma Mufleh

Jeremy Cole

Alex Ntwari

Charlie "Chollie"  
Nelson



### Maple Avenue:

Nathanial Nyok

Eldin Subasic

Chike Chime

Bill Mehlinger



### Pine Road

Paula Balegamire

David Faryen

David Anderson

Timothy Jordan

**Teacher Directions:** Hand these slips out to the small groups of students. Consider asking students to jot down character descriptions from the text before starting their discussion.

### Elm Street

Quendrim Bushi

Nini Pinzon

William Perrin

Hong Diep Vo



### Poplar Avenue

Tito

Lee Swaney

Tracy Ediger

Emanuel Ranson



### Birch Avenue

Idwar and Robin  
Dikori

Kanue Biah

Beatrice Ziaty

Tony Scipio

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**Directions:** Answer the reflection questions in complete sentences using the lines below.

- 1. How do different personal experiences impact the Clarkston townspeople’s reaction to the refugee resettlement?

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- 2. You had a chance to argue for the opinion of the person you represented from the book. Now it is your turn to answer the same question from your **own perspective**:

**Do you support the continuation of refugee resettlement in towns like Clarkston around the country?**

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