Christian Reformed
CENTRE FOR Public Dialogue

Using Children's Books to Talk about Refugee Justice

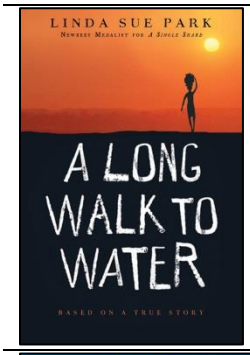
The following is a collection of books that can be used to talk to children and youth about issues related to refugee justice. This list is not exhaustive but a great resource! Use them in the classroom, Sunday school classroom, church service, community centre and home. Most of these books are children's picture books, and some are non-fiction/fiction books for youth. The goal is to offer books about refugees, but you will also find books on peace and war. All are meant to offer windows into the refugee experience: being uprooted, the terror of war, being forced to find a new home, the struggle to fit in, loss, grief, and … hope.

Tips for using these books:

- Use the images (only) to stimulate dialogue
  i.e. "Out of Iraq: Refugee's Stories in Words, Paintings, and Music"
- Use a book as an example to make another book to highlight a real story in the your city, then exhibit them in a library
  i.e. "Gervelie's Journey: A Refugee Diary"
- Read a book or portion of a book during a church service
  i.e. "When the Horses Ride By: Children in the Times of War"
- Use a prayer or poem from one of the books
  i.e. "Let There Be Peace: Prayers from around the World"
- Show just the images or a single image of a book to start an event
  i.e. "Why"
- Work with a group to change the ending of a book
  i.e. "The Butter Battle Book"
- Use a book in an art class to analyse what and how the illustrator is communicating
  i.e. "Terrible Things: An Allegory of the Holocaust"
- Copy the style of a book to create another book
  i.e. "Azzi in Between"

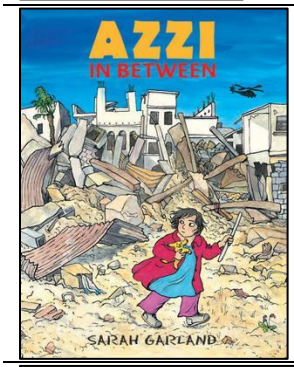
Christian Reformed
CENTRE FOR Public Dialogue

Refugees



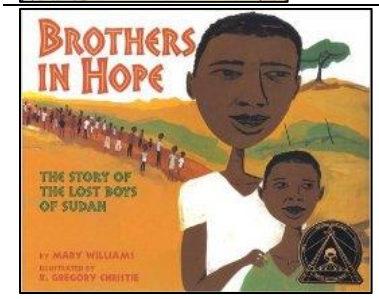
A Long Walk to Water
by Linda Sue Park
(Boston: Sandpiper, 2010)

Key ideas: Sudan, refugee, civil war, history, boy, non-fiction novel
Age: 10-up; 119p



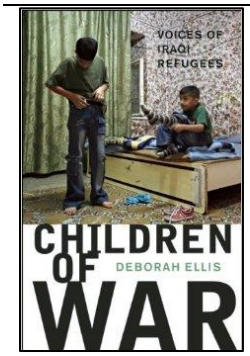
Azzi in Between
by Sarah Garland
(London: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2012)

Key ideas: war, refugee, graphic picture book
Age: 6-12; 40p



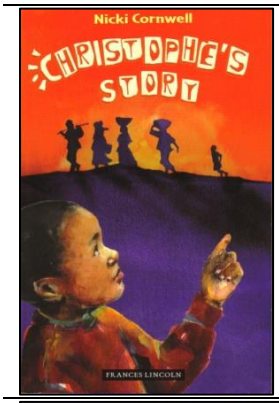
Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan
by Mary Williams & R. Gregory Christie, illustrated by Gregory Christie
(Lee & Low Books, 2005)

Key ideas: Sudan, refugee camp, orphan boys, picture book
Age: 6-12; 40p



Children of War: Voices of Iraqi Refugees
by Deborah Ellis
(Groundwood Books, 2009)

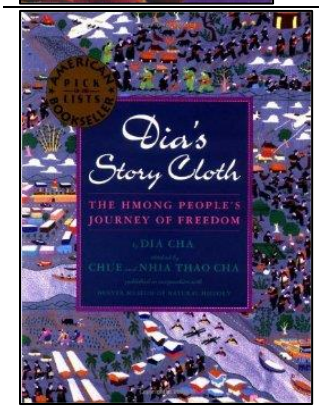
Key ideas: children of war, Iraq, refugees, non-fiction book
Age: 12-up; 128p



Christopher's Story

by Nicki Cornwell, illustrated by Karin Littlewood
(Great Britain: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2011)

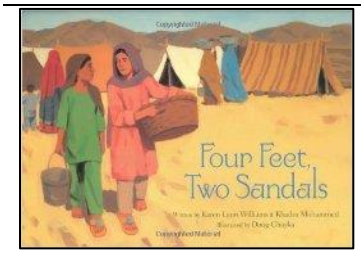
Key ideas: refugees, Rwanda, England, picture book
Age: 6-12; 96p



Dia's Story Cloth: The Hmong People's Journey of Freedom

by Dia Cha and Cha Chue
(Lee & Low Books, 1996)

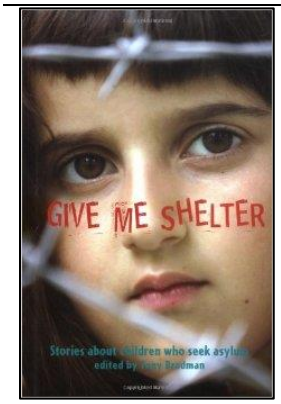
Key ideas: war, refugees, refugee camp, Laos, Thailand, picture book
Age: 6-12; 28p



Four Feet, Two Sandals

by Karen Lynn Williams & Khadra Mohammed, illustrated by Doug Chayka
(Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Books for Young Readers, 2007)

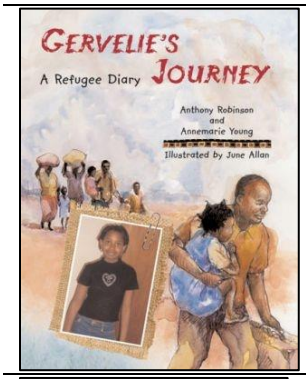
Key ideas: refugee camp, Pakistan, surprising friendship, shoes, picture book
Age: 6-12; 32p



Give Me Shelter: Stories About Children Who Seek Asylum

edited by Tony Bradman
(Great Britain: Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2007)

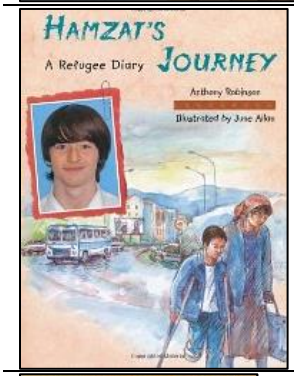
Key ideas: asylum seekers, Kosovo, Ethiopia, Vietnam, Eritrea, Zaire, Sudan, Somalia, Iraq, Zimbabwe, Kurdistan, non-fiction
Age: 12-up; 127p



Gervelie's Journey: A Refugee Diary

by Anthony Robinson & Annemaria Young, Illustrated by June Allan
(London: Frances Lincoln, 2008)

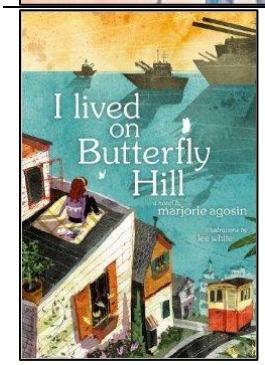
Key ideas: Republic of Congo, England, girl, refugee, non-fiction picture book
Age: 6-12; 32p



Hamzat's Journey: A Refugee Diary

by Anthony Robinson, illustrated by June Allan
(London: Frances Lincoln, 2009)

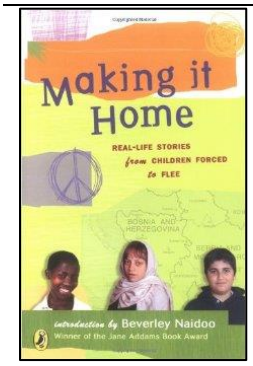
Key ideas: Chechnya, England, refugee, boy, non-fiction picture book
Age: 6-12; 32p



I Lived on Butterfly Hill

by Marjorie Agaosin, illustrated by Lee White
(Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2014)

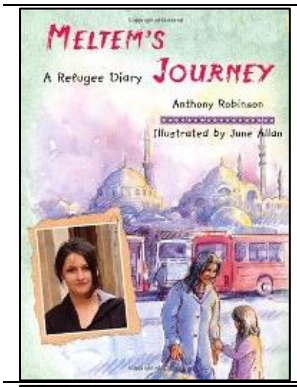
Key ideas: Chile, military dictatorship, refugees, Maine USA, historical fiction novel
Age: 10-up; 455p



Making It Home: Real-Life Stories from Children Forced to Flee

by Beverly Naidoo
(Puffin, 2005)

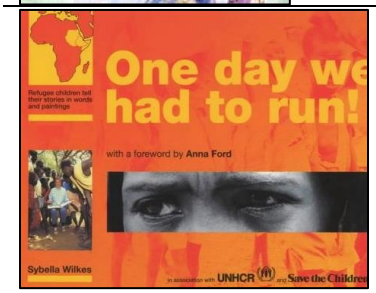
Key ideas: refugees, real stories, non-fiction
Age: 12-up; 128p



Meltem's Journey: A Refugee Diary

by Anthony Robinson, illustrated by June Allan
(London: Frances Lincoln, 2010)

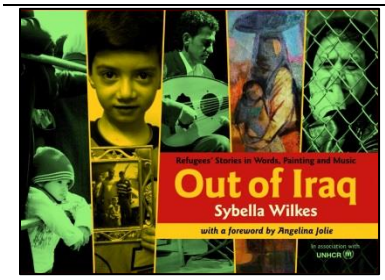
Key ideas: Turkey, Kurdish, England, refugee, girl, non-fiction picture book
Age: 6-12; 32p



One Day We Had to Run: Refugee Children Tell Stories In Words and Paintings

by Sybella Wilkes
(Lerner Publishing Group, 1995)

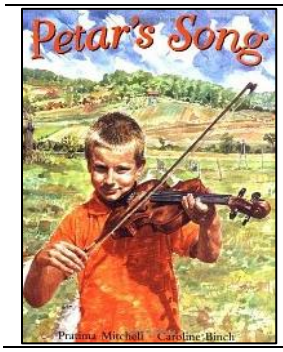
Key ideas: refugees, real stories, art, picture book, non-fiction
Age: 10-up; 64p



Out of Iraq: Refugee's Stories in Words, Paintings, and Music

by Sybella Wilkes
(London: Evans Brothers Ltd, 2011)

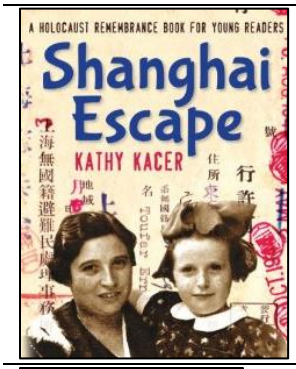
Key ideas: Iraq, war, refugees, Civil Ward, poverty, UNHCRM, art, personal stories, non-fiction juvenile literature
Age: 10-up; 77p



Petar's Song

by Pratima Mitchell, illustrated by Caroline Binch
(London: Frances Lincoln, 2004)

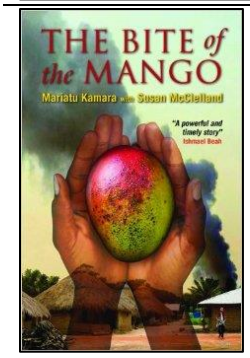
Key ideas: refugee, music, boy, picture book
Age: 6-10; 28p



Shanghai Escape

by Kathy Kacer
(Toronto: Second Story Press, 2013)

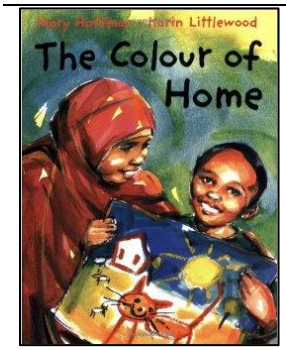
Key ideas: holocaust, Shanghai China, Vienna, Jewish, refugee, non-fiction juvenile literature
Age 8-up; 248p



The Bite of the Mango

by Mariatu Kamara & Susan McClelland
(Toronto: Annick Press, 2008)

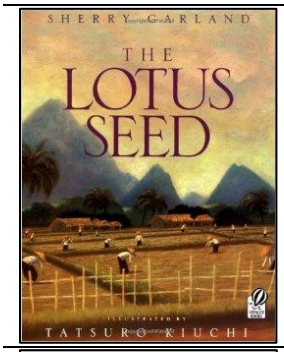
Key ideas: war, civil war, history, refugee camp, Sierra Leona, 12-year-old girl, UNICEF, Toronto Canada, non-fiction
Age: 12-up; 216p



The Colour of Home

by Mary Hoffman, illustrated by Karin Littlewood
(Great Britain: Frances Lincoln, 2002)

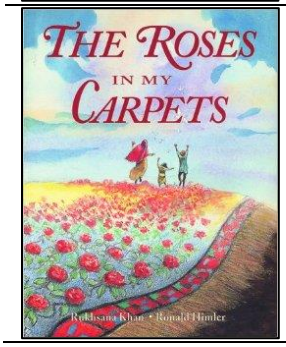
Key ideas: refugee child, a new home, struggle, Somalian, Great Britain, picture book
Age: 5-10; 32p



The Lotus Seed

by Sherry Garland, illustrated by Tatsuro Kiuchi
(HMH Books for Young Readers, 1997)

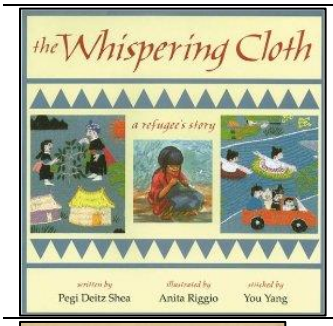
Key ideas: Vietnam, USA, picture book
Age: 6-12; 32p



The Roses in My Carpets

by Rukhsana Khan, illustrated by Ronald Himler
(New York: Holiday House, 1998)

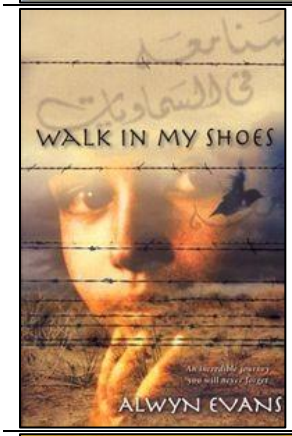
Key ideas: war, refugees, Afghanistan, weaving, picture book
Age: 6-12; 32p



The Whispering Cloth: A Refugee's Story

by Pegi Deitz Shea, illustrated by Anita Riggio & You Yang
(Honesdale, Pennsylvania: Boyds Mills Press, 1995)

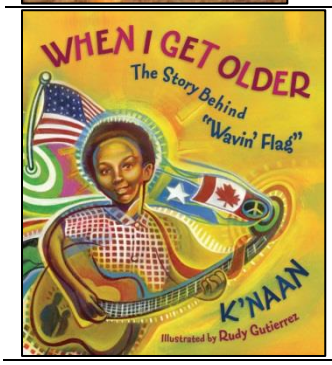
Key ideas: refugees, refugee camp, Thailand, fabric, picture book
Age: 6-10; 32p



Walk In My Shoes

by Alwyn Evans
(Penguin Books, 2004)

Key ideas: refugee, Afghanistan, Australia, non-fiction
Age: 12-up; 360p

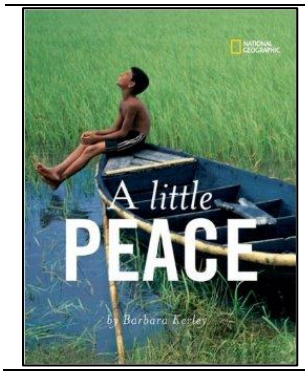


When I Get Older: The Story Behind "Wavin' Flag"

by K'naan, illustration Rudy Gutierrez
(Toronto: Tundra Books, 2012)

Key ideas: Somalia, soccer, song, music, Toronto Canada, boy, non-fiction picture book
Age: 6-up; 32p

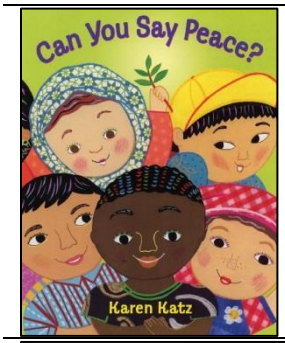
Peace and War



A Little Peace

by Barbara Kerley
(Washington: National Geographic, 2007)

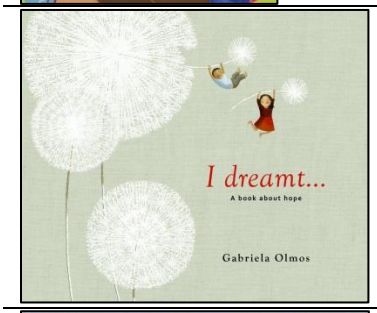
Key ideas: peace, multi-cultural, picture book
Age: all ages, 32p



Can You Say Peace

by Karen Katz
(New York: Henry Holt and Company, 2006)

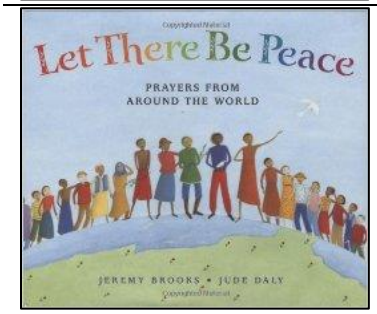
Key ideas: peace, International Peace Day, picture book
Age: 3-6; 32p



I Dreamt… : A Book about Hope

by Gabriela Olmos
(Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2012)

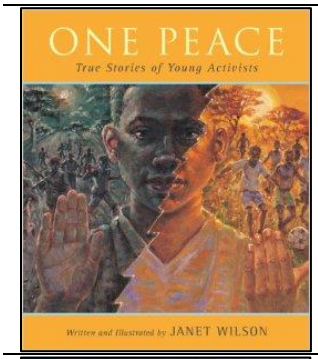
Key ideas: hope, violence, whimsical, picture book
Age: 8-up; 32p



Let There Be Peace: Prayers from Around the World

by Jeremy Brooks, illustrated by Jude Daly
(Great Britain: Frances Lincoln, 2009)

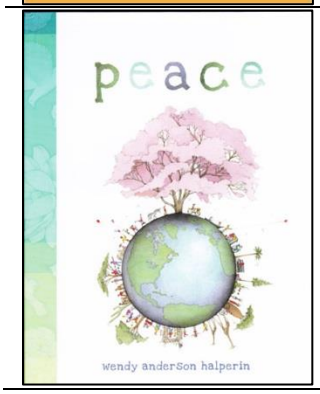
Key ideas: peace, prayers, picture book
Age: 5-12; 32p



One Peace: True Stories of Young Activists

by Janet Wilson
(Toronto, Ontario: Orca Book Publishers, 2008)

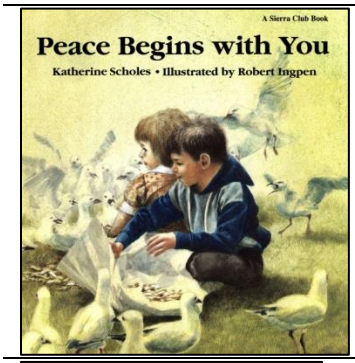
Key ideas: peace, pacifism, activists, non-fiction picture book
Age: 8-up; 52p



Peace

by Wendy Anderson Halperin
(New York: Atheneum Books for Young Readers, 2013)

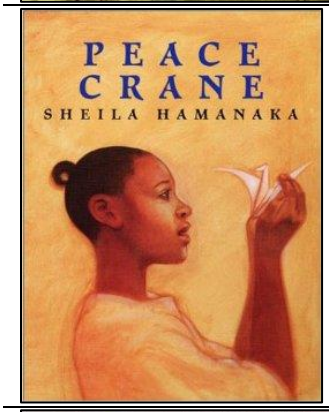
Key ideas: peace, quotations, multi-cultural, picture book
Age: ageless; 40p



Peace Begins with You

by Katherine Scholes, illustrated by Robert Ingpen
(San Francisco: Sierra Club Books, 1989)

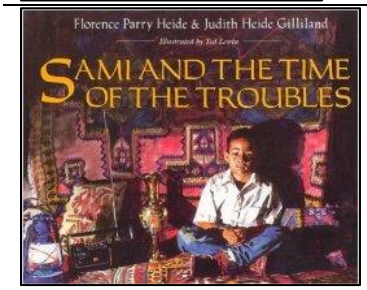
Key ideas: peace, picture book
Age: 6-up; 40p



Peace Crane

by Sheila Hamanaka
(New York: Morrow Junior Books, 1995)

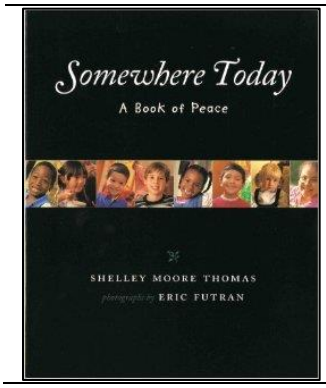
Key ideas: peace, Hiroshima, Japan, picture book
Age: all ages; 40p



Sami and the Time of the Troubles

by Florence Parry Heide, illustrated by Judith Heide Gilliland
(New York: Clarion Books, 1992)

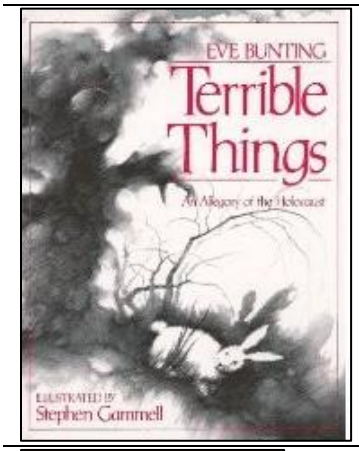
Key ideas: Lebanon, civil war, picture book
Age: 6-12; 40p



Somewhere Today: A Book of Peace

by Shelley Moore Thomas, illustrated by Eric Futran
(Morton Grove, Illinois: Albert Whitman & Company, 1998)

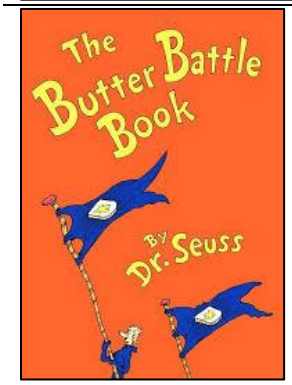
Key ideas: peace, multi-cultural, picture book
Age: 0-8



Terrible Things: An Allegory of the Holocaust

by Eve Bunting, illustrated by Stephen Gammell
(Philadelphia: The Jewish Publication Society, 1993)

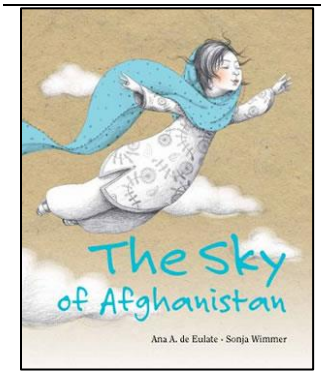
Key ideas: war, an allegory, picture book
Age: 5-10



The Butter Battle Book

by Dr. Seuss
(New York: Random House, 1984)

Key ideas: war, senselessness of war, poetry, picture book
Age: all ages



The Sky of Afghanistan

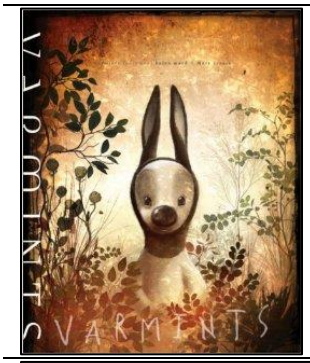
by Ana Eulte and Sonja Wimmer
(Madrid Spain: Calle Claveles, 2012)

Key ideas: peace, poetic, kites, Afghanistan, picture book; *Gold Medal Winner of 2012 Moonbeam Awards for Peacemaking; **original language is Spanish
Age: ageless

Three Wishes Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak

by Debrorah Ellis
(Toronto: Groundwood Books, 2004)

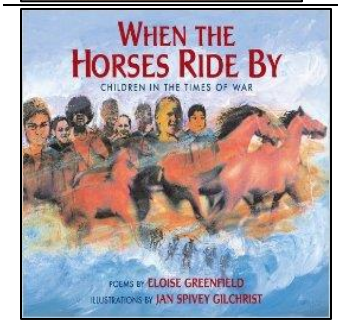
Key ideas: Palestine, Israel, children of war, non-fiction novel
Age: 12-up; 111p



Varmints

by Helen Ward, illustrated by Mare Craste
(Cambridge, Massachusetts: Candlewick Press, 2007)

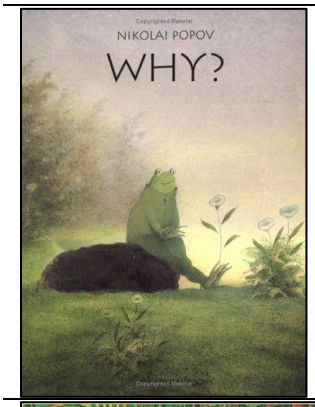
Key ideas: war, peace, picture book
Age: 8-up



When the Horses Ride By: Children in the Times of War

by Eloise Greenfield, illustrated by Jan Spivey Gilchrist
(New York: Lee & Low Books Inc., 2006)

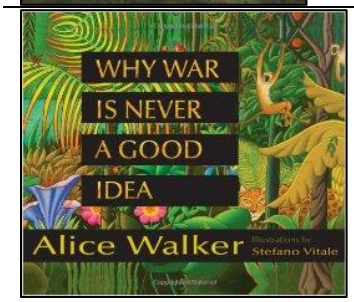
Key ideas: war, peace, multi-cultural, poetry, picture book
Age: 6-12



Why?

by Nikolai Popov
(New York: North-South Books, 1996)

Key ideas: war, senselessness of war, wordless picture book
Age: 6-up



Why War Is Never a Good Idea

by Alice Walker, illustrated by Stefano Vitale
(New York: Harper Collins Publishers, 2007)

Key ideas: war, peace, hope, multi-cultural, children's poetry, picture book
Age: all ages