

THE SUSAN B. ANTHONY ACADEMY – I.S. 238

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Dear Families,

In the coming weeks we will begin to read a powerful book in class, *Refugee* by Alan Gratz. This book covers three different perspectives and individual refugee stories in Cuba, Germany, and Syria.

As stated on www.alangratz.com/writing/refugee site the synopses is as follows:

One mission in common: ESCAPE.

Josef is a Jewish boy in 1930's Nazi Germany. With the threat of concentration camps looming, he and his family board a ship bound for the other side of the world...

Isabel is a Cuban girl in 1994. With riots and unrest plaguing her country, she and her family set out on a raft, hoping to find safety and freedom in America...

Mahmoud is a Syrian boy in 2015. With his homeland torn apart by violence and destruction, he and his family begin a long trek towards Europe...

All three young people will go on harrowing journeys in search of refuge. All will face unimaginable dangers- from drownings to bombings to betrayals. But for each of them, there is always the hope of tomorrow. And although, Josef, Isabel, and Mahmoud are separated by continents and decades, surprising connections will tie their stories together in the end.

The book, while inspirational and thought provoking, is also heavy and dark at times. *Refugee*, describes accounts of violence. It is not overly graphic or gruesome, but anytime we read about violence in the world, we need to be extra thoughtful to make sure that everyone feels safe. We will discuss strategies we might use to support safety during a difficult reading (such as: taking a break from reading, talking to an adult or friend about your thoughts, journaling, or writing a note to the teacher). We encourage you to discuss this book with your child each week and ask them about their thoughts and feelings. We also encourage you to read the book as well but please do not have your child read ahead as we want to be able to prep the students and guide them through the material.

On a personal note, this book is incredibly powerful and inspiring. We suggest, if you have time, to read it so that you can have discussions with your children about the world, the refugee crisis, struggles, and hope. We are so excited to have this book as part of our curriculum.

We thank you for your support.

Sincerely,

Ms. Baffour

Ms. Baffour
Assistant Principal

