

 FYI
INVESTIGATES

CHILDREN OF WAR

(22 MINUTES 55 SECONDS)

TEACHER NOTES

Overview of the film

FYI Investigates: Children of War provides an overview of the war in Ukraine one year on. It follows the stories of children who have been affected by the war and looks at how their lives have changed since it began. Through hearing these children's stories, this film helps young people in the UK understand the impact the war has had on Ukrainian children and empathise with the plight of refugees fleeing from war.

Discussion notes

- **Part 1: Overview of the children and their stories**
- **Part 2: Discussion questions for the film**

Discussion notes

These notes will help you unpick **FYI Investigates: Children of War** with your pupils. They include brief summaries of each child's story, timecodes of where the stories appear in the film and questions to help you lead discussions about the film with your class. The questions are provided in chronological order as the sections appear in the film.

This material is intended as a guide only, and teachers should use their own judgement on how best to use the film to support their pupils' understanding of, and reaction to, the events of the past year. Particular care must be taken if refugee Ukrainian students are part of your school community. All teachers should watch the complete film before sharing with students.

Part 1: The children and their stories



● Davyd (01:39–05:50)

Theme: Davyd's story helps us to understand what has happened to young refugees who have fled Ukraine with their parents.

Davyd is from the town of Bucha near the capital, Kyiv. As Russia began its invasion of Ukraine one year ago, Bucha was hit by missiles day after day. Davyd and his family had to hide in the basement of their home for three weeks. Eventually, Russia allowed civilians to leave the city, so with some protection, Davyd and his family left. They put a sign on their car saying 'children' in the hope Russian troops wouldn't attack them. They headed to the airport and flew to Poland and then eventually England. Now Davyd lives in London and goes to school there.



● Elya (See timeline overleaf)

Theme: Hearing Elya's story helps us to understand what it's been like for young refugees who fled Ukraine on their own.

Elya is from the city of Kharkiv, which was almost completely destroyed at the beginning of the Russian invasion. She is one of many teenagers who had to flee Ukraine without her parents because they had to stay behind to look after sick relatives. One year on, Elya is living with a host family in Bristol and attends university in the UK, but she has been struggling with life without seeing her mum and dad. Just before Christmas, she decided to take a risk and head back to her war-torn country to see them.

Elya's timeline

In the film, Elya's story is broken up into different sections, with other children's stories featuring in between. The timeline below is to help you with finding the different parts of her story.

Part 1 – The start of the war (05:47–09:13) – Scarlett meets Elya in Ukraine for the first time one year ago.

Part 2 – Life as a refugee in the UK (07:33–09:13) – We hear about what Elya's life in the UK is like and how she is getting on.

Part 3 – Returning home (11:57–15:18) – Elya returns to Ukraine to see her parents.

Part 4 – Going back to Kharkiv (18:05–22:17) – Elya and her family travel back to their home city of Kharkiv and she reflects on how it has changed.



● Daniel (09:13–11:57)

Theme: Through hearing Daniel's story, we learn what happens to young refugees when British families pull out of hosting families.

Daniel fled Ukraine with his mum, Taya, and grandmother. They have been living with a host family in High Wycombe and Daniel has been going to school there, but after 10 months, their host family asked them to leave. It has been challenging for Taya to find new accommodation for the family to live in. Daniel handed in a petition to the prime minister signed by 10,000 hosts looking after 5,000 refugees, asking for more financial support. Since then, the Government has announced it will increase the amount of money it gives to host families. The hope is to convince more people to welcome Ukrainian refugees into their homes.



● Nazari, Sophia and their friends (15:18–18:04)

Theme: This section explores the lives of children who have stayed in Ukraine.

When Elya returns to Ukraine, she visits some children who are still living there, one year on. According to children's charity UNICEF, every one of Ukraine's 5.7 million children has suffered trauma from the war. Many of these children have had to escape their home towns. Some have fathers fighting on the frontline or have lost relatives. Nazari says that now, when he hears a plane or loud sound, he gets under a bed because he is scared it is a fighter jet. Sophia desperately wants to call her dad who is fighting on the frontline, but isn't allowed because it's forbidden. All these children are getting specialist care to help them cope with their experiences.

Part 2: Discussion questions for the film

These have been put into sections to appear in chronological order as each story features in the film. The questions are designed to guide you with discussions about the film in the classroom and to help you to understand and think through the children's stories with your pupils.

● Meeting Davyd (01:39–05:50)

A young person who has fled to the UK with his mum

What made life very frightening and difficult for Davyd and his family when the war began?

- Bucha, where they lived, was bombed and one bomb fell metres from their house
- Russian troops moved into their town
- There were Russian soldiers on the streets so they couldn't go outside
- There was no electricity

What did they have to do to keep safe?

- The family had to lie down to protect themselves
- They hid in their basement and remained here for three weeks
- Davyd took toys with him to the basement to play with

How did Davyd and his family finally escape from Bucha?

- Russian troops eventually agreed to an evacuation of civilians from Bucha
- Ukrainian soldiers were making advances in the war, so they could go out because they were now more protected
- Davyd's mum's friend met them with a car so they could flee Bucha

What did they do at this point to try to keep safe?

- They put a sign saying 'children' on the car, in the hope it would keep them safe from Russian troops

Where did Davyd and his mum go when they fled their country?

- They flew to Poland, and then to England

How is Davyd doing now he's in the UK? What's helping him feel safe and happy?

- Davyd and his mum are doing well and now live with a family in the UK who have always lived here
- Davyd enjoys going to school and playing piano

● Meeting Elya

A young person who has fled to the UK alone

Part 1 – The start of the war (05:47–07:33)

What made life very difficult for Elya and her family in their home in Kharkiv when the war began?

- The ninth floor in their block of flats was destroyed, which was the moment Elya realised she had to leave
- Elya had no other choice but to go and leave her parents behind
- Leaving her parents was very hard for Elya

Why did Elya’s parents need to stay in Ukraine?

- They had to take care of relatives

Why do you think they wanted Elya to leave Kharkiv and become a refugee?

- They wanted Elya to be safe
- They wanted Elya to pursue her dream and go to university in the UK

● Elya part 2 – Life as a refugee in the UK (07:33–09:13)

Life for Elya in the UK is complicated

Since she arrived in the UK, how has Elya been able to carry on with her life and hopes for her future?

- She was taken in by a British host family
- Her dream to study in the UK is now a reality because she is a student at university

What struggles has she faced with leaving her family in Ukraine?

- Elya worries about her family so much
- She feels guilty for being safe
- She is so far away that even if she wanted to help them, it’s just not possible

How do you know she spends a lot of time thinking about what is happening back in her home country?

- Elya has painted the Ukrainian Motherland statue, which reads ‘Glory to Ukraine’

● **Meeting Daniel** (09:13-11:57)

A young person who has lived with his mum and grandmother with a host family in the UK, but now needs to find a new home here

How did Daniel, his mother Taya and his grandmother find safety from the war?

- They fled to the UK

What is a host family? What do we find out about Daniel's host family?

- A host family provides somewhere for refugees to stay
- Daniel's host family have been very welcoming
- The host family have a big house close to Daniel's school and he has enjoyed living there

Why do you think some host families in the UK are unable to keep looking after Ukrainian refugees in their homes?

- Some are struggling to share their homes, especially for such a long time
- It is too expensive

Why is it difficult for Daniel's mum to find a new home for the three of them?

- It's too expensive to find a flat that will be big enough for all three of them and is close to Daniel's school

How many hosts had signed the petition that Daniel handed into 10 Downing Street?

- 10,000 hosts looking after 5,000 refugees

What action did the UK Government then take to persuade more people in the UK to host Ukrainian refugees?

- It announced that it will increase the monthly payment it gives to host families

● Elya part 3 – Returning home (11:57–15:18) and (18:05–22:17)

When we meet Elya again she decides to go back to Ukraine to visit her parents

Why is Elya so keen to go back to Ukraine even though there are risks?

- Life in England without her parents is proving too much for Elya
- She is very determined to see her parents and it's important to her to keep her going

● Meeting Nazari, Sophia and their friends (15:18–18:04)

Young people who stayed in Ukraine

How have these children been affected by war?

- Some escaped towns taken over by Russian soldiers
- Many have been forced to flee from their homes
- Some have lost relatives

What kind of things now frighten Nazari, and why?

- Loud noises and the sound of planes remind Nazari of a fighter jet that flew right above his head. He hides under his bed when he hears loud sounds

What is very difficult for Sophia?

- She can't contact her dad as he is fighting in the war
- She was calling and texting her dad but it's forbidden
- It's hard when her dad calls her and she asks 'how are you?' 'how is everyone?'

How are Nazari and Sophia, and other children, being supported to cope with their experiences of war?

- They are getting specialist care
- They are visited by a therapy dog to help reduce stress and anxiety
- More support will be needed. According to children's charity UNICEF, every one of Ukraine's 5.7 million children has suffered trauma because of the war. More than 2 million have been forced to flee their homes and over half have no school to go to

● Elya part 4 – Going back to Kharkiv (18:05–22:17)

During her visit, Elya and her parents go back to their home town, Kharkiv

What has happened to her home town and all the places she grew up in?

- Their apartment block has been badly damaged
- Her school has been destroyed

What are Elya's reflections on what has happened in her home town?

- It is very painful for Elya to see what has happened to her home town
- She is sad that there is no place she can come back to to meet her teachers and school friends

Elya's parents have decided they now need to stay and live in Kharkiv. Why do they make this decision? How do you think Elya might feel about this?

- Even though there is no electricity or running water, and the city is still attacked, they no longer feel the capital, Kyiv, where they fled to is any safer

What positive final thoughts does Elya have at the end of this video?

- Elya is determined to never give up on her dreams or hopes for peace
- She says:
 - “Putin cannot destroy our dreams and stop us from getting an education”
 - “He will never break our spirit because our freedom and love to each other is now stronger than ever”
 - “We will never let Putin destroy our future”