

CALIFORNIA DROUGHT | A GAMER GIRL'S VICTORY | POLICE & BODY CAMS

# Junior Scholastic®

SEPTEMBER 7, 2015

THE CURRENT EVENTS MAGAZINE



## DESPERATE JOURNEY

Thousands of migrants from the Middle East and Africa have died trying to cross the Mediterranean to Europe. Meet a teen who survived the voyage. p. 8

Asylum seekers traveling from Libya await rescue by the Italian navy.

 SCHOLASTIC

INTERNATIONAL

# Desperation



# at Sea

Tens of thousands of people from the Middle East and Africa are risking their lives to cross the Mediterranean Sea to get to Europe

BY REBECCA ZISSOU

It was early in the morning on April 17, 2015, and 15-year-old Ali\* sat in an inflatable plastic boat in the Mediterranean Sea. It had been three months since he climbed into the back of a pickup truck to leave his home in the African nation of Somalia. Desperate to escape the violence and poverty of his homeland, he'd arranged for smugglers to take him 4,400 miles across the Sahara Desert to the coast of Libya.

Now, crammed in the small boat with about 70 other **migrants** and **refugees**, he dreamed of starting a new life in Europe.

But after a few hours at sea, a hole appeared in the front of the boat and air started leaking out. Some of the passengers tried frantically to cover the opening, while others used a satellite phone to call the Italian coast guard. It took six hours for help to arrive.

"Those six hours were the worst moments of my life," says Ali. "I thought I would never live again."

Luckily, everyone onboard survived. Hours later, they were taken to a reception center for migrants and refugees on the Italian island of Lampedusa. There they were given a hot meal—their first in months—and beds to sleep in.

Ali and his fellow travelers represent just a fraction of the →

◀ **European ships have rescued thousands of people stranded on overcrowded, rickety boats in the Mediterranean Sea.**



FABRIZIO VILLAPOLARIS IMAGES

\*Name has been changed for privacy



## MAPPING MIGRATION

Thousands of people from Africa and the Middle East cross the Sahara Desert on their long journeys to Europe. Many of them set sail from Tripoli, the capital of Libya, on crowded boats (right).



thousands of people who have attempted to cross the Mediterranean Sea to get to Europe in recent years. Many are escaping violence, poverty, or persecution in the Middle East and Africa. According to the United Nations (U.N.), more than 100,000 people arrived in Europe by boat in the first half of 2015.

Most, like Ali, are packed into rickety boats that were never meant for the high seas. The vessels often lack life jackets and navigation equipment. As of June, more than 1,800 people had drowned attempting the journey, up from 425 during the same period in 2014.

“The situation in the Mediterranean . . . cannot continue like

this,” says European Union (E.U.) President Donald Tusk. “We cannot accept that hundreds of people die when trying to cross the sea to Europe.”

### Dangerous Journeys

Throughout history, millions of people have been forced to flee their homelands—often to escape war, poverty, hunger, disease, persecution, or natural disasters.

Today the U.N. estimates that nearly 60 million people are displaced worldwide—more than at any other time ever recorded. (See “A Global Crisis,” pp. 12-13.)

Many of those seeking safety in Europe come from Syria, a country in the Middle East being torn apart by a civil war. Since

the fighting began in 2011, more than 200,000 people have been killed, and 4 million have fled for their lives. Thousands of others are running from poor, unstable countries in Africa, including Eritrea, Gambia, and Sudan. (See “Mapping Migration,” left.)

In Somalia, where Ali was born, a violent militant group known as al-Shabaab has been wreaking havoc for years. The group’s aim: to overthrow the country’s Western-backed government and impose strict Islamic law. Al-Shabaab has kidnapped hundreds of children on their way to school and forced them to fight on the front lines.

“In my country, there is no peace,” says Ali, whose parents died when he was 9 years old.

In January, he decided that it was finally time to go. Ali left Somalia with a 19-year-old friend whose father had paid smugglers to take the two teens to Libya. As they traveled north through the Sahara Desert—where temperatures can reach 110 degrees Fahrenheit—they were given little food or water. Then one day, Ali’s friend fell out of the back of the pickup truck as it sped through the sand.

“[He] didn’t make it,” says Ali. “We buried him in the desert.”

### A Brutal Stop

Weeks later, Ali arrived in Libya alone and afraid. There is virtually no security along the Mediterranean coast of this North African country, allowing human smugglers to operate freely.

Conor Fortune of Amnesty International, an aid group, says smuggling networks in Libya often hold people for weeks at a time

**“IN MY COUNTRY,  
THERE IS NO PEACE.”**

—ALI, 15, FROM SOMALIA

until the refugees are able to pay thousands of dollars to secure a spot on a boat.

“They promise that it’ll be a very sturdy, seaworthy boat,” he tells *JS*. “But those often turn out to be false promises.”

Instead, hundreds of people are packed into small vessels made of wood or plastic. The smugglers often abandon the boats, says Fortune, leaving the passengers to fend for themselves.

“The boats don’t have enough fuel to make it across,” he says. “They end up drifting on the high seas for days on end.”

### Long Road Ahead

For the migrants and refugees who make it to Europe, the future is



An African migrant denied entry into Europe protests being sent back to his home country.

often unclear. Once they arrive on dry land, they’re taken to reception centers near the Mediterranean coast, where they receive food, shelter, and medical attention. Some stay there for months while European officials decide their fates.

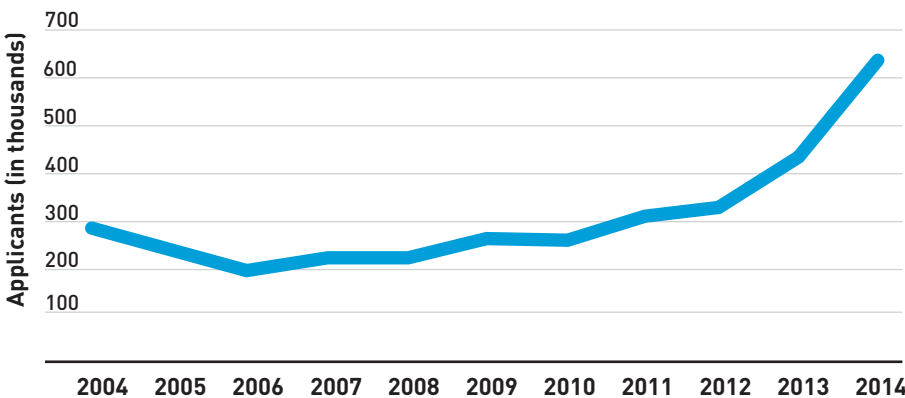
Those who face the greatest dangers at home may be granted asylum, which allows them to stay in Europe permanently.

(*Asylum* is protection given by a government to someone who has left their country to escape harm or persecution.) But thousands of others are eventually sent back. (See graphs, below.)

Fortune says that European leaders are reluctant to accept newcomers. Some fear that welcoming foreigners will encourage others to try to get to Europe. In addition, some leaders are concerned →

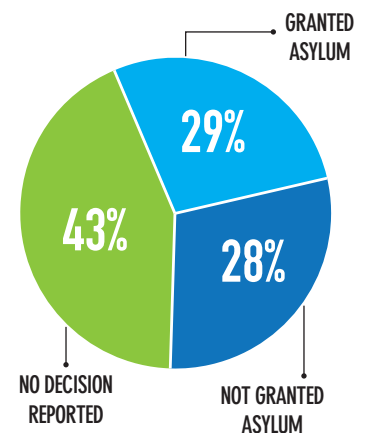
## SAFETY IN EUROPE?

The number of people applying for asylum in the 28 nations of the E.U. has doubled in the past 10 years.



SOURCE: Eurostat

Here’s what happened to the 630,000 people who applied for asylum in the E.U. in 2014.



about the effect that migrants and refugees could have on their local economies. They worry that natives will have to compete with the newcomers for jobs.

In recent months, governments, humanitarian groups, and other organizations have come together to try to find solutions. This spring, European officials started working on a plan to resettle about 60,000 migrants and refugees across the continent. They also agreed to increase funding for search-and-rescue operations in the Mediterranean.

**“THIS PROBLEM ISN’T GOING AWAY.”**

—CONOR FORTUNE,  
AMNESTY INTERNATIONAL

But much more needs to be done, according to Fortune. He says world leaders should help build stable governments in the Middle East and Africa. That way, fewer people would need to seek safety abroad in the first place. Individuals can help too, he says, by raising awareness about the crisis.

“This problem isn’t going away,” Fortune notes.

For Ali, the dangerous journey has been worth it. He says that he’s grateful to have arrived safely in Italy and is looking forward to starting over. He hopes he’s allowed to stay so he can continue his education and find a job.

“I’m looking for a better life,” he says. “I’d like to go to Norway.” ♦



**A GLOBAL CRISIS** Millions of people worldwide are fleeing their homes to escape violence, poverty, or persecution. This map shows the estimated number of refugees by their country of origin. The 10 nations with the most refugees are numbered.



**» The Americas**  
Poverty and gang violence in Central and South America have driven tens of thousands of people to flee to the United States. How to deal with people crossing the U.S.-Mexico border illegally will likely be a major issue in the 2016 U.S. presidential election.

**YOUR TURN**

What challenges might migrants and refugees face in their home countries and in the countries they immigrate to?

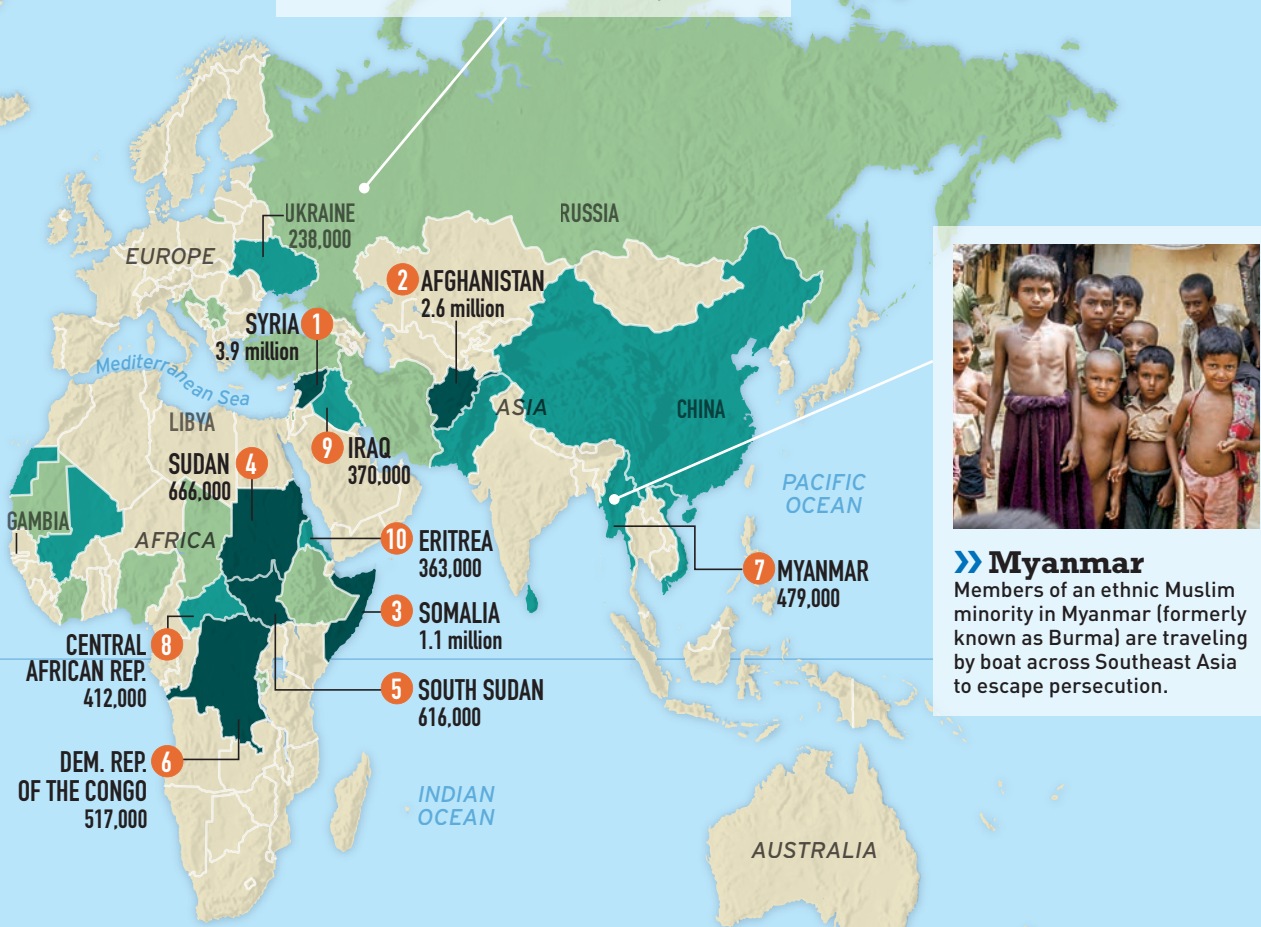
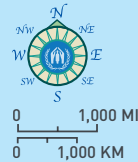


Watch a video about the Mediterranean migrant crisis at [scholastic.com/js](http://scholastic.com/js).



## » Ukraine

Thousands of Ukrainians have been displaced within Ukraine or have fled to other nations to escape armed conflict and a shrinking economy.



## » Myanmar

Members of an ethnic Muslim minority in Myanmar (formerly known as Burma) are traveling by boat across Southeast Asia to escape persecution.

## QUESTIONS

- Which two continents have the most refugees?
- How many refugees are from Somalia?
- Which country in the Americas has the most refugees?
- How many more refugees are from Syria than from Afghanistan?
- Which body of water separates Libya and Europe?
- Who is escaping from Myanmar?
- Which countries in Africa have more than 500,000 refugees?
- Which country has about three times as many refugees as Eritrea?
- Why are people in Central and South America fleeing to the U.S.?
- Which is greater: the number of refugees from Syria and Afghanistan or the number of refugees in all of the other top 10 countries combined?

# LEVELED TEXTS!

A lower-Lexile version of our cover story is available at [scholastic.com/js](http://scholastic.com/js).

## INTERNATIONAL PAGES 8-13

**Lexile Score: 1065L**  
(lower-Lexile version: 920L)

# Desperation at Sea

### OBJECTIVE

Students will use text-based evidence to analyze an article and think critically about the accompanying graphics.

### KEY STANDARDS

RH.6-8.1, RH.6-8.7, WHST.6-8.9

### TIME FRAME

Approximately one class period

### ARTICLE SUMMARY

This article describes how thousands of people are fleeing to Europe to escape violence, poverty, or persecution in the Middle East and Africa. Many of them attempt to cross the Mediterranean Sea on rickety boats that aren't meant for the high seas. As of June, more than 1,800 people had drowned while making the journey this year. Governments and humanitarian groups are working together to try to find solutions to the ongoing crisis.

## STEP-BY-STEP LESSON PLAN

# Before Reading

### 1 USING VOCABULARY TO MAKE PREDICTIONS (5-10 MINUTES)

Write the following words on the board: *Africa*, *asylum*, *Europe*, *flee*, *Middle East*, *migrant*, *persecution*, *refugee*, and *smuggler*. As a class, create a definition for each word. (For the continents and region, say where they're located.) Then have students use all the words in a two- or three-sentence statement that describes what they think the article will be about. Invite students to share their statements with the class.



### 2 PREVIEW GRAPHICS AND VIDEO (5-10 MINUTES)

Have students skim the article, paying special attention to the photos, maps, and headings to get a sense of what it's about. Then show students the video, which can be found at [scholastic.com/js](http://scholastic.com/js). Once students have previewed the article and watched the video, they can revise their prediction statements, if necessary.

# Read & Analyze

### 3 INDEPENDENT READING (15 MINUTES)

Ask students to number each paragraph of the article. Then have them read the article independently. While reading, students should annotate the text by underlining central ideas and jotting down any comments or questions. They should also write at least one comment or question for each graphic (photos, maps, graphs, etc.).

### 4 PAIR SHARE (5 MINUTES)

Allow students to work in pairs to discuss some of the notes they made while reading. Have a few volunteers share their notes with the class.

### 5 MAP QUESTIONS (10 MINUTES)

Have students work with a partner to complete the map questions on p. 13 of the issue. Go over the answers as a class. Then have each pair of students draw an inference based on information they gathered from answering the questions. Have teams support their inferences with details from the map.





NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

KEY  
STANDARD

**RH.6-8.7**



PDF is available  
at [scholastic.com/js](http://scholastic.com/js).

**Not a subscriber?**  
Order now at  
[scholastic.com/buy-Junior](http://scholastic.com/buy-Junior)

## INTEGRATING VISUAL INFORMATION

# The Power of Graphics

The article “Desperation at Sea” (pp. 8-13) has a variety of large, colorful graphics. But visuals don’t just decorate an article. They help convey important information that words alone cannot. Think critically about the purpose of each graphic from the article and complete the table below. (The first one has been done for you.) Then answer the prompt at the bottom of the page.

Graphic	What does the graphic show? Describe it in your own words.	How does the graphic enhance or add to the information provided in the text?	Why do you think the editors chose to include this particular graphic?
Opening photo, pp. 8-9	<i>The photo shows people traveling to Europe on a rickety boat that was stranded at sea.</i>	<i>It helps readers picture what these conditions really look like.</i>	<i>It adds a human element to the story. By seeing faces of people in distress, readers can connect to the story on a more personal level than they would from words alone.</i>
Map and photo, p. 10			
Photo, p. 11			
Line graph, p. 11			
Circle chart, p. 11			
Map, photos, and callouts, pp. 12-13			

**Putting It All Together** On a separate sheet of paper, describe how different types of graphics (charts, maps, photos, etc.) can have different effects on the reader. Then explain which graphic from the article affected you the most and why.

### CITING TEXT EVIDENCE

# Support It!

KEY  
STANDARD**RH.6-8.1**

Read "Desperation at Sea" (pp. 8-13). Complete the graphic organizers below by finding text-based evidence to support your response to each question. Then respond to the prompt at the bottom of the page.

**QUESTION 1:** How would you describe the journey from Africa and the Middle East to Europe?

Your response	One piece of text-based evidence to support your answer (include page and paragraph number)	Another piece of text-based evidence to support your answer (include page and paragraph number)

**QUESTION 2:** Why are migrants and refugees willing to risk their lives to reach Europe?

Your response	One piece of text-based evidence to support your answer (include page and paragraph number)	Another piece of text-based evidence to support your answer (include page and paragraph number)

**QUESTION 3:** What happens to migrants and refugees once they arrive in Europe?

Your response	One piece of text-based evidence to support your answer (include page and paragraph number)	Another piece of text-based evidence to support your answer (include page and paragraph number)

**Get Writing** Based on the information above and other details from the article, write a one-paragraph summary of the Mediterranean migrant crisis.

**Not a subscriber?** Order now at [scholastic.com/buy-Junior](http://scholastic.com/buy-Junior)

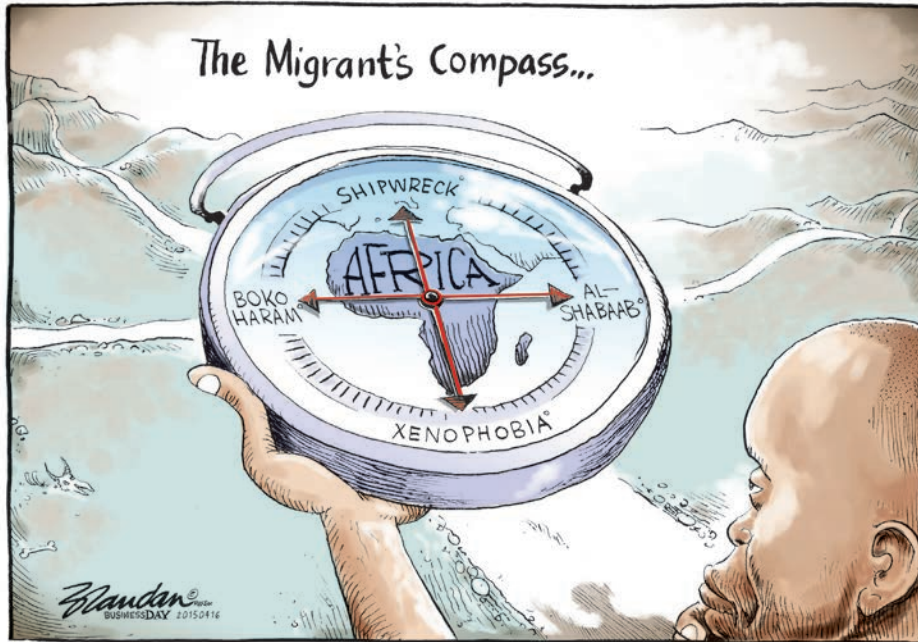
## ANALYZING A CARTOON

# No Good Choice

KEY  
STANDARD

**RI.6-8.9**

The story "Desperation at Sea" (pp. 8-13) examines the plight of migrants from Africa and the Middle East. This cartoon has more to say on the subject. Along with dangers at sea (shipwreck), it refers to two violent insurgent movements: Boko Haram in the nation of Nigeria and Al-Shabaab in Somalia. The word *xenophobia* (pronounced zee-noh-FOE-bee-uh) means a senseless fear or hatred of strangers or foreigners. Review the story, study the cartoon, and answer the following questions.



BRANDAN REYNOLDS/CARTOONMOVEMENT

## Questions

1. Where might the man in the cartoon be standing? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. What is the man doing? What about the way he is drawn tells you something about his mood or his condition? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. How is this compass different from other compasses? What does this difference say about the choices that this man has? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Examine the landscape. How does the drawing contribute to the mood and message of the cartoon? In your own words, what do you think the cartoonist is saying? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. What is meant by the word *xenophobia* in the cartoon? How does this concept affect the migrant's decision? \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### TEST PREP

# Know the News: “Desperation at Sea”

Read “Desperation at Sea” (pp. 8-13). Then answer the questions below.

- Which is a central idea of the article?
  - Ali’s friend died on the long journey from Somalia to Libya.
  - European officials recently agreed to increase funding for search-and-rescue operations in the Mediterranean Sea.
  - Thousands of people from the Middle East and Africa are risking their lives to get to Europe.
  - Once migrants arrive in Europe, they’re taken to reception centers.
- Which sentence best supports this central idea?
  - “As of June, more than 1,800 people had drowned attempting the journey, up from 425 during the same period in 2014.”
  - “Many of those seeking safety in Europe come from Syria, a country in the Middle East being torn apart by a civil war.”
  - “Some fear that welcoming foreigners will encourage others to try to get to Europe.”
  - “Throughout history, millions of people have been forced to flee their homelands.”
- What does *rickety* mean in the following sentence? **“Most, like Ali, are packed into rickety boats that were never meant for the high seas.”**
  - crowded
  - large
  - rundown
  - strong
- How does the section “Dangerous Journeys” contribute to the article?
  - It argues that migrants and refugees should be allowed to stay in Europe permanently.
  - It suggests that European leaders should do more to help build stable governments in the Middle East and Africa.
  - It provides examples of why people are happy living in Syria and Somalia.
  - It explains why people are fleeing countries in the Middle East and Africa.
- From reading the article, you can infer that \_\_\_\_\_ is a stable country.
  - Libya
  - Norway
  - Somalia
  - Syria
- Information from the “Safety in Europe?” sidebar would best fit into which section of the main article?
  - “Dangerous Journeys”
  - “A Brutal Stop”
  - “Long Road Ahead”
  - none of the above
- Based on context clues in the following statement, what does it mean to *wreak havoc*? **“In Somalia, where Ali was born, a violent militant group known as al-Shabaab has been wreaking havoc for years. The group’s aim: to overthrow the country’s Western-backed government and impose strict Islamic law.”**
  - to come to power
  - to create chaos
  - to solve problems
  - to outlaw
- Which word best describes the tone of the last five paragraphs of the article?
  - angry
  - hopeful
  - pessimistic
  - tense
- Which of the following sentences should *not* be included in a summary of the article?
  - Thousands of people are risking their lives to cross the Mediterranean Sea to get to Europe.
  - Many people are escaping violence, poverty, or persecution in the Middle East and Africa.
  - Migrants and refugees should be allowed to stay in Europe permanently.
  - Governments, humanitarian groups, and other organizations are working together to try to solve the ongoing crisis.
- What is the main purpose of the map on pp. 12-13?
  - to encourage readers to donate to aid organizations that help refugees
  - to explain that immigration will be a major issue in the 2016 U.S. presidential election
  - to show that millions of people worldwide are refugees
  - to highlight the current refugee crisis in Southeast Asia

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

KEY  
STANDARD

**RI.6-8.4**

**BUILDING VOCABULARY**

# Crossword Puzzle

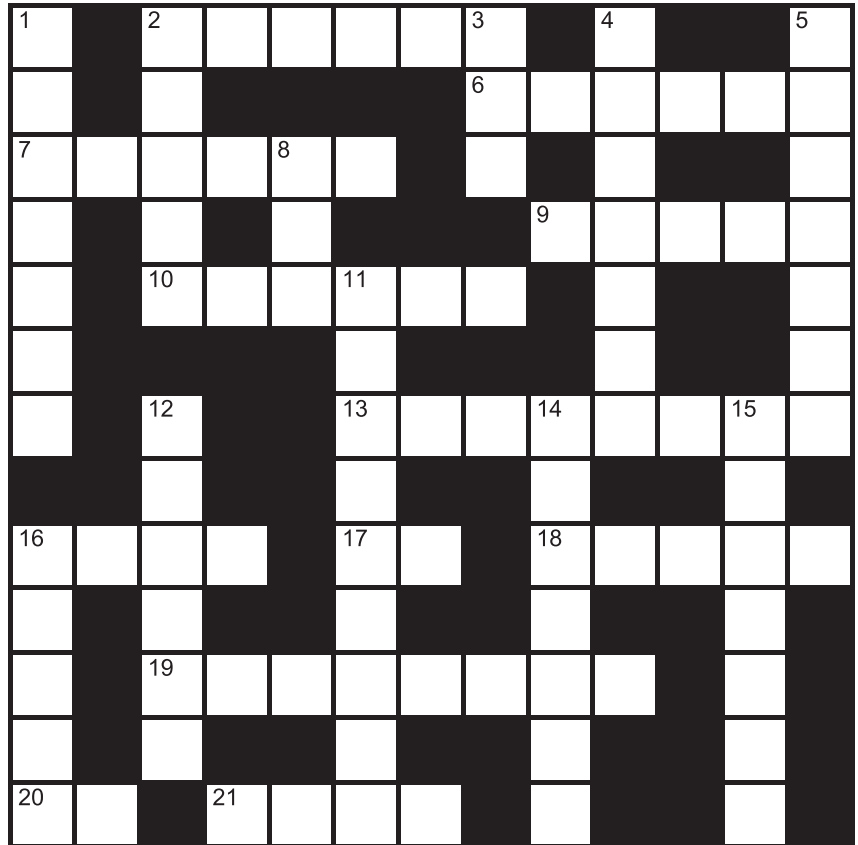
Here are a few clues for you to puzzle over. Answers to starred clues are in the article on pp. 8-13 of *JS*. For the rest, you're on your own!



PDF is available  
at [scholastic.com/js](http://scholastic.com/js).

**Across**

- 2 Horse house
- 6 Search engine
- \*7 A continent producing millions of *19 Across*
- 9 1D and 5SOS, for example
- \*10 Some *19 Across* seek this to stay in Europe.
- \*13 They leave their homes to find work.
- 16 Canyon sound
- \*17 28-nation group (*abbr.*)
- \*18 *2 Down* is being torn apart by a \_\_\_\_\_ war.
- \*19 People forced to flee their country
- 20 Español for yes
- 21 Dude with the ark



**Down**

- \*1 Formerly called Burma
- \*2 War-torn Middle Eastern country with 3.9 million *19 Across* in 2014
- 3 A boastful person has a big \_\_\_\_\_.
- \*4 In 2014, 1.1 million people fled this country in eastern *7 Across*.
- \*5 Many \_\_\_\_\_ carrying *19 Across* to Europe lack life jackets, navigation equipment.

- 8 To release tears
- \*11 Italian island destination of many *19 Across*
- \*12 The great northern desert of *7 Across*
- \*14 Unsafe or unstable, like the boats smugglers pack people into
- \*15 Many African *13 Across* set sail from this city in Libya.
- 16 The King of rock 'n' roll, many say.

**Not a subscriber?** Order now at [scholastic.com/buy-Junior](http://scholastic.com/buy-Junior)