

# Letters from a Refugee Camp: A Family's Story of Hope

COMPREHENSION • VOCABULARY • DISCUSSION

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## Reading Passage

Read the passage carefully. Each paragraph is labelled with a letter for easy reference.

- A** In a small refugee camp in Jordan, the Almasri family has been living for the past two years. They fled their home in Syria, escaping the violence that has engulfed their country. The camp, while not perfect, has provided them with a sense of safety and community. Every week, they receive letters from their relatives who are still in Syria. These letters are filled with stories of hope and despair, revealing the harsh reality of life back home. The children, Hana and Amir, often gather around their mother to hear about their uncle's bakery that still stands, despite the war. They dream of one day returning to Syria and helping him rebuild it, imagining the sweet smells of fresh bread wafting through the air. Each letter strengthens their resolve to survive and eventually thrive in their new environment, as they cling to the memories of their past life.
- B** Despite the challenges they face, the family finds various ways to cope with their situation. They attend classes offered by the camp, where they learn English and mathematics, skills they believe will help them in the future. Their father, Khaled, volunteers at the camp's community center, sharing his skills as a carpenter with others. He believes that education and hard work are the keys to a better future. One day, he hopes to open a workshop where he can teach others the craft of carpentry. In their letters, they often write about their dreams of starting anew, filled with aspirations for a peaceful life. The Almasris hold onto the belief that their situation will improve, and they continue to inspire each other with stories of resilience and hope, reminding one another that they are not alone in their struggles.

## Vocabulary Glossary

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Key words and phrases from the passage. Study them before attempting the exercise below.

WORD / PHRASE	DEFINITION	EXAMPLE SENTENCE
<b>refugee</b>	a person who leaves their country to find safety in another place	<i>The refugee found a new home in a nearby country.</i>
<b>engulfed</b>	when something is completely covered or surrounded by something else	<i>The city was engulfed by the rising floodwaters.</i>
<b>despair</b>	a feeling of no hope	<i>He felt despair when he couldn't find a job.</i>
<b>thrive</b>	to grow or be successful	<i>The plants will thrive in the sunny garden.</i>
<b>resolve</b>	a strong decision to do something	<i>She showed great resolve to finish her studies.</i>
<b>aspirations</b>	hopes or goals for the future	<i>He has aspirations to become a doctor.</i>
<b>resilience</b>	the ability to recover quickly from difficulties	<i>Her resilience helped her overcome many challenges.</i>
<b>cope</b>	to manage or deal with something difficult	<i>They had to cope with the loss of their home.</i>

### Vocabulary Exercise — Fill in the Blank

Use one word or phrase from the glossary above to complete each sentence. Each item is used only once. Answers are on the final page.

1. The family had to leave their home and live as \_\_\_\_\_ in a new country.
2. The small boat was \_\_\_\_\_ by the large waves during the storm.
3. After losing his job, he fell into a deep \_\_\_\_\_, feeling he had no future.
4. With enough sunlight and water, these flowers will \_\_\_\_\_ and bloom beautifully.
5. Her \_\_\_\_\_ to succeed in her career was clear to everyone around her.
6. He shared his \_\_\_\_\_ of becoming an engineer with his teacher.

## Comprehension Questions

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*These questions are different from the online practice test. Choose the best answer (A, B, C, or D). Answers and explanations are on the final page.*

### Question 1

**Why do the children gather around their mother when she reads letters?**

- A. To hear stories about their uncle's bakery.
- B. To learn about the camp's classes.
- C. To plan their escape from the camp.
- D. To write their own letters to Syria.

### Question 2

**What does Khaled hope to open one day?**

- A. A bakery
- B. A carpentry workshop
- C. An English school
- D. A community center

### Question 3

**What role does education play for the Almasri family?**

- A. It is a way to pass time.
- B. It's seen as essential for their future.
- C. It helps them forget their problems.
- D. It's a tool to escape the camp immediately.

### Question 4

**What feeling do the letters from Syria mostly convey?**

- A. Joy and celebration
- B. Hope and despair
- C. Fear and panic
- D. Indifference and boredom

### Question 5

#### What does the camp provide for the Almasri family?

- A. A permanent home
- B. A sense of safety and community
- C. Immediate job opportunities
- D. Luxury and comfort

### Discussion & Writing Prompts

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*Each prompt references a specific detail from the passage above. Use for classroom discussion or a short written response (150–200 words).*

1. The passage mentions that the Almasri family receives letters from relatives still in Syria. How do you think these letters influence their daily lives and decisions?

2. According to the passage, Khaled volunteers as a carpenter at the community center. How important do you think volunteering is in building community support in refugee camps?

3. The passage states that the children, Hana and Amir, dream of rebuilding their uncle's bakery in Syria. Do you think this dream is realistic, and what challenges might they face?

# Answer Key

## COMPREHENSION QUESTIONS

Q1 A

Q2 B

Q3 B

Q4 B

Q5 B

## VOCABULARY EXERCISE

FIB1 refugees

FIB2 engulfed

FIB3 despair

FIB4 thrive

FIB5 resolve

FIB6 aspirations

## Comprehension Question Explanations

Why the correct answer is right — and why each wrong option is incorrect.

### 1. Why do the children gather around their mother when she reads letters?

✓ A — To hear stories about their uncle's bakery. The letters contain stories about their uncle's bakery, which the children are interested in.

✗ B — To learn about the camp's classes. The children gather to hear about their family in Syria, not about classes.

✗ C — To plan their escape from the camp. There is no mention of planning an escape in the passage.

✗ D — To write their own letters to Syria. The passage does not mention them writing letters.

### 2. What does Khaled hope to open one day?

✓ B — A carpentry workshop Khaled wants to open a workshop to teach carpentry.

✗ A — A bakery The bakery is owned by their uncle in Syria.

✗ C — An English school He does not express interest in opening an English school.

✗ D — A community center He already volunteers at a community center but wants a workshop.

### 3. What role does education play for the Almasri family?

✓ B — It's seen as essential for their future. They see education as important for a better future.

✗ A — It is a way to pass time. The passage emphasizes education's future benefits, not just passing time.

✗ C — It helps them forget their problems. Education is valued for its future benefits, not just distraction.

✗ D — It's a tool to escape the camp immediately. They do not view education as a means of immediate escape.

### 4. What feeling do the letters from Syria mostly convey?

✓ B — Hope and despair The letters are described as containing stories of hope and despair.

✗ A — Joy and celebration The letters mix hope and despair, not joy.

✗ C — Fear and panic The passage emphasizes hope and despair, not fear and panic.

✗ D — Indifference and boredom The letters are not described as indifferent or boring.

### 5. What does the camp provide for the Almasri family?

✓ **B — A sense of safety and community** The camp provides them with safety and community.

✗ **A — A permanent home** *The camp is not their permanent home.*

✗ **C — Immediate job opportunities** *The passage does not mention immediate job opportunities.*

✗ **D — Luxury and comfort** *The camp is not described as luxurious or comfortable.*

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