

FACING
Difference
CHALLENGE



Georgia

Elementary School

STUDENTS REBUILD DISCUSSION GUIDE



students
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Note to teachers: Thank you for participating the Students Rebuild Challenge! Below are suggestions to help introduce *Aska and Nino's Story* as well as discussion questions you might use or adapt. As there may be some unfamiliar words or locations represented in this video, we recommend that ahead of showing it to your students you (a) Pre-watch the video or read the transcript below, noting any vocabulary that may be unfamiliar to your students, (b) review the unfamiliar vocabulary with your students before showing the video, (c) locate Georgia and Azerbaijan on a map.



Framing

As we grow up, we are given information—from our families, our communities, the television and the internet—about people who are like us and about people who are different from us. Some of the ways we are alike and different are how we look, how we dress, what religion we are taught, what languages we speak, where we were born, and our families' culture(s), customs and traditions. Sometimes we have friends who are very similar to us and sometimes we have friends who are very different from us.

In *Aska and Nino's Story*, two friends live in a country called Georgia, that is located right where the continents of Asia and Europe touch. About 3.7 million people live in this country.

Azerbaijan is a neighboring country. Some people move from Azerbaijan to Georgia, to look for opportunities and join a community of Azerbaijanis who already live there. Many of the Azerbaijanis who now live in Georgia maintain the culture and customs of Azerbaijan.

The story of *Aska and Nino* shows the connection between two teenage girls, one whose family moved to the country where they both live and one whose family is from the country where they both live. We call people who move from the country they were born in to a new country an immigrant. Even though their families have different histories, customs and cultures, *Aska and Nino* have a strong friendship, full of laughter and fun.



Discussion Questions

1. Aska says that her family moved from Azerbaijan to Georgia because there were “problems”. What are some of the problems that cause people to move from the country where they were born to live in a different country? Has anyone in your extended family or family history had to move from the country where they were born? Why?

2. What are the things that Aska and Nino like to do together? What do you like to do with your friends?

3. Aska talks about a school she went to where Georgian students did not want to be friends with her because her family was from Azerbaijan. How did this make her feel?

4. Aska says that Nino is like a sister to her. What did you see in the way Nino and Aska acted together that made them seem like they could be sisters?

5. What makes a friendship strong? What is good about being friends with someone who is different from you?

6. What are some of the reasons people choose to leave the country where they were born to live somewhere else?

7. What do you think it’s like to be an immigrant where you live?

8. Aska says she wants to end oppression of people. Oppression is when a group of people are being treated unfairly. Are there groups in your community who are not treated fairly? What do you do when you see unfair treatment of groups of people?

9. Nino says it’s important “to do our best to understand each other.” If you were trying to understand someone who was born in a different country than you, what would you do to try to understand them? What are some actions people from different countries can take when they want to understand each other?



Additional Activity Options

Venn diagram:

As a class, create a Venn diagram noting what Aska and Nino have in common and what are their differences. Students then pair with “the most different person from me in this room” and create a similar diagram.

Behind the eyes:

Each student will think of a person from a group in their country or community that they are not part of. From the perspective of that person, they will free-write their perceptions of the group they are a part of. (e.g., Aska would write from her imagined perspective of a Georgian about Azerbaijanis and Nino would write from her imagined perspective of an Azerbaijani about Georgians).

Get more information on Georgia:

Find more information on studentsrebuild.org



Transcript

TIME	SPEAKER	DIALOGUE
00:00:24	Aska	My name is Aska Akhmedova. I live in Gardabani. I'm 15.
00:00:30	Aska	My family comes from Azerbaijan. We moved to Georgia. There were some problems that made us do this. But we have very good conditions here. We love it here, living with Georgians.
00:01:04	Nino	My name is Nino Chovelidze. I'm 13. I live with my brother, father and grandparents.
00:01:14	Nino	We are Georgians and live in Gardabani.
00:01:22	Nino	In the past there has been some tension between Georgians and Azerbaijanis.
00:01:28	Nino	I think that this was foolishness. They should have realized that and became friends.
00:01:36	Nino	Then, nobody would have had any problems.
00:01:42	Nino	I have a friend, Aska. We met in school. We've become really good friends.
00:01:50	Aska	I know Nino from school. I visit her often, and we are friends. We know each other well.
00:02:01	Aska	We don't need a reason to laugh. We start laughing just by looking at each other. She is a smiley person.
00:02:13	Aska	At school, someone has said "You're Azerbaijani, we are Georgian, why should we be friends with each other?"
00:02:23	Aska	Some Georgians think this way. They think that Azerbaijanis are not good people.
00:02:33	Aska	They think that Azerbaijanis are dirty and smelly.
00:02:44	Aska	It makes me feel bad, of course, when people say these things. It breaks my heart.



Transcript (cont.)

TIME	SPEAKER	DIALOGUE
00:02:59	Aska	There are friendships that are forbidden by some parents.
00:03:04	Aska	They say that there shouldn't be friendly relationships between Georgian and Azerbaijani.
00:03:15	Aska	But if both of you are good for each other, why should you not be friends?
00:03:31	Aska	The thing that I want to change in the world is oppression of the people. You just shouldn't oppress anyone.
00:04:43	Nino	We live together, in one environment, so it's important to treat each other warmly, and do our best to understand each other.
00:03:57	Aska	I believe that Nino and I will be friends until the end, because of the fact that we are really good friends.
00:04:06	Aska	It does not matter whether you are Azerbaijani or Georgian, you are both humans.



Take Action

Make a self-portrait:

Support your students in creating a self-portrait that reflects their identity and experiences. Each portrait sent to Students Rebuild generates a \$3 matching donation from the Bezos Family Foundation—up to \$600,000—to support peace building programs in Nigeria, Sri Lanka, and the South Caucasus region of Eastern Europe.

Join the conversation:

As part of the Facing Difference Challenge our partner Global Nomads Group will be hosting virtual town hall dialogues on topics around our differences ranging from religion, race, and immigration. These webcasts will feature a live conversation between youth involved in CARE and Search for Common Ground's peacebuilding programs as well as other Students Rebuild participants. These virtual town halls will be lived streamed; your team can send questions to on-air participants as well as participate in a facilitated chat room. All you need to join is an internet connection. Go to www.studentsrebuild.org to register.