

SCHOOL GUIDE:

**RETURN DATE: UNKNOWN**



## ABOUT THIS GUIDE

BYkids School Guides help educators expand student learning from passively watching a film to active, deeply personalized learning. Three Pathways provide questions for discussion, reflection or writing prompts, plus Problem/Project-Based Learning (PBL) activities to motivate and engage students, individually, in small groups or full class(es). Alignments to English Language Arts (ELA), Mathematics, Science curriculum standards plus CASEL's five Social Emotional Learning (SEL) competencies are included. We encourage you to customize the activities for your students' journeys through each BYkids film's themes and content. And for more resources, see [bykids.org/for-educators](https://bykids.org/for-educators) including our *Take Action, Talk with Your Kids* and new content that is added often.

BYkids believes that lived experience and story sharing are vital to educate the whole child, preparing and inspiring global citizens who see our shared humanity. As you adapt and use our BYkids activities, please share your discoveries and ideas with us at [education@bykids.org](mailto:education@bykids.org).

## ABOUT THE FILM

Tymur Tsaplienko, 17, shares his journey to safety after Russia invaded Ukraine, shedding light on the cost of war and life as a young refugee.

War's trauma—families separated, homes and friends left behind—shadows a generation of young Ukrainian refugees. According to UNICEF, more than two million Ukrainian children have crossed into neighboring countries since the war's start in February 2022.

In his film RETURN DATE: UNKNOWN, 17-year-old refugee Tymur Tsaplienko helps us begin to understand the impact of the Russian invasion on Ukraine's exiles as well as what led to this crisis. Tymur makes a connection between the war and Europe's dependence on Russia's fossil fuels.

When Russia invaded Ukraine in early 2022, Tymur's parents took him to Poland, the nearest NATO member country. As war correspondents, they both knew what war meant. Tymur and his mother crossed the border to safety, while his father and brother remained in Ukraine. (Army-age male citizens are not allowed to leave without a special permit.)

Tymur and his mother now live in the German state of Bavaria in a centuries-old monastery as guests along with fellow refugees. He is completing high school and trying to make decisions about his uncertain future. He longs for family, school friends and home. He grapples with anger and a sense of powerlessness.

Tymur's film travels a reverse journey, from Germany back to Ukraine through Poland, to meet his father, who was injured in a Russian bombardment while reporting for a Ukrainian news channel and whom Tymur hasn't seen in months. Along the way, Tymur interviews other teenage refugees. Each conversation helps him understand the conflict and his own feelings toward it.

Through Tymur's eyes, we see the good in people even in the worst of times, and glimpse displays of human solidarity and even hope.

## ABOUT TYMUR'S MENTOR — ROM BARNEA

Rom Barnea is a Tel Aviv-based entrepreneur, photographer, social activist, actor and curator. He is co-founder and creative director of Pendulum, which creates content aimed at social causes, and is founder of Fish Out of Sea, a photography initiative for and by refugees. He specializes in creating content with storyteller ambassadors from within the community, particularly people with special needs, youth at risk and NGO workers.

*"From our first calls to our last shooting day together, I was thrilled by how this mature young person carries himself in his war-torn world; Tymur comes across as an experienced filmmaker and storyteller. His sharp eye captures moments that escape everyone else. This film touches on subjects that are simultaneously universal and personal. It's a tale of war and how one copes with it in an attempt to make peace within yourself while your country is falling apart; how to still breathe life into your dreams while the unknown is hovering not too far off. Tymur has taught me a lot, and I'm sure he'll do the same to anyone watching this film." —Rom Barnea*

## **ABOUT BYKIDS**

BYkids produces real-world films for kids, by kids. Talented young storytellers from around the world are paired with seasoned filmmakers to create powerful documentaries about their lives. In partnership with public television and education innovators, we share the films and their educational resources to help make global issues feel personal, relevant and actionable for millions of students. Our work serves as a catalyst for change, igniting important conversations and inspiring a new generation of social activists.

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## PATHWAY 1

### HOW CAN YOU DECIDE ON YOUR OWN PERSONAL RESPONSE TO CLIMATE CHANGE?

Tymur talks about Russia's war on Ukraine being driven by Europe's dependence on Russia's fossil fuels. He is surprised that the world did not help Ukraine immediately when it was invaded in February 2022. Tymur shares his feelings as he struggles to make sense of a complicated political and economic situation that is also driven by climate change. He shares his reactions and his personal values in the film.

#### FROM THE FILM

*"If the Europeans resist the war and fight with us [Ukraine], ... all of this could have been avoided, if we would use renewable energy instead of coal, gas and oil." –Tymur Tsapliienko*

*"Uneducated people are very easy to manipulate." –Andrii Tsapliienko, Tymur's father*

#### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- What are Tymur's reactions and feelings about how climate change and war have changed his life?
- Tymur and his family are not filled with hatred by their very challenging situation. He presents facts and objective information as he examines different viewpoints. How does his approach help Tymur analyze and sort out his situation so that he is able to deal with it in a positive way?
- Tymur shares the progress of his thinking about climate change and war in the film. At first, he wants to return to Ukraine and fight. His values and sense of ethics change. How do you think that change happens? What does it suggest for you?

#### SUGGESTED PROJECTS

- What facts and information about climate change or other topics in the film interested you? What do you want to research to help you form your own opinions and values? This is a question that professional journalists who value telling a real, true story struggle with!

In your group, make a list of your questions and decide how to research them to get the facts. Identify sources and websites that are factual and not misinformation or disinformation. As a group, create your own policies that deem a source ACCURATE or BIASED. For example, an ACCURATE source may give information that you can check and

verify in other objective sources such as government or scientific databases. A BIASED source may make claims that are based on information from groups that benefit financially from what they are reporting.

In your group, rate each source as ACCURATE or BIASED based on your group's policies. Explain your group's policies for your ratings, and the reasons for each rating. Present your group's ratings and reasoning to the class. Invite the class to challenge your ratings and ask questions. Remember to keep all discussion fact-based, reason-based, civil and polite. You may want to make a list of any questions your group could not answer and research them further.

- After completing the previous project, decide on at least one question your group will discuss more to define how it demonstrates your group's shared opinion or value for how people should act to care for the environment and one another. You may want to research in more depth to find more ACCURATE sources and information.

Your goal is to create a presentation for your class or school that shows how the facts of climate change raise questions about how we treat humans and the environment. Who is helped and who is hurt? How does that reflect the values your group agrees are most important for living together? You may want to focus on the impact of climate change on your school, town, or state. How will your group recommend ways to improve? What role should climate change play in tough decisions? What would your group like to make better or change?

Your group's presentation may be a video, posters, mural, podcast, or any type of performance if you choose.

- How can you encourage others to take action about the impact of climate change? Choose a climate-related issue that impacts your school, community or town. Research what is known about it, and possible solutions. Then organize an effort to make positive change right where you live.

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## PATHWAY 2

### WHAT IS FREEDOM?

Tymur and his family talk about freedom as both personal and in wider terms for their country and for all people. When Russia invaded Ukraine, freedom became dangerous. Tymur's family had to make hard decisions.

### FROM THE FILM

*"A person without freedom cannot be a person. A person without freedom is a slave."*  
—Andrii Tsapliienko

### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- Tymur talks about being afraid in Ukraine and what he misses from his life before he and his mother fled to safety. How did the war change him? How is it different to really experience something, not just read about it or see it in a movie?
- Tymur and his mother are free physically, but they are not at home. What is home for Tymur? What is home for you?
- Tymur's father says that the Russia-Ukraine war could result in "a victory on ruins." What does that mean? How is war changing the lives of people like Tymur? How can organizations support and help efforts for freedom and rebuilding after war and conflict?

### SUGGESTED PROJECTS

- With a small group, create your own expression of freedom. It could be a piece of art, an essay, a song, a film or video, or any other form. It could be data about freedom or conflict visualized in a compelling graphic. If you like, include your wishes for Tymur, the Ukrainian people and your own community. Answer this question for yourself or your group: What does freedom mean?
- The Ukrainian people are fighting for their freedom to live in their homeland. How does thinking about Tymur's film help you reflect on your own freedom and home? How can freedom and safety for everyone in your school or community improve freedom for everyone?

Create a plan for improving the feeling of and value placed on freedom and safety by your class, school or community. Your plan could be an awareness campaign to respect everyone.

You might research how to defuse and resolve disagreements and conflict. You might choose to have a campaign to convince lawmakers to enact stricter gun control laws and policies. You might choose to work with a charity that aids climate refugees or Ukrainian people. Your group may want to create a performance art event in which you find images of war and climate disasters, then destroy them to symbolize your group's values. Remember to be respectful of others—your goal is to express your values and opinions while respecting the differing values and opinions of others.

- Tymur films his friend Angelina to get another perspective on the war, Russia and climate change. Angelina joined her friends at Youth Strike for Climate to embargo, or stop, the use of any Russian fossil fuels. How can you take action and impact an issue you feel strongly about?

With your group, research some groups of young adults like you who are working to let leaders know how they feel and the changes needed. Get help from adults at school to be sure that you have identified groups that have integrity and are nonviolent.

After your group completes its research into how those groups work for change, make your own plan to communicate your opinions for how to change for the better to your community leaders. You may want to write letters, attend school board or other public meetings, create an event that gets publicity from a local media outlet or find other respectful ways to make positive change.

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## PATHWAY 3

### HOW CAN YOU HELP YOURSELF AND OTHERS TO STAY POSITIVE AND HOPEFUL WHEN THE WORLD SEEMS HOSTILE?

Tymur says he struggles not to feel hatred, to accept being a refugee and to handle the stress of being separated from his father and brother. He wanted to return to Ukraine and fight, but his mother hid his passport. After a time, Tymur realizes that was good for him, but he still struggles to feel in control of his life.

#### FROM THE FILM

*"It's hard to talk about it... It's just hate... I feel a lot of hatred inside me and that feeling, it curses and poisons you." —Tymur Tsapliienko*

*"Do something! People need help... Direct your energy this way." —Andrii Tsapliienko*

#### DISCUSSION STARTERS

- How can you help yourself and others handle situations that make you angry or even hateful? What did you learn from Tymur?
- What can you do when you or someone else exhibits behavior that expresses hatred or anger that could become violent?
- What can you do when you fear that a friend exhibits behaviors that show that they are sad, even perhaps suicidal?

#### SUGGESTED PROJECTS

- Write Tymur's story as you and your group would tell it. You might make a graphic novel, film or play. How will your version of Tymur turn the energy of his hatred into helping people? How can helping others also help him to triumph over hatred? How is Tymur's story in real life unlike the superheroes in comic books, graphic novels and film?
- Who are your/your group's superheroes who help you learn to handle tough emotions and situations? Create a day of appreciation for them. Prepare posters or presentations that honor them and that list the specific ways they help others handle tough stuff. Those ways may range from small things to major ones. For example, superheroes may be good listeners, they may be able to guide people to good resources to help or they may always be able to point out the positive and put a situation in perspective.

- We all have negative feelings sometimes. What can you and your group do to increase empathy and feelings of control and belonging? What actions create positive feelings?

With your group or class, list some ways that you can improve your school's mental health and culture. For example, you could create a Kindness Exhibit with words and illustrations of how to be kind to each other, or you could sponsor an art exhibit of one great quality about each person in your class. You may want to start by identifying what you would like to change to make your class, school or community more supportive of social and emotional growth. Then use your creativity to form a plan for taking action.

- How can you provide resources to help friends who may be dealing with the social and emotional challenges many of us experience as we grow?

Sharing Tymur's film with them and discussing the hope he has and positive ways to respond may be a good first step. Create a BYkids Night at your school to show the film and organize a panel discussion after. You may also want to share any of the art and other projects you and your colleagues have created. And you may want to make a poster, brochure or digital resource for others to summarize what you learned and list some resources for helping others.

Be sure that you communicate the program's goals and that it proceeds in ways that are appropriate for all ages who attend, and that show respect for all views. (You will need guidance from a teacher and school officials to understand any rules and requirements about holding special programs and school events.)

Your poster or brochure could include resources and suggestions for what to do if a friend or classmate withdraws from being with people and may need help. For example, a friendly gentle check-in might help. They may just need you to listen to them without judging or advising. If you feel that they might become suicidal or violent, you should get help from an adult you trust. And be sure that you do not spread rumors or stories about them that might be embarrassing or make them feel worse. You may have even more positive suggestions.

Two places with helpful information are:

- **Child Mind Institute:** ([childmind.org](http://childmind.org) and [childmind.org/healthyminds/students](http://childmind.org/healthyminds/students))
- **CASEL:** ([casel.org](http://casel.org))

There are also organizations that have information about climate change anxiety. One is:

- **National Center for Science Education:**  
([ncse.ngo/supporting-teachers/classroom-resources](http://ncse.ngo/supporting-teachers/classroom-resources))

Your school guidance counselor(s) will also be able to help you with more resources.

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## COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS

Dear Educator,

You and your students, in defining the creative and collaborative details of each Pathway and Project, will implement many different standards not limited to any one content area but focused on critical and rigorous, evidence-based thinking. Below are provided some College and Career Readiness Anchor Standards that appear in the majority of state PK-12 curriculum standards in ELA and Math, and in the Next Gen Science Standards, but you and your students will go beyond those limited standards. Also identified are Social Emotional Competency areas identified by CASEL, a charitable organization that has helped to lead the way in defining and evaluating social emotional learning. We hope you will share your experiences and ideas at [BYkids.org](http://BYkids.org).

### PATHWAY 1

#### ELA COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS

CCRA.R.3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact.

CCRA.R.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes content and style.

CCRA.R.7 Integrate and evaluate content in diverse media and formats.

CCRA.R.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a work, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

CCRA.W.1 Write arguments to support claims using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCRA.W.2 Write informative/explanatory text to examine and convey complex ideas.

CCRA.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events.

CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCRA.W.6 Use technology to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

CCRA.W.7 Conduct research based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject.

CCRA.W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

CCRA.W.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing your own clearly and persuasively.

CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCRA.SL.3 Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric.

CCRA.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence so that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCRA.SL.5 Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

CCRA.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks.

## **STANDARDS OF MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE**

MP 3 Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others

MP 7 Look for and make use of structure

MP 8 Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

## **NEXT GEN SCIENCE STANDARDS, SCIENTIFIC AND ENGINEERING PRACTICES**

SEP 1 Ask questions and define problems

SEP 2 Develop and use models

SEP 6 Construct explanations for science and design solutions for engineering

SEP 7 Engage in argument from evidence

SEP 8 Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information

## **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING CORE COMPETENCE AREAS (CASEL.ORG)**

### SELF-AWARENESS:

- Integrating personal and social identities
- Identifying one's emotions
- Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
- Having a growth mindset
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose

### SOCIAL AWARENESS:

- Taking others' perspectives
- Demonstrating empathy and compassion
- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
- Recognizing situational demands and opportunities
- Understanding the influences of organizations/systems on behavior

### SELF-MANAGEMENT:

- Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
- Setting personal and collective goals
- Using planning and organizational skills
- Showing the courage to take initiative
- Demonstrating personal and collective agency

### RELATIONSHIP SKILLS:

- Communicating effectively
- Developing positive relationships
- Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
- Resolving conflicts constructively
- Showing leadership in groups
- Seeking or offering support and help when needed

## RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING:

- Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness
- Identifying solutions for personal and social problems
- Learning to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, facts
- Recognizing how critical thinking skills are useful both inside and outside of school
- Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community well-being
- Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts

## **PATHWAY 2**

### **ELA COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS**

CCRA.R.3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact.

CCRA.R.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes content and style.

CCRA.R.7 Integrate and evaluate content in diverse media and formats.

CCRA.R.8 Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a work, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

CCRA.W.1 Write arguments to support claims using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

CCRA.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events.

CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCRA.W.6 Use technology to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

CCRA.W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

CCRA.W.9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing your own clearly and persuasively.

CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCRA.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence so that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCRA.SL.5 Make strategic use of digital media and visual displays of data to express information and enhance understanding of presentations.

CCRA.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks.

### **STANDARDS OF MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE**

MP 3 Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others

MP 8 Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

## **NEXT GEN SCIENCE STANDARDS, SCIENTIFIC AND ENGINEERING PRACTICES**

SEP 1 Ask questions and define problems

SEP 8 Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information

## **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING CORE COMPETENCE AREAS (CASEL.ORG)**

### SELF-AWARENESS:

- Integrating personal and social identities
- Identifying one's emotions
- Demonstrating honesty and integrity
- Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
- Experiencing self-efficacy
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose

### SOCIAL AWARENESS:

- Demonstrating empathy and compassion
- Showing concern for the feelings of others
- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
- Recognizing situational demands and opportunities
- Understanding the influences of organizations/systems on behavior

### SELF-MANAGEMENT:

- Managing one's emotions
- Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
- Setting personal and collective goals
- Using planning and organizational skills
- Showing the courage to take initiative
- Demonstrating personal and collective agency

#### RELATIONSHIP SKILLS:

- Communicating effectively
- Developing positive relationships
- Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
- Resolving conflicts constructively
- Seeking or offering support and help when needed
- Standing up for the rights of others

#### RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING:

- Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness
- Identifying solutions for personal and social problems
- Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions
- Recognizing how critical thinking skills are useful both inside and outside of school
- Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community well-being
- Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts

## **PATHWAY 3**

### **ELA COLLEGE & CAREER READINESS ANCHOR STANDARDS**

CCRA.R.3 Analyze how and why individuals, events, or ideas develop and interact.

CCRA.R.6 Assess how point of view or purpose shapes content and style.

CCRA.R.7 Integrate and evaluate content in diverse media and formats.

CCRA.W.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events.

CCRA.W.4 Produce clear and coherent writing appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCRA.W.6 Use technology to produce and publish writing and to interact and collaborate with others.

CCRA.W.7 Conduct research based on focused questions, demonstrating understanding of the subject.

CCRA.W.8 Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, assess the credibility and accuracy of each, and integrate the information while avoiding plagiarism.

CCRA.SL.1 Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing your own clearly and persuasively.

CCRA.SL.2 Integrate and evaluate information in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

CCRA.SL.4 Present information, findings, and supporting evidence so that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

CCRA.SL.6 Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and communicative tasks.

### **STANDARDS OF MATHEMATICAL PRACTICE**

MP 3 Construct viable arguments and critique the reasoning of others

MP 8 Look for and express regularity in repeated reasoning

### **NEXT GEN SCIENCE STANDARDS, SCIENTIFIC AND ENGINEERING PRACTICES**

SEP 8 Obtain, evaluate, and communicate information

## **SOCIAL EMOTIONAL LEARNING CORE COMPETENCE AREAS (CASEL.ORG)**

### SELF-AWARENESS:

- Integrating personal and social identities
- Identifying one's emotions
- Demonstrating honesty and integrity
- Linking feelings, values, and thoughts
- Experiencing self-efficacy
- Having a growth mindset
- Developing interests and a sense of purpose

### SOCIAL AWARENESS:

- Taking others' perspectives
- Recognizing strengths in others
- Demonstrating empathy and compassion
- Showing concern for the feelings of others
- Understanding and expressing gratitude
- Identifying diverse social norms, including unjust ones
- Recognizing situational demands and opportunities

### SELF-MANAGEMENT:

- Managing one's emotions
- Identifying and using stress-management strategies
- Exhibiting self-discipline and self-motivation
- Setting personal and collective goals
- Using planning and organizational skills
- Showing the courage to take initiative
- Demonstrating personal and collective agency

#### RELATIONSHIP SKILLS:

- Communicating effectively
- Developing positive relationships
- Practicing teamwork and collaborative problem-solving
- Resolving conflicts constructively
- Resisting negative social pressure
- Showing leadership in groups
- Seeking or offering support and help when needed
- Standing up for the rights of others

#### RESPONSIBLE DECISION-MAKING:

- Demonstrating curiosity and open-mindedness
- Identifying solutions for personal and social problems
- Learning to make a reasoned judgment after analyzing information, data, facts
- Anticipating and evaluating the consequences of one's actions
- Reflecting on one's role to promote personal, family, and community well-being
- Evaluating personal, interpersonal, community, and institutional impacts