Welcome to the Florida Gulf Coast University One Book, One Campus Reading Project! At FGCU, first year students and many faculty and staff, including your Composition faculty, Orientation Leaders and the Resident Directors and Assistants in Housing, join together to read a common book, along with lots of other faculty, staff, and students across campus. This project is designed to help students join an intellectual community at FGCU, allowing them to increase student engagement and success and to foster a common academic experience.

Fall Semester ENC 1101 Composition I Assignment: Before you begin to read Outcasts United, please review the study questions below with care. As you read the book closely, make notes in the margins and highlight passages you find important. Consider the questions below as way of preparing to join the campus and classroom dialogue this Fall. During the early weeks of the semester, students will be required to work with the text in their Composition I classes. The Study Guide Questions below are intended to get the wheels of thought turning in preparation for this work and for upcoming conversations about this text.

Study Questions

1. In the introduction of Outcasts United, the author compares the issue of migration to the game of soccer. What comparisons can you make between the fluidity of soccer and the life challenges of the refugees of Clarkston? How does the nature of soccer reflect and influence the ways in which the refugee children respond to the challenges of life in Clarkston? Is there something about the game that might make it particularly compelling for children who have endured war, violence, and displacement? Is there something in your life that you rely on to help you navigate challenging times?

2. The cultural iceberg conception is the belief that, like an iceberg, only a small portion of a culture’s characteristics and core values are apparent to a casual observer. How can the cultural iceberg conception be useful in understanding and addressing the diversity of a city like Clarkston? How might this conception be useful in understanding your home town?

3. The Under 13s managed to develop a warm, familial connection with little regard to their cultural and religious differences, while the Under 15s were less successful in creating such an environment. Why were the younger Fugees able to bond in a way that their older counterparts were unable to achieve? How did that bond or lack thereof affect their performance both on and off the field? What kind of preconceived notions do you have as you prepare to enter FGCU? What strategies might you use to move beyond these preconceptions and be open to diverse ideas, people, and experiences?
4. Discuss examples of the human rights violations that some of the families experienced in the book. How does Luma’s experience in Jordan compare with her experience in the United States? What are some human rights issues that you have learned about or experienced? How can we, as a community, move forward in light of such issues?

5. Like many teenagers, Mandela Ziaty was wrestling with identity issues. What decisions did he make in negotiating both worlds? How did these decisions affect his integration in American society? Give examples of how his new life in America affected his sense of identity. In what ways have you experienced similar conflicts in trying to negotiate your own identity in relation with the expectations of your family?

The above information adapted from Random House Inc. Lesson Plans / Outcasts United and from Outcasts United, Questions and Topics for Discussion www.randomhouse.com.

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