# Lesson 3: What is Persecution?

## Learning outcome

Participants will be able to understand what persecution is and how it defines a person’s refugee status.

## Lesson resources

* Teaching notes **What is Persecution?**
* **Roads to Refuge > Persecution> What people say**

**Note** *The content of this lesson can be disturbing for participants. It is recommended that the lesson only be taught by teachers confident in their ability to manage participant reactions.  
If there are students from a refugee background in the class, teachers should be particularly cautious as some parts of the discussions and video may upset them. Teachers might warn the refugee students about the content, explain the purpose of the activity and give them the option to participate.*

### Step 1. Reading

Ask students to read the refugee quotes at **Roads to Refuge > Who is a refugee? > Persecution > What people say**

1. What examples of persecution are given?
2. Why is persecution a key factor in the determination of ‘refugee’ status?
3. How do you think a person would prove they were persecuted?

### Step 2. Research and response

* Where in the world is persecution occurring?
* Use the following links to research the plight of Rohingya people in Myanmar. Respond to the questions below.
* UNHCR [News from Myanmar Oct 2012](http://www.unhcr.org/506eac079.html)
* UNHCR [Exploitation by smugglers May 2014](http://www.unhcr.org/53677d659.html)
* [France24](http://www.france24.com/en/20130422-burma-violence-ethnic-cleansing-rohingya-muslims) coverage of Rohingya persecution in Myanmar
* [AlJazeera](http://www.aljazeera.com/news/asia-pacific/2013/04/2013421135240814468.html) coverage of internally displaced persons in Rakhine State
* [BBC](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-asia-22243676)  coverage of Rohingya persecution in Myanmar

1. What evidence is there that people in Myanmar are being persecuted?
2. Look at a World Map (online) and locate the Rakhine State.
3. Why do you think people cannot leave the area?
4. What solutions might there be for the Rohingya people?

### Step 3. Writing activity

* Ask students to imagine they are living in a country at war. Students write a blog about their experiences of persecution.

or

* Ask students to imagine they are a journalist. Students write about the human rights situation in their chosen country, explaining why/ when/ where/ how people’s rights are being denied and the options available to people being persecuted.