

I Am American by Mehul Bhattacharyya, Grade 7

Every day, I wake up in the morning to the smell of a great breakfast. With a full stomach, I go to a beautiful school building to learn. Then I come back home to a loving family. I play with our dogs, I study, I enjoy outdoors. Everything is in place to have a wonderful childhood: A beautiful house in the suburb, a large yard, a bedroom of my own, and lots of toys. Every day, I feel a sense of safety, fulfillment, and happiness.

Why do I sometimes cry silently in my bedroom? Why do sad thoughts come to my mind?

Many children in many parts of the world do not have any of the luxuries I get. Many times, they do not even have the basic necessities in life. I see pictures of refugee camps through war ravaged Middle East. Children in these refugee camps have a very different and much tougher life. Good meals and basic education are not available to them. Breakfast is the most important meal of the day, still many refugees go without breakfast because it is not there when they need it. Children and families live in crowded tents and do not have any outdoor space to play. Many refugees do not even have indoor bathrooms. Litter and mud surround the tents. I can go on and on about this sad situation.

I think! How are they warming up food during winter months? Who is making sure they have warm clothes to protect them from cold and flu? Do they have medicine when they are sick? Are they reading books to learn how beautiful the Earth is? Are they getting bedtime kissed by their parents? I cry!

I need answers to these questions now before it is too late. When I tell my parents about my desire to help, they encourage me. But they also say that it will be a hard road ahead. They say that I will see unbearable poverty, sickness, and desperation. So, I need to be educated and prepare myself to be brave and determined. I need to grow up quickly. Then only I can give them hope and happiness.

What is American about me?

My parents, my teachers, political leaders, and even Disney Movies are teaching me every day to think big, to be optimistic, and get things done. They are planting seeds in my mind that life is about helping others to fulfil their dreams. I am American because I am preparing myself to be goal oriented and getting ahead. I am American because I believe in fairness. I have all basic necessities in life and therefore I am focused on making that happen to unfortunates. I am American because I am curious and want to face challenge to make the World a better place. I am American because I strongly believe the US armed force slogan "The difficult we do immediately, the impossible takes a little longer." I am an American because the way I think.