**Discussion ideas for …**

**No Ballet Shoes in Syria by Catherine Bruton**

* What did you find out about Aya and her family in the first few chapters of the book? What was most poignant?
* If you were Aya, how do you think you would feel about having to take the lead role in the discussions with the authorities? How do you think you would cope with repeating your story over and over again with different officials?
* What’s in a name? Aya is introduced to the others in the ballet class and they discuss names (pages 52-53). What do you think of your name and do you think it suits you?
* Discuss Aya’s scar on her leg and how it felt for her to show it in ballet class (pages 69-73).
* "Dancing transcended borders; it cared nothing for languages, skin colour, nationality, religion” (page 154). In your group, discuss what this and the rest of the paragraph means to you.
* Compare Miss Helena’s story of her escape from Prague to that of Aya’s.