



*An Elementary Level Annotated
Bibliography of Middle East and Arab
World Themed Literature
By Dr. Roberta Robinson*



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Author's Note

The primary purpose of my having created this bibliography is to offer teachers and librarians a reliable resource for literature about the Middle East and Arab World. My hope is that anyone using this resource will come to realize the diversity that exists in this part of the world. My bibliography is by no means definitive and will expand over time, but it is a start. I have included a selection of titles for teachers hoping they will take advantage of this section to expand their own understanding of Middle Eastern, Arab and Muslim cultures.

We live in a globalized world and the need for better understanding of other cultures is critical if we are to ever have an impact on the United Nation's Sustainable Development Goals. Sharing a planet means understanding, collaboration, cooperation, and implementation of goals that will help prevent conflict and further destruction of earth's environment and sustain a healthy planet for future generations.

The cultures of the Middle East and the Arab World are some of the least understood cultures in the western world. Currently there is only one narrative circulating in the public sphere about these cultures and that narrative is primarily a negative one. Perhaps some of these stories will lead to a better understanding, to a more positive narrative about cultures I experienced while living in the Middle East.

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Author's Biography

Dr. Roberta Robinson is a life-long learner, world traveler and literacy specialist. She lived in Iran for three years, spent another year exploring and documenting cultures in 25 countries on three continents. Her explorations include living with a family in Rajkot, India, attending school in Fez, Morocco, while living with a Moroccan family and traveling to 47 of the 50 United States, focusing on places of historical interest, such as the Oregon Trail, to supplement lessons.

She is a long-standing member of the Middle East Outreach Council (MEOC) and has served several times on the MEOC Book Award Committee. Her education includes the study of the history and cultures of Morocco while living in Fez, attendance at Dar Al Islam, New Mexico, to study Islamic history and the Programs in International Educational Resources (PIER) institute at Yale, “Worlds of Islam: Regional Perspectives on Unity and Diversity. In keeping with her belief in life-long learning she is currently enrolled in a Harvard course: Educating Global Citizens.

The years spent living and experiencing life outside the United States has led her to understand the need for broader educational goals that will enable students to live productive lives in a global society based on the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals. Learning what those goals are and thinking critically and creatively to work toward solutions. However, the first step is diminishing fear of the “other”, beginning at the elementary level, through the use of literature, because “story” not only challenges the intellect, it touches the heart.

Bibliography

Children's Section

Algeria

Kessler, Cristina. *One Night: A Story from the Desert.* Illustrated by Ian Schoenherr, (30 pp.).

The Putman & Grosset Group, 1995. ISBN: 9780698116672. Picture book.

Muhamad is a Tuareg who lives in the Sahara with his family and community members. He introduces us to his family and community members, to the rituals and traditions of the Tuareg, and what daily life is like for a Tuareg boy. This story offers a glimpse of the rapidly vanishing life of the Tuareg. The reader should note that Tuaregs are Muslims, but the women do not cover their faces, the men do.

Meddour, Wendy. *A Hen in the Wardrobe.* (151 pp.). Frances Lincoln Children's Books,

2012. ISBN: 97818478022555. Novel.

The Ramadan family has a problem. Mr. Ramadan is sleepwalking and creating havoc so there isn't much sleeping for the rest of the family. In an attempt to help his dad, Ramzi seeks help in finding a doctor. Mr. Ramadan finally agrees to see the doctor, who discovers the problem. The solution however is not so simple. Mr. Ramadan reveals he is a Berber from the mountains of Algeria; the doctor's diagnosis is nostalgia and his solution is for the family to leave England for a visit to Mr. Ramadan's village. But will this visit cure Mr. Ramadan? This humorous story offers an interesting portrait of Berber village life as well as addressing the issue of immigrants adjusting to living in a different culture. This book is easy to read, and the illustrations enhance the humor in every chapter. There is a glossary of Arabic terms for readers.

Awards: John C. Laurence Award; First place: Islamic Foundation's International Writing Competition; Shortlist: Muslim Writer's Award 2011.

Bahrain

Johnson, Julia. *Saluki: Hound of the Bedouin*. Illustrated by Susan Keeble, (52 pp.). Stacey International, 2012. ISBN: 9781906768904. Picture book - Historical fiction.

The author carefully weaves historical fact and fiction in this story of the relationship between the Bedouin and the Saluki. Readers are transported to a time and lifestyle that is disappearing and in some places already has disappeared. The relationship between Bedouin and Saluki has existed for centuries. The Saluki, thought to be the oldest dog breed, has been traced back to ancient Mesopotamia. This is a well-researched, timeless, beautifully illustrated story that sheds light on the actual life of the Bedouin. Although there are conflicting reports about whether there are still traditional Bedouin in Bahrain. I have chosen Bahrain as the cultural origin of this story since research confirms there were traditional Bedouins before the oil industry transformed Bahrain and the breeding of Arabian Salukis is well established in Bahrain.

Dubai

Johnson, Julia. *Humpy Grumpy Saves the Day!* Illustrated by Emily Styles, (31 pp.). Stacey International, 2007. ISBN: 9781905299430. Picture book.

This is a lively story, written in easy rhyme about Humpy Grumpy Camel. He is the star of several stories written by this author. Although this is a delightful tale, it does have one realistic aspect, flashfloods. However, children will not realize these storms have really occurred and can be delighted with the poetry and light airy illustrations.

Johnson, Julia. *The Pearl Diver*. Illustrated by Patricia Al Fakhri, (56 pp.). Stacey International, 2003. ISBN: 9781909339767. Picture book - Historical fiction.

Saeed, age six, is at last invited to join the crew and his father, Abdullah, to learn pearl diving. He had been practicing swimming and holding his breath under water. Saeed would follow in the footsteps of his ancestors and learn the ways of the sea to become as good as his father. Stormy seas and angry sharks add to the adventure, but the authors skillfully chronicle the life of the pearl divers of the Arabian Gulf. The beautiful illustrations mirror the fluid movement of the sea.

Egypt

Brandenberg, Alik. *Mummies Made in Egypt*. Illustrated by Alik Brandenberg, (28 pp.). HarperTrophy, 1979. ISBN: 9780064460118. Picture book - Non-fiction.

Mummies were important to the ancient Egyptians and they are a fascination for young people. Alik, with straightforward language and detailed drawings, tells the story of the why and how of Egyptian mummies. Many of her drawings are modeled after drawings from ancient Egyptian tombs. Ancient Egyptians worshiped many gods and anyone trying to learn about ancient Egyptian religion might find it confusing. She singles out those gods most associated with the ritual of the dead.

Awards: Reading Rainbow Book; IRC, CBC Children's Choice; Notable Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies (NCSS/CBC); Garden State Children's Book Award (New Jersey).

Gerrard, Roy. *Croco'nile*. Illustrated by Roy Gerrard Farrar, (32 pp.). Straus & Giroux, 1994. ISBN: 9780374316595. Picture book.

The setting is ancient Egypt in this vividly illustrated, rhymed narrative about the adventures of a boy, Hamut and his sister, Nekatu, who stow away on a boat and end up miles away from their village. They are saved by their friend the crocodile. The story is delightful, and the illustrations are an introduction to the culture of ancient Egypt. Children reading this book will enjoy the challenge of translating the hieroglyphics in the story using the hieroglyphic alphabet key included in the book.

Hassanein, Amany. *Goha and His Donkey (Retold by Author)* Illustrated by Valeri Gorbachev, (16 pp.). Richard C. Owen Publishers, Inc. 1999. ISBN: 9781572741805. Picture book - Folktale.

Goha is a familiar character all over the Arab world. Each country has its own version of stories with Goha as a fool or a wise man. In this story Goha and his son are out walking with their donkey. As they walk along Goha is criticized by everyone, first for letting his son ride the donkey, then, because he is riding, and his son is walking, and next because they are both walking. He comes to the conclusion you cannot please all of the people all the time.

Johnson-Davies, Denys. *Goha the Wise Fool*. Illustrated by Hany El Saed Ahmed, Hag Hamdy Mohamed Fattouh and Ahmed Mohamed Hamed El Sayed, (40 pp.). Philomel Books, 2005. ISBN: 9780399242229. Picture book - Folktale.

Here are 15 Goha stories, funny and full of wisdom. Goha is one of the most beloved characters in the Middle East and Arab world. Each country has their version of these stories. Folktales provide insight into the values of a culture. Folktales enable cultures to make connections across time and space. It is worth mentioning the illustrations are hand sewn appliques traditionally

used to decorate tents, known as Khiyamuyas in Arabic. They are now almost exclusively made in the Cairo tentmakers souk. There is a photograph of two of the illustrators engaged in making appliques in Cairo.

Awards: Parents Choice Award, 2005.

Jeunesse, Gallimard, Claude Delafosse and Philippe Biard. *Pyramids: A First Discovery*

Book. Illustrated by Philippe Biard, (35 pp.). Scholastic Inc., 1994.

ISBN: 9780590427869. Picture book - Non-fiction.

The mysteries of the pyramids of ancient Egypt have held people in thrall for as long as anyone can remember. Even young children often know about them. And along with the fascination, comes many questions. This little book of drawings, and the use of transparent plastic pages, offers a wonderful overview of the building, use and some history of the pyramids.

Heide, Florence Parry & Judith Heide Gilliland. *The Day of Ahmed's Secret.* Illustrated by

Ted Lewin, (30 pp.). Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1990. ISBN: 9780688088941.

Picture book.

Ahmed lives in Cairo and helps his father deliver bottled gas to customers. He drives a donkey drawn cart. Many of his deliveries are in the old city according to the illustrations, where the streets are too narrow for automobiles. As Ahmed works, he thinks about the secret he will share with his family at the end of the day. He can write his name! The authors offer no hint of how or where he has learned to write his name. While some may see this as a major flaw in the story, there is the possibility of using the question of how and where he learned to write his name as a topic for discussion and/or research about life in Cairo for some of the children living there.

Matze, Claire Sidhom. *The Stars in My Geddoh's Sky*. Illustrated by Bill Farnsworth, (30 pp.).

Albert Whitman & Company, 1999. ISBN: 9780807576106. Picture book.

Alex's grandfather, Geddoh, visits from Egypt. During his visit he shares stories about Egypt. Alex and his grandfather grow very close and Alex is worried he will not see his grandfather again. His grandfather shares a special constellation with Alex and reminds him that even though they live far apart they share the same sky. This comforts Alex. This is a delightful story of love and the power of story to help family connect to each other no matter where they live. The author's descriptions of Egypt are made more vivid by the illustrations.

Roth, Susan L. & Karen Leggett Abouraya. *Hands Around the Library: Protecting Egypt's*

Treasured Books. Illustrated by Susan L. Roth, (32 pp.). Dial Books for Young Readers,

2012. ISBN: 9780803737471. Picture book - Non-fiction.

Karen Leggett Abouraya participated in the protests in Egypt that were a part of what is known as the Arab Spring. She marched in Alexandria. When the marchers headed toward the library there was the very real possibility that the library could be damaged or destroyed. The library director called on many of the marchers to create a barrier around the building to protect it from some of the angrier protestors. Everyone who heard the library director's plea formed a chain, everyone holding hands, until the library was surrounded. This is Karen's story, and an inspirational story of the importance of that library to the people of Alexandria, even in the midst of such heated protest.

Awards: All in 2013: Arab American Book Award; Notable Social Studies Trade Books; Bank Street College of Education Best Children's Books; Cooperative Children's Book Center

Choices,; Notable Books for a Global Society: International Reading Association; National Council of Teachers of English Orbis Pictus Nonfiction Recommended Book; Best Books for Young Children: Children's Africana Book Awards Committee.

Rius, Maria, Gloria Verges & Oriol Verges. *Journey Through History: Prehistory to Egypt.*

Illustrated by Maria Rius, (30 pp.). Barrons, 1988. ISBN: 9780812033908.

Picture book - Historical fiction.

This delightfully illustrated history and engagingly written text will help children understand the beginnings of civilization. The story follows children as they move through a museum looking at and commenting on displays of prehistoric to ancient Egyptian exhibits. There is a guide to parents with a short description of some major developments in history: Fire, Stone and Metals, Agriculture and livestock, Settlements, Early trade, The city, Writing and Egyptian civilization.

Wolf, Bernard. *Coming to America: A Muslim Family's Story.* Photographs by Bernard Wolf,

(46 pp.). Lee & Low Books, Inc. 2003. ISBN: 9781584301776. Picture book - Non-fiction.

This is the story of the Mahmoud family. They are Egyptian and immigrated to America from Alexandria. The photo essay takes us through the transitions, adjustments, difficulties and joys of settling in a new land. Children will learn something about how the Mahmoud family builds a new life in America and maintains the traditions of their culture and religion. This book is a timely addition to any classroom or school library. Immigrants and in particular, Muslim immigrants are an important topic of conversation.

Iran

Jalali, Reza. *Moon Watchers: Shirin's Ramadan Miracle*. Illustrated by Anne Sibley O'Brien,

(36 pp.). Tilbury House Publishers, 2017. ISBN: 9780884485872. Picture book.

Shirin and her family are Iranians who live in the United States. The narrator is Shirin. The story revolves around Ramadan, the month of fasting for Muslims. Shirin and her father watch for the new moon to begin the month of Ramadan. Each family member is participating except for Shirin, everyone says she is too young. She finally convinces her parents to let her fast for a part of the time. Explanations about rituals related to Ramadan are imbedded in the story as well as how each family member copes with fasting from sunup to sundown. The authors included a small detail, a Turbah, a small prayer stone made from clay. The Turbah is used primarily by Shia Muslims. The quality of the illustrations complements the tranquility of the story.

Khodadad, Kaviani. *Mehregaan: The Triumph of Liberty Over Tyranny*. Illustrated by

Kaviani Khodadad, (43 pp.). CreateSpace, 2017. ISBN: 9780692892794. Picture book -

Legend.

This is the story of one of the three major holidays celebrated in Iran. It dates back to before Islam came to Persia, and Zoroastrianism was the religion and Ahura Mazda the deity. This story is told in rhyme with vibrant illustrations. Social Justice is a major theme. The book also contains a glossary and an explanation of how Iranians celebrate this holiday in the 21st century.

Khodadad, Kaviani. *Norooz with My Family*. Illustrated by Kaviani Khodadad, (36 pp.).

CreateSpace Publishing Platform, 2017. ISBN: 9781542930161. Picture book - Realistic fiction.

Norooz is the Iranian New Year and family members are gathered together to share stories about the holiday. Written in rhyme, this story provides accurate explanations, history and rituals associated with Norooz. It is a time of great excitement when family members work together house cleaning, shopping, and preparing special foods. The deep, rich, intensive colors of the illustrations are evocative of ancient Persia.

Mirsadeghi, Nazanin. *The Story of Spring and Norooz (An Untold Tale of Persian New Year).*

Illustrated by Sanam Hooshvar, (24 pp.). Bahar Books, 2017. ISBN: 9781939099662.

Picture book.

The story of Norooz, English language edition, is told in the style of a fairy tale. Norooz is the Persian New Year and is celebrated in the spring beginning with the vernal equinox. The celebration may have originated with Zoroastrianism, a religion that predates Islam, going back more than 3,000 years. The illustrations are bright, cheerful and whimsical a complement to this engaging story about Norooz.

Robert, Na'ima bint. *The Swirling Hijaab.* Illustrated by Nilesh Mistry, (22 pp.). Mantra

Lingua Ltd, 2002. ISBN: 9781852691639. Picture book - Farsi and English.

A little girl takes the reader on an imaginary journey as she plays with her mother's hijab. A ship's sail, a fort, a Bedouin tent and so much more. The language is straightforward and the colorful illustrations match each of her imaginary uses of the hijab. This small story presents a picture of a little girl doing the same things many children do with their favorite blankie.

Iraq

Halls, Kelly Milner and Major William Sumner. *Saving the Baghdad Zoo: A True Story of*

Hope and Heroes. Illustration and photography credits listed on copyright page, (64 pp.).
Greenwillow Books, 2010. ISBN: 9780061772023. Picture book: Non-fiction.

The invasion of Iraq in 2003 left the entire country devastated. Army Captain William Sumner was assigned the task of saving the animals roaming the destroyed country. He coordinated an international group of experts to accomplish this task. The photographs document the people, places, animals and events of each step of this extraordinary story. Given the seriousness of the task, the tone of the story is one of optimism.

Awards: Parent's Choice Silver Award Honor, 2010.

Heide, Florence Parry and Judith Heide Gilliland. *The House of Wisdom.* Illustrated by

Mary GrandPre, (38 pp.). DK Publishing, 1999. ISBN: 9780789425621. Picture book -
Historical fiction.

The authors and illustrator have skillfully and beautifully woven a story around the historical figure of Ishaq, the son of Hunayn, a scholar in 8th century Baghdad and the House of Wisdom. Both Ishaq and Hunayn were renowned as scholars and translators. The House of Wisdom was a library, the center of intellectual life, learning and research, where scholars from all over the known world gathered to study and work. The Caliph sent emissaries out into the world to collect books in any language to bring to the library for translation into Arabic. Love of learning, exploration and reading are passions brought to life on every page. Ishaq has a love of learning but watching the caravans returning to Baghdad, fires his imagination and determination to go with a caravan and explore while collecting books for the library. This is his story.

Henderson, Kathy. *Lugalbanda: The Boy Who Got Caught Up in a War: An Epic Tale*

From Ancient Iraq. Illustrated by Jane Ray, (77 pp.). Candlewick Press, 2006. ISBN: 9780763627829. Picture book - Myth.

According to the author, this Sumerian story translated from cuneiform clay tablets, is the oldest written story, dating back to about 2600 BCE. The author has included some history and information about the Sumerian culture. Lugalbanda was a prince with seven older brothers, all princes and each commanding their own army. When his brothers marched off to war, Lugalbanda followed them. After days of marching, Lugalbanda fell ill. Too far from the palace, he was placed in a warm cave and left with food, water, an ax and a dagger. Frightened, he prayed to the goddess to keep him safe and help him heal. His prayers answered, he set out with his supplies to find his brothers. Along the way he encounters a fierce bird, the Anzu bird (mythical bird with magic powers), with a chick in the nest. When the Anzu parents fly away, he makes his way to the nest, feeds the chick, leaves treats and decorates the nest. The parents return and want to know who did this. Lugalbanda comes out of hiding, the bird repays him for his kindness by helping him find his father and brother and bestowing a gift on him. This is a story about courage and kindness. The story is beautifully told, and the history makes this book excellent for social studies.

Awards: Parent's Choice Award, 2006.

Kuntz, Doug and Amy Shrodes. *Lost and Found Cat: The True Story of Kunkush's*

Incredible Journey. Illustrated by Sue Cornelison, (42 pp.). Crown Books for Young Readers, 2017. ISBN: 9781524715472. Picture book - Non-fiction.

The journey of a family fleeing Mosul, Iraq in the dead of night for a new life in Norway is one of bravery and kindness. Not wanting to leave their beloved cat Kunkush behind, the children

work to keep the smugglers from realizing they have their pet with them. However, when they reach the shores of Lesbos the landing was difficult and Kunkush, wet and frightened was separated from the family. Volunteers helped the family search for him, but to no avail. They had to leave on the next leg of their long journey. Two volunteers eventually found Kunkush, and with great determination, using social media and flyers searched for and found Kunkush's family. The subdued illustrations help convey the sense of love and hope. There are photographs of parts of the journey, the family, the volunteers and of course, Kunkush.

Moss, Carol. *Science in Ancient Mesopotamia*. Illustrations by Drew Brook Cormack

Associates, (63 pp.). Franklin Watts, 1998. ISBN: 9780531159309. Expository text.

The author traces the path of science through the "land between the rivers". With Iraq so much in the news, information about the contributions of the Mesopotamians can be part of not only science lessons, but of history as well. This book is easy to read for upper elementary students. It includes a glossary, an index, and a list of resources, with a note reminding readers that sites disappear and are often replaced with different ones.

Rumford, James. *Silent Music: A Story of Baghdad*. Illustrated by James Rumford, (32 pp.).

A Neal Porter Book - Roaring Book Press, 2009. ISBN: 9781596432765.

Ali lives in Baghdad and loves music, dancing and playing soccer, but he loves calligraphy most of all. He likens calligraphy to music, silent music playing in his head as he practices his words, over and over again. His hero is Yakut a famous calligrapher who lived in Baghdad in the thirteenth century and during a war, climbed to the top of a tower to record the battle below. Ali takes refuge into the sanctuary of his calligraphy when the bombs and missiles are dropping all

over his city. Rumford, who is a master calligrapher, has skillfully woven calligraphy into every scene on each page making each illustration unique.

Awards: Bank Street Best Children's Book of the Year; Michigan Great Lakes Great Books Award Master List; NCTE Notable Children's Books in the Language Arts; Capitol Choices Noteworthy Titles for Children and Teens; CCBC Choice; IRA Notable Books for a Global Society; American Library Association Notable Children's Book; NCSs-CBC Notable Trade in the Field of Social Studies; Charlotte Zolotow Award/ Honor Book; Jane Addams Children's Book Award Honor Book.

Robinson, Anthony & Annemarie Young. *Mohammed's Journey: A Refugee Diary.*

Illustrated by June Allen, (32 pp.). Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2009. ISBN: 9781845076535. Picture book - Non-fiction.

The authors retell Mohammed's story using Mohammed's words. Mohammed is Kurdish, his father was killed by Iraqi soldiers and he and his mother are forced to flee Kirkuk. They make their way, traveling through Iran, all the way through Turkey, to Istanbul and finally to England and safety. He describes the hardships he and his mother endured while trying to get to a safe place, how this experience affected him, his struggles and triumphs making adjustments to his new life and his hopes and dreams for the future. The illustrations and photographs offer the reader a glimpse of Mohammad's life. There is a section at the end of the book with information about Iraq that offers context for this story.

Stamaty, Mark Alan. *Alia's Mission: Saving the Books of Iraq.* Illustrated by Mark Alan

Stamaty, (32 pp.). Dragonfly Books, 2004. ISBN: 9780375857638. Picture book- Non-Fiction.

Alia loves books, they hold the history of her country, and so much more. They are treasures and Alia is determined to save the books in her library from destruction because of war. She enlists the help of her friends and neighbors and together they manage to save 30,000 books. The library and the remaining books are destroyed by fire. This graphic edition of Alia's story includes details about how the books were removed from the library, where they were first housed, how they were collected and moved again to Alia's house and the houses of a few close friends. Included are scenes depicting the chaos war brought to Baghdad. In contrast to Jeanette Winter's version, Stamaty's is black and white with only a splash of color in the title. The last page includes a few paragraphs about the famous libraries of ancient Egypt and Iraq. Any teacher using this book would need to understand why the invasion of Iraq by the United States took place to be ready to engage in a discussion when students raise questions.

Awards: Middle East Outreach Council Book Award for 2005.

Winter, Jeanette. *The Librarian of Basra: A True Story from Iraq*. Illustrated by Jeanette

Winter, (32 pp.). Harcourt, Inc., 2005. ISBN: 9780152054458. Picture book.

A colorful version of Alia's determination to save the books of the library she worked in for fourteen years. Alia loves books, she thinks they are treasures, each one filled with stories, history and information. Many of the books contain the history of her country. War is coming, and Alia is determined to save her treasures. Friends and neighbors help her and in the end 30,000 books were saved. The colorful, straightforward illustrations provide clear visual impressions of the fear and tension experienced by the characters as they struggle to save the books.

Awards: Middle East Outreach Council 2005 Honorable Mention.

Winterberg, Philipp. *Am I Small?* Illustrated by Nadja Wichmann, (32 pp.). Philipp

Winterberg, 2014. ISBN: 9781499507232. Picture book - Bi-lingual English/Kurdish.

Tamia wants to know if she is small. She sets about to find an answer by going along and asking each creature she encounters the same question: Am I Small? The tiny creatures tell her no, the very large creatures tell her yes, the just right creatures tell her she is just the right size. It's all about perspective! This charmingly illustrated book will help children accept themselves and learn something about perspective.

Jordan

Al Abdullah, Her Majesty Queen Rania. *The Sandwich Swap.* Illustrated by Tricia Tusa,

(32 pp.). Triumph Books, 2010. ISBN: 9781423124849. Picture book.

Salma and Lily were best friends. In school they did everything together, they sat together at lunch. Secretly Lily thought Salma's sandwich of chickpea paste was awful and Salma thought Lily's sandwich of peanut butter and jelly was gross. One day, Lily told Salma she thought her lunch was yucky. What began as an argument between two friends ended up in a cafeteria food fight! When the principal reprimanded them, they were sorry they argued. The next day, Lily had the courage to ask Salma if she wanted to taste her sandwich, Salma offered Lily a bit of hers. They decided they each liked the sandwich of the other. The next day the girls went to the principal to ask permission for a special event, a peanut butter and jelly/hummus on pita school lunch party. The light, breezy illustrations add a bit of whimsy, matching the quality of voice of the text.

Awards: Parent's Choice Award, 2010.

Azzoubi, Rana. *Through a Mud Wall*. Illustrated by Omar Wisam, (84 pp.). Rana Azzobi, 2007. ISBN: 9789957860608. Novel.

Nadia and Walid are excited to be off for a family visit to their grandfather's farm. Always looking for some excitement, they join their cousins Mohammad and Omar ready for an adventure. Against the wishes of the adults, the kids investigate a nearby cave and just as they discover what they think is treasure, they are chased out of the cave by a neighbor. They go to uncle Kareem for help. When the contents of the cave are identified, everyone is shocked. Adventure and humor make this a delightful read. The author is Jordanian, and her stories are based in part on her own life experiences. There is a glossary of Arabic terms.

Azzoubi, Rana. *Million Star Hotel*. Illustrated by Omar Wisam, (91 pp.). RaMa for EduCulture, 2009. ISBN: 9789957513023. Novel.

Nadia is not happy. Her mom's friends are visiting from New Mexico and their son Joey, Nasty Joey, as Nadia thinks of him, is not her favorite person. The two families are bound for Wadi Rum to camp and for a ride in a hot air balloon over the Wadi. As the families head for home across the desert in two jeeps, Nadia's father realizes the other jeep is having trouble. He leaves the jeep with Nadia and Joey parked on a spot of hard packed sand, telling them to stay put. It's dark and Nadia and Joey are bored. They decide to head out after dad. But the desert is not a place to go wondering. Hoping to find Bedouin, they find a pickup truck instead. Believing it will stay parked all night, they crawl in the back and look at the stars, waiting for morning. That's when the trouble begins. There is a glossary of Arabic terms.

Kuwait

Addasi, Maha. *The White Nights of Ramadan.* Illustrated by Ned Ganno, (32 pp.). Boyds

Mills Press, 2008. ISBN: 9781590785232. Picture book.

Although Ramadan, the Islamic month of fasting during the daylight hours, is fairly familiar, the celebration of Girgian (gur-gee-ANN) is observed in the countries of the Arabian Gulf. It begins in the middle of Ramadan when the moon is full and lasts for three nights. Noor and her brothers are eager to celebrate. The children dress in fancy clothes and carry decorated bags, going from house to house getting candy. Everywhere Ramadan lanterns (fanouses) glow in the night. After returning home the children take baskets of food to the mosque for the poor. This is a story that could be paired with one about Halloween. The illustrations are colorful and add to the sense of festivity of the story. There is an Author's note and a glossary.

Lebanon

Aktar, Nasreen. *Samira's Eid.* Illustrated by Enebor Attard, (30 pp.). Mantra Lingua Ltd, 2009.

Translated by Azza Habashi. ISBN: 9781846116506. Picture book - Arabic and English.

The story of the festival of Eid al-Fetr as celebrated by one family. Eid al-Fetr marks the end of Ramadan, the month of fasting for Muslims worldwide. The story within a story is a focus on the actual fasting that is the point of Ramadan and how the children in the family experience it. The book includes a glossary, a map of Islamic countries, Islamic art activities, making Eid holiday cards, and recipes for traditional holiday food.

Askar, Saoussan & Robert Munsch. *From Far Away.* Illustrated by Micael Marchenko,

(22 pp.). Annick Press (U.S.) Ltd, 2014. ISBN: 9781550373967. Picture book.

Saoussan and her family were forced to leave Beirut, Lebanon because of war. Her home was destroyed and they were in grave danger. This is Saoussan's story, told from her perspective, of her first days in an English-speaking school in Canada. Although this story is classified as fiction, Robert Munsch wrote this story based on letters that Saoussan wrote to him when she was five years old. Together they bring to life, in easily readable prose, the fear a child experiences when there is a language barrier and no one to translate. The illustrations are as engaging as the little girl in the story.

Heide, Florence Parry & Judith Heide Gilliland. *Sami and the Time of the Troubles*.

Illustrated by Ted Lewin, (32 pp.). Clarion Books, 1992. ISBN: 9780395720851. Picture book.

War has come to Lebanon and Sami and his family hide in the basement while bombs drop, and the sound of gunshots can be heard. On these days, the adults cannot go to work or the children to play. Their mother has decorated the basement with colorful rugs to remind them of better days. They listen to a radio to find out if it is safe to go outside. As the family reaches the street, children are carrying signs and shouting in protest against the war. Ever hopeful the adults will listen.

Lovelace, Maud Hart. *The Trees Kneel at Christmas*. Illustrated by Carie-Claude Monchaux,

(112 pp.). ABCO & Daughters Publishing, 1951. ISBN: 9781562399993. Novel.

This story is about a Lebanese family. They are Christians, and grandmother is telling Afify (Afeefee) and Hanna the story about how the trees kneel at Christmas in Lebanon, but, she explains, not in Brooklyn. Afify is sure if she could go to her secret place in the park she would

see the trees kneel. This author learned about the trees from the Lebanese families she was friends with. This story is different because Christianity is not usually associated with Arabs, but Christianity in Lebanon can be traced to the time of Christ. In this story readers will learn of the Lebanese traditions associated with Christmas. The illustrations are indicative of the 1950s.

Shefelman, Janice. *A Peddler's Dream.* Illustrated by Tom Shefelman, (32 pp.). Houghton Mifflin Company, 1992. ISBN: 9780395609040. Picture book.

Soloman was determined to travel to American and make a new life for himself and his future bride. Leaving his family and future bride behind he travels on a ship for four weeks. When he reaches America, he takes the advice of a shop keeper who explains that being a peddler is a good way to start to save for the future business he dreams of. After many months and having faced hardships along the way, he is taken in by a farming family, and given a job. Eventually he secures work in a store exactly like the one he dreams of owning one day. Follow Solomon as he works to fulfil his dream. Children will get a glimpse of life at the turn of the century, when so many immigrants came to America to start a new life. The illustrations lend themselves to the struggles and joys of Solomon's pursuit of his dream.

Mauritania

Cunnane, Kelly. *Deep in the Sahara.* Illustrated by Hoda Hadadi, (40 pp.). Schwartz & Wade Books, 2013. ISBN: 9780375870347. Picture book.

Lalla wants to be just like her mother, sister, cousin and grandmother. Each woman wears a beautiful, colorful malafa (moo-LAH-fuh) over her clothing. Lalla tells each one her desire to wear a malafa so she can be beautiful like them, they in turn explain that the malafa is about

more than being beautiful. Finally, she is given one of her own. A wonderful, beautifully illustrated story that offers a narrative different from the sometimes, controversial narrative in the western world about the cloaking of the body in the Middle East and Arab world.

Awards: Kirkus Reviews Best Book of the Year, 2014.

Morocco

Alalou, Elizabeth & Ali Alalou. *The Butter Man*. Illustrated by Julie Klear Essakalli, (32 pp.).

Charlesbridge, 2008. ISBN: 9781580891271. Picture book.

Nora's father (baba) makes couscous in a special pot he brought all the way from Morocco. It takes a long time for the couscous to cook. On these Saturdays Nora stays in the kitchen to watch her baba, but on one Saturday, she was especially hungry and kept asking for something to eat. Baba told her she had to wait and with her comment about "starving", he continues to cook. At the same time, he tells her the story about the butter man. It's a story from his childhood, when their crops failed because no rain came. His father had to sell their cow and leave their village in the Atlas Mountains to find work. Soon most of the food they had left was gone, even the butter. Baba's mother gave him a small piece of bread. He wanted butter, but all the butter was gone. She told baba to go to the edge of the road and wait for the butter man to come. While he waited, he was too hungry and ate the bread. He did this for many days, waiting for the butter man. Then one day, with the smallest piece of bread in his hand and while he waited and fretted about whether the butter man would ever come, down the road came his father, bringing food for the family. Eventually the rains came, they grew crops and bought another cow.

There is an author's note and glossary

The folk-art illustrations are bright and are indicative of life in the Berber village of Morocco.

Awards: Charlotte Zolotow Award Nominee for Highly Commended Title: 2008; Middle East Outreach Council Award: 2009; NCSS Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People: 2009; Children's Africana Book Awards Honor Book for Young Children: 2009.

Baker, Jeannie *Mirror*. Illustrated Jeannie Baker, (40 pp.). Candlewick Press, 2010.

ISBN: 9780763648480. Picture book - Wordless.

There are two families in this book. One family lives in Australia and the other in Morocco. The two stories on opposite sides of the book compare daily life for the families. The western side of the book opens from left to right, the Moroccan side from right to left. Each page mirrors some aspect of their daily lives. Though the homes people live in, the places where they live and their activities may be different, this book reinforces the idea that people, no matter where they live, also have much in common. The illustrations are unique, colorful and appear to be almost three dimensional.

Awards: *Horn Book* Fanfare Best Books of 2010, Picture Books; *Kirkus Reviews* 2010 Best Children's Books; IRA Notable Books for a Global Society, 2011; Children's Book Committee, Bank Street College of Education, Best Children's Books of the Year, 2011.

Czernecki, Stefan. *Zorah's Magic Carpet*. Illustrated by Stefan Czernecki, (32 pp.). Hyperion

Books for Children, 1995. ISBN: 9780786800810. Picture book.

Zorah dreamed of traveling. She wanted to see the world. One day her husband brings home a lost sheep. Holiday time is coming soon and Zorah's husband want to use the sheep for the holiday meal. The sheep tells Zorah that if she lets him go, she can shear its wool and make a

magic carpet with its wool, that will take her anywhere she wants to go. She follows the sheep's instructions and her trips are the substance of this story. Wonderful explanations are provided for some of the things she witnessed while traveling. The illustrations are right in keeping with the tradition of bright, colorful carpets in Morocco.

Ichikawa, Satome. *My Father's Shop*. Illustrated by Satome Ichikawa, (32 pp.). Kane/Miller Book Publishers. 2006. ISBN: 9781929132997. Picture book.

A humorous story of a Moroccan boy, Mustafa, whose father owns a rug shop. Mustafa's father wants him to learn a few words in different languages to greet customers. But Mustafa is more interested in the carpet his father gave him, the one with the hole in the middle. Off he runs, through the market to show his friend his carpet when a rooster follows him and along the way crows loudly. Mustafa's friend wants to know if the rooster is his and insists Mustafa make the rooster sing. As Mustafa tries, tourists in the market offer their interpretation of how a rooster sounds in their country. The delightful illustrations depict the colorful markets that can be seen all over Morocco.

Awards: USBBY Outstanding International Booklist, 2007; ASA Children's Africana Honor Book for Young Children, 2007; Best Children's Books of the Year, Bank Street College, 2007.

Lewin, Ted. *The Storytellers*. Illustrated by Ted Lewin, (40 pp.). Lothrop, Lee & Shepard Books, 1998. ISBN: 9780688151799. Picture book.

The author takes the reader on an incredible journey through the ancient walled city of Fez, following Abdul and his grandfather to work. The descriptions of every aspect of the city are enhanced by the illustrations which lend a sense of mystery and wonder to the city. At last Abdul

and his grandfather reach their spot by the old gate of the medina. Grandfather performs his ritual of sending the white bird to the sky to bring back a story. Once Grandfather begins, the crowds grow larger and inch closer, better to hear.

This story is based on the author's experiences following the storyteller, while in Morocco.

There is an author's note and a glossary.

Awards: Notable Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies designation, NCSS/CBC, 1999; New York times Best Illustrated Book of the Year; School Library Journal Best Book of the Year; A Smithsonian Magazine Notable Book, 1999.

London, Jonathan. *Ali Child of the Desert*. Illustrated by Ted Lewin, (32 pp.). Lothrop, Lee & Shepherd Books, 1997. ISBN: 9780688125608. Picture book.

Ali and his father are traveling in the Sahara, with their herd of camel, to the Moroccan town of Rissani. Ali was finally old enough to make the trip. A fierce sandstorm separates them. When the storm blows over Ali is alone, he mounts his camel and heads west in the direction of the town. Along the way he meets a Berber goatherd and his son. They invite Ali to spend the night with them at an oasis. In the morning, although the goatherd invited Ali to go with them to their village, he chooses to stay at the oasis. The goatherd teaches Ali how to use their musket, so he can use it as a signal and leaves Ali some dates. Ali keeps the fire burning and every now and then fires the musket, hoping his father will find him and he does. This coming of age story is a wonderful window into a desert culture that has all but disappeared. The illustrations make the story come alive. The story is based on the experiences of the author while he was in Morocco. There is a Glossary at the end of the story.

Awards: Parent's Choice Gold Award, 1997.

Rumford, James. *Traveling Man: The Journey of Ibn Battuta, 1325 - 1354*. Illustrated by

James Rumford, (40 pp.). Houghton Mifflin Company, 2001. ISBN: 9780618083664.

Picture book - Non-fiction.

The author weaves a wonderful story of the life of Ibn Battuta. The mesmerizing artwork lures the reader along, as the serpentine ribbon of text leads from place to place. It is impossible in a children's book to include the entirety of Battuta's travels, but there is enough in this biography to astonish even a seasoned traveler. The calligraphy and decoration of each illustration is evocative of the art of illumination. Ibn Battuta traveled for almost 30 years and 75,000 miles. Included are maps, a glossary and historical notes.

Awards: ALA Notable Children's Books, 2002; MEOC Book Award, 2001.

Palestine

Bahous, Sally. *Sitti and the Cats: A Tale of Friendship*. Illustrated by Nancy Malick, (24 pp.).

Roberts Rinehart Publishers, 1997. ISBN: 9781570981715. Picture book - Folk Tale.

Sitti encounters talking cats, she stops to help them and they in turn give her a bag of onion peels and a bag of garlic peels instructing her to put them under her bed. Her good deed brings her good fortune. This is a time-honored tale, about friendship and about doing good and receiving an unexpected reward. It offers a wonderful glimpse into Palestinian values and beliefs.

Sprinkled throughout the book are notes offering explanations about Palestine, Arabic words and food. The author provides an explanation of the purpose of Palestinian folk tales. An introduction and a glossary. Sitti is a gentle soul and the softly rendered illustrations match her gentle character.

Nye, Naomi Shihad. *Sitti's Secrets*. Illustrated by Nancy Carpenter, (32 pp.). Aladdin

Paperbacks, 1997. (Originally published by Simon & Shuster Books, hardcover edition, 1994). ISBN: 9780689817069. Picture book.

Based in part on the author's life when, as a child, she visited her grandmother in Palestine. A young girl describes her visit with her Siti (grandmother) who lives on the other side of the world. Their loving relationship, even without the benefit of a common spoken language, draws the reader into their shared experiences and the heartbreak of parting. The illustrations enhance the sense of intimacy and heartfelt emotion of this story.

Awards: Jane Addams Children's Book Award for Picture Book, 1994.

Williams, Emma. *The Story of Hurry*. Illustrated by Ibrahim Quraishi and Edited by Jean Stein,

(36 pp.). Seven Stories Press, 2014. ISBN: 9781609805890. Picture book.

This story, based on an actual event in Gaza, is told from the donkey's point of view. This is an anti-war story, but the author keeps the story focused on the donkey, which lends a small bit of humor to it. Hurry, the donkey wanted to do something to make the children happy, in the midst of war, so he allows Moody, the zoo keeper, to paint him so he looks like a zebra. A zebra which the zoo did not have. The illustrations are a mix of photographs, watercolors, and marker. There is a six-page historical note section for adult readers.

Awards: Middle East Outreach Council Book Awards: Honorable Mention, 2015.

Saudi Arabia

Alexander, Sue. *Nadia the Willful*. Illustrated by Lloyd Bloom, (44 pp.). Dragonfly Books,

1983. ISBN: 9780394852652. Picture book.

This is a story of overcoming grief after the loss of a loved one. Nadia loved her brother Hamed. He was the only member of the Sheik Tarik's family that could calm Nadia when she was in a temper. One day, Hamed left their Bedouin camp to look for new grazing land for their sheep. He never returned. All attempts to find Hamed were to no avail. Sheik Tarik was inconsolable and forbade anyone from mentioning his son's name. Nadia was upset and angry. She remembered all the wonderful things about Hamed and her times with him. She could stand the silence no more and approach her father. Explaining what was in her heart, convincing him it was better to share thoughts, feelings and memories than to never speak of him. The illustrations are black, gray and white and lend a somberness to the story, but without being maudlin. I could find no research to indicate the author was ever in the Desert, but her depictions are accurate and well done.

Awards: Notable Children's Trade Book in the Field of Social Studies; NCTE Teachers' Choice; A *Booklist* Children's Reviewers' Choice. No dates available for these awards.

MacDonald, Margaret Read and Nadia Jameel Talbah. *How Many Donkeys? An*

Arabic Counting Tale (Retold). Illustrated by Carol Liddiment, (32 pp.). Albert

Whitman & Company, 2009. ISBN: 9780807534250.

This is the Saudi Arabian version of a traditional folk tale told in many Middle Eastern and Arab countries. Jouha is a silly man who never seems to be able to keep track of just how many donkeys he has. The illustrations are colorful and amusing, helping the reader to "see" Jouha's ongoing dilemma of miscounting his donkeys.

Sudan

Park, Linda Sue. *A Long Walk to Water*, (120 pp). Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2010.

ISBN: 9780547577319. Novel based on true events, two stories in one.

Salva's story: 1985

He was one of the lost boys of Sudan. Eleven years old, separated from his family during a seemingly endless war. Alone, he sets out on foot to find his family, or anyone from his village. Along the way he meets other boys, all looking for their families, a safe place to sleep, food. He walked 1,800 miles, for a year and a half, across the Sudan, to Ethiopia and finally into Kenya to a refugee camp. Follow his footsteps and hold your breath.

Nya's story: 2008

For seven months of the year Nya spent her days walking to and from the pond to get water and bring it to her family's village. When the pond dried up, the family camped near a lake three day's walk from their village. When the lake dried up, Nya dug in the earth until water slowly seeped to the surface enough for her to get some water. The water was not clean, people often became sick from drinking it. One-day strange men came to her village, they spoke to Nya's father and uncle, they looked at a place between two trees in the village, and finally they left. she did not understand what was happening. Eventually, the men returned with a large machine and drilled for three days until water shot up into the air. Water, finally.

Read the stories to discover the connection between Salva and Nya. There is an author's note at the end of the book.

Awards: Top 10 Books for Youth, Historical Fiction: 2011; IRA Notable Books for a Global Society, 2011; *Booklist* Lasting Connections of 2010, Social Studies; Jane Addams Children's Book Award, 2012; Black-Eyed Susan Award Nominee, 2012; Flicker Tale Children's Book Award, 2012; Great Lakes Book Award Nominee, 2012; Kentucky Blue Grass Award Nominee, 2012; Maine Student Book Award Nominee, 2012; Golden Sower Award Nominee, 2013; South Carolina Association of School Librarians Award Nominee, 2013; Young Hoosier Book Award Nominee, 2013.

Williams, Mary. *Brothers in Hope: The Story of the Lost Boys of Sudan*. Illustrated by R.

Gregory Christie, (39 pp.). Lee & Low Books, 2005. ISBN: 9781584302322. Picture book- Historical fiction.

Garang is just eight years old when his village and the surrounding area is attacked while he is out tending the cattle. Many of his cattle are killed, the other run off in fear. He hides in the shadows of trees. Returning to his village, everyone is gone and the houses on fire. He began to wander down the road and met other boys, soon there were more people than he had ever seen. The boys took care of each other as best they could. Slowly, holding hands so no one would get lost, they walked to Ethiopia to a refugee camp where they met Tom who helped run the camp. But war came to Ethiopia, the boys were chased back into Sudan, again began to walk, on to Kenya, 1000 miles, for more than a year. They met Tom again, he took the youngest and sickest boys in his truck to the camp. At last they all met again in Kenya. But Tom had to leave again. Garang and the boys who survived, worked together to stay alive and it was 13 years before he saw Tom again. He came with news that the United States would find homes for the boys.

There is an author's note and an afterward with information about the boys.

Awards: Coretta Scott King Illustrator Award Honor, 2006; IRA Notable Children's Book Award, 2006; Best Children's Books of the Year: Outstanding Merit, 2006; Notable Books for a Global Society, 2006; Books Reflecting Diversity, 2006; Children's Book Award Notable, 2006; Bank Street College Best Children's Books of the Year Outstanding Merit, 2006; Children's Picks List, Book Sense, 2006; Family Fun Magazine, Best Children's Books, 2006.

Syria

Rahimi, Alhan. *Yara: My Friend from Syria*. Illustrated by Anahit Aleksanyan, (35 pp.).

Alhan Rahimi, Publisher, 2016. ISBN: 9781520109305. Picture book.

This little story about Yara from Syria, who moves to Canada because of war, is really meant to provide an example of how we would like children and adults to respond when an immigrant child, who does not speak the language of the host country, enters the classroom. The illustrations are in bright and the bold colors are in keeping with the upbeat tone of the story. The illustrations depicting Yara's life in Syria before the war show a modern family in a modern setting that could be anywhere in a western country. Before the war, that was Syria.

Ruurs, Margriet. *Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family's Journey*. Illustrated by Nizar Ali Badr,

Translated by Falah Raheem, (25 pp.). Orca Book Publishers, 2016.

ISBN: 9781459814905. Picture book - Arabic/English.

This is a story told all too often, a refugee story, a story of a family fleeing from war, a family finding a home in a new land. This time the place is Syria. The illustrations are what make this story so extraordinary. The stone artwork of Mr. Badr is astonishing in its ability to bring to life the emotions of Rama, her father, grandfather, mother and brother as they leave their home and walk to freedom.

There is a Forward and information about the author, the illustrator and a list of organizations that help refugees.

Awards: Kirkus Reviews Best Books of 2016 US; Christie Harris Illustrated Children's Literature Prize, CA 2017; Bank Street College of Education Best Children's Books of the Year, US, 2017; CL/R SIG International Reading Association Notable Books for a Global Society, US, 2017; CCBC Best Books Starred Selection, CA, 2017; Bolen Books Children's Book Prize, CA, 2017.

Tunisia

Gioanni, Alain. *Arafat: A Child of Tunisia*. Photos by Alain Gioanni, Boutin, Francois Goalec,

Muriel Nicolotti, Michel Gauvry and Pascal Deloche, (23 pp.). Blackbirch Press, 2001.

ISBN: 9781410302892. Picture book – Non-fiction.

This lovely book provides a mini tour of both traditional and modern life in a seaside town in Tunisia. Photographs of Arafat's family, neighborhood, the family store, where he sometimes helps out, and his school. Photographs of the southern part of Tunisia offer a glimpse of life in the Sahara among the Bedouins.

There is a world map with Tunisia highlighted as well as a list of facts about Tunisia.

Turkey

Curtis, Chara M. *No One Walks on My Father's Moon*. Illustrated by Rebecca Hyland,

(24 pp.). Voyage Publishing, 1996. ISBN: 9780964945418. Picture book.

This is a story about a boy who lives in two worlds. The one he shares with his hard working, old world thinking father, in a small village and the one he shares with other students and his teacher. In school he learns that America has sent a space ship to the moon and men have walked on the moon. Astonished, he relates this information to his father. His father is unbelieving and angry. This presents a problem for the boy, as his father thinks he is lying. The teacher explains that everyone has a different idea about the moon. With that idea in his mind, he proceeds to try to understand his father's point of view.

The author created this story based on a conversation with a friend from Turkey. Rebecca Hyland based her illustrations on drawings she made while she was in Turkey.

Awards: Washington State Governor's Writers Award, 1997.

Gilani-Williams, Fawzia. *Nabeel's New Pants: An Eid Tale.* Illustrated by Proiti Roy, (24 pp.).

Marshall Cavendish Children, 2010. ISBN: 9780761456292. Picture book.

This is an amusing story about Nabeel, the shoemaker and his family, all hurrying to prepare for Eid. House cleaning, food preparation and buying new clothes are a big part of the preparations. Nabeel, among other purchases, buys himself a pair of pants, but they are too long. First his wife decides to surprise him and shorten the pants. Not realizing that has already been done, his mother shortens them again. Both wife and mother are eager for Nabeel to try on his pants. Can you imagine his surprise when he does? The illustrations are bright and cheery, matching the spirit of this holiday tale.

Awards: Vermont Red Clover Award Nominee, 2012; CCBC Choices, 2011; Bank Street CBC Best Book of the Year, 2011; Five to Nine, 2011.

Masood, Hiba. *Drummer Girl*. Illustrated by Hoda Hadadi, (36 pp.). Daybreak Press, 2015.

ISBN: 9780990625971. Picture book - Realistic fiction.

Based on a true story, this colorfully illustrated book brings to life an old Ramadan tradition practiced in only a few small villages in the Middle East and Arab world. Before alarm clocks, during Ramadan (the annual month of fasting), before the sun rose, a drummer (musaharati) would walk through the village and wake everyone, so they might eat before daybreak.

Traditionally the drummer was a male member of the village. The setting of this story is Turkey, but the true story, upon which this one is based, took place in Cairo. The original story is about an Egyptian woman who became the musaharati to earn extra money to support her family, after her husband died. There is a glossary, an author's note, biographical information about the author and the illustrator and information about the publisher.

Awards: Literary Classics International Book Award Seal of Approval, 2017.

Robinson, Anthony. *Meltem's Journey: A Refugee Diary*. Illustrated by June Allan, (28 pp.).

Frances Lincoln, 2010. ISBN: 9781847800312. Picture book - Non-fiction.

Meltem and her family had a pistachio farm in a Kurdish area of Turkey. They lived peacefully until political tensions with the Turkish government forced her father to flee to Germany.

Meltem and her mother followed, with the help of German social services, then in the dead of night, hiding in a lorry, they arrived in England. They were settled in Bradford England, but they lived in terror from threats. Their house was set on fire, they were hounded by immigration officials. For their father it was run, hide, run. For Meltem and her mother it was fear, fear, fear, then prison. Meltem was so traumatized, while officials were trying to deport her and her mother that she was in and out of the hospital. Their ordeal lasted for 10 years before they were finally

given leave to stay in England. The illustrations are subdued, matching the subdued tone of the story, interspersed with photographs.

There is a map, a fact section and historical notes about the Kurds in Turkey.

United Arab Emirates

Al Redha, Ahmad AbdulGhani. *The Sifrah Glider*. Illustrated by Joanne Mendelski, (19 pp.).

Jerboa Books, 2008. ISBN: 978998859956. Picture book.

This little fantasy story stars an amusing character who bursts into the children's classroom larger than life. He is the special guest of the day and is there to tell them about the clothes he is wearing. At the end, he tells the kids he is special as he glides off into the horizon using his sifrah (the large white triangle cloth worn on the head, under the black rope, the agaal). The illustrations are bright, colorful and have a comic book quality to them, right in keeping with the mood of the story.

Faruqi, Reem. *Lialah's Lunchbox: A Ramadan Story*. Illustrated by Lea Lyon, (32 pp.).

Tilbury House Publishers, 2015. ISBN: 9780884484318. Picture book.

Lialah is from Abu Dhabi, but now resides in America. Ramadan has begun, and she is excited to be fasting for the first time, but worried her classmates and teacher will not understand why she is not eating lunch. She hides in the library. The librarian is happy to see Lialah, so Lialah explains about fasting and Ramadan. The librarian convinces Lialah to explain things to her teacher. She writes a note and a poem. Her teacher responds with a note inviting Lialah to read her poem about Ramadan to the class.

Awards: ALA Notable Children's Books, 2016.

Art

Robert, Na'ima BD. *Journey Through Islamic Art.* Illustrated by Diana Mayo, (32 pp.).

Mantra Lingua, 2005. ISBN: 9781844444392. Picture book - English/Kurdish.

A young girl takes an imaginary journey through the Islamic world stopping to see the most notable icons of Islamic art. The illustrations bring to life the art and the short explanations are perfect for the young reader.

Awards: UK National Literacy Association WOW! Award 2005 for Best Children's Titles.

History

Ceceri, Kathy. *The Silk Road: Explore the World's Most Famous Trade Route.* Illustrated

By Kathy Ceceri, (122 pp.). Nomad Press, 2011. ISBN: 9781934670620. Expository text.

The Silk Road was not just one road, but a series of interconnecting routes between China and Europe. Although the Silk Road is often most closely associated with China because that is where the silk route began, Muslims were heavily involved in the trade route. This book includes projects and is an excellent resource for learning about the contributions of Muslims to the world, spreading art, culture, religion and so much more along the Silk Road.

Dennis, Yvonne Wakim & Maha Addasi. *A Kid's Guide to Arab American History: More*

Than 50 Activities. Illustrated by Gail Rattray, (204 pp). Chicago Review Press, 2013.

ISBN: 9781613740170. Expository text.

In this book, the contributions of Egyptian, Iraqi, Jordanian, Lebanese, Palestinian, Syrian and Yemeni Americans are described through the many craft instruction. Learning about Arab Americans is the missing link in some multicultural curriculum.

There is a resource section and an index at the back of this book.

Jungman, Ann. *The Most Magnificent Mosque*. Illustrated by Shelley Fowles, (24 pp.).

Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2004. ISBN: 9781845070120. Picture book - Realistic fiction.

In the days of the Moorish Empire, people of the book, Muslims, Christians and Jews lived in harmony. This is the story of the great mosque of Cordoba, told through the lives of three friends, a Christian, a Jew and a Muslim. A relevant story for today.

Major, John S. & Betty J. Belanus. *Caravan to America: Living Arts of the Silk Road*.

Illustrations: Photo Credits listed on page 129, (130 pp.). Cricket Books/A Marcato Book, 2002. ISBN: 9780812626773. Expository text.

This colorful text positions the people from the Middle East and Arab world in the context of the history of contributions of immigrants to the United States. The book is an extension of the Silk Road Project established by Yo-Yo Ma inspired by his travels. A wonderful resource for young researchers, this book connects history, geography, immigration and the arts.

1001 Inventions and Awesome Facts from Muslim Civilization, (96 pp.).

National Geographic Kids, 2012. ISBN: 9781426312588. Expository text.

The National Geographic organization worked with the Foundation for Science, Technology and Civilization to put together the information in this book. It was created for children from about age eight. The format is very much like the Guinness Book of World Records, with short bits of information in colorful boxes spread across the pages.

Ruelle, Karen Gray & Deborah Durland DeSaix. *The Grand Mosque of Paris: A Story of*

How Muslims Rescued Jews During the Holocaust. Illustrated by Karen Gray Ruelle &

Deborah Durland DeSaix, (40 pp.). Holiday House, 2009. ISBN: 9780823423040. Picture

Book - Non-fiction.

This is a not so well know story of the humanitarian effort by the Muslims in Paris to help Jews from being captured by the Nazis. The Mosque is a large complex and the rector was able to hide Jews for short periods of time and help them move on with falsified papers identifying the holder as a Muslim. It is estimated that more than 1,700 Jews passed through the mosque, many of them children.

There is an Afterword, a glossary, references, bibliography and an index.

Awards: ALA Notable Children's Book Award, 2010; NCTE Orbis Pictus Recommended Book, 2010; MEOC Honorable Mention, 2009; Booklist Top 10 Religion Books for Youth, 2010; Choices, 2010; Notable Social Studies Trade Books for Young People, 2010; Smithsonian Magazine's Notable Books for Children, 2009.

Islam

Abdullah, Noorah Kathryn. *What do we say... (A Guide to Islamic Manners).* Illustrated by

Noorah Kathryn Abdullah, (20 pp.). The Islamic Foundation, United Kingdom, 2008.

ISBN: 9780860373506. Picture book - Non-fiction.

This is a book used by Muslims parents to help teach their children Islamic manners. The words and phrases in this little book can be heard all over the Arabic speaking world. Any reader will immediately recognize that, although the words are in Arabic, translated into English, they are the equivalent of the language American parents will teach their children. When someone sneezes you often hear people say in English, "God bless you." In Arabic the phrase is Al-Ham-du-lil-lah. The illustrations are cheerful and whimsical.

There is a glossary on the last page.

Demi. *Muhammad*. Illustrated by Demi, (48 pp.). Margaret K. McElderry Books, 2003.

ISBN: 9780689852640. Picture book - Biography.

Demi has created an elegant, beautifully illustrated book on the life of Muhammad. The reader will not only learn of the life of Muhammad from boy to adult but will also see illustrations created in the style of Persian miniatures. Included in the story are a few passages from the Qur'an, a map and a bibliography.

Awards: Middle East Outreach Council Book Award, 2004.

Douglas, Susan L. *Ramadan*. Illustrated by Jeni Reeves, (48 pp.). Carolrhoda Books, Inc.

2004. ISBN: 9781575055848. Non-fiction.

This book not only explains what Ramadan is but includes information about how it is celebrated by Muslims living in different countries. The author describes the daily routines during Ramadan, the food that is eaten before and after daylight hours and the celebration of the end of

Ramadan.

A recipe and a glossary are included.

Ghazi, Suhaib Hamid. *Ramadan*. Illustrated by Omar Rayyan, (30 pp.). Holiday House, 1996.

ISBN: 9780823412754. Realistic fiction.

The author skillfully explains what Ramadan is and how a family experiences the month of fasting all Muslims practice, especially focusing on how a child might experience fasting. This is a gently told story offering facts and insight into what Ramadan means to Muslims and how it fits into their lives. The illustrations compliment the text with subdued colors and Islamic artistic embellishments. There is a glossary at the end of the book.

Hoyt-Goldsmith, Diane. *Celebrating Ramadan*. Photographs by Lawrence Migdale, (32 pp.).

A Holiday House Book, 2001. ISBN: 9780823415816. Picture book - Non-fiction.

Ibraheem lives near Princeton, New Jersey and is in the fourth grade. The combination of text and photographs offer the reader a window into the life of a devout American Muslim family. Photos of Ibraheem demonstrating the five steps of Muslim prayer, the family praying at home and in the mosque, celebrating Eid al-Fitr are just a few of the photographs that enable, even a child who cannot read the text, to learn about Ramadan.

There is a glossary and an index at the back of this book.

Husain, Sharukh. *What Do We Know About Islam?* Illustrated by Celia Hart, (45 pp.). Peter

Bedrick Books, 1996. ISBN: 9780872263888. Picture book - Non-fiction.

Written in short chapters with accompanying illustrations, this book covers the most important aspects of Islam. The chapter headings are all questions and the answers are short paragraphs

with photographs and illustrations. What is different about this book is the inclusion of information about calligraphy and why it is so important to Muslims. The first commandment to Muhammad was to read. There are four major styles of calligraphy in Islam: Kufic Script, one of the oldest and originating in Iraq, found on stone carved buildings like those in the Alhambra; Naskh Script, found on computer keyboards and used for writing; Thuluth Script, most frequently used in Koranic texts; Nasta'liq Script used mostly as a Persian-Arabic script; Diwani/Diwali al Jali Script developed during the reign of the Ottoman Turks. There is an index, a glossary, maps and a timeline of important Islamic events.

Islam, Hina. *An Eid for Everyone*. Illustrated by Roseanna Lester, (12 pp.). Author House, 2009. ISBN: 9781438948454. Picture book - Non-fiction.

Muslims all over the world celebrate Eid. This little book, with festive illustrations, explains Eid while at the same time showing characters in the holiday dress of their respective countries. There is a helpful author's note included.

Khan, Aisha Karen. *What You Will See Inside a Mosque*. Photographs by Aaron Pepis, (31 pp.). Skylight Paths Publishing, 2008. ISBN: 9781594732577. Picture book - Non-fiction.

This excellent book takes the reader on a walk through a mosque. This is a fine introduction to what a Muslim house of worship looks like. The book also includes photos of Muslims at various stages of daily prayer rituals with complete explanations. There is also some basic historical information about Islamic traditions, celebrations and food.

Khan, Hena. *Golden Domes and Silver Lanterns: A Muslim Book of Colors*. Illustrated by

Mehrdokht Amini, (25 pp.). Chronicle Books, LLC, 2012. ISBN: 9780811879057.

Picture book.

The author has cleverly used colors to explain various aspect in Islam. Each illustration concentrates on one area, red - prayer, blue - the hijab, gold - the mosque, and so on. A beautiful book that is easy for readers in the lower elementary grades. The narrator is a child, telling her story of the many colors of Islam. The illustrations are bright, bold and eye-catching.

There is a glossary at the back of the book. The fly leaves of this book are beautifully decorated with a Zellige design. This is a design created from various cut plaster shapes in many colors found in Morocco.

Awards: ALA Notable Children's Books Award, 2013; MEOC Book Award Honorable Mention, 2013.

Khan, Hena. *It's Ramadan, Curious George.* Illustrated by Mary O'Keefe Young, (16 pp.).

Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company, 2016. ISBN: 9780544652262

Picture book - Realistic fiction.

Curious George is at it again. This time celebrating Ramadan with his friend Kareem. This book does not identify any particular culture. Instead, the characters are from many ethnicities participating in Ramadan. This is for lower elementary children and offers an uncomplicated explanation of Ramadan.

Robert, Na'ima B. *Ramadan Moon.* Illustrated by Shirin Adl, (24 pp.). Frances Lincoln

Children's Books, 2009. ISBN: 9781845079222. Picture book - Realistic fiction.

This poetically written celebration of Ramadan is a delightful introduction for children. The illustrations depict elements of various Muslim cultures around the world. The tone of the story is as joyful as any story of a family's anticipation of a holiday.

Zucker, Jonny. *Festival Time! Sweet Dates to Eat: A Ramadan and Eid Story.* Illustrated by

Jan Barger, (17 pp.). Rafiq Abdulla, Consultant. Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2004.

ISBN: 9781845072940. Picture book - Realistic fiction.

The story of Ramadan and Eid is very simply told and children reading this book should have little trouble understanding this holiday. The illustrations are colorful and uncluttered matching the easily read text.

Language

Haskins, Jim. *Count Your Way Through the Arab World.* Illustrated by Dana Gustafson,

(22 pp.). Carolrhoda Books, Inc., 1991. ISBN: 9780876143049. Picture book -

Non-fiction.

Each page in this book offers not only a number in Arabic, but some fact related to an Arab custom or country. The language is easy, all words in Arabic are accompanied by a phonetic spelling to help with pronunciation. There is also a pronunciation guide for just the number words at the back of the book. The illustrations are colorful and depict visuals of facts in text.

Prejudice

Mobin-Uddin, Asma. *My Name is Bilal.* Illustrated by Barbara Kiwak, (24 pp.). Boyd Mills

Press, 2005. ISBN: 9781590781753. Picture book.

Bilal and his Ayesha are in a new school. They are Muslim and on the first day are encountering trouble. A bully, Scott, grabs Ayesha's hijab, then runs away. Bilal wants to fit in, he tells his classmates his name is Bill. However, his teacher, a Muslim, helps Bilal by loaning him a book about a friend and helper of the Prophet also named Bilal. He reads about the courage of the friend of the Prophet. When he returns to school, his sister is again being verbally abused by Scott. Bilal confronts him and tells him to leave his sister alone. After school, noticing Scott standing alone watching a game of basketball, Bilal invited Scott to join in the game. Tensions are eased, Bilal adjusts and finds new friends. The illustrator has managed to capture the subtle expressions of each character as the story unfolds, which lends itself to the quiet confidence Bilal gains through his faith.

Awards: Paterson Prize for Books for Young People, Grades 4-6, 2006; Best Children's Books of the Year Bank Street College of Education, 2006.

Refugees

Garland, Sarah. *Azzi In Between*. Illustrated by Sarah Garland, (36 pp.). Frances Lincoln Children's Books, 2012. ISBN: 9781847802613. Picture book.

Azzi's father is a doctor and for a while things go on as usual. But war has come to Azzi's country. Each day life becomes a little more dangerous, until the day arrives when Azzi and her family must flee. Her grandmother stays behind to watch the house. In the dead of night, they begin their escape, over mountains, in an overcrowded boat, finally reaching land. Everything is confusing, the language, the food...everything. Finally, the family is settled in one room. Now Azzi goes to school however, she cannot understand anyone, but a kind lady comes to help Azzi. This story captures the difficulties of refugee resettlement, especially for a child. It was inspired

by a young refugee who asked the author why there were no books about children like her. The author met and worked with many refugee children who were the inspiration for her book.

Awards: Little Rebels Children's Book Award, 2013.

Science

Beshore, George. *Science in Early Islamic Cultures*. Illustrations by Drew-Brook-Cormack

Associates, (64 pp.). Franklin Watts, 1998. ISBN: 9780531159170. Expository text.

This book beautifully connects the ancient civilizations through scientific theories and discoveries. Muslims, using information from ancient civilizations, explored mathematics, science, medicine, astronomy, medicine and the universe. This is an excellent introduction to the accomplishments of Islamic cultures.

There is a glossary, an index and a page with a few resources.

Teacher Resource Bibliography

Children

Abdelrazaq, Leila. *Baddawi*. Illustrated by Leila Abdelrazaq, (125 pp.). Just World Publishing, LLC, 2015. ISBN: 9781935982401. Graphic biography.

The author's biography of her father's life in stark black and white is arresting. The reader will either be intrigued and choose to read on or be repelled. Outside the community of people interested in the story of the Palestinians from the Palestinian perspective, these stories are not part of the American Middle East narrative. Leila's family was forced to escape to a refugee camp from their home in Palestine in 1948. Leila's father was born there and until old enough to attend college, lived his entire life as a refugee in Lebanon.

There is a glossary and a small selection of Ahmed and his family.

Al-Ali, Naji. *A Child in Palestine: The Cartoons of Naji al-Ali, With an introduction by Joe Sacco*, (118 pp.). Verso Books, 2009. ISBN: 9781844673650. Graphic biography.

The story of the life of Palestinian Naji al-Ali as a refugee and his ever-evolving views of the struggle of the Palestinian people in this selection of his cartoons. It is also a reflection of his own struggles to maintain a hope of a return to Palestine. The most famous symbol of his cartoons is the barefoot child Hanthala, his back always to the reader. Al-Ali documented what he witnessed. He chose not to represent any political party with his work. His lampooning of Yassar Arafat resulted in warnings by the PLO. This book contains only a small fraction of what he produced. His work is held in high esteem by Arabs but, in particular, by Palestinians, wherever they are in the world.

Ellis, Deborah. *Thee Wishes: Palestinian and Israeli Children Speak.* Photographs by Deborah

Ellis, (112 pp.). Groundwood Books, 2004. ISBN: 9780888996459. Non-fiction.

Deborah Ellis has written a powerful book about how the decisions of governments effect children. She lists the names of the 429 children under the age of 18, who were killed between 2000 and 2003 in the Palestinian/Israeli conflict. Her interviews with the Palestinian and Israeli, children, all between the ages of eight and 18, are sometimes painful to read, but necessary to understand.

There is a map, an Afterword, a bibliography, a list of organizations attempting to help in this conflict, and a short paragraph about the author.

Marston, Elsa. *Figs and Fate: Stories About Growing Up in the Arab World Today.* George

Braziller, Inc., 2005, (135 pp.). ISBN: 9780807615546. Realistic fiction.

Elsa Marston studied in Beirut, Lebanon, where she met and married her Lebanese husband. She lived and traveled Arab countries and devoted her life to writing stories set in the Arab world. One of her goals was to help young Americans understand they have much in common with young Arabs. These stories depict an aspect of the lives of Arab children that is rarely included in the media.

I had the pleasure of corresponding with Elsa, she passed away in February 16, 2017.

Wilkes, Sybella. *Refugees' Stories in Words, Paintings and Music: Out of Iraq.* Picture credits

listed on copyright page, (70 pp.). Evans Brothers Limited, 2010.

ISBN: 9780237539306. Picture book - Non-fiction.

Refugee status: No country, no city, no town, no village, no home and sometimes, no family. The plight of Iraqi refugees is presented here in the aftermath of the invasion of Iraq and in the face of what many believe was a horrific mistake. The author worked with the actual refugees as a member of the United Nations High Commission for Refugees. Her goal is to help people hear the voices of those refugees. These are their stories.

There are maps, a glossary, an index, a list of resources and suggestions for how teachers might use this book in school.

Contemporary Issues

Middle Easterners, Arabs and Muslims in America

Alsultany, Evelyn. *Arabs and Muslims in the Media: Race and Representation After 9/11.*

New York University Press, 2012, (225 pp.). ISBN: 9780814707326. Non-fiction.

This exploration into the media representations of Arabs and Muslims is an important contribution toward understanding how and why public perceptions are created based on political events, public sentiment and the role of the media and the government. The author provides well referenced historical and contemporary information about the stereotyping of Arabs and Muslims.

Bayoumi, Moustafa. *How Does It Feel To Be A Problem? Being Young and Arab in America.*

Penguin Books, 2008, (301 pp.). ISBN: 9780143115410. Non-fiction.

Bayoumi deftly shares the experiences of seven young Arab-Muslims after 9/11 and how America's human rights were no longer applied to all people. These stories provide the other side of the story of the aftermath of 9/11. While the focus was understandably primarily on the

victims of the downing of the twin towers, other victims were being created. These are compelling stories with the potential to help people see another side of the event.

There is an Afterward, extensive notes and a conversation with Moustafa Bayoumi section.

Cristillo, Louis, Nisrin Elamin, Ann Hawley and Amina Tawasil (Eds.). *This is Where I*

Need to Be: Oral Histories of Muslim Youth in NYC. Student Press Initiative /CPET,

Teachers College, 2008, (105 pp.). ISBN: 9781932948448. Oral history.

This book represents a unique project developed at Teachers College. The oral historians are all teenagers trained at Columbia to collect oral histories. They were then sent out into the city to interview ordinary Muslim teens about their thoughts and experiences living in NYC after 9/11. These stories provide a wide variety of experiences from a group whose voices are not usually heard. The students are proud to be Muslims and even though some of them have experienced prejudicial incidents, they believe the incidents are due to ignorance. The maturity of their responses is encouraging.

Dumas, Firoozeh. *Funny In Farsi: A Memoir of Growing Up Iranian in America.*

Random House Trade Paperbacks, 2003, (227 pp.). ISBN: 9780812968378. Memoir.

Ms. Dumas skillfully takes us on her journey in America as an Iranian, before, during and after the Iranian Revolution. She has managed to share some of her most difficult experiences with humor, while at the same time focusing sharply on what it is like to be an outsider. Even while I was laughing loudly as I read her stories, I was also cringing on the inside, not only with sympathy for her, but for the ignorance of the Americans she encountered. Her resilience is astounding. She manages to cover her life from age seven to adulthood so well the reader hardly

realizes what might have been left out. Readers will gain insight into how political events can change a life here in America. Overnight her father, an engineer, loses his job and his pension, during the hostage crisis and had to sell all their belongings. The family was constantly humiliated by situations like vendors selling T-shirts with the slogan “Iranians Go Home”. There is a Reader’s Guide and a Reading Group Questions and Topics for Discussion section. Her website, www.firoozedumas.com, has photographs of some of her friends as well as teacher materials.

Dumas, Firoozeh. *It Ain’t So Awful, Falafel*. Houghton Mifflin Harcourt, 2016, (378 pp.).

ISBN: 9781328740960. Semi-autobiographical novel.

Ms. Dumas relates her life experiences as an Iranian child growing up in California, trying desperately to fit in. Her name is Firoozeh, and since no one seems to be able to pronounce it, she tells her teachers to just call her Cindy and introduces herself to others as Cindy. And so her efforts to accommodate, understand, fit in and make a place for herself provides wonderful insight into the life of an immigrant child. Along the way the reader will learn a considerable amount about Iranian history and culture that would never be found in a textbook.

There is an author’s note that includes information for learning more about Ms. Dumas and Iran.

Ewing, Katherine Pratt, (Ed.) *Being and Belonging: Muslims in the United States Since*

9/11. Russell Sage Foundation, 2008, (215 pp.). ISBN: 9780871540447. Non-fiction.

The collection of authors for this book have undertaken a much-needed look at aspects of Muslims in America that are not all in the public eye. The invisible struggle for identity, the many different ethnicities of Muslims and the reshaping Muslim practices and institution. These

are complex issues but ones that need to be examined by educators. Teaching about Arabs, Middle Easterners and Muslims requires understanding the context in which events take place.

Kincheloe, Joe L. & Shirley R. Steinberg (Eds.). *The Miseducation of the West: How Schools and the Media Distort Our Understanding of the Islamic World*. Praeger, 2004, (209 pp.). ISBN: 9780275981600. Non-fiction.

The authors have taken on an important task in attempting to shed light on the causes of distortions and misunderstandings of the Islamic world. While every chapter is important, I call attention to Chapter 5: Consequences of Perceived Ethnic Identities, that deals with misperceptions of ethnic identities. The author asks the question, “How is it that an Iranian, a Pakistani, an Indian, a Sikh, an Afghani, or any other dark-skinned person from this cast region have all become Arabs, or more accurately, Arabs with possible links to terrorism? The author goes on to state that this chapter is written for teachers and student teachers and that his concern is for elementary-school-aged children.

Pearson, Robert P. & Leon E. Clark. *Through Middle Eastern Eyes (4th ed.): Post 9/11*

***Edition*. Illustrations and photographs sourced individually, (413 pp.). A Cite Book, 2002. ISBN: 9780938960485. Non-fiction.**

This resource is a collection of chapters covering two broad areas: Part one: Tradition and Change and Part two: Past Glories and Future Hopes. With these two sections the authors cover broad swaths of history, tradition, culture and life of the cultures of the Middle East and Arab world most connected to the conflicts of today between the West and the people of these two

areas. The chapters are short, and concise therefore readers will come away with an overview of the topic they choose.

History of Arab Stereotypes

Tchen, John Kuo Wei & Amita Manghnani (Eds.) *A Is For Arab: Archiving Stereotypes in*

U.S. Popular Culture. Illustrations credits are listed with each illustration, (71 pp.).

Asian /Pacific /American Institute, 2012. ISBN: 9780615699691. Expository text.

This small book contains excerpts from a much larger work, *Reel Bad Arabs: How Hollywood Vilifies a People*, by Jack Shaheen. The representations of Arabs and Muslims in American popular culture going back to the days of the silent film is critiqued and provides context for these representations in American culture. Jack Shaheen was the quintessential expert on Arab and Muslim stereotypes. His extensive work is archived in the library at New York University. I met Jack in 2012 and briefly corresponded with him about my efforts to find ways to introduce a counter narrative about Arabs, Muslims and Middle Easterners to teachers and students. He graciously offered his assistance after my dissertation was completed, but sadly Jack passed away in July of 2017.

Illustrating and Writing

Ellabbad, Mohieddin. *The Illustrator's Notebook.* Illustrated by Moheiddin Ellabbad, (30 pp.).

Groundwood Books, 2006. ISBN: 9780888997005. Expository text.

The author is a renowned Egyptian writer and illustrator. This English version retains the Arabic format of opening the book from left to right. All the illustrations are the same as in the Arabic version with explanations in English in the margins. Arabic calligraphy is part of the pictorial

tradition and Ellabbad takes the reader through an impressive gallery of this artistic tradition. Since calligraphy is such an important artform in the Middle East and Arab world, exploring this tradition opens another door of understanding between East and West.

Awards: Middle East Outreach Council Award – 2006; Children’s Africana Book Awards Best Book for Older Readers: 2007.

Whitesides, Barbara. *Sugar Comes from Arabic: A Beginner’s Guide to Arabic Letters and*

Words. Book designed by Geoffrey Piel, (133 pp.). Interlink Books, 2009.

ISBN: 9781566567572. Expository text.

If only I had had this book when I was studying Arabic in Morocco! Written Arabic has an artistic quality to it even when the written words are mundane. Reading Arabic is confusing not only because the words are written and read from right to left, but the letters themselves do not resemble the letters in the English language. This text demystifies Arabic by presenting explanations in small easily understood increments with illustrations.

Islamic/Muslim Contributions to the World*

Al-Hassani, Salim, T. S. (Ed.) *1001 Inventions: The Enduring Legacy of Muslim Civilization*

(3rd ed.), (350 pp.). Illustration credits p. 342. Published by National Geographic as a companion to the National Geographic Museum exhibition 1001 Inventions in Washington, D.C., 2012. (for more information about the exhibit:

<http://www.1001inventions.com/dc>). ISBN: 9781426209345. Expository text.

The book is well organized by topic with beautiful illustrations. Each section is delineated with a border of traditional Islamic design.

There is an extensive reference section, an index and glossary.

Al-Hassani, Salim, T. S., Chief Editor; Elizabeth Woodcock & Rabah Saoud. 1001

Inventions: Muslim Heritage in Our World (2nd ed.), (376 pp.). Illustration credits p. 374-375. The Foundation for Science, Technology and Civilization, 2006.

ISBN: 9780955242618. Expository text.

The focus is the Muslim Middle Ages, with seven chapters: Home; School; Market; Hospital; Town; World; Universe. The illustrations are photographs and drawings. This book was the centerpiece for two events in England, 1001 Inventions Exhibition at the house of Parliament in 2008 and a conference at Hoare Memorial Hall, Church House, Westminster, London.

There is an extensive reference section, a timeline of events, suggestions for further reading, a glossary, and an index.

Barnard, Bryn. *The Genius of Islam: How Muslims Made the Modern World*. Illustrated by

Bryn Barnard, (38 pp.). Alfred A. Knopf, 2011. ISBN: 9780375840722. Expository text.

This book is not a definitive collection of all the contributions of Muslims, but it is a good introduction. The author includes a time line of events, maps and colorful illustrations. The book is not too cumbersome and is an excellent starting point for further exploration of the contributions of Muslims and the impact of those contributions on today's society.

Awards: Middle East Outreach Council – 2011.

Hussain, Saima S. *The Arab World Thought of It: Inventions, Innovations and Amazing*

Facts. Photographs from multiple sources listed on page 44, (48 pp.). Annick Pres (U.S.) Ltd. 2013. ISBN: 9781554514762. Expository text.

A look at the contributions of the Arab world from a different perspective. Chapters are short and include colorful photographs, touching on the topics of education, architecture, medicine, to name a few. The author also includes the contributions of women. This is an excellent introduction to the Arab world.

There are maps, a timeline, reference list, bibliography and an index.

***Although the books in this section cover many of the same topics, each book contains information the others do not.**

Muslim Women

Abdel-Fattah, Randa. *Does My Head Look Big In This?* (360 pp.). Scholastic Inc., 2005.

ISBN: 9780439922333. Novel.

The idea of wearing the hijab (Muslim woman's head covering) has been a controversial subject on and off over the years. This novel opens the door to understanding what wearing the hijab can mean to a Muslim girl (or woman). In places where the choice is left to women as opposed to places where it is mandatory, the decision is more than a fashion statement. It is also more than a religious choice. In western cultures, deciding to wear the hijab is also a social choice. There are consequences to taking this step. Abdel-Fattah's novel follows a young Australian-Palestinian girl as she takes a metaphorical breath and decides.

Awards: Australian Book Industry Award; Australian Book of the Year Award for Older Children, 2006; American Library Association Popular Paperbacks for Young Adults, 2007;

Bank Street College of Education Best Children's Book of the Year, 2008; Booklist Top 10 First Novels for Youth, 2007; Australian Family Therapists Books Useful for Therapists, 2005; The Capitol Choices Committee Capitol Choice, 2008; American Booksellers Association Children's Book Sense Picks, 2007; Kirkus Best Young Adult Books, 2007; Children's Book Council, 2006; West Australian Young Readers' Book Award, 2006; White Ravens Award Nominee, 2006; Winner Australia International, 2006.

Fernea, Elizabeth Warnock. *In Search of Islamic Feminism: One Woman's Global Journey.*

Photograph credits listed with individual photos, (430 pp.). Anchor Books, 1998. ISBN: 9780385488587. Non-fiction.

This book expands what it means to be a feminist. Women in the Middle East and the Arab world define being a feminist from within the context of their societies. One thing they all have in common is the idea of change. What kind of change is determined by context. In Palestine and Israel, a women's movement for peace, in Iraq education for women, in Kuwait a divorced women's support group, in Turkey, the establishment of a Women's Library. The history of the feminist movement in Turkey is saved in a collection of stories, letters and literary tracts for all women to access. Egypt is considered the birthplace of the first Arab women's movement, when Huda Sharawi shed her face veil. This is an eye-opening book that challenges the definition of feminism.

Maydell, Natalie & Sep Riahi. *Extraordinary Women from the Muslim World.* Paintings by

Heba Amin, (117 pp.). Global Content Ventures, 2007. ISBN: 9780979990106.

Picture book - Non-fiction.

Although this book is considered a picture book for grade five and up, I believe it should be read by teachers. Famous women from the Muslim world are generally invisible in the west. The women in this volume challenge the conventional thinking about Islam and women as being timid and housebound. Reading this book, as well as Ms. Fernea's book, raises new questions. Is one contributing factor to the unrest in the Middle East and Arab world a subconscious fear of the potential strength and power of Muslim women? Aspects of that question are addressed in the next book in this bibliography.

Awards: Skipping Stones Magazine's Honor Award, 2009; Middle East Outreach Council Award, 2008; National Best Book Award, 2008; Moonbeam "Peacemaker Award, 2008.

Sabbagh, Suha, (Ed.). *Arab Women: Between Defiance and Restraint*, (267 pp.). Olive Branch Press, 1996. ISBN: 9781566561877. Non-fiction.

A series of essays, this book is divided into nine parts that examine women's roles in politics, as leaders, their work, their education, status in society and in the family and so much more. Every contributor has a connection to the Arab world. Stereotypes in the western media of Arab women are shattered with revelations of who Arab women are, strong, resilient and independent, more often than not. A book full of revelations and questions.

Satrapi, Marjane. *Embroideries*. Illustrated by Marjane Satrapi, (144 pp.). Pantheon Books, 2005. ISBN: 9780375714672. Graphic memoir.

Ms. Satrapi eavesdrops on the conversations of her grandmother, relatives and friends at an afternoon informal gathering over coffee and tea. Every stereotype of Muslim women as meek, obedient, and uneducated is shattered by the revelations in the conversations of these women.

Their strong opinions of men, marriage and virginity are related with humor, through Ms. Satrapi's drawings, and snappy dialogue.

Satrapi, Marjane. *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood*. Illustrated by Marjane Satrapi, (153 pp.). Pantheon, 2003. ISBN: 9780375714573. Graphic memoir (First published In France).

The author not only shares her story of growing up during the Iranian revolution, but imparts the confusion, contradictions and chaos of those years. The black and white drawings add to the sense of underlying doom and drama as events unfold. The scale and position of characters in some of the scenes are aligned with the relationship of the characters to each other and events (example: page 153). This powerful story reveals the reality of the revolution. I lived in Iran from 1976 to 1979. There were signs of a coming revolution with news of bombings and crackdowns on Iranians. All the while we, Americans, received written reassurances from the American employers, these were just occasional disruptions and things were under control. However, the constant uncertainty was anxiety producing. The news we received each day was conflicting. In our village one day there were pro Shah demonstrations and the next day we were warned not to leave our homes as anti Shah demonstrators with weapons and tanks moved across the local landscape. Other days our neighborhood was surrounded by armed guards. I was never sure if they were there to keep us in or the revolutionaries out. I can attest to the validity of many of the author's experiences.

Awards: American Library Association ALEX Award Winner, 2004; Booklist Editor's Choice for Young Adults Winner; New York Public Library Books for the Teen Age Winner; New York Times Notable Book; Time Magazine "Best Comix of the Year"; San Francisco Chronicle Best

Seller; Los Angeles Times Best Seller; School Library Journal Adult Book for Young Adult Award; Angouleme Coup de Coeur Award in France in 2001.

Satrapı, Marjane. *Persepolis 2: The Story of a Return*. Illustrated by Marjane Satrapı,

(187 pp.) Pantheon, 2004. ISBN: 9780375714665. Graphic memoir (First published in France).

The sequel to *Persepolis; The Story of a Childhood*, is every bit as compelling as the first book. Marjane’s life takes a drastic turn as she leaves Iran for Europe. Her culture shock combined with the hostility she encountered because she was Iranian, drove her to extremes in trying to “fit in” with the new people in her life. While she was struggling to adjust to the changes in herself as a young adult, the world around her was changing swiftly. She seemed always to be trying to adjust to those changing circumstances while grappling with her Iranian values, alternately feeling brave and defiant or a traitor to her own culture. Her return to Iran was as much of a culture shock as the shock of living in Europe, but she was with her family for support. Her ultimate decision to leave Iran for good was painful, but she was no longer a child, she made peace with herself and moved forward.

Awards: Time Magazine Best Non-fiction Book, 2004; Angouleme Prize for Scenario in France in 2002.

Wilson, G. Willow. *Ms. Marvel Volume 1: No Normal*. Illustrated by Adrian Alphona,

(122 pp.). Marvel Worldwide, Inc. 2015. ISBN: 9780785190219. Comic book.

One of the newest superheroes of the Marvel world of comics is a reincarnation of the Ms. Marvel character as a teenage Muslim girl. Because the author is herself a Muslim, she has

successfully created a Muslim character without having to worry about not getting it right. I chose to include this comic for two reasons. One because the author is a Muslim woman and does not fit any of the stereotypes attributed to Muslim women. She is not meek, subservient and uneducated nor is she exotic. She is a talented author with a husband and children. And two because the character in this comic is an American Muslim teenage girl struggling with the usual teenage transformation from child to adult issues and she is also dealing with understanding her powers as a superheroine. The author and her character are examples of an anti-stereotypical Muslim woman.

Awards: Hugo Award for Best Graphic Story, 2015; Harvey Award Nominee for Best New Series, Best Writer (for G, Willow Wilson), 2015; [Will Eisner Comic Industry Awards Nominee for Best New Series, Best Writer \(for G. Willow Wilson\); Best Penciller/Inker \(for Adrian Alphona\), Best Lettering \(for Joe Caramagna\); Best](#) Cover Artist (for Jamie Mc Kelvie & Matthew Wilson), 2015; Award Nominee for Graphic Novels & Comics, 2014.