

Arabs and Muslims: Their culture through literature

Curriculum Materials Center

This is a selected list of juvenile books available at the Cheng Library that can be helpful when teaching about the culture of Arabs and Muslims in Grades K-12.

Fiction & Picture Books

Budhos, M. T. (2006). *Ask me no questions*. New York: Atheneum Books. (Grades 7-10).

Fourteen-year-old Nadira, her sister, and their parents are immigrants from Bangladesh, but the expiration of their visas and the events of September 11, 2001, bring frustration, sorrow, and terror for the whole family.

Call Number: J Bud

Carmi, D. (2000). *Samir and Yonatan*. (Y. Lotan, Trans.). New York: Arthur A. Levine Books. (Grades 6-10).

Samir, a Palestinian boy, is sent for surgery to an Israeli hospital where he has two otherworldly experiences. He makes friends with an Israeli boy, Yonatan, who travels with him to Mars where Samir finds peace over his younger brother's death in the war.

Call Number: J Car

Clinton, C. (2002). *A stone in my hand*. Cambridge, MA: Candlewick Press. (Grades 6-12).

Living in Gaza City in the late 1980's, eleven-year-old Malaak and her family are touched by the increasing violence between Israelis and Palestinians. First her father disappears and then her older brother is drawn to the Islamic Jihad.

Call Number: J Cli

Heide, F. P., & Gilliland, J. H. (1995). *The day of Ahmed's secret*. New York: Mulberry Books. (Grades K-4).

A young Egyptian boy describes the city of Cairo as he goes about his daily work and waits for the evening to share a special surprise with his family.

Call Number: PJ Hei

Khan, R. (2005). *Silly Chicken*. New York: Viking. (Grades PreK-2).

In Pakistan, Rani believes that her mother loves their pet chicken Bibi more than she cares for her, until the day that a fluffy chick appears and steals Rani's own affections.

Call Number: PJ Kha

Krishnaswami, U. (2003). *Monsoon*. New York: Farrar, Straus, Giroux. (Grades K-3).

A child describes waiting for the monsoon rains to arrive and the worry that they will not come.

Call Number: PJ Kri

- Lewin, T. (1998). *The storytellers*. New York: Lothrop, Lee, & Shepard. (Grades K-3).
Abdul and Grandfather pass through the streets of Fez, Morocco, and stop at an old gate, where Grandfather performs as a storyteller.
Call Number: J Lew
- Matthews, M. (1996). *Magid fasts for Ramadan*. New York: Clarion Books. (Grades 3-6).
Magid, an eight-year-old Muslim boy in Cairo, is determined to celebrate Ramadan by fasting, despite the opposition of family members who feel that he is not old enough to fast.
Call Number: J Mat
- Matze, C. S. (1999). *The stars in my Geddoh's sky*. Morton Grove, IL: Albert Whitman & Co. (Grades K-5).
Alex's Arabic-speaking grandfather comes to visit the United States, and Alex learns about his grandfather's Middle Eastern homeland.
Call Number: PJ Mat
- McCormick, P. (2006). *Sold*. New York: Hyperion. (Grades 9-12).
Thirteen-year-old Lakshmi leaves her poor mountain home in Nepal thinking that she is to work in the city as a maid. However she has been sold into the sex slave trade in India and that there is no hope of escape.
Call Number: J McC
- McKay, L. (1995). *Caravan*. New York: Lee & Low Books. (Grades K-4).
A ten-year-old boy accompanies his father for the first time on a caravan trip through the mountains of Afghanistan to the city below where they will trade their goods at market.
Call Number: J McK
- Nye, N. S. (1994). *Sitti's secrets*. New York: Four Winds Press. (Grades K-4).
A young girl describes a visit to see her grandmother in a Palestinian village on the West Bank.
Call Number: PJ Nye
- Staples, S. F. (1989). *Shabanu: Daughter of the wind*. New York: Knopf. (Grades 6-12).
When eleven-year-old Shabanu, the daughter of a nomad in the Cholistan Desert of present-day Pakistan is pledged in marriage to an older man, she must make the decision of accepting the custom of her family or defy her father's wishes.
Call Number: J Sta
- Stolz, J. (2004). *The shadows of Ghadames*. (C. Temerson, Trans.). New York: Delacorte Press. (Grades 6-10).
At the end of the nineteenth century in Libya, eleven-year-old Malika simultaneously enjoys and feels constricted by the narrow world of women, but an injured stranger enters her home and disrupts the traditional order of things.
Call Number: J Sto

Literature: Poetry, Folktales, etc.

Cohen, B., & Lovejoy, B. F. (1982). *Seven daughters & seven sons*. New York: Atheneum. (Grades 4-12).

A retelling of a traditional Arabic tale in which a young woman disguises herself as a man and opens up a shop in a distant city in order to help her impoverished family.

Call Number: j398.2 Coh

Hickox, R. (1998). *The golden sandal: A Middle Eastern Cinderella*. New York: Holiday House. (Grades K-5).

An Iraqi version of the Cinderella story in which a kind and beautiful girl who is mistreated by her stepmother and stepsister finds a husband with the help of a magic fish.

Call Number: j398.209 Hic

Lang, A. (Ed.). (1946). *Arabian nights*. New York: D. McKay. (Grades 4-12).

Twenty of the traditional tales told by Scheherazade in an attempt to save her life.

Includes The Merchant and the Genie, The Forty Thieves, The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor, and Aladdin and the Wonderful Lamp.

Call Number: j398.2 Ara

McVitty, W. (1989). *Ali Baba and the forty thieves*. New York: Abrams. (Grades 1-8).

The famous story is illustrated in the style of tenth-century Persian miniatures.

Call Number: j398.2 McV

Nye, N. S. (2002). *19 varieties of gazelle: Poems of the Middle East*. New York: Greenwillow Books. (Grades 6-12).

A collection of poems about the Middle East, old and new. Includes a poem about a young man released from prison on the morning of September 11th that deals with the humanity of Arabs and their daily struggles and joys.

Call Number: j811.542 Nye

Nye, N. S. (Ed.). (1998). *The space between our footsteps: Poems and paintings from the Middle East*. New York: Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers. (Grades 8-12).

A collection of poetry and full-color artwork from Middle Eastern and North African countries. Selected poetry from Arabic, Hebrew, Persian, and Turkish.

Call Number: j808.81 Spa

Simms, L. (2003). *A key to the heart: Bi-lingual collection of Afghan folk tales*. (M. Massarat-Foudeh, & A. H. Shayek, Trans.). New York: Chocolate Sauce Pub. (Grades 4-12).

A collection of six stories adapted from Afghan folktales. Written in English with Dari translations.

Call Number: J Sim

Non Fiction: History, Geography, Biography, etc.

Al-Windawi, T. (2004). *Thura's diary: My life in wartime Iraq*. New York: Viking. (Grades 5-12).

Through the point of view of 19-year-old Thura, we see the build-up to war, the actual war itself, and its aftermath. Covers the period from March to August 2003.

Call Number: j956.7 Alw

Budhos, M. T. (2007). *Remix: Conversations with immigrant teenagers*. New York: Henry Holt. (Grades 7-12).

Presents profiles of fourteen teenagers from countries around the world, revealing their struggles to fit into American society and their personal triumphs.

Call Number: j920 Bud

Chalfonte, J. (1996). *I am Muslim*. New York: PowerKids Press. (Grades K-5).

Introduces the fundamentals of Islam through the eyes of a Muslim child living in Detroit.

Call Number: j297 Cha

Cultures of the world. (2002-2006). New York: Marshall Cavendish Benchmark. (Grades 6-8).

This series provides comprehensive information on the geography, history, government, economy, cultural diversity, peoples, and religion of the countries.

Afghanistan	Call Number: j958.1 Ali
Bahrain	Call Number: j953.65 Co
India	Call Number: j954 Sri
Iran	Call Number: j955 Raj
Iraq	Call Number: j956.7 Has
Israel	Call Number: j956.94 DuB
Pakistan	Call Number; j954.91 She
Saudi Arabia	Call Number: j953.8 Jan
Syria	Call Number: j956.91 Sou
Turkey	Call Number: j956.1 She

Demi. (2003). *Muhammad*. New York: Margaret K. McElderry Books. (Grades 4-7).

Introduces Muhammad and the basic tenets of the Islamic faith.

Call Number: jB Muhammad

Enchantment of the World. (1997-1998). New York: Children's Press. (Grades 6-8).

Describes the geography, history, culture, economy, and people of various cultures.

Kuwait	Call Number: j953.67 Fos
Qatar	Call Number: j953.83 Aug

Fiesta!: A portrait of the country through its festivals and traditions. (1997). Danbury, CT: Grolier Educational. (Grades 4-8).

A collection of books that describe the cultural and religious celebrations of different countries around the world.

Call Number: j394.26 Fie v.4 India

Call Number: j394.26 Fie v.15 Turkey

Frank, M. (2002). ***Understanding September 11th: Answering questions about the attacks on America.*** New York: Viking. (Grades 6-12).

What is al Qaeda? What is Islam? Why does the Middle East matter to us? Who are the Taliban and why did we go to fight them in Afghanistan? Who is Osama bin Laden?

These are some of the questions answered in this report.

Call Number: j973.93 Fra

Frank, M. (2005). ***Understanding the Holy Land: Answering questions about the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict.*** New York: Viking. (Grades 6-12).

Frank explains the complex issues and history surrounding the Israeli/Palestinian conflict using a question-and-answer format. A generous amount of maps, sidebars, and photographs offer perspectives that reflect all sides.

Call Number: j956.94 Fra

Hoyt-Goldsmith, D. (2001). ***Celebrating Ramadan.*** New York: Holiday House. (Grades 2-5).

This picture book for older readers follows devout Muslim, Ibraheem, a fourth-grader living in New Jersey, through the holy month of Ramadan. It gives a brief comprehensive introduction to Islamic faith and the five pillars of Islam.

Call Number: j277 Hoy

Landau, E. (2002). ***Osama bin Laden: A war against the West.*** Brookfield, CT: Twenty-First Century Books. (Grades 6-12).

Presents biographical information about militant Islamic leader, Osama bin Laden, his role in international terrorism and the beliefs that fuel his actions.

Call Number: jB Bin

Macaulay, D. (2003). ***Mosque.*** Boston: Houghton Mifflin Co. (Grades 4-12).

This book shows the methods and materials used to design and construct a mosque in late sixteenth century Turkey.

Call Number: j762.2 Mac

Morris, A. (2003). ***Grandma Hekmat remembers: An Arab-American family story.*** Brookfield, CT: Millbrook Press. (Grades 1-5).

Three Arab-American girls learn about their family and cultural history from their grandmother, who grew up in Cairo, Egypt, and moved to New Jersey after her marriage. Directions are included in the book for making Egyptian paper boats.

Call Number: j305.89 Mor

- Shahrukh, H. (1995). *What do we know about Islam?* New York: Peter Bedrick Books. (Grades 4-8).
An illustrated guide to the origins, history, practices, and beliefs of Islam.
Call Number: j297 Sha
- Stewart, G. (2005). *Life under the Taliban*. San Diego, CA: Lucent Books. (Grades 6-12).
Discusses the history of Afghanistan, the rise and fall of the Taliban, and daily life under the regime.
Call Number: j958.1 Ste
- Winchester, F. (1999). *Muslim holidays*. Mankato, MN: Bridgestone Books. (Grades K-5).
Briefly describes the beliefs of Muslims and seven of the special celebrations that are part of the Islamic faith.
Call Number: j394.2 Win
- Winter, J. (2005). *The librarian of Basra: A true story from Iraq*. Orlando, FL: Harcourt, Inc. (Grades 1-7).
This is a true story about a librarian's struggle to save her community's priceless collection of books
Call Number: j020.92 Win
- Worth, R. (2008). *Saladin: Sultan of Egypt and Syria*. Berkeley Heights, NJ: Enslow Publishers. (Grades 6-12).
Saladin is packed with historical and biographical facts that follow the ruler's influence on Egypt, Syria and the entire region.
Call Number: jB Saladin
- Zwier, L. J., & Weltig, M. S. (2005). *The Persian Gulf and Iraqi wars*. Minneapolis, MN: Lerner Publications Co. (Grades 5-12).
The cradle of civilization, a deadly standoff, the invasion of Kuwait, Desert Shield and Desert Storm, the ground war, and occupation of Iraq are a few of the concepts explained in this book.
Call Number: j956.7 Zwi

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