

Arab & Arab American Creators

Picture Books

Aziz, Susannah. *Halal Hot Dogs*. Every Friday Musa's family takes turns picking out a Jummah treat to try different foods, but when it is Musa's turn, he sticks to his favorite halal hot dogs to share.

Camper, Cathy. *Ten Ways to Hear Snow*. Walking to her grandmother's home to help make a family favorite recipe for warak enab, Lina discovers many ways to hear snow, from the scrape of a shovel on a sidewalk to the quiet pats of snowman-building.

Charara, Hayan. *The Three Lucys*. A young Lebanese boy must learn to cope with loss and hope for a peaceful future after losing one of his beloved cats because of The July War. *Arab American Book Award Honor

Ebeid, Rifk. *Baba, What Does My Name Mean?: A Journey to Palestine*. When Saamidah, a young Palestinian refugee, is asked by her friends what her name means, she isn't quite sure what to say. She turns to her baba for some answers - but what she gets is an adventure beyond her wildest dreams.

Faruqi, Reem. *Amira's Picture Day*. Amira is excited because tomorrow is Eid with special clothes, treats, gifts, and a morning party at her mosque; but then she realizes that she is going to miss class picture day at school, something she was also looking forward to—so Amira has to figure out a way to be in two places at once. Also by Reem Faruqi: *I Can Help* and *Lailah's Lunchbox*.

Gilani-Williams, Fawzia. *Yaffa and Fatima: Shalom, Salaam*. Yaffa and Fatima live on neighboring date farms. When very little rain leads to a poor harvest, both women go to extra measures to make sure that their neighbor doesn't go hungry.

Kaadan, Nadine. *The Jasmine Sneeze*. Haroun, the cat, likes nothing better than to spend his days sleeping in the sunlit courtyards of Damascus. But one thing always ruins his sleep: jasmine! Haroun can't stand the sweet-scented flowers. Their pollen sends him into fits of sneezes!

Khalil, Aya. *The Arabic Quilt: An Immigrant Story*. When Kanzi's teacher engages the class in a project to make a quilt out of every student's name written in Arabic, Kanzi feels a sense of pride in her culture. *Arab American Book Award Winner

Latham, Irene and Karim Shamsi-Basha. *The Cat Man of Aleppo*. When war came to Syria, many fled Aleppo and were forced to become refugees in faraway places, but Mohammad Alaa Aljaleel, an ambulance driver, stayed behind to care for his neighbors in need, which included abandoned cats.

Lumbard, Rabiah York. *The Gift of Ramadan*. Sophia wants to fast for Ramadan this year. Her grandma tells her that fasting helps make a person sparkly—and Sophia loves sparkles. But when her attempt at fasting fails, Sophia must find another way to participate.

Marston, Elsa. *The Olive Tree*. Sameer's neighbors left when war came to Lebanon, but now they have returned. Instead of finding a friend to play with, Sameer meets an unfriendly girl, Muna, who confronts him about taking olives that fall from her family's tree to his side of the wall.

Muhummad, Ibtihaj. *The Proudest Blue: A Story of Hijab and Family*. Mama takes Asiyah and Faizah to the hijab shop so that Asiyah can pick out her "first-day hijab." Faizah has a new backpack and light-up shoes for the first day of school, but when Asiyah walks out in her blue hijab, "It's the most beautiful first day of school ever."

Najjār, Taghrīd 'Ārif. *The Ghoul*. Brave Hassan embarks on a dangerous mission to face the long-feared Ghoul. When Hassan finally meets the Ghoul, he discovers that the Ghoul is just as terrified of people as they are of him. They both realize that they can still be friends, despite their differences. Also by Taghrīd 'Ārif Najjār: *My Brother and Me* and *Watermelon Madness*.

Ramadan, Ahmad Danny. *Salma the Syrian Chef*. Between English classes, job interviews, and missing Papa back in Syria, Mama always seems busy or sad. All Salma wants is to make her mama smile again. Maybe a homemade Syrian meal will cheer her up!

Ruurs, Margriet and Nizar Ali Badr. *Stepping Stones: A Refugee Family's Journey*. With only what they can carry on their backs, Rama and her family set out to walk from their Syrian home to freedom in Europe.

Yuksel, M.O. and Hatem Aly. *In My Mosque*. Step in and discover all the rituals and wonder of the mosque. No matter who you are or where you're from, everyone is welcome here.



For Older Kids

Abu-Jaber, Diana. *Silverworld*. Sitti, Sami's Lebanese grandmother, has been ill for a while, slipping from reality and speaking in a language only Sami can understand. Her family thinks Sitti belongs in a nursing home, but Sami doesn't believe she's sick at all. Desperate to help, Sami casts a spell from her grandmother's mysterious charm book and falls through an ancient mirror into a world unlike any other. Welcome to the enchanted city of Silverworld.

Al-Mansour, Haifaa. *The Green Bicycle* (Tween). Spunky eleven-year-old Wajda lives in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia with her parents. She desperately wants a bicycle so that she can race her friend Abdullah, even though it is considered improper for girls to ride bikes. Wajda earns money for her dream bike by selling homemade bracelets and mixtapes of banned music to her classmates. But after she's caught, she's forced to turn over a new leaf (sort of), or risk expulsion from school. Still, Wajda keeps scheming, and with the bicycle so closely in her sights, she will stop at nothing to get what she wants.

Chalfoun, Michelle. *The Treasure of Maria Mamoun*. Lebanese-American Maria's mother transplants the two of them from the South Bronx to Martha's Vineyard. While Maria's nurse mother cares for a rich, elderly film director, Maria joins forces with a local boy to sail and search for pirate treasure. *Arab American Book Award Winner

continued on back



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For Older Kids, cont.

Darraj, Susan Muaddi. *Farah Rocks Fifth Grade* (series). Fifth-grader Farah Hajjar and her best friend Allie Liu are hoping to go to the Magnet Academy for their middle school years, but when a new girl starts tormenting Farah and her younger brother, Samir, she decides she can not leave Samir to face the bully alone. The adults and even Allie do not seem to be taking the matter seriously, so Farah comes up with a plan, one which involves lying to those closest to her. *Arab American Book Award Winner

Dennis, Yvonne Wakim. *A Kid's Guide to Arab American History: More Than 50 Activities* (973.049 DEN). A contemporary and historical look at Arab American people and experiences that have shaped Arab American culture, with fun activities that highlight distinct arts, games, clothing, and food.

Faruqi, Reem. *Golden Girl*. When her father is accused of a crime he didn't commit, seventh grader Aafiyah, a Pakistani American girl who has a habit of "borrowing" glittery things, decides to use her bad habit to reunite her family. Also by Reem Faruqi: *Unsettled*.

Hussain, Saimi. *The Arab World Thought of It: Inventions, Innovations, and Amazing Facts* (953 HUS) Explore some of the inventions and innovations that were developed in the Arab world, including the astrolabe, stitches, hummus, and soap bars. *Arab American Book Award Honor

Jamieson, Victoria and Omar Mohamed. *When Stars are Scattered* (Graphic novel). Omar and his younger brother Hassan live in a refugee camp, and when an opportunity for Omar to get an education comes along, he must decide between going to school every day or caring for his nonverbal brother.

Nurali, Siman. *Sadiq and the Desert Star* (series). Sadiq's father is going on a business trip, but before he goes he tells Sadiq a story of the Desert Star, which fits in perfectly with Sadiq's third grade class field trip to the planetarium, and inspires Sadiq to build a simple telescope to study the stars when his father returns.

Nye, Naomi Shihab. *The Turtle of Oman* (series). Aref, a boy from Oman, has serious misgivings about temporarily moving from his homeland to Michigan. As he avoids packing his suitcase, Aref savors the familiar sights, sounds and scents of his hometown, Muscat.

Nye, Naomi Shihab. *Everything Comes Next: Collected & New Poems* (811 NYE). A treasure chest of Naomi Shihab Nye's most beloved poems, celebrating her term as Young People's Poet Laureate. Writing prompts and tips by the award-winning poet make this an outstanding choice for aspiring poets of all ages. Also by Naomi Shihab Nye: *Cast Away: Poems for Our Time* (811 NYE).

Once Upon an Eid: Stories of Hope and Joy by 15 Muslim Voices. A collection of short stories that showcases the most brilliant Muslim voices writing today, all about the most joyful holiday of the year: Eid! Maybe it's waking up to the sound of frying samosas or the comfort of bean pie, maybe it's the pleasure of putting on a new outfit for Eid prayers, or maybe it's the gift giving and holiday parties to come that day. Whatever it may be, for those who cherish this day of celebration, it's all about joy.

Roy, Jennifer Rozines and Ali Fadhil. *Playing Atari with Saddam Hussein: Based on a Real Life Story*. For forty-two days in 1991, eleven-year-old Ali Fadhil and his family struggle to survive as Basra, Iraq, is bombed by the United States and its allies.

Saeed, Jamal. *Yara's Spring*. Growing up in Aleppo, Yara's childhood has long been shadowed by the coming revolution. Yara is pushed to her limits as she discovers how far she'll go for her loved ones—and for a chance for freedom.

Warga, Jasmine *The Shape of Thunder*. Told in their alternating voices, twelve-year-old neighbors and former best friends Cora Hamed and Quinn McCauley begin working together to open a wormhole so they can travel through time to prevent the school shooting that resulted in the deaths of Cora's sister and Quinn's brother. Also by Jasmine Warga: *Other Words for Home*.

Yuksel, M.O. *One Wish: Fatima Al-Fihri and the World's Oldest University*. (B AL-FIHRI) The story of Fatima al-Fihri, a trailblazing woman who founded the oldest existing and continually operating university in the world.

The Arab American Book Award is an honor given each year to outstanding books written by or about Arab Americans, defined as anyone who has ancestry in any of the 22 Arab countries. The mission is to celebrate Arab American literature and honor those who have produced exemplary work, with portrayals or representations of Arab Americans that are accurate, engaging and avoid stereotypes.

The award was established in 2006 by the Arab American Museum in partnership with librarians from the University of Toledo. Find more information at arabamericanmuseum.org



Middle School & Up

Barakat, Ibtisam. *Balcony on the Moon: Coming of Age in Palestine* (Teen 956.952 BAR). A touching memoir about pursuing dreams in the face of much adversity and political turmoil in the Middle East and finding inspiration through writing letters to pen pals. *Arab American Book Award Honor. Also by Ibtisam Barakat: *Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood*.

Daud, Somaiya. *Mirage* (Teen series). Amani is abducted from her small village and finds that her survival depends on being the perfect body double to an arrogant and cruel princess. *Arab American Book Award Honor

Findakly, Brigitte. *Poppies of Iraq* (Adult Graphic Novels, B FINDAKLY). Findakly's chronicle of her relationship with her homeland Iraq, including her middle class childhood, cultural practices, the education system, Saddam Hussein's state control, and her family's history as Orthodox Christians in the Arab world.

Gharib, Malaka. *I Was Their American Dream: A Graphic Memoir* (Adult Graphic Novels, B GHARIB). The daughter of parents with unfulfilled dreams, Malaka navigated her childhood chasing her parents' ideals, learning to code-switch between her family's Filipino and Egyptian customs, adapting to white culture to fit in, crushing on skater boys, and managing the tension between holding onto cultural values and trying to be an all-American kid. *Arab American Book Award Winner

Iftin, Abdi Nor. *Call Me American: The Extraordinary True Story of a Young Somali Immigrant* (Teen B IFTIN). In Somalia, Abdi Nor Iftin grew up amidst a blend of cultures, including stories of his mother's nomadic upbringing and his father's life as a basketball player. When the threat of civil war reached Abdi's doorstep, his family was forced to flee.

Kullab, Samya. *Escape from Syria*. (Teen Graphic Novels) A fictionalized account of a family fleeing war-torn Syria after their home in Aleppo is destroyed. They endure wretched refugee camps, ocean crossings, swindlers - all to find safety in the West.