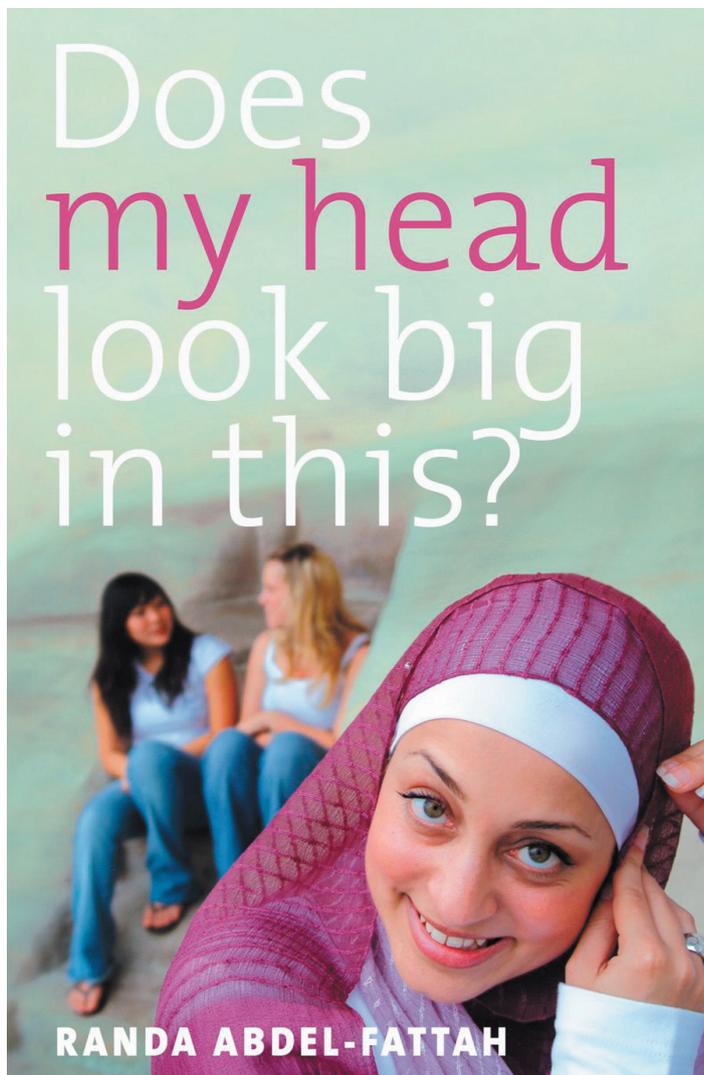


Does my head look big in this? in this?

RANDA ABDEL-FATTAH



TEACHERS' NOTES



These teachers' notes are designed to assist you and your class in investigating the issues and concerns contained in the novel. The notes are divided into four sections:

- 1. Group Exercises** These tasks involve the whole class through discussing and brainstorming ideas and concepts that have been raised in the book.
- 2. Extended Tasks** A selection of creative writing projects based around events that occur in the book.
- 3. Research Tasks** To be completed over a period of time, individuals or groups are encouraged to further investigate relevant issues developed in the book.
- 4. Essay Questions** Individual students choose an extended writing task that encourages an in-depth understanding of narrative devices, plot issues and character concerns from the book.

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1. Group Exercises

1. Divide the class into small groups and assign each group a character from the book. Each group is to discuss amongst themselves the prejudice that their character might experience from other characters. In front of the class, each group will speak from the point of view of their character.
2. In the book Amal makes a list of all the reasons why she should wear the hijab. Discuss with the class what they would have done if they had been in Amal's position. Divide the class into 2 groups for a class debate. Choose 2 students to be the adjudicators. Topic: That Amal should wear the hijab to school.
3. Amal and Adam decide to be friends and not girlfriend and boyfriend because of Amal's religious beliefs. Divide the class into small groups and have them talk about what they think would have happened if Amal and Adam had gone out. How would Amal have felt? How would Adam have felt? Was it a good decision for them to stay friends?

2. Extended Tasks

1. Imagine you are Amal and you have gone to Chadstone shopping mall, as Amal does in the book. Write a letter to the editor of your local newspaper, describing what it feels like to walk around. How do people react when they see you in the hijab?
2. Leila and her mother, Gulchin, have a difficult relationship. They have differing perspectives about the role of women in contemporary society. Write a short radio play of a conversation they might have, relating to this. Remember to convey the difference in their speech and attitude and remember also to accurately portray their mother/daughter relationship.
3. Imagine you are Simone. Write a diary entry for the day Simone decides to start smoking in order to be thin. Now imagine you are Tia. Write another diary entry for how Tia feels the day after Adam's party. What are the differences and similarities (if any) in each entry?
4. Write about a time in your own life when you felt discriminated against because you were different from the people around you. Now write about a time when you have discriminated against someone because they were different from you. What feelings motivated you to discriminate against another? What feelings motivated others to discriminate against you? How are these feelings similar or different?

3. Research Based Questions

1. Amal describes herself as an Australian-Palestinian-Muslim. Write 500 words on Palestine, including: information on its geographic location, its history, its population and its relationship with other states in the Middle East.
2. Alternatively, write 500 words on Islam. Include in your report a brief history, a list of its beliefs and a list of countries where Islam is the official religion.
3. Wearing the hijab can be an important part of being a Muslim woman. Why is it so important? How can the size and style of veils vary from culture to culture?

4. Essay Questions

1. Analyse the plot devices used in the novel to explore the themes of prejudice and discrimination? Support your answer with examples and quotes from the book.

2. *'I can imagine there's a lot of hate right now. If it ends up turning us against each other then I'm petrified, I'm sickened to think that we will allow those murderers to end up winning.'* p.239

What political events and cultural and social customs are referred to in the book? How do they impinge upon the characters lives?

3. As the reader, discuss whether or not you sympathised with Amal. What techniques does the author use to illicit this response from the reader? Use quotes from the text to justify your response.

4. Amal is an individual, expressing her right to choose. Using examples from the book and other social events, discuss whether individuals should have this right.

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