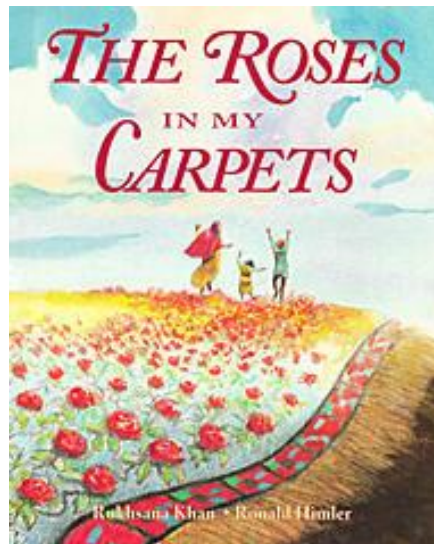


The Roses in My Carpets
Teacher's Guide for
Grades 3-6, 7-8,
and 9-12
With Student Activity Sheets



by Rukhsana Khan
www.rukhsanakhan.com

About Rukhsana Khan

Rukhsana has been writing seriously since 1989 with, at this point, ten books published, several of which have been nominated and/or won various awards. Along the way she also became a storyteller and has performed at numerous festivals. For more information on Rukhsana and her books please see her website:

www.rukhsanakhan.com



Rukhsana was born in Lahore, Pakistan and immigrated to Canada, with her family, at the age of three. She began by writing for community magazines and went on to write songs and stories for the Adam's World children's videos. Rukhsana is a member of SCBWI, The Writers Union of Canada, CANSCAIP, and Storytelling Toronto. She lives in Toronto with her husband and family. Rukhsana has four children, three girls and a boy.

Books by Rukhsana:

Wanting Mor

A New Life

Many Windows

Silly Chicken

Ruler of the Courtyard

The Roses in My Carpets

Muslim Child

King of the Skies










Bedtime Ba-a-a-lk

Dahling if You Luv Me Would You Please Please Smile

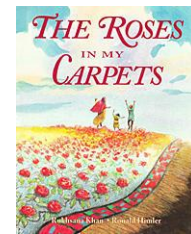


Acknowledgement: This study guide created with help from Tracie Vaughn Zimmer (www.tracievaughnzimmer.com)

The following curriculum applications are fulfilled by the discussion topics and activities outlined in this teacher's guide:

<u>Legend</u>	
 writing applications	 character applications
 visual art applications	 Social Studies
 drama applications	 Science
 History applications	 Music
 Math applications	

Discussion topics and Activities before Reading the Book



Grades 3 - 12

Exploring the Setting:

The story is set in Peshawar, Pakistan. Peshawar lies on one of the routes of the ancient Silk Road.



Find the city of Peshawar. Note how close it is to the border.



What land features are prevalent in the area? This area is part of the Himalayas. What mountain(s) in the area have the students heard of? (Answer: Everest and K2—the tallest and second tallest mountains in the world respectively)

What is the climate of the area? How cold does it get in winter? How hot in summer? (Answer: Near freezing in the winter, around 80 degrees F in the summer.)



How would that affect living conditions for the characters in the story? (Answer: Afghans were glad because now they had three growing seasons.)

The Khyber Pass is the most important route between Pakistan and Afghanistan. To find out more about this strategic area see the webpages below:

<http://www.afghanistans.com/>

<http://www.afghan-network.net/Culture/khyber.html>

Afghanistan has long been the victim of invasion from ancient times to modern. In recent history the British, the Russians and the Americans have invaded. The invaders have always been met with fierce resistance.



The correct term for a person from Afghanistan is 'Afghan' not Afghani. 'Afghani' is the name of the currency.



There are two predominant languages in Afghanistan: Dari (Farsi) and Pushto.

Discuss wars and how many children are involved in war all over the world. What are refugees?

The story is about a refugee foster child.

Discuss the term 'refugee'. The word 'refugee' comes from the word 'refuge' which means 'a safe place', so refugees are those who are looking for a safe place. Do the students know anyone who is a refugee?

Discuss the term 'foster child', foster meaning 'to help'. Does anyone have a foster child in another country?



Conflict resolution--Discuss ways in which people can solve problems without having a war.

Many Afghans describe the shape of their country as a clenched fist with a thumb pointing towards the northeast. What does that say about the character of the Afghan people?



Do any of the students sponsor a child through an organization like World Vision?





Has anyone ever had a chance to meet their sponsored child? If so, what was the experience like?





Cut out the shape of a pallet (don't forget that little hole in the corner) and choose a pallet of colors you would use to tell this story. This is particularly effective if you at first don't let them see the illustrations] What do the different colours mean to you? What is 'white' for you? What is 'black'? What are the colors of the rainbow. Discuss the mixing of colours – red + yellow = orange

Intermediate and Secondary Grades

- a) Look at the copyright page in the book. When would this story have been set? Is it still applicable today? If so, why? 
- b) Which war in Afghanistan could this book have been written about? 
- c) Why do you suppose the author did not identify the country responsible for the bombing? Does the anonymity of the enemy help or hinder the story?
- d) Discuss current wars and how many children are involved in war all over the world. 
- e) What are refugees? Where does the term 'refugee' come from? What is the root meaning?
- f) What does the word 'foster' mean. What does the word 'sponsor' mean. Both terms are used in the story.
- g) Examine the paragraph where the boy describes himself as a foster child. How does he feel about being sponsored? What is this story ultimately about? 

Discussion Topics and activities after Reading the Book

Grades 3 - 6

Discuss what happens next in the boy's story when the book is over.

Brainstorm ways students can participate in the ongoing effort to help orphans in Afghanistan and other war-torn countries.



Visit the author's website: <http://www.rukhsanakhan.com/orphanafghan.htm> See how the author has used the funds from this book to establish libraries in Afghanistan.

Brainstorm ways students can participate in the ongoing effort to help orphans in Afghanistan and other war-torn countries.

Using a box, create a diorama of one of the scenes in the book. You can use any media that you wish.



Write a story about a 'refuge' (safe place) you know.

Research the United Nations and the way it ministers to refugees all over the world.



Write a story where you have to move from your home because of war. How would you feel?



When the boy says "Black is for the night that cloaks us from enemy eyes" would that statement still be true today according to current technology? (Answer: No because of night vision technology.)



Why is the protagonist nameless? Why do you suppose the author chose not to name him?

Activities:

1. Act out the scene where the boy goes to the hospital because of Maha's accident. Don't use the book as a script, just stay true to the story.
2. Find and listen to some traditional Pakistani and Afghan music. Describe what it sounds like to you and what instruments you think are being used.
3. On slips of paper write the major events of the story: bomb dream, learning carpets, school, accident, hospital, etc. Pick one out and try to—without saying a






word, or even using gestures—have your partner guess which scene it is by “reading” your facial expressions.

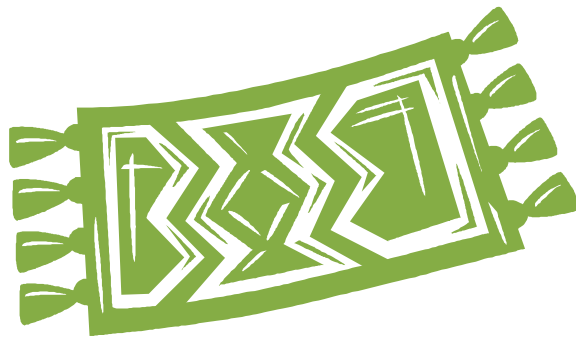
4. Write a "found poem" based on the text in the book. Choose a particularly vivid scene and pair down the words to their most basic elements. Then experiment with line breaks for effect. Be sure to write Rukhsana Khan as the author, and the full title but list yourself as the person who "found" the poem within the text.
5. Weaving activity:

- ✓ Talk about looms and knotting of rugs.
- ✓ Discover Mathematical formulas to make a pattern.
- ✓ Provide carpet mesh and yarn for rug hooking
- ✓ Or use paper strips or graph paper and colored pencils.
- ✓ Look on the back of a carpet and count the number of knots per inch.
- ✓ Discuss ways of repeating a pattern.



Intermediate/Secondary Grades

1. Brainstorm ways students can participate in the ongoing effort to help orphans in Afghanistan and other war-torn countries. Visit the author's website:
<http://www.rukhsanakhan.com/orphanafghan.htm>
2. Send any funds raised to the project or any other charitable organization that helps refugees. 
3. Divide the class in groups and each group research an aspect of the United Nations and the way it ministers to refugees all over the world. Check out the website: <http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home>
4. Have the students cut out an article from a newspaper or magazine. The article should be accompanied by a picture of the person in the story. Have the students examine the facial expressions of the person, and compare it to the newspaper story. Have the students rewrite the story as if they were the person in the picture and it had happened to them. 
5. In groups create a comparison chart of your daily life compared to the boy's daily life.
6. Write in role: e.g. Write a letter from one character in the story to another. Write a letter from a reader of the story to one of the characters in the story. Write an imaginary diary entry or a newspaper report or prepare a documentary on Afghanistan. 
7. Make a character change chart showing how one character changes during the story and what caused the change.



Student Question Sheet for Junior Grades



1. What two words on the first page let you know that the bombs and the airplanes are not flying now?

2. In what other countries could this story be true?

3. Why does the boy say that washing his face is "a useless habit"?

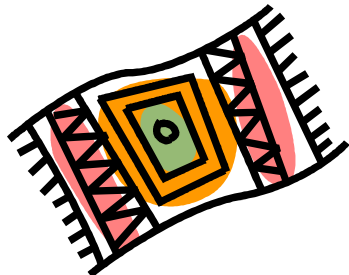
4. What does he mean when he says "I will pull my sash a little tighter."?

5. How did the boy feel about his father?

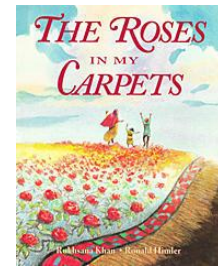
6. In what ways does the boy show he cares for his sister?

7. What is the best description in the story? Why did you choose that particular sentence?

8. Describe in your own words where the boy lives with his mother and sister.



Student Exercise Sheet for Intermediate and Secondary Grades



Answer the following:

1. One of the basic rules of writing is ‘show don’t tell’. i.e. Show the emotions of the characters, show their situation, don’t tell what they’re feeling. The word ‘poor’ doesn’t occur at all in the text of the story. What are three ways the author has used to show that the family is poor?
2. A motif is a recurring element that has symbolic significance to the story. One of the motifs in the story is bread. It appears three times in the story. What are some other motifs of the story?
3. What does bread symbolize in the story? How does the author use the bread motif to illustrate the relationship between the main character and his sister and the condition of the family’s poverty?
4. At the end of the day the family is having bread and water for supper. What do you think the author was suggesting with the mention of bread and water?
5. How would this story be different if told through his sister’s eyes?
6. The boy says his father would never have taken money from a sponsor. The boy does, would you in these circumstances?
7. Imagine you had to work to support your family, what job would you be interested in learning about? Why?



Student Activity Sheet for
Junior – Intermediate Grades:
Construct a Mud House!

In this story the boy and his family live in a mud house.

In groups, make your own model mud houses using clay or mud mixed with grass. Use square ice cube trays to mold the bricks.

Let them air dry and then stack them into walls using wet mud as mortar and twigs or popsicle sticks as reinforcements for door and window frames.

Plaster over with more mud, lay sticks across the top and build them into the little walls.

Lay plastic wrap on top to make it water proof. Then apply more mud on the roof to hold the plastic down.

Doors and windows are made with sticks laid across in lintel fashion. Use string to tie your sticks together. Now imagine making a house on a livable scale!

What would it feel like to live in such a house?



Teacher Resource Material



Websites:

<http://www.afghanistans.com/>

<http://www.unhcr.org/cgi-bin/texis/vtx/home>

Books:

Junior picture books and novels:

From Far Away by Saoussan Askar and Robert Munsch

Sami and the Time of Troubles by Florency Parry Heide & Gilliland Judith Heide

The Color of Home by Mary Hoffman

The Carpet Boy's Gift by Pegi Deitz Shea

Parvana's Journey by Deborah Ellis

Mud City by Deborah Ellis

Three Cups of Tea: One Man's Journey to Change the World...One Child At A Time - Young Reader's Edition by Greg Mortenson

Listen to the Wind by Greg Mortenson

Intermediate and secondary:

The Kite Runner by Khalid Hosseini

One Thousand Splendid Suns by Khalid Hosseini

Three Cups of Tea by Greg Mortenson

