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#### SYNOPSIS

**Chapter 1: Guluband** After a two-year drought in the dunes, January seems unusually dusty on Pakistan's Cholistan Desert. Returning from the family cistern, twelve-year-old Shabanu observes her aunt and mother sewing wedding dresses for Phulan, Shabanu's thirteen-year-old sister. Auntie, the wife of the girls' uncle Rahimyar Khan, flaunts her two sons and fears that dowries and weddings for two daughters will strain family finances.

Dadi, the girls' father, is more concerned about a lack of water for the camels. He decides to move the family to Dingarh to spend the remaining month before the Sibi fair. Shabanu ponders Phulan's wedding to Hamir after Ramadan and thinks of Hamir's brother, Murad, to whom she was betrothed the previous year during a family journey to Mehrabpur. The girls will live a different life in a non-nomadic family.

The next day brings rain. The family stays in their mud hut: Dadi mends harness; Grandfather tells stories about his days in service to the Army Camel Corps of the Nawab of Bahawalpur. Auntie and her two young boys live apart from Uncle, who works in a government office. The following morning, Shabanu takes Guluband, her prized dancing camel, to the cistern. Ample rain allows the family to stay on the desert until Phulan's wedding.

**Chapter 2: Birth** Shabanu locates a pregnant camel dying of snakebite and helps it give birth. Although the mother dies, Dadi is pleased that she saved the baby, which is part of Phulan's dowry. Because other females reject the little one, the girls drip milk into its mouth.

**Chapter 3: Kalu** A month later, Shabanu names the baby Mithoo. She observes the sex acts of camels and wonders if human experience is the same. Dadi helps her separate their stud Kalu from a challenging male and lifts her and Mithoo on Guluband for a quick escape. Because she struggled to remain behind, Dadi orders her to obey. Her mother fears that she will suffer for her untamed ways.

**Chapter 4: Safari** In mid-February, Dadi and Shabanu dress well and deck the camels in bells and henna swirls before leaving for Sibi. Auntie gives her a *chadr*, the traditional garment of grown women, to cover her hair; Mama insists that Shabanu wear it. Before sunrise, they depart; by nightfall, they camp at Derawar Fort. Dadi tells a desert ranger that their journey will take ten days. Shabanu resents the ranger's offer to buy Guluband, her favorite.

**Chapter 5: The Bugtis** Near the Gudu Barrage, a dam over the Indus River, they pass other nomads, who search for a runaway woman. Dadi discusses prices with fellow travelers and declares that he does not sacrifice camels as food for the festival of Eid. Other herders admire his stock.

**Chapter 6: Sibi Fair** At the fairground, Shabanu helps her father camp and cook while the buyers bargain. He gives her

money and promises to take her to the fair at sundown. Shabanu knows that she must marry if Allah wills it and that she will miss the fair next year. She and Dadi enjoy the rides. Shabanu buys betel from a man dressed like a woman. Back at camp, the pair encounter four armed Afghans. The leader, Wardak, makes an offer for camels; Dadi insists on double their worth. He hopes he will not have to sell Guluband. The next morning, Wardak again presses for the sale. Shabanu weeps in fear that Guluband will be sold.

**Chapter 7: The Bargain** The third day of the fair, a man from Zhob bargains for all but one of the females and for Tipu, who brings a good price. Shabanu sells two wooden saddles and cooks chicken, rice, and lentils. When Wardak returns for Guluband, she fights her father, who slaps her and carries her to the tent. She grieves for the camel who had become like one of the family. After the rain, Shabanu acts as Dadi's hostess and serves men who come to celebrate the sale. Dadi has earned enough to pay for his daughters' weddings and dowries. Others hear of his success and bring food to the tent.

**Chapter 8: Shatoosh** The celebration includes music and a traditional desert dance. Late that night, Shabanu packs their belongings, which their remaining camel will carry. The next morning, Dadi gives her a puppy, which she names Sher Dil. They depart for Dingra. For two days, they cross the tribal area, fearful for Dadi's money, most of which is hidden in the saddle. He stops trying to talk to Shabanu, who is stonily resentful. On the eighth night of their homeward trek, they reach Rahimyar Khan and shop for Phulan's wedding. The old widower who sells shawls gives Shabanu a gossamer *shatoosh* made from the chin hairs of wild goats. The gift is a rare honor because it once belonged to his mother. In four days, Dadi and Shabanu arrive home.

**Chapter 9: Dowry** In their absence, the herd produces twenty-two baby camels. Grandfather encourages Shabanu to grieve for Guluband because he was the finest of their stock. At dusk, the family celebrates the sale and examines the goods from the west.

**Chapter 10: Nose Pegs** In March, the family has only a month left before drought will force them out of the dunes; rains will return in May with the monsoon, a time of weddings. Shabanu washes Phulan's hair and tells her about the runaway girl. After breakfast, Dadi and Mama peg the camels' noses and attach cords as leads. For a week, wedding preparations continue.

**Chapter 11: Channan Pir** On the night of the next full moon, the family makes a pilgrimage over the dry Hakra River bed to Channan Pir, a shrine favorable to women who pray for sons and good marriages. Grandfather recites memories and ancient history. He misidentifies the battle with India over Kutch, in which he was a hero. They overtake a caravan containing Fatima and her mother, Sharma, Mama's favorite cousin, who rebelled and fled from her brutal husband. Shar-

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ma survives on her own herd of sheep and goats.

Female worshippers kneel and whip themselves into a frenzy. Their songs, wails, and chants honor the martyr. In the afternoon, they rest in the women's camp. Shabanu goes at sunset to collect firewood. She observes a wrestling match in the men's camp. Dadi, the winner, catches sight of her and flashes an angry glance.

**Chapter 12: Sharma** Shabanu envies sixteen-year-old Fatima, who remains unmarried. Sharma sings a poetic song about Channan Pir, the Muslim saint. According to legend, a vengeful raja left the child in the wilderness, but a cradle from heaven kept him safe. Reared by desert animals, the child became a sage honored by Hindus and Muslims. Sharma reminds Shabanu that her father is a good man and that he has made respectable marriages for his daughters.

**Chapter 13: Desert Storm** On their return, the family witnesses a disastrous sandstorm that threatens to cover their camp and herd. Shabanu and her father call in vain for Grandfather. Hours later, all is engulfed in grit. When calm returns in late afternoon, the desert has a new shape, but the family water supply is limited to less than a two-day supply. At dawn, Dadi locates Grandfather, who is scrubbed raw by pelting sand. Barely alive, the old man requests a martyr's burial in Derawar. Mama cares for him while Auntie and Phulan pack for the journey.

**Chapter 14: The Thirsty Dead** The family loads Grandfather on a string cot aboard a camel. He wears his khaki fez and the bronze star, symbol of his brave charge at Kutch. The family takes the remaining water in sips. They locate the partially buried corpse of a young man and pause to say prayers for him. At sunset, they arrive at the century-old fort. His goal at hand, Grandfather relaxes. Dadi speaks softly to him.

**Chapter 15: Derawar** Before daylight, Grandfather dies. The family chants prayers and wraps his body in a shroud. They hurry to arrange a burial place before heat swells and corrupts the corpse. In the graveyard, only the nawab's family and army heroes lie buried. Sulaiman, the keeper of tombs, reports that no one has been buried in the cemetery in the past twenty years except for the nawab's wife.

Dadi and Shabanu hurry to Shahzada, the keeper of the fort, but fail to find a tomb maker. The family pounds clay into powder and, at sunset, buries Grandfather in the desert in a paved hole six feet in the ground. Sticks with colored flags mark the spot, where pilgrims can pray. Dadi is bitter toward the inhospitable village:

Mama worries that Hamir's family doesn't expect them until the end of Ramadan, which lasts two more weeks. That night, Shahzada makes the traditional visit and promises to watch over Grandfather's grave. He promises to put the old man's fez and sword in a tomb built for a general whose body was never found.

**Chapter 16: Ramadan** Water is scarce and salty in Derawar. The family moves on to Mehrabpur. After a two-day trip, they arrive at the irrigation channel dug by Hamir's father. Bibi Lal, Hamir's mother and a widow for two years, greets them with water. Her daughter Kulsum also mourns for Lal Khan, her husband who was found murdered in the well of Nazir Mohammad, a rich landowner. As future mother-in-law, Bibi Lal makes Phulan welcome.

The families build a thatched cottage and begin the celebration of Ramadan with fasting. Phulan is delighted that

Hamir has built a cottage for her. Dadi orders Shabanu to remain constantly with her sister to guard her from Nazir Mohammad, who envies Hamir's rich land. The families inspect the new cottage. Bibi Lal gives Mama jasmine oil to smooth on Phulan's skin. The women paint the whitewashed cottage with symbols of fertility and good luck.

**Chapter 17: The Landlord** While fetching pots of water, Phulan dreams of giving birth to a son. Shabanu leaves her sister at the canal to wash cloths stained with menstrual blood and walks toward the camp. She encounters a party of quail hunters led by Nazir, who traditionally offers his guests a girl for the duration of their visit. Shabanu flees and tosses water jars at her pursuers. Phulan joins her and climbs on the camel.

Shabanu hurries to Dadi and warns of the landlord's intent. The family packs; Dadi departs alone to warn Hamir. In their haste to flee, the women cut a hole in the hut and hurry into the desert. Shabanu follows Dadi's orders to keep the North Star over her left shoulder.

**Chapter 18: Spin Gul** Shabanu avoids the track and hurries on. Phulan sobs. Mama assures her that Hamir and Dadi will appease Nazir. Shabanu fears "camel vengeance," the harsh desert tradition of retaliation, and wonders why Dadi has not caught up with them. Desert Rangers meet them. The leader, Spin Gul, orders the party to return to Mehrabpur. Mama suspects a trick. Auntie is pale and ill. Spin Gul provides tents for the women and mends their leaky goatskin, which has spilled the remaining water.

Dadi and Murad, both covered in blood, arrive safely, but Hamir is dead. The rangers of Yazman guard Hamir's family while they negotiate a truce through Rahim, Nazir's older brother, a politician. At noon, Auntie, lying on a bloodstained quilt, begins to give birth to a premature fetus. Shahzada helps by introducing Dadi to his sister, a midwife. Late in the day, Auntie recovers. Mama and Shabanu bury the dead baby boy in the sand.

**Chapter 19: Yazman** The next morning, rain lifts their spirits. Auntie blames Shabanu for causing the family's hardships. Dadi and Murad have negotiated all night by radio; Nazir accepts Hamir's death as an appeasement, but threatens to reclaim Murad's land and cut off its water supply. Spin Gul and the Rangers agree to accompany the family to Dingarh, where Rahim will protect Murad's family. While Murad visits, Shabanu admires him.

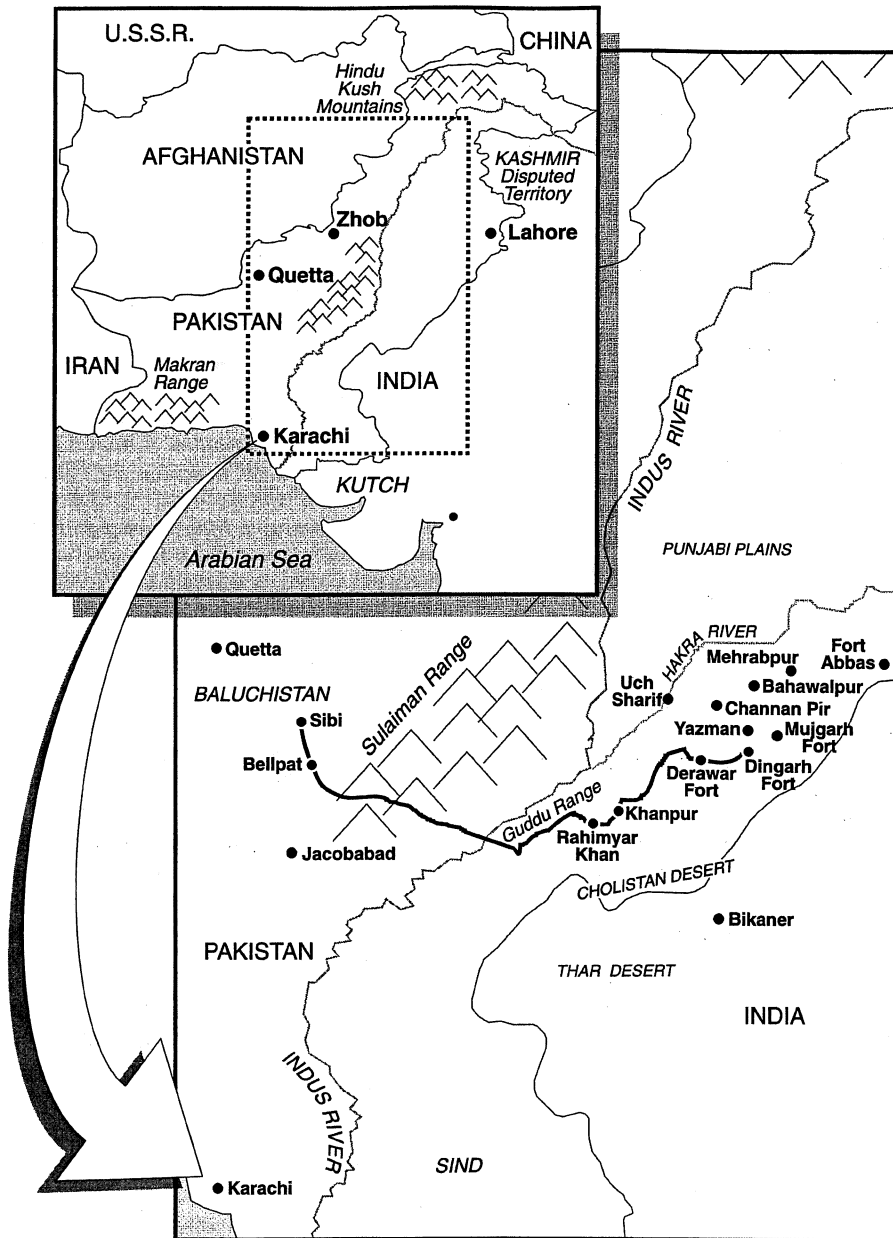
After a ten-hour ride, the family arrives at the Wing Command headquarters of Colonel Haq in Dingarh. Phulan presses Sakina, Hamir's younger sister, for information about the shooting. Sakina reports that Hamir armed himself and challenged the other men to protect his future bride. When Nazir rode up in a jeep, he demanded the girl. Hamir fired one shot; Nazir's answering shot cut Hamir nearly in half. The family quickly washed and buried his remains in the house.

Shabanu hurries to save her young cousins from a mango tree by returning the fallen ladder to the branch. A man the age of Dadi steadies the ladder and jokes with Shabanu. She smiles at the man and claims to have perfect teeth.

**Chapter 20: Justice** The men continue negotiations into the night and again in the morning. Shabanu insists that her mother allow her to hear the outcome. Bibi Lal reports that the wedding will take place after forty days of mourning. Phulan will wed Murad. Rahim has formally requested Shabanu.

Shabanu rebels; Bibi Lal comments that Rahim is a reli-

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gious leader capable of bringing honor to the two families. Mama adds that Shabanu will be the fourth of his wives. Auntie reminds Shabanu that she must agree to keep Nazir from going back on his word. Shabanu threatens to run away to Sharma; Mama slaps her and orders her to say nothing.

**Chapter 21: The Choice** Five days after the murder, the family returns to Mehrabpur. Rahim has replaced their huts with a small village and has given them a servant and paid the bride price. Shabanu tries on golden ornaments; Phulan admires wedding gifts. At the farm are new houses for Bibi Lal's family. During the mourning period, Hamir becomes a legend. Pilgrims visit his tomb.

Phulan recovers from her grief as Shabanu sinks into torpor. Rahim sends eye makeup for Shabanu. She teaches Mithoo to dance like Guluband. In the waning moon, Sharma

arrives. She angrily accuses Dadi of paying for new wealth with his younger daughter. To Dadi's angry retorts, Sharma reminds him that Shabanu will probably die a penniless widow while Rahim's older wives and their children will inherit everything. Dadi realizes Sharma speaks the truth; he stalks out with his hookah.

Fatima and Sharma help Shabanu seek positive aspects of the marriage arrangement. Sharma tells Shabanu that she has a choice—she has herself. To learn the secrets of wives, Shabanu should listen to the married women at the *mahendi*, the first wedding ceremony. If wives' tricks fail to please Rahim, she can come to live with Sharma.

**Chapter 22: The Wedding** Eight days before Phulan's wedding, relatives pour in. Uncle reunites with Auntie. Rahim sends jewels for Phulan's hair. Two days before the ceremo-

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ny, Bibi Lal leads the *mahendi* procession. The women paint ritual figures on Phulan's hand. Sharma urges Phulan to keep some of her inner self a secret. Phulan appears uncertain of the meaning of Sharma's advice, but Shabanu understands.

At dawn, the women arise to dress Phulan. After long consideration, Shabanu is at peace. Dadi informs Phulan that the groom has arrived. The couple say their vows and sit together on a ceremonial platform. In privacy, the new couple look at themselves in a mirror. The aunts hold the Koran overhead and make an arch as Phulan departs underneath to her new home. The next day, Murad's family gives a feast. Shabanu's face burns at Rahim's gaze.

**Chapter 23: Cholistan** Before leaving for Fort Abbas, Sharma reminds Shabanu that she has a choice and notes optimistically that Rahim appears to love her. Sharma promises to tell her how to remain beautiful and youthful long after Phulan is old. The family returns to Cholistan in the rain. Dadi takes the cousins to tend camels and forces Shabanu to remain home to learn women's work. Shabanu envisions a houseful of servants and considers learning to read and write and to play the flute. She helps her family build and seal underground water tanks.

A month later, rusty red stains attest to the beginning of Shabanu's menstrual flow. She tears strips of discarded cloth to soak up the bleeding and buries them in the desert. In the night, she overhears Mama telling Dadi that the bleeding has started and that Shabanu conceals the fact because she doesn't want to marry Rahim. Dadi comments that intelligence will not help Shabanu in her future life.

When the couple fall asleep, Shabanu flees. Loping rapidly into the desert on Xhush Dil, she heads for the dunes. She knows that if she is caught, she will be beaten. Mithoo, who struggles to keep up, breaks his leg in a foxhole. Shabanu prays that Dadi will find them to save the camel from death. Dadi gallops up and begins beating her on the shoulders with a stick. As the blows fall on her bloodied shoulders, she repeats Sharma's advice to keep her reserves hidden. Dadi weeps and embraces her. Shabanu knows that Rahim will never learn the secrets of her heart.

### TIME LINE

- 2500 B.C. Civilization develops in the Indus Valley.
- 1500 B.C. Aryans settle in India.
- 326 B.C. Alexander the Great controls an area that becomes the Mauryan Empire.
- 230 B.C. Greek invaders establish cities in Pakistan.
- A.D. 50 Kushans rule Pakistan.
- 711 Islam is introduced into Pakistan.
- 1206 Pakistan becomes part of the Delhi Sultanate.
- 1526 Babar establishes the Mogul Empire.
- 1700 British companies begin trading in India.
- 1756-63 Seven Years War: French are forced out of India.
- 1856-57 Sepoy Mutiny: Indian troops rebel against British rule.
- 1858 Britain begins direct rule of India.
- ca. 1890 The fort at Derawar is built.
- 1906 Indian Muslims form the Muslim League to agitate for independence for India.
- 1935 India received limited self-rule.
- 1939-45 World War II: Hindu nationalist leaders refuse to support British war effort and are jailed. Muslims

support British and secure promise of independent nation.

- 1947 Pakistan becomes an independent nation.
- 1956 Pakistan becomes a republic.
- 1971 East Pakistan declares independence and becomes Bangladesh. India intervenes and defeats Pakistan.
- 1977 General Zia Ul-Haq seizes power in Pakistan.
- 1979 Soviet Union invades Afghanistan.
- 1988 Soviet troops leave Afghanistan.  
May Zia dies in a plane crash.  
November Democratic elections held in Pakistan.
- 1998 Pakistan conducts nuclear weapons tests.

### BIOGRAPHICAL SKETCH

Author Suzanne Fisher Staples follows a long tradition of journalists who became fiction writers. A native of Philadelphia and current resident of Mount Dora, Florida, she was born August 27, 1945, to engineer Robert Charles Fisher and manager Helen Brittain Fisher. She was educated at Cedar Crest College and worked as Asian marketing director of Business International for two years. After her divorce from Nicholas Green, she joined the Washington, D. C., bureau of United Press International as news editor and served in New Delhi as UPI bureau chief, where she met and married writer Eugene Staples in 1980. In 1983, she moved to the *Washington Post* as foreign desk editor and served in New York, Washington, D. C., Hong Kong, and India. Three years later, she worked for the U. S. Agency for International Development as a consultant.

### CRITIC'S CORNER

Staples's writing career began in 1988. In addition to producing articles for *Smithsonian* magazine, she began lecturing on living conditions for Pakistani women in an Islamic culture, stressing the universal qualities that Muslim women share with Western women. A member of the Asia Society, she won a Newbery Honor Award for her first book *Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind* (1989). The sequel, *Haveli* (1993), maintains her emphasis on Pakistani family life. A third novel, *Dangerous Skies* (1996), is set in the Chesapeake Bay area. Plans for a fourth book set the story in India.

### GENERAL OBJECTIVES

1. To discuss the nature of realism
2. To list aspects of the nomadic life
3. To contrast open and populated settings
4. To contrast characters in their responses to despair, humiliation, manipulation, coercion, and longing
5. To evaluate examples of kindness and courtesy
6. To list ways in which Islamic sex roles limit women's choices
7. To read aloud examples of verbal conflict
8. To define obedience as it applies to men and women
9. To study the geographical settings of the novel
10. To analyze the need for a dowry and bride price
11. To isolate moments that depict cruelty, suffering, and deception
12. To explain methods of assuring survival

### SPECIFIC OBJECTIVES

1. To characterize life on the Cholistan Desert

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2. To acknowledge the roles of Mama and Dadi
3. To outline events that reveal Shabanu's character
4. To recount how and why Phulan marries Murad
5. To explain Grandfather's yearning for burial among heroes
6. To assess the importance of the Sibi fair to the family
7. To account for Hamir's recklessness with a gun
8. To describe preparations for a wedding
9. To evaluate Sharma's influence on Shabanu
10. To analyze Shabanu's flight into the desert
11. To account for the family's devotion to Allah
12. To note the importance of the monsoon to desert people

### THE IMPORTANCE OF SETTING

The milieu of *Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind* determines the attitudes and motivations of the characters. Set on the joint border of Pakistan and India, it draws on the weather patterns, animals such as scorpions, jackals, and vultures, and plants of the Cholistan Desert, particularly wild sage for camel fodder, *sito* grass, the branchy *kharin* bush, and *pogh* to build campfires for cooking *chapatis* and making tea. The lifestyle of desert people requires an annual movement to habitable lands and to markets for trading livestock and purchasing supplies. For Shabanu's trip west with her father, the duo looks for landmarks: Fort Abbas, the Khanpur irrigation canal, Rahimyar Khan, the Punjabi Plains, Gudu Barrage, the Indus River, tribal Baluchistan, and finally the Sibi Fair.

Implicit in character behaviors is an awareness of the danger of shifting sand and harsh winds. Clothing offers its meager protection, but a sandstorm devastates even the experienced desert dweller. Characters anticipate the monsoon, which will relieve the danger of not finding sweet water for personal and livestock consumption. In the month preceding the annual rains, Shabanu anticipates salt water, shriveled grass, dry camel udders, and weak babies.

### CROSS-CURRICULAR SOURCES

For more information about Islam, Islamic marriage, Koran, the chador, Kutch, Ramadan, and other subjects and issues deriving from *Siddhartha*, consult these sources:

- Comparing Cultures*, Knowledge Unlimited  
*Conflict Resolution*, Sunburst  
*The Desert*, Social Studies School Services  
*Five Pillars of Islam*, Social Studies School Services  
*Folk Music of Pakistan*, Folkways  
*Islamic Tradition*, Social Studies School Services  
*The Koran*, Multimedia Home Library  
*Learning to Be Assertive*, AMS Video  
*Not Without My Daughter*, Movies Unlimited  
*Pakistan*, Trafalgar Books  
Smith, Barbara, "Behind the Chador," *The Economist*, Jan. 18, 1997, p. S9.  
*The World's Religions*, Eerdman  
Also, consult these web sites:  
"Islamic Wedding," [http://www.jamiat.org.za/isl\\_wedding.html](http://www.jamiat.org.za/isl_wedding.html).  
"Koran—The Ultimate Truth," <http://www.eccentrica.org/satyamevjayate/koran.html>.  
"Kutch Peoples," <http://budamusique.com/US/MONDE/ASIE/kutch.html>.  
Kenoyer, Jonathan Mark, "Around the Indus in 90 Slides," <http://www.harappa.com/indus/indus0.html>.  
Quick, Sheikh Abdullah Hakim, "Ramadan in History,"

<http://www.al-muslim.org/ramadan/history.htm>.  
"Understanding Islam and the Muslims," <http://www.almuslim.org/uim/intro.html>.

### THEMES AND MOTIFS

A study of the central issues and situations in Suzanne Fisher Staples's *Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind* should include these aspects:

#### Themes

- survival
- family unity
- autonomy
- self-esteem
- alienation
- rediscovery
- death
- loss
- flight
- resolve
- contentment

#### Motifs

- asserting self-control
- coping with patriarchy
- taking responsibility for actions
- accepting the inevitable
- remaining true to self

### LITERARY TERMS AND APPLICATIONS

For a better understanding of Suzanne Fisher Staples's style, present the following terms and applications:

**first-person narration** a story told from the point of view of a witness or participant. Shabanu narrates events in present tense, lending immediacy to the action and establishing the authenticity of emotion that accompanies her maturity. The parts of the story that Shabanu does not witness—for example, the camel charge at Kutch, Sharma's escape from a brutal husband, and Nazir's murder of Hamir—are told to her by knowledgeable characters. In the end, only Shabanu knows the emergent strength that helps her tolerate a beating and anticipate a successful marriage with Rahim.

**literary foil** a character who serves as an opposite or as a standard by which another character is matched. From the beginning, Shabanu's older sister displays a blend of dreamy romanticism and complacency that contrasts Shabanu's independence. By nature, Shabanu prefers to tend camels, take part in decision making, and make her own choices, even though the traditional role of Muslim women calls for obedience to male authority. Because of Shabanu's stubbornness, Shabanu appears to court independence while Phulan naturally avoids it. Other pairs provide opposites as well: the headstrong Hamir and his more settled brother; Mama and Sharma, two cousins who differ in their obedience to traditional female roles; and, to a lesser degree, Mama and Auntie, whose family situations place them in separate roles—Mama in regular communication with Dadi, and Auntie alone most of the year while she is separated from Uncle.

**realism** a re-creation of life in theme, plot, setting, mood, and characterization. To project realism, Suzanne Fisher Staples presents believable situations, for example, the exertion required to pull a baby camel from the womb of its dying mother, the family's hurry to bury Grandfather before his body decays, gunfire that nearly slices Hamir in half, the frenzy of worshippers at the shrine of Channan Pir, and the

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search for *sito*, sweet grass that grows on the desert and provides a bit of refreshment to thirsting travelers.

### MEANING STUDY

Below are words, phrases, sentences, or thought units that have a particular meaning in the text. Explain each. Chapter numbers and names and page numbers pinpoint the context in which the item appears.

1. There has been no rain in nearly two years, and the heat of the Cholistan Desert is as wicked as if it were summer. (Chapter 1, Guluband, p. 2)  
*(Life is harsh on the Cholistan Desert, a northwestern segment of the Thar or Great Indian Desert, the largest of the Indian subcontinent. Extending some 100,000 square miles, it ranges from the Indus River Valley to Kutch and the Aravalli Range. The texture of the arid land includes large sand dunes and rock outcroppings.)*
2. Phulan fetches Dadi's hookah, and lights it with a stick from the fire. Dadi sucks on the snakelike mouthpiece, and the sweet smoke of brown sugar and tobacco bubbles through the water in the base of the long pipe. (Chapter 1, Guluband, p. 4)  
*(One of Dadi's few pleasures in the desert wastelands is his hookah, or water pipe, which consists of a bowl, a series of flexible, interlacing tubes, and a carved bone or wooden mouthpiece. Water in the bottom segment filters and cools the substance being smoked.)*
3. The people among whom they have settled in the irrigated area call us gypsies and accuse us of stealing their animals and food. (Chapter 1, Guluband, p. 6)  
*(There is some connection between Pakistan's nomadic camel traders and gypsies. The Rom—erroneously named Gypsies because Europeans identified their dark skin with Egypt—migrated from India during the 1300s. The major difference between nomads and the Romanic people is the connection of nomads with cyclic movement over a particular area. The Rom are perpetual wanderers who have no fixed destination or homeland. They have been the object of race discrimination, enslavement, pogroms, racial cleansing, and stereotyping as pickpockets, beggars, fortunetellers, and thieves. The slang term gyp derives from European prejudice against Romanic traders.)*
4. Dadi brings us camel harnesses to mend, and Grandfather tells stories about his days as a great warrior in the Army Camel Corps of the Nawab of Bahawalpur. (Chapter 1, Guluband, p. 7)  
*(A nawab is an Indian nobleman. In pre-independence times, such landowners were the respected gentry and minor magistrates of the Indian subcontinent. For protection, the nawab depended on the loyalties of nomadic bands, who formed military regiments to defend territories, particularly precious water rights. The formation of such loyalty groups or clans under a nawab was one of the organizing principles of nomadic desert society.)*
5. The birds are after her unborn baby! Only its head and front feet extend from the mother. The sack has burst, and the baby's eyes are shut tight against the brilliant sun. (Chapter 2, Birth, p. 14)  
*(Shabanu is acquainted with the responsibilities of a camel herder. She recognizes the standard presentation of a camel fetus, which originates with nose and front feet. While still in the womb, it lives within the amniotic*

*fluid that protects it from jarring and regulates its body temperature. In birth, the baby camel appears to dive from the womb. At its most vulnerable point, it must be hurried into the world and detached from the mother so it can breathe on its own.)*

6. Phulan is covered head to foot in a *chadr*. (Chapter 2, Birth, p. 18)  
*(Phulan wears the long, ample tunic or enveloping veil concealing all body parts and featuring a mesh panel to cover the adult female face. The Indian burka and Persian chador have ritual significance as an obligatory modesty shield to conceal adult women from the scrutiny of strangers, particularly unknown males. Such rigid chastity regulations were enacted to protect Muslim women from attack and to inhibit males from impure thoughts.)*
7. Friday market, what's for sale?  
Melons, onions, and fat oxtail.  
Sell me your camel strong and brave?  
Not for a million rupees, knave! (Chapter 4, Safari, p. 34)  
*(The rupee is the currency of Pakistan, India, Sri Lanka, Mauritius, Nepal, Bhutan, and the Seychelle Islands. In the northern regions, the denomination equals 16 annas or 100 paisa or cents.)*
8. Dadi leaves me near the south wall to set up camp while he makes his *salaams* to the villagers and the Desert Rangers. (Chapter 4, Safari, p. 35)  
*(Like a handshake, Dadi's ritual obeisance is a gesture of loyalty or ceremonial submission to local authorities. Consisting of a low bow and symbolic touch to the forehead with the right palm, the greeting is a common Islamic act of welcome, respect, or salute in Asia and the eastern Pacific Rim.)*
9. I know I mustn't pray to Allah for Guluband, but I keep him in my heart as I whisper along with Dadi when he recites from the Koran. (Chapter 4, Safari, p. 39)  
*(Shabanu acknowledges the Arabic God or supreme being of the Islamic faith. According to scripture contained in the Koran, Allah is creator, ruler, and judge of humankind. He is the author of or inspiration for Muslim prayers and meditations, which were recorded by his prophet Mohammed in 613 A. D.)*
10. "I remember," says Grandfather, his eyes far away again, "sitting as a boy under the great banyan tree at the edge of the river, dreaming of when I could fight for the Abassi prince." (Chapter 11, Channan Pir, p. 93)  
*(A natural portico, the banyan is an Indian ficus tree that produces garnet red figs. Sacred to Indians, it grows auxiliary trunks from air roots and creates a thicket with a high canopy of leaves and vertical columns of trunks. Named for the Tamil word for trader, it is a natural setting for commerce.)*

### COMPREHENSION STUDY

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important and you should be ready to defend your answers by referring to passages from the text.

#### Questions 1-5 Literal Level

1. What makes Shabanu unhappy?  
*(After long anticipating the Sibi Fair, Shabanu, daughter of a desert herder, is delighted to see the landmarks that*

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indicate they have arrived for the annual livestock sale. Dadi is generous and offers five rupees and some change for Shabanu to spend at the carnival after sunset. She knows that in one year, she will marry and can no longer accompany her father on trading expeditions. The exultation crumbles the next morning as Dadi computes the price agreed upon by Wardak the Afghan. Instantly, Shabanu realizes that Guluband, her beloved pet, has been sold.

Wailing and calling her father a liar, Shabanu collapses after a slap in the face. When the new owner leads her camel away, she mourns, "I am numb and mute. Everything registers, but I cannot move. Dadi returns, folds back one edge of the tarpaulin, and builds a fire. I follow him with my eyes as he moves about the tent, arranging our clothes around the fire to dry and putting a kettle of tea on to boil. He brings me a cup, but the salty-sweet tea turns bitter in my mouth and I choke. He takes back the cup. My teeth begin to chatter, and Dadi carries me to the fire. In its light, he inspects my face, looking at where he slapped me. I stare into his eyes, and for the first time he meets my look. He brushes his fingers over my tangled hair and folds me into his arms, where he holds me until I stop shivering."

2. How does the family honor a dead traveler?

(In Chapter 14, as the family journeys over burning sand, the girls search for the silver sito shrub. Phulan catches sight of trouble in the form of a blue banner fluttering from a kharin bush stick, the customary desert signal that indicates a traveler in trouble. While waiting to be found and revived with water, the man died alone. Phulan fears a ghost, but the brave Shabanu rushes ahead to a lone sandal and the dead man's lungi.

Together with Dadi, Shabanu completes the appropriate ritual: "Dadi turns the man's face toward Mecca and chants the prayers a family says for its dead. He pours water into his palm and sprinkles it over the lifeless face as a token of the ritual washing of the dead. He wraps the turban like a shroud about the man's head and shoulders, and we sit silently for a moment, wishing his soul well on its way. We heap more sand over him. As we turn to leave, Dadi reaches into the jar and sprinkles a handful of water over the head of the grave in the hope that it will quench the man's thirsty spirit."

3. Describe Phulan as a bride.

(Eight days before Phulan's wedding, the relatives begin arriving from across the Cholistan Desert. Rahim sends an ornately garbed and mounted servant with strings of pearls and rubies to adorn Phulan's hair. On the evening preceding the wedding, Bibi Lal leads the women's procession to the house for the mahendi celebration. At the center of female activity sits Phulan, who awaits decoration with henna designs of the tree of life.

At dawn, Phulan is clad in jewels and red silk chadr embroidered with flowers and butterflies. Sharma pins up her hair and places jewels in the tresses. As the singing, dancing, and jostling begin, the groom arrives. Shabanu reports, "Mama and I lead Phulan to a platform with mirrored and embroidered bolsters scattered over red carpets. Garlands of roses and jasmine form a canopy overhead. Murad sits beside her. They do not touch or look at each other. They seem oblivious of the

singing and dancing around the platform. Bibi Lal hands him a glass of sweetened milk. Murad drinks from it and hands it to Phulan. She dips her head and drinks, her first act of obedience to her husband. Bibi Lal holds a silver mirror under the red and gold chadr that hides Phulan's face. She and Murad peer shyly into the mirror, and their first glimpse of each other as man and wife is a reflected image. When it's time for them to leave, Bibi Lal pulls the veil back from Phulan's face. She continues to stare down while Mama and I lead her to the camel where Murad waits to take her to her new home.")

4. What is Sharma's advice to Shabanu about her own wedding?

(While painting designs on Phulan, Sharma turns her attention to Shabanu, the niece whose emotions are more in turmoil. To Shabanu's questions about marriage, Sharma asks what she knows about adults' intimacies and instructs her to learn how to please a husband. Sex jokes cause the women to titter, but Sharma remains focused on her niece's fears. To Phulan as well as Shabanu she advises, "Keep some of yourself hidden . . . The secret is keeping your innermost beauty, the secrets of your soul, locked in your heart so that he must always reach out to you for it." The advice calms both girls and steadies them for the task of being wives.)

5. How does Rahim court Shabanu?

(After the family's hasty flight from Mehrabpur, they ride back to the desert edge and find a small cluster of mud huts replacing their lean-tos. A young servant girl sweeps and presides over ovens and grain storage cupboards in the courtyard. Each entrance is marked by a decorative clay pot.

As the family approaches, Rahim's agent rides up, welcomes them to the dwellings, and offers a rosewood box. Shabanu is surprised to learn that the bride price has already been paid. The velvet-lined chest offers additional gifts for Rahim's intended—gold bangles, diamond nose pin, and a gold ring set with diamonds, rubies, and emeralds. For the first time, she decks herself like a bride-to-be.)

### Questions 6-8 Interpretive Level

6. How does the novel shift in Chapter 23?

(After Phulan's wedding, the rhythm of expected behaviors shifts as Shabanu exerts her independence. Before Sharma departs, she hugs Shabanu and reminds, "You have a choice, pigeon." Terrified that all decisions have been made for her, Shabanu tells Sharma that a disruption of her marriage will ruin Phulan's life. With gravity, Sharma asserts, "No matter what happens, you have you." She assures the girl that she has observed Rahim. In her opinion, the man loves Shabanu and he will see to her happiness.

Shabanu's fears of joining an established harem are grounded in real possibilities. She may quarrel with Rahim's other wives. She may give birth, age rapidly, and lose his love. Sharma advises, "There are ways of keeping your body strong and healthy through childbearing. You will be beautiful long after Phulan is old." Before departing, Sharma offers Shabanu a way out. "But remember: you will always have a place with Fatima and me near Fort Abbas if you want to come," she says. The alternative sets up an opportunity for Shabanu to flee her

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*arranged marriage.)*

7. When does Shabanu commit her final act of rebellion? *(Dadi's decision to end Shabanu's role as herder surprises her. Forced to stay home to prepare breakfast, she rebels against the ritual separation of a girl from her childhood chores. By autumn, nature makes the final break with girlhood as Shabanu experiences her first menstrual flow. She conceals the event by burying stained cloths in the desert. The approach of physical desire leads her to new contemplations of intimacy with Rahim.)*

*In a panic to avoid her testy father, the precursor of an angry, demanding husband, Shabanu determines to flee to Sharma on Xhush Dil. As her parents sleep, she removes anklets, dresses in man's garb, and saddles her mount for flight over the dunes. Mithoo's insistence forces a change in plans—she cannot leave him behind. The rapid departure fills her with hope, "The farther I go, the more fully I sense freedom, leaving my spirit fresh and light.")*

8. How does Mithoo's accident halt Shabanu's escape? *(The late-night dash over the dunes ends after Mithoo steps in a foxhole. Carefully, she explores his injured limb and finds "a warm, sticky mass of fur around a foreleg that is buried in the sand above the knee." Torn between love for her beloved pet and the will to escape marriage, she alters her plan once more. Knowing that she can't leave him to jackals, she prays that Dadi will find them and rescue Mithoo from a grisly desert death.)*

*Shabanu's maturity surges in her prayer, which turns from survival to a wish for forgiveness "for my one hope for freedom." Whether she is punished or not, she knows that her "fate is sealed." Tears express an awareness that a rash flight from home has cost Mithoo strong, straight legs for dancing. The comparison between herself and the camel is instructive. She concludes, "Mithoo, like me, has lost his greatest gift by wanting to follow his heart.")*

### Questions 9 and 10 Critical Level

9. How does the author accommodate an unfamiliar social system?

*(By broaching the subject of Islamic betrothals and patriarchal control of women, Staples introduces American readers to a social system foreign to free dating and courtship, betrothal, and church or synagogue weddings. For Shabanu, the choices and outlook of non-Islamic women have no bearing on her life. Rather than hope to survey a variety of possible grooms and to fall in love with a man her own age and of her own choosing, she has a brief childhood culminating in a ritual wedding in her early teens.)*

*Staples makes no value judgments about Muslim customs. To present varied opinions of desert customs, she creates contrasting sisters who approach marriage from opposite points of view. As Phulan grows dreamy and settled into womanhood, Shabanu becomes more impatient with her domesticated sister and struggles to establish independence as her options are gradually reduced. The fact that differences of opinion exist among Islamic people indicates that desert women suffer emotional turmoil just as American brides face cases of pre-nuptial jitters.)*

10. What does the final scene add to the story?

*(As Shabanu braces herself for a beating from Dadi, she removes her spirit. Taking Sharma's advice, she retreats into fantasy by thinking of "the beautiful things in my world." Sobbing seems to come from far away as she endures the blows of her father's stick, then collapses at his feet, her tunic sticky with blood.)*

*In a return to the present, Shabanu hears another sound—Dadi's weeping as he mourns the discipline he must exact to instruct his wayward girl. His embrace reminds her that being a father carries its own pain. In her memory, Shabanu recalls Sharma's advice about concealing "your innermost beauty, the secrets of your soul, locked in your heart." Assured that she can bear painful punishment in recompense for her flight, she promises herself that, just as Dadi can never erase her private feelings, a husband will "never unlock the secrets of my heart.")*

### Questions 11-13 Creative Level

11. In a speech, summarize Islam's religious and philosophical importance to Shabanu's family and clan.  
12. Account for the importance of journeys, refreshment, and shelter in the novel.  
13. Explain in an impromptu speech how Sharma influences Shabanu.

## ACROSS THE CURRICULUM

### Architecture

Create a bulletin board illustrating the types of architecture that mark forts, huts, houses, tents, lean-tos, tombs, shrines, platforms, cisterns, mosques, and palaces. Indicate the characters connected with each style of building. List building materials, particularly iron, skins, glass, lattice, cow dung, powdered clay, thatch, barbed wire, and stone.

### Law

Launch an internet web site on current problems with runaways. Outline Dadi's initial reaction to his daughter's disobedience. Comment on parallel civil and religious law concerning the power of a father over his minor children.

### Philosophy and Religion

1. Compose a web site or wall chart explaining the elements of Islam. Demonstrate with a flow chart the evolution of Islam as it parallels Judaism, Christianity, Buddhism, Zen, Lamaism, Shinto, Confucianism, animism, and Tantrism.
2. Present a time table of major incidents in the novel. Note the importance of Ramadan to the ordering of the final chapters. Explain why Ramadan, a moveable feast, is not found on ordinary calendars.
3. Compose a first person account of Pakistani wedding and funeral rites. Explain the haste to locate a burial site, the need to turn the victim's face to Mecca, and the purpose of flags on sticks. Describe the preparations of a bride, cooking and sewing, makeup, reception of guests, and participation in the wedding ceremony.
4. Discuss the importance of holidays, traditions, songs, prayer, teamwork, chores, and ritual in establishing family rhythms



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### **Economics**

1. Describe aloud why Shabanu fears that Dadi will sell Guluband. Explain how the trek to the Sibi fair is more profitable than Dadi anticipates. Discuss why Dadi chooses to deal with Wardak, leader of the Afghans. Comment on Shabanu's emotional response to the sale of a favorite camel.
2. Compose a short newspaper article in which you relate Dadi's success at the Sibi fair. Explain what he anticipates, how he treats Shabanu to rides and sweets, styles of negotiating a price, and how he celebrates. Mention visitors to the tent, shared food, dancing, a shopping trip for wedding garments, hiding the money, and returning home.

### **Cinema and Drama**

1. Create several conversations in which characters react to Phulan's betrothal to Murad. Include comments by Kulsum, Auntie, Shabanu, Sakina, Mama, Sharma, Dadi, Uncle, Adil, Fatima, Murad, and Bibi Lal. Act out your dialogue for an audio or video taping.
2. Pantomime an extended scenario that fits the plot, for example, a visit between Bibi Lal and Mama or a flashback to Lal Khan's murder. Work as a team to compose a story about Shabanu's wedding, the arrest of the quail hunters, the cousins' visit to the Sibi fair, Uncle's holiday with Auntie, or Grandfather's service in the nawab's army.

### **Science and Health**

1. Compose a short explanation of sandstorms. Order events that occur after the sandstorm. Explain how the turmoil in nature parallels Nazir's demand for girls for his guests, the foiled wedding to Hamir, Grandfather's death, and the betrothal of Rahim and Shabanu.
2. Compose an informal essay on the role of humor in naturalizing family relationships. Explain why Grandfather's jumbled tales, Dadi's fall from the saddle, Mithoo's theft of Phulan's *chadr*, and Shabanu's good time at the Sibi fair stand out as lighthearted scenes in otherwise serious episodes.
3. List standard motifs of adolescence, for example, isolation, sexual curiosity, physical or emotional immaturity, loss of innocence, clashes with parents or authority figures, and a yearning for security.
4. Create a web site on the job of camel herding, breeding, training, and sale.

### **Geography and Computer Graphics**

1. Create a mural or web site that contrasts settings: Sibi, Cholistan Desert, Indus River, Dingarh Fort, Derawar Fort, Arabian Sea, Rahimyar Khan, Uch Sharif, Channan Pir, Mehrabpur, Bahawalpur, Zhob, Khanpur, Baluchistan, India, Yazman, Maujgarh Fort, Pakistan, Sind, Gudu Barrage, Mujarawala Toba, Quetta, Sulaiman Range, Hindu Kush Mountains, Kashmir, Afghanistan, Bikaner, Makran Range, Jacobabad, Dingra, Bellpat, Kutch, Karachi, Punjabi plains, Hakra River, Lahore, and Fort Abbas.
2. Using color-coded lines on a drawing program, indicate the journey that Sharma and Fatima make to the wedding, Shabanu's trip to the fair, Grandfather's heroism in battle, the flight from Nazir and his men, and the family's journey to Mehrabpur to arrange marriages for their

daughters.

### **Art**

1. Using desktop publishing or other media, design an appropriate banner for the heroes' section of the cemetery or for the Sibi fair, multiple views of a pannier or hookah, a guide for saddling and loading camels, a drawing of a rupee or annas, a signboard pointing the way to Karachi or the Arabian Sea, first aid for scorpion bite, instructions for a traditional men's dance, a recipe for curry or chapatis, a handbook for desert rangers or jeep owners, a genealogy of Shabanu's family, detailed sketches of a thatched mud hut or clay tomb, a deed to Bibi Lal's family's land, a news headline announcing the nawab's death or the charge at Kutch, a list of items necessary for a wedding or *mehendi*, the title page for the Holy Koran, or an anatomical drawing of a camel.
2. Draw settings for a television version of *Shabanu*. Show the placement of actors, music, costumes, props, sound effects, and lighting. Center on dramatic entrances and exits.
3. Draw a frieze or poster emphasizing some aspect of life in the Cholistan desert.

### **Social Studies**

1. Lead a discussion of the nomadic lifestyle. Assess the qualities that keep desert wanderers alive in a harsh, unforgiving climate. Include adaptation, flexibility, understanding weather cycles, interest in animal welfare, perseverance, courage, tradition, caution, simplicity, and ambition.
2. Make an oral report on the contrasting themes of obedience and independence. Explain why Shabanu frequently appears disobedient to her father and to Islamic traditions. Discuss times and places where Muslim women may relax and be themselves. Suggest ways that Shabanu could avoid punishment and chastisement for her wild ways.
3. Compose a character sketch emphasizing strong women. Stress Mama's insistence that Shabanu marry Rahim, Sakina's matter-of-fact details about the murder, Kulsum's adaptation to widowhood, Fatima's determination to remain single, Bibi Lal's reaction to her son's murder, Sharma's chastisement of Dadi for trading Shabanu for wealth, Auntie's recovery from spontaneous abortion, and Phulan's care with the *chadr*.
4. Contrast in a short speech the martyrdom of Channan Pir and the legend of Hamir's murder. Explain why pilgrims visit each tomb and what they hope to gain from the experience. Describe female pilgrims and their frenzied head motions.
5. On a web site essay or book review, indicate how Staples's social commentary gives insight into the difficulties of growing up in a patriarchal society. Cite as examples runaways, rebels, and obedient women.

### **Language and Speech**

1. Make flash cards to illustrate and define these important words and phrases from the novel.
2. Create and discuss a list of images that appeal to the five senses, for instance, the feel of freshly washed camel hair, the smell of curry and sweetened betel leaf, the fragrance of green landscapes, the refreshing fra-

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grance of rain, the sound of Phulan keening, the syncopated beat of camel gaits, the throb of traditional music, and the taste of salty water.

### Literature

1. Compose a short speech in which you contrast quiet and turbulent moments in Shabanu's life. Mention packing a camel for travel, observing Dadi performing funeral rites for an unidentified young man, trying on jewelry sent by Rahim, observing Murad, performing hostess duties at the Sibi fair, throwing pots at Nazir Muhammad, observing Grandfather's death, teaching Mithoo to dance, raging against the sale of Guluband, solacing Phulan's grief, and awaiting a beating from Dadi.
2. Explain to a small group why Staples juxtaposes people of different social and educational levels, tastes, values, and behaviors, for example, Bibi Lal/Sharma, Fatima/Shabanu, Shahzada/Dadi, Grandfather/nawab, Kulsum/ Mama, midwife/Auntie, and Rahim/Nazir. Contrast this fictional cast with that of a film such as *Fiddler on the Roof*, *Zulu*, *The Grapes of Wrath*, *House of the Spirits*, *Dances with Wolves*, *Dr. Zhivago*, *Like Water for Chocolate*, *Daughters of the Dust*, *Little Big Man*, or *The Power of One*.
3. Study the literary elements of realism, particularly description, understatement, climax, dialogue, simile, irony, resolution, dialogue, internal monologue, and metaphor. Note which lines picture life in the desert for nomadic camel herders.
4. Explain in a theme how Staples uses literary foils. Why does she contrast siblings? What womanly behaviors does she emphasize in Bibi Lal and Mama? What types of rebellion does Staples note in Fatima, Sharma, and Shabanu? How does rebellion affect Shabanu's self-esteem?
5. Take notes on the role of a minor character. Make an oral presentation on the purpose of the character in furthering action.
6. Draw a web representing the interconnectedness among characters. Which seem well acquainted? Which say little about themselves, for example, Spin Gul, Rahim, Sardar Nothani Bugti, Sulaiman, Murad, and Kulsum? Which express opinions on camel sales, conservation of water, use of the nawab's cemetery, negotiation by radio, or feminine beauty?
7. Apply a Venn diagram to pairs of unlike characters, e. g., Nazir Mohammad/Spin Gul, Bibi Lal/Phulan, Murad/the old shawl seller, nawab/Grandfather, Shahzada/Fatima, and Wardak/Rahim. Point out differences in age, family, experience, social status, ambition, reputation, manners, and background.

### History and Current Events

1. Explain briefly the historical era. Why does Staples emphasize Grandfather's memories? What other characters reflect on the past? Which characters appear to live among modern conveniences, styles, and inventions, including electric lights, jeeps, rifles, radios, and Western dress.
2. Compose episodes from Kutch history. Express the pride of soldiers who participated in battles and the type of awards and monuments that mark their courage and loyalty.

### Psychology

1. Describe in a short speech the effects of isolation, yearning, fasting, frustration, loss, failed ambitions, manual labor, meditation, creativity, and indulgence on characters in the novel. Include your response to a breaking attachment to an animal that must be sold or sacrificed. Why does Dadi refuse to sell to Arabs? What animal does Dadi prefer for Eid?
2. Compose an extended definition of rationalizing. Explain how Shabanu interprets events and predictions to suit her point of view. How does she justify marrying Rahim? Why does she dread life as his fourth wife? How does Sharma's advice help her cope with anxiety and her parents' disapproval?
3. Compile lines that indicate character flaws. Mention Phulan's dreamy self-absorption, Mama's lack of sympathy for Shabanu, Auntie's rude remarks, Dadi's quick anger, Rahim's abuse of wealth to impress a young girl, Sharma's defiance of cultural roles for women, Sulaiman's callousness, Nazir's murderous behavior, Fatima's refusal to marry, and Wardak's fierceness.
4. Lead a debate concerning Dadi's command that Shabanu chaperone her sister and keep her safe from Nazir Mohammad. Determine whether Dadi made a foolish decision in placing Phulan in the care of a flighty, headstrong younger sister.

### ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT

1. List examples of husbandry, anticipation, fear, insecurity, loyalty, suffering, patience, loss, and character in the text.
2. Compile a list of actions that demonstrate family unity.
3. Compose a scene in which Shabanu is readied for her own marriage.
4. Make a character list and explain the accommodation each makes to desert life. Emphasize Grandfather, Suleiman, Dadi, Shabanu, Rahim, and Sharma.
5. List abstract concepts in the story and link each to a concrete image, for example, obedience and the *chadr* or heroism and the fort.

### STAPLES'S OTHER BOOKS

*Haveli* (1993)  
*Dangerous Skies* (1996)

### RELATED READING

Isabel Allende, *House of the Spirits*  
Karen Cushman, *Catherine, Called Birdy*  
Laura Esquivel, *Like Water for Chocolate*  
Jean Craighead George, *Julie of the Wolves*  
John Keats, "The Eve of St. Agnes"  
Sylvia Lopez-Medina, *Cantora*  
Carson McCullers's *Member of the Wedding*  
N. Scott Momaday, *The Way to Rainy Mountain*  
Reynolds Price, *A Long and Happy Life*  
Yoko Kawashima Watkins, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*  
Jessamyn West, *Friendly Persuasion*  
Thornton Wilder, *Our Town*

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- Warwick, Ellen D., "Review," *School Library Journal*, November 1989, pp. 128-130.
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## ANSWER KEY

### VOCABULARY TEST

- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| 1. lulled      | 9. influence  |
| 2. gait        | 10. bulbous   |
| 3. bandoliers  | 11. fury      |
| 4. intricately | 12. bloodlust |
| 5. salute      | 13. dowry     |
| 6. martyrs     | 14. tunic     |
| 7. inlaid      | 15. haze      |
| 8. lapis       |               |

### COMPREHENSION TEST A

#### Part I: Identification (20 points)

Answers will vary.

#### Part II: Completing Quotations (20 points)

- |             |             |
|-------------|-------------|
| 1. kohl     | 6. mosque   |
| 2. Kalu     | 7. shatoosh |
| 3. Raja     | 8. Allah    |
| 4. panniers | 9. water    |
| 5. mouths   | 10. dowry   |

#### Part II: Cause and Effect (30 points)

Answers will vary.

#### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

### COMPREHENSION TEST B

#### Part I: Matching (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. C | 6. B  |
| 2. A | 7. D  |
| 3. H | 8. I  |
| 4. J | 9. F  |
| 5. E | 10. G |

#### Part II: True/False (20 points)

- |      |       |
|------|-------|
| 1. F | 6. T  |
| 2. T | 7. T  |
| 3. T | 8. F  |
| 4. F | 9. F  |
| 5. T | 10. F |

#### Part III: Quotation Identification (20 points)

1. Auntie
2. Dadi
3. Shabanu
4. Grandfather
5. Nazir

#### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Answers will vary.

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### VOCABULARY TEST

In the passages that follow, select words from the list below to fill each blank.

Allah	dowry	haze	Koran	rupee
bandoliers	dune	hookah	lapis	salaam
banyan	fury	influence	lulled	salute
bloodlust	gait	inlaid	martyrs	tunic
bulbous	gypsies	intricately	nawab	

1. I doze, (1) \_\_\_\_\_ by the graceful forward and back motion of Guluband's (2) \_\_\_\_\_. The caravan stops, jolting me awake. On the ridge beside the trail at eye level stands a band of Bugtis, a breeze filling their voluminous trousers and shirtsleeves. My heart leaps into my mouth. Their chests are crossed with (3) \_\_\_\_\_. Their eyes are fierce between long beards and (4) \_\_\_\_\_ wound turbans. Several of them lean on long, brass-studded rifles. Dadi and one of our new companions climb slowly up the rocks, their hands open, palms up in humble greeting. The Bugtis don't return the (5) \_\_\_\_\_.

2. Over a broken stone wall patched in places with barbed wire, we see the (6) \_\_\_\_\_ graves—white marble (7) \_\_\_\_\_ with turquoise and (8) \_\_\_\_\_ and tiles, some inscribed with gold—glistening in the sun. Flags flutter over the heads of the long, mounded tombs to mark the place where the troubled and needy might find a place to pray beside a spirit that has (9) \_\_\_\_\_ with God.

The blue tiled domes of the elaborate tombs of the nawabs' wives cast (10) \_\_\_\_\_ shadows across the empty graveyard. A crow balances on a *khari*n bush that has crept up between the gravestones in the yard, his mouth open but silent, eyes blinking. A broken gate of wood tips on its hinges. A big brass lock holds together a rusting iron chain. Nobody is in the graveyard, and we turn toward the village.

3. I refuse to cry out, and Dadi in his (11) \_\_\_\_\_ is like Tipu, (12) \_\_\_\_\_ in his eyes. He can beat me to death if he likes. The pain grows worse as the blows strike already-bruised flesh. But I take Sharma's advice. I recall the beautiful things in my world and, like a bride admiring her (13) \_\_\_\_\_, I take them out, one by one, then fold them away again, deep into my heart. I hear sobbing, as if from a great distance, and my knees crumple. Dadi catches me in his arms and buries his face against my bloody (14) \_\_\_\_\_. He holds me against him, and through a (15) \_\_\_\_\_ of pain, I realize it is Dadi sobbing, not me.

**SHABANU**

**COMPREHENSION TEST A**

**Part I: Identification (20 points)**

Briefly describe each of the following characters.

1. Nazir \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Bibi Lal \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Hamir \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Mithoo \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Phulan \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Auntie \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. Spin Gul \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Grandfather \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Dadi \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Sharma \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Part II: Quotation Completion (20 points)**

Fill in a term to complete each quotation below:

1. Every morning she lines her eyes with black \_\_\_\_\_ and massages the soft gold powder into the creases of her lids.
2. \_\_\_\_\_ charged another furlong before he fell.
3. The Hindu \_\_\_\_\_ of Bikaner had seized all of Cholistan from Qutb-ud-din, the Abassi general.
4. Two young males carry new babies in \_\_\_\_\_ on their backs, and the mothers stand beside their flanks, their noses just touching the little ones.
5. "Most country girls cover their \_\_\_\_\_ when they laugh," he says, still joking.
6. Mama lifts Grandfather's head to see the marble dome and vaulted minarets of the nawab's \_\_\_\_\_ beyond the fort's massive brick walls.
7. "My father gave this \_\_\_\_\_ to my mother," he says. "Would you like it?"
8. I know I mustn't pray to \_\_\_\_\_ for Guluband, but I keep him in my heart as I whisper along with Dadi when he recites from the Koran.
9. If we say no to Rahim-*sahib*, it won't be long before his brother starts demanding his payments again, and soon enough he'll turn off the \_\_\_\_\_ and the land will be ruined.
10. After checking that the kabob and sweets makers are ready for the feast, we pack the camels Dadi has given Phulan for her \_\_\_\_\_ with things for the house where she and Murad will live: a stone wheat grinder, goatskin water buckets, clay pots, butter churns, a string bed with carved wooden legs, clothes, reed mats, goathair carpets with saffron-dyed cords, woven bags for spices and rice.

## SHABANU

### Part III: Cause and Effect (20 points)

Finish each of these statements.

1. Shabanu disobeys her father because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
2. Violence erupts at the camp because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
3. Grandfather's grave is safe because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
4. Sharma sets a different example of womanhood because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
5. Rahim is a likely candidate for marriage because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
6. Losing Guluband incites Shabanu's anger because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
7. The gift of a goat-hair shawl is precious because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
8. Marriage is an important tribal occasion because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
9. Desert rangers are necessary because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_
10. Channan Pir is legendary because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_

### Part IV: Essay (40 points)

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Compare two different opinions on wives and marriage.
2. Describe how Shabanu assists her father with the herd.
3. Compare Shabanu at the beginning of the story and the end.
4. Summarize the hardest parts of living in the desert.
5. Analyze advice to young girls on obedience to the Koran.

## SHABANU

### COMPREHENSION TEST B

#### Part I: Matching (20 points)

Complete each citation with the appropriate closing.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Well after the sun is up and the heat has gathered,  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2. The queue grows quieter as  
\_\_\_\_\_ 3. We walk silently and are caught in the crush of women sitting with baskets before them  
\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Rotating their bodies, they toss their oiled hair over their heads,  
\_\_\_\_\_ 5. We circle the tomb once,  
\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Sleeping women on bright quilts  
\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Because of the miracle and the Channan Pir's simplicity and wisdom,  
\_\_\_\_\_ 8. Again, like hens laying eggs,  
\_\_\_\_\_ 9. For the first time, I feel a communion with the saint;  
\_\_\_\_\_ 10. Word of his heroic death and our resultant wealth spreads wider and wider, like ripples in a pond, and
- A. we approach the mound of stones.  
B. increase in number from a few scattered shapes to a sea of blankets touching edge to edge.  
C. the bagpipes and drums begin.  
D. the people of the desert became his followers.  
E. passing under the thorn tree that shades the mound and past the eternal lamps beside the grave.  
F. his presence is like a soothing hand on my shoulder.  
G. Hamir's house becomes a shrine.  
H. heaped with flowers and lumps of white sugar candy.  
I. we leave our prayers and hopes for Phulan's sons at the head of the shrine.  
J. back and forth and around and around with a whipping motion like horses' tails, in a frenzy of devotion.

#### Part II: True/False (20 points)

Mark the following statements either **T** for true or **F** if any part is false.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. Grandfather's fez and sword remain at the cemetery with Sulaiman.  
\_\_\_\_\_ 2. Dadi beats Shabanu for running away from her betrothal.  
\_\_\_\_\_ 3. Men at the fair meet at Dadi's tent, eat, and dance in celebration.  
\_\_\_\_\_ 4. Sakina keens with a primitive wail for her brother Hamir.  
\_\_\_\_\_ 5. The mirror shows Phulan and Murad their reflection as a couple.  
\_\_\_\_\_ 6. Sharma has a reputation for independence.  
\_\_\_\_\_ 7. Auntie blames Shabanu for the shooting.  
\_\_\_\_\_ 8. Mama insists that Shabanu remain in the house to learn women's work.  
\_\_\_\_\_ 9. The vendor gives Shabanu a treasured *chadr*.  
\_\_\_\_\_ 10. The sandstorm buries a young man who turns into a thirsty ghost.

**Part III: Quotation Identification (20 points)**

Identify the speaker of each quotation below. Comment on the significance of each statement.

- \_\_\_\_\_ 1. If you don't agree Shabanu, how can we be sure the landlords will keep their word?  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 2. She would be tending camels and children and moving from *toba* to *toba* the rest of her life, never knowing when the rain will stop and the vegetation will dry up.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 3. He's used to buying what he wants.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 4. You can grieve for your Guluband—he was the finest we've had.  
\_\_\_\_\_
- \_\_\_\_\_ 5. We'll pay you handsomely—land, jewelry, money, anything you like.  
\_\_\_\_\_

**Part IV: Essay (40 points)**

Choose two and answer in complete sentences.

1. Contrast Bibi Lal before and after Hamir's death.
2. Comment on the mood of the scene in which Dadi brings tea to Shabanu as she lies in the tent at the Sibi fair.
3. Describe traditions that separate men and women.
4. Using scenes from the novel, compose an extended definition of patriarchy.
5. Account for differences in Shabanu and Phulan as daughters and wives-to-be.



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