

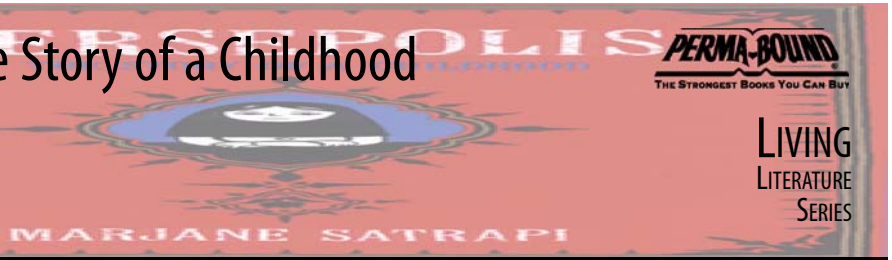


Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood

Susan Marjane Satrapi

Teacher's Guide

By Mary Ellen Snodgrass



A Perma-Bound Production

Note: This guide was prepared using the Pantheon Books English version, ©2003. Other editions may vary.

Synopsis

The Veil

At age 10, Marji Satrapi regrets Iran's revolution of 1979 and a shift to the Islamic fundamentalist requirement that she be veiled at school. Her mother, Taji, joins demonstrations in the streets. Marji has outgrown her belief at age six that she is destined to be a prophet of justice, love, and divine wrath.

The Bicycle

Revolution awakens Iranians to fight tyranny. Marji reads about world leaders and compares Marx to God. Police lock the Rex Cinema, which burns along with 400 victims trapped inside. The shah pretends to mourn. Marji volunteers to accompany her parents to the next day's street demonstration. Her father, Ebi, refuses to allow it.

The Water Cell

Marji's militant parents join each day's protests. Ebi repudiates Marji's belief that God chose the king. He explains how, in 1930, the British influenced Reza Shah to seize the throne from the emperor, who was Marji's great-grandfather (Nasser al-Din Shah). She is surprised to learn that Grandpa (Shapur Bakhtiar) was once a prince. Ebi explains how the shah dispossessed Grandpa, then named him prime minister because Grandpa had the skills to rule. Grandpa became a Communist, opposed the shah, and spent terms in a watery prison cell. Marji soaks in the bathtub to experience the torture.

Persepolis

Grandma tells about poverty and taking in sewing. She used cloth scraps to make clothes for the family. The shah's son (Reza Pahlavi) was even more tyrannical than his father had been. The younger ruler wasted money on celebrations of his dynasty and terrorized citizens

through SAVAK, his secret police. One night, Ebi's late return from photographing a demonstration leads Marji, Taji, and Grandma to fear he has been shot. He reports that crowds honored two martyrs, one of whom actually died of cancer.

The Letter

Marji begins reading in earnest about her country's predicament and attends a book-signing by Kurdish author Ali Ashraf Darvishian, whom she calls the Iranian Charles Dickens. She comprehends differences in social classes and appreciates Mehri, her illiterate working-class nanny. In 1978, Marji writes love letters dictated by Mehri to Hossein, the neighbor's son. Ebi intervenes and discovers that Marji writes Mehri's letters. Because Marji and Mehri demonstrate against the shah the next day, Black Friday, Taji slaps them both for endangering themselves.

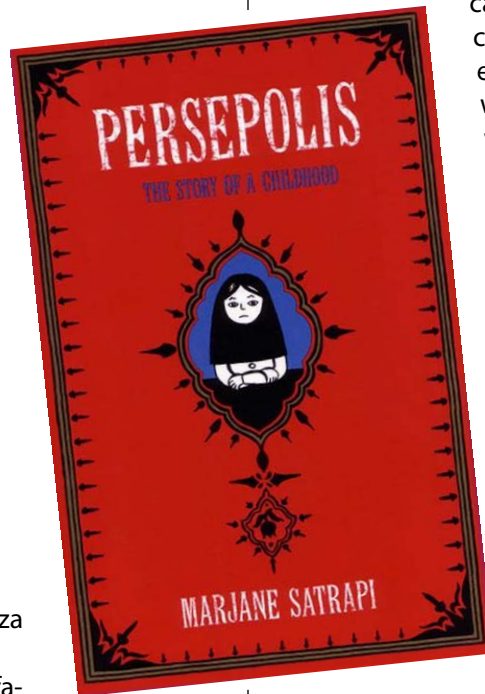
The Party

Massacres worsen. The shah promises to turn his realm into a democracy. Citizens force him out of the country. After President Jimmy Carter rejects the shah, Anwar Sadat accepts him in Egypt. Marji gets in trouble at school by

reminding the teacher that she had once supported the shah. Taji scolds Marji for threatening her friend Ramin, whose father was a member of the shah's secret police. Taji urges forgiveness, even after Ramin excuses his father for killing Communists.

The Heroes

The regime releases 3,000 political prisoners, including the Luristani journalist Siamak Jari and Mohsen Shakiba, a rebel from Racht. Before they arrive at the Satrapi home, Marji suggests to Laly that her father, Siamak, is dead. Mohsen reports that torturers pulled out his nails, but they grew back. Siamak tells about cigarette burns on prisoners' bodies. Ebi reveals that their cohort Ahmadi was tormented with an iron and dismembered.



Marji, sickened by the stories, retreats to visions of God as the only source of justice.

Moscow

Marji wishes her father had been a martyr. She learns of Uncle Anoosh, who tells her stories of Great Uncle Fereydoon and the independence movement in Azerbaijan. After Fereydoon's arrest, Anoosh walked to Astara and swam the Aras River to self-exile in Russia. After a divorce from his cold-hearted Russian wife, he repatriated and spent nine years in an Iranian prison.

The Sheep

The family engages in political discussion of Islam and revolution. Uncle Anoosh believes that a religious state will result from illiterate peasants who have no knowledge of world history. Marji's friend Kaveh immigrates to America along with many of Marji's relatives, traveling to Los Angeles. Mohsen is found drowned in his bathtub; assassins terrorize Siamak and execute his sister. Siamak and his family flee over the border. After Anoosh is arrested, Marji visits him in prison before his execution. Marji rejects God in response to the death of her beloved uncle. The war begins with bombing.

The Trip

Fundamentalist students overrun the U.S. embassy. Universities close; school systems introduce religious texts and the veil. Marji's dream of becoming the next Marie Curie crumbles. Because bearded thugs threaten Taji with rape, she becomes more militant. Citizens must dress according to conservative laws. Marji pretends to be devout. After thugs attack and stab women in the street, in September 1980, Marji's family goes on vacation in Italy and Spain. Arabs invade Iran.

The F-14s

Before school begins, Iraqi MIGs bomb Tehran. Saddam Hussein attacks while Iranian fighter pilots are in jail. The pilots agree to retaliate against Iraq if President Banisadr allows the playing of the original Iranian national anthem. Pardisse's father dies during the battle, which claims half the Iranian planes.

The Jewels

Shoppers denude grocery shelves; gas becomes scarce. Bombers target border towns and destroy the home of Mali, Taji's old friend. Her family stays at Marji's house. Mali quarrels with women at the grocery store, who worry about refugee women turning to prostitution and seducing husbands.

The Key

Schools lead self-flagellation in mourning for dead soldiers. Marji joins in mockery of the breast-beating ritual. Ebi rebukes a school official for charging the children with disrespect. Boys receive promises of heavenly reward for dying in battle. Poor boys lured into service with keys to paradise die on the minefields.

The Wine

The family retreats to the basement during bombings and covers the windows with tape and black curtains to prevent spying by devout neighbors. Tinoosh's father endures 75 lashes for owning videos, cards, and a chess set; the beating leaves him unable to walk. Elsewhere, citizens attend underground parties to ward off despair. Marji's parents attend Tinoosh's party, where they dance and drink alcohol, activities forbidden under Islamic law. On the way home, guards intimidate Ebi and follow the family home. Grandma pretends to feel faint and flushes all alcohol down the toilet. Ebi stalls the guards and bribes them with cash.

The Cigarette

In the third year of the war, Marji follows older girlfriends to the Kansas, a burger hangout, to flirt with boys. Taji scolds her for cutting grammar class. To save the fundamentalist regime, Iran refuses a peace settlement with Iraq. Fanatics execute opposition leaders. Marji takes up smoking.

The Passport

In July 1982, persecution worsens. Uncle Taher Talischi sends his oldest son to Holland. The explosion of a grenade causes Taher to have a third heart attack. He dies before Ebi can get a counterfeit passport for Taher to receive treatment in a foreign hospital.

Kim Wilde

A year later, Ebi and Taji get passports and travel to Turkey. For Marji, they buy tennis shoes and a denim jacket and smuggle rock posters into the country in Ebi's coat. Female guards stop Marji for wearing punk shoes, tight jeans, and a Michael Jackson button. She conceals from her parents her close call with detention.

The Shabbat

Iraqis target Tehran with scud missiles. Citizens desert the city. While Marji shops, a bomb explodes on her street. It kills her friend Neda, leaving a bracelet attached to part of her body.

The Dowry

In 1984, Marji becomes a rebel and is expelled for hit-

ting the principal. At the next school, she refutes false claims in religion class. Her parents explain how virgin detainees are raped before being executed. Ebi and Taji prepare Marji to travel to Vienna to live with Sherine and her mother, Zozo. Marji gives her posters to friends. Grandma comes to spend the night and offer advice. At the airport, Taji faints. Marji thinks leaving home is like dying.

Author Sketch

The graphic novels and animated film of Iranian-French pacifist author and artist Marjane Satrapi have earned her international renown. Her only child, born in 1969 in Rasht, Iran, on the Caspian Sea, she is the great-granddaughter of the last emperor of the Qajar dynasty, who ruled a half century. She grew up in Tehran in a secular Marxist household. Influenced by an outspoken maternal grandmother and mother, she attended Lycée Français and read, played cards, and argued like an adult with liberals. Because she was a member of her family, she marched with her parents in demonstrations against the shah. The only comic books she saw in childhood were a tutorial on dialectic materialism and a Dracula comic in a toy shop.



After the Iran-Iraq War began in 1983, Satrapi's family sent her to safety in Vienna, where she lived with Zozo and her daughter, Sherine. The author completed high school but felt like an outsider among German-speaking Austrians. As a comfort, she carried a container of soil from home. Of misperceptions of her homeland, she gasped, "Prejudices and clichés about Iran have never failed to astonish me." She was expelled from one academy for striking the principal. She lived on the street, joined a punk commune of eight gay males, smoked marijuana, and sold drugs. Despair drove her to slit her wrists with a fruit knife and to overdose on antidepressants in abortive suicide attempts. She returned home to attend college.

Political rebellion made Satrapi a stateless humanist. After a failed marriage to an artist, at age 24 she completed a master's degree in film at Islamic Azad University. She chose graphics for a career because, in her words, "Image is an international language." She then left home permanently and earned an art degree in Strasbourg, France, supporting herself by teaching language and aerobics classes. Of her life as an emigré, she remarked, "I don't take the risk to go back to my country anymore, but at the same time, it's a good feel-

ing not to belong to any place anymore; at the same time it's a hard feeling."

Satrapi adapted well to renown. She lectured in Naples and Paris and displayed her drawings in Berlin, Lucerne, and Paris. Fluent in Farsi, French, English, German, Italian, and Swedish (her husband, translator and software specialist Mattias Ripa, is a Swede), and lives in the Marais district of Paris.

Critic's Corner

Satrapi applied the graphic novel style to her two-stage black-and-white autobiographical graphic novels, *Persepolis* and *Persepolis 2*, translated by Blake Ferris and Mattias Ripa. Of her work, she stated, "I want to show that all dictatorships, no matter if it's Chile, if it's the Cultural Revolution in China or Communist Poland, it's the same schematic." Feminist maven Gloria Steinem admired the work for its intimacy, appeal, and political depth in contrasting fundamentalism with democracy. For *Persepolis*, Satrapi has received an Angoulême Coup de Coeur Award, a Time magazine Best Comix of 2003 Award, and Spain's Fernando Buesa Blanco Prize for promoting peace. She also received an Album of the Year nomination for her 2003 graphic novel, *Broderies* (*Embroideries*), and won the award in 2004 for *Poulet aux prunes* (*Chicken with Plums*).

For filming, Satrapi chose hand-tracing of images on paper rather than computer generated cels, and acted out gestures for artists to preserve Iranian authenticity. In 2007, the animated version of *Persepolis* opened at the Cannes Film Festival, featuring the voices of Catherine Deneuve, Chiara Mastroianni, and Danielle Darrieux. Before the event, Iranian authorities discredited the film and attempted to suppress it. The author refused to be intimidated. She declared, "I'm happy to die for my principles." The English version, which combines the talents of Sean Penn, Iggy Pop, and Gena Rowlands, was a headliner at the Brisbane International Film Festival and won a 2008 Oscar nomination and a Cinema for Peace "Most Valuable Movie of the Year" prize.

Timeline of Iranian History in *Persepolis*, 1890s-1980s

1896 Marji's great-grandfather,

October 31, 1925 Nasser al-Din Shah, dies after 48 years of rule in Iran. The British influence Reza Pahlavi to seize the throne from the emperor.

1953 President Dwight Eisenhower supports the arrest of Prime Minister Mohammad Mossadegh and the rule of Shah Reza Pahlavi.

mid-1950s Grandpa (Shapur Bakhtiar) supports underground protest of the shah.

1969 Marji Satrapi is born in Rasht, Iran.

October 12-16, 1971 Shah Reza Pahlavi holds a sumptuous celebration of Iran's 2,500-year monarchy.

1975 Marji believes she is destined to be a prophet.

January 1978 The Islamic Revolution begins.

September 7 Marji writes love letters for Mehri to Hossein, the neighbor's son.

September 8 Because of rioting on Black Friday, Taji slaps Mehri and Marji for taking risks.

late 1978 The shah dispossesses Grandpa (Shapur Bakhtiar), then names him prime minister.

January 1979 The shah flees the country and resides in Egypt. The war begins with bombing.

April When Iran becomes an Islamic Republic, Grandpa immigrates to France.

November 4 Fundamentalist students overrun the U.S. embassy in Tehran.

December The Ayatollah Ruhollah Khomeini establishes a theocracy in Iran.

February 1980 Hezbollah thugs target citizens on the street.

March Universities close; schools require veiling.

September For three weeks, Marji's family vacations in Italy and Spain.

September 22 Iraq-Iran War begins when

Iraq invades Iran; Iraqi MIGs bomb Tehran while infantry invade.

September 30 Iranians defend Khorramshahr.

March 1981 Iranian jets outgun the Iraqi air force, but Pardisse's father dies in battle.

1982 Taji scolds Marji for cutting grammar class.

mid-March Iran takes the offensive against Iraq.

May 24 Iranian forces liberate Khorramshahr.

June The Iranian army recovers territory lost in the war.

June 6 To save the fundamentalist regime, Iran refuses a peace settlement.

July 1982 Persecution worsens. Uncle Taher Talischi dies before Ebi can get a counterfeit passport for him.

1983 Ebi and Taji get passports and travel to Turkey. Iraqis target Tehran with scud missiles that kill Neda.

1984 Marji becomes a rebel and is expelled for hitting the principal. The Satrapis send Marji to Vienna.

August 20, 1988 The Iran-Iraq War ends.

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Selected Other Works

by Marjane Satrapi

Persepolis (2003)

"The Diary of a Nobelist," *New York Times* (10

December 2003)

Persepolis (2004)

Embroideries (2005)

"Op-Art," *New York Times* (May 29, 2005)

Chicken with Plums (2006)

Monsters Are Afraid of the Moon (2006)

"How Can One Be Persian?," *My Sister, Guard Your Veil; My Brother, Guard Your Eyes* (2006)

The Importance of Setting

The physical setting dominates *Persepolis*, with the oppression in Iran, the dangers of Iraq to the east, and the possibility of escape to Austria and Russia in the north and to Turkey, Egypt, Italy, Spain, and the United States to the west. After war heats up Tehran, the text retreats from school playground scenes and backyard shenanigans to the horrors of chemical warfare, veterans in hospital wards, 400 citizens burned in a locked movie theater, and a martyr on a stretcher in the street. The Satrapi family learns to cope with the constant threat of personal violence, windows covered with masking tape and black curtains, F-14s overhead, BBC news, and retreats to the basement from Iraqi scud missiles. The intensity of private conversations between idealists, relatives, and friends in the Satrapi home contrasts with Marji's pious pose on the street and her veiling and discipline in a conservative girl's school, where children mourn their deceased parents. When her immature eruptions cause dissension in the classroom during self-flagellation honoring martyrs, the clash between intellectual parents and oppressive school personnel presents, in microcosm, the coming war between Iraqi Arabs and Iran's Persians.

Street protests cause Marji to wish that Ebi were a hero. Storytelling sessions with Uncle Anoosh introduce Marji to the past and to her libertarian ancestors' impact on Iran and its government. At the last meeting before Anoosh's execution, the prison setting jolts Marji with the reality of persecution and legalized murder. More fearful is the sound of an explosion on her street and her discovery that Neda's family died in the blast. The sight of rubble and a part of Neda's body still adorned with a bracelet hurries Marji's maturity and her grasp of the danger to free thinkers like the Satrapis and their fellow Marxist conspirators.

The arrival of Ebi and Taji to the Tehran airport with contraband posters contrasts with the novel's closing scene. The light-hearted view of Ebi as a hulking Frankenstein staves off the sorrow of Marji's departure from her parents for an indeterminate length of time. Looking back

from the luggage search, she sees her mother's limp body and Ebi carrying her away from the inevitable parting in a cold, impersonal airport. As a final glimpse of the Satrapis, the scene emphasizes the position of a 14-year-old departing all she has known and loved to function alone among German-speaking strangers in a European city.

Literary Terms and Applications

For a better understanding of Marjane Satrapi's style, present the following terms and applications to her fable:

Bildungsroman: a formation novel describing the coming-of-age of an untried or naive youth. Marji learns defiance long before she witnesses the price of revolt. As she internalizes the loss of Ahmad, Uncle Anoosh, Pardisse's father, poor boys in minefields, and Siamak's sister, she realizes that idealism requires commitment and acceptance of the consequences, such as the rape of the virgin Niloufar before her execution.

Cautionary tale: a brief action-centered narrative derived from oral tradition and focusing on a loosely plotted action intended to alert the unwary to a danger or threat. Satrapi's cautionary tale reveals the hardening of hearts in a formerly cosmopolitan community in Tehran that no longer tolerates deviation from strict Islamic behaviors and dress. At stake are the freedoms of all members of society, and particularly women and girls, who are subject to widespread societal repression and to the random attacks of enforcers with fists, whips, and knives. The conclusion shows the Satrapis as unwilling to sacrifice Marji to possible lashings, incarceration, imprisonment, and execution by a fanatic regime, and the difficulty of the decision to send her away to safety.

Universality: a quality or theme that applies to all people at all times. *Persepolis* exhibits universality in the human situations—tyranny, imprisonment, torture, execution, martyrdom, widowhood, orphaning, crippling, and terrorism—that deter individuals from free thought and speech. At the core of the story, the love of parents for their only child proves stronger than their liberal activism. The only choice for Ebi and Taji is to secure Marji in a society where she will be safe despite her ethnicity, self-expression, and idealism.

Related Readings

Julia Alvarez, *In the Time of the Butterflies*
Avi, *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*
Ray Bradbury, *Something Wicked This Way Comes*
Pearl Buck, *The Good Earth*

Kaye Gibbons, *Ellen Foster*
Esther Hautzig, *The Endless Steppe*
Khaled Hosseini, *The Kite Runner*
Shirley Jackson, "The Lottery"
Emma Lazarus, "The New Colossus"
Lois Lowry, *The Giver* and *Messenger*
Betty Mahmoody, *Not Without My Daughter*
Marie McSwigan, *Snow Treasure* and *All Aboard for Freedom*
Julie Otsuka, *When the Emperor Was Divine*
Gary Paulsen, *The Crossing*
Conrad Richter, *The Light in the Forest*
Luis J. Rodriguez, *Always Running*
Jean-Paul Sartre, "The Wall"
Yoko Kawashima Watkins, *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*

Cross-Curricular Sources

For related reading and more information about *Persepolis*, graphic novels, cautionary tales, Persian history, the Iranian Revolution, veiling, women's rights, the Iran-Iraq War, and religious fanaticism, consult these sources:

Articles

"How to Win the War within Islam," *Economist* (19 July 2008): 16-17.
Zakaria, Fareed. "We Need a Wartime President," *Newsweek* (7 July 2008): 48-50.

Internet

"The Iran-Iraq War," <http://i-cias.com/e.o/Iranianrqw.htm>
"Islam," <http://www.religioustolerance.org/islam.htm>
"Reza Shah Pahlavi," http://www.iranchamber.com/history/reza_shah/reza_shah.php

Map

"First Gulf War,"
<http://users.erols.com/mwhite28/Iranianraq.htm>

Memoir

In the Time of the Butterflies
Not Without My Daughter
So Far from the Bamboo Grove

Novels

The Good Earth
The Light in the Forest
Shabanu: Daughter of the Wind

Poems

"Babi Yar"

“The New Colossus”

Reference

The Challenge of Fundamentalism
The Forbidden Modern: Civilization and Veiling
Theology of Discontent
Women and Politics in Iran

Stories

“The Lottery”
 “The Wall”

Videos

The Good Earth
In the Time of the Butterflies
The Kite Runner
The Lottery
Not Without My Daughter
Persepolis
THX-1138

Themes and Motifs

A study of the central issues and situations in Marjane Satrapi’s Persepolis should include these aspects:

Themes

- community
- revolt
- change
- loss
- terrorism
- memories
- refugees
- hospitality
- synergy
- immaturity
- disorder
- risk
- self-sacrifice
- martyrdom
- separation

Motifs

- family reunion
- conservative factions
- solutions to dilemma
- realization of threat
- compromised civil rights
- female oppression

General Objectives

1. To discuss the formation of a rebellion
2. To characterize a cautionary tale and Bildungsroman
3. To identify flashbacks as evidence of nobility
4. To outline the relationship between citizen and individual
5. To contrast types of risk
6. To note the value of honesty to children
7. To read aloud examples of aphorism, advice, superstition, tradition, dialogue, and slang
8. To study the source of power shifts
9. To enumerate examples of social dysfunction and fanaticism
10. To explain the universality of death, mourning, and honor

Specific Objectives

1. To describe the types of coercion that threaten Iranians like Ahmad and Niloufar
2. To recount how and why Marji leaves home
3. To discuss public opinion of the shah and Great-Grandpa
4. To explain how the war ignites struggle between Persians and Arabs
5. To account for Marji’s class disruptions and mockery
6. To characterize the relationship between Anoosh and his niece
7. To list incidents illustrating nostalgia, hope, regret, and terror
8. To evaluate changes in Tehran
9. To account for conflict between Taji and Marji
10. To assess the roles of Grandma, Mehri, Mali, Pardise, Laly, and Neda
11. To analyze the symbolism of a bracelet and Michael Jackson button
12. To contrast the arrivals of Mali, Siamak Jari, Anoosh, and Mohsen Shakiba
13. To project how Marji will communicate with Grandma, Taji, and Ebi

Meaning Study

Below are significant words, phrases, or sentences from the graphic novel. Explain each in context. Chapter names and page numbers pinpoint each entry so you can re-read the passage in which it appears.

1. Then came 1980: The year it became obligatory to wear the veil at school. (“The Veil,” p. 3)
(The head covering of Muslim women adheres

to the custom of hijab (modesty), which requires the obscuring of hair, ears, and throat. Styles vary from a scarf to the head-to-foot burka, a full-body hood that leaves a grille or slit over the eyes. The religious fashion displays morality in accordance with Islamic custom. It allows privacy in public for women who prefer anonymity, especially during interaction with male neighbors, strangers, grocers, taxi drivers, and guards.)

2. The first three rules came from Zarathustra. ("The Veil," p. 7)
(Within a pastoral tribe at Rhages outside Tehran, in Media near the current borders of Afghanistan, Iran, and Turkmenistan, the monotheist Zarathustra (628-551 B.C.) served as a priest-diviner of the creator-god Ahura Mazda. Around 600-590 B.C., a vision initiated Zarathustra's spread of a felicitous Middle Eastern faith. His works advocated a well-ordered life dedicated to justice, thrift, neighborliness, and compassion. His writings comprised the first ancient scripture based on the universality of all races and cultures, male and female, slave and free.)
3. Today my name is Che Guevara. ("The Bicycle," p. 10)
(Marxist rebel Ernesto "Che" Guevara (1928-1967) of Rosario, Argentina, earned heroism as a doctor, politician, defender of the poor, military strategist, and guerrilla warrior for world revolution. He joined Fidel Castro's invasion of Cuba to overthrow dictator Fulgencio Batista. Guevara was executed by the Bolivian Army in 1967 after an abortive attempt to spread the Communist "revolution" in South America.)
4. My favorite was a comic book entitled "Dialectic materialism." ("The Bicycle," p. 12)
(Marxists maintain that history is the result of class struggle between opposing forces, particularly the moneyed class with the slaves and laborers who provide wealth.)
5. The Bolsheviks make miracles. ("The Water Cell," p. 23)
(The Bolshevik revolutionaries were a faction of the socialist party in Russia and the core of the Communist Party. Led by Vladimir Lenin, Bolshevism came to power in October 1917 with the murder of Tsar Nicholas II and his family and the establishment of the Soviet Union.)
6. I am the light of the Aryans. ("Persepolis," p. 27)
(The Shah proclaims himself king of kings and supreme Aryan, an ethnic term identifying citizens of Iran with the early settlers of India. The

designation separates Aryans from Semitic Arabs.)

7. My favorite author was Ali Ashraf Darvishian, a kind of local Charles Dickens. ("The Letter," p. 33)
(A Kurdish-Iranian social novelist, Ali Ashraf Darvishian taught at poor schools in Islamabad. He spent six years in prison after he turned his experiences into 42 works of fiction, including *The Bread Season*, *The Leaden Years*, *Dorishti*, and *Seven Men, Seven Stories*. The Iranian government has suppressed publication of other of his works.)
8. We had demonstrated on the very day we shouldn't have: on "Black Friday." ("The Letter," p. 39)
(In Iranian history, Black Friday was the date of the official reprisal against protests of the shah. It began in Zhaleh Square, Tehran, on September 8, 1978. Under martial law, soldiers in tanks and helicopter gunships killed 61 men, two women, and a girl but blamed Israel for the attack. Elsewhere, the clash killed 23 men and one woman. The shah never recovered from citizen hatred for his brutality.)
9. He always had cyanide on him in case he was arrested, but he was taken by surprise and unfortunately he never had a chance to use it. ("The Heroes," p. 51)
(Secret operatives historically protect themselves from interrogation and prolonged torture by carrying capsules of hydrogen cyanide, a poisonous compound that quickly deprives the body of oxygen.)
10. I was 18 years old when my Uncle Fereydoon and his friends proclaimed the independence of the Iranian province of Azerbaijan. ("Moscow," p. 55)
(After the collapse of the Russian Empire in October 1917, Azerbaijan, the first republic in the Muslim world, established its independence in May 1918. Soviet soldiers conquered the province in April 1920. After years of Soviet rule, Azerbaijan became an independent state in 1991.)

Comprehension Study

Answer the following questions in your own words. There is not always a right answer. Your judgment is important. Be ready to defend your answers by referring

to passages in the graphic novel.

Structure

1. Why does the action conclude with Taji’s faint? *(Satrapi leads her narrative toward increasing violence and terrorism in Tehran. Taji and Ebi know the kind of outspoken adult their daughter will be. They have groomed her thinking from babyhood with the truth about tyranny and its effects on the people of Iran. Their ancestors set the example of proactive patriotism and belief in nationalism. Ebi and Taji explain why guards raped Niloufar before executing her. The next day, a parent conference with Marji’s principal suggests that she will continue making bold statements and gestures of egalitarianism and truth, even if she receives punishment and expulsion. The only choice is to send her to Zozo in Vienna to attend a French school. The parting is sad, but the final glimpse of Ebi carrying Taji’s limp body establishes the sacrifice they have made for their daughter’s safety and education.)*

Exposition

2. How does Uncle Anoosh relieve Marji’s misconceptions of heroism? *(When Uncle Anoosh returns from prison in “Moscow,” he tells Marji stories about family dissidents. Great Uncle Fereydoon’s liberation of Azerbaijan and Grandpa’s anger at Anoosh attest to Marji the price paid by freedom fighters. Anoosh returned home to his parents, but had to swim a river and go into exile in Russia to escape the execution that awaited Fereydoon. As a gift to his lover, on his last day in prison, Fereydoon sired a son. Anoosh continues his story with his failed marriage and his return home to arrest and torture. Additional recitals precede Marji’s leave-taking with Anoosh in prison and his execution as a Russian spy.)*

Flashback

3. How does the author introduce Persian history? *(Through flashback in “The Bicycle,” the author presents “a long sleep of 2,500 years” following “tyranny and submission.” Through storytelling, Ebi explains to Marji how emperors cowed the people. Subsequent invasions by Arabs and Mongols preceded an era of modern imperialists, represented by the shah’s executioners, a marching army, a British flag-waver, and Uncle*

Sam. In one panel, Satrapi introduces Iranian rebels F. Fezai, Dr. Hossein Fatemi, and H. Sharaf, all of whom died in their 30s. The flashback introduces Marji’s first experience with terrorism in the burning of 400 people behind locked doors of the Rex Cinema.)

Characterization

4. Which characters receive Marji’s sympathy and support? *(Marji allies with friends and acquaintances by comforting Mrs. Nasrine, the maid, when her oldest son goes to war, and by writing love letters from Mehri to Hossein, the neighbor’s 16-year-old son. She forgives Ramin for his father’s service to SAVAK, bids farewell to Kaveh on his way to Los Angeles, regrets Pardisse’s sorrow over her father’s death in battle, and tries to reveal truth to Laly about unexplained disappearances. She grieves the violent deaths of Neda and Niloufar. Even more wrenching for Marji are the execution of her beloved Uncle Anoosh and separation from her parents and Grandma, the person she wanted to spare the pain of achy knees.)*

Action

5. In the book, how does religious fanaticism affect the daily life of females? *(The patrols of Guards of the Revolution terrorize women and girls by demanding veiling and sedate clothing, in accordance with a strict interpretation of Islamic law. Women face the constant threat of physical assault by the thugish representatives of the state. The knifing of women in the street angers Taji, causing her to overrule Ebi on the subject of Marji’s participation in revolution. When necessary, Taji instructs Marji to feign piety and pretend to obey fanatic rules for female behavior. Nevertheless, Marji’s disobedience results in interrogation and threats by female guards, who chastise her in public for wearing a Michael Jackson button, “punk” shoes, and tight jeans. Even more sinister and significant is the constant threat of state-sanctioned violence, rape, and murder, such as what happened to Niloufar, and the anger that such cruelty and injustice go absolutely unpunished.)*

Interpretation

6. How do the shah’s last days disclose his weak-

ness?

(The decline of the shah's power results after the Black Friday massacre and resultant slaughter of citizens. He declares on television that he intends to democratize Iran, but his half-hearted attempt to name a prime minister fails. As people destroy more royal statues and burn him in effigy to vent their rage, the departure of the royal family becomes necessary. The shah's retreat to Egypt follows a plea to President Jimmy Carter for sanctuary in the United States. Only Egyptian President Anwar Sadat is willing to receive Iran's royal family. Marji describes the end of the shah's corrupt rule as a huge celebration for citizens.)

Details

7. What details suggest community upheaval?

(Satrapi narrates the collection of apartment dwellers in basements during the bombing and pictures among protesters in the streets at the death of a young male revolutionary. Slogans appear on walls. At the grocery store, women search for food and complain about the influx of southern refugees. The rise in prostitution angers wives, who fear that their husbands are in danger of seduction. The rebellion of school girls against self-flagellation to honor martyrs demonstrates the results of an era of permissive education, when Marji and her peers attended class with both boys and girls. Most upsetting to Marji is the Iranian refusal of an imposed peace, which anti-Iraqi crowds support.)

Theme

8. How does the novel reflect current issues?

(The novel reminds readers that hatred between Aryans and Arabs and disagreement over the Israeli presence in the Middle East has ancient roots and is too thorny a situation to be settled simply or neatly. Complicating issues of sovereignty and religion is the presence of a sizeable cache of oil in the region. The willingness of Great Britain and the United States to interfere in self-government suggests that greed and self-interest of outsiders detract from the issues of democracy and civil rights for Middle Easterners.)

Tone

9. How does the book's tone alter?

(The author's strength as a writer of young adult literature lies in the juxtaposition of child-

hood disobedience and disillusion with the unrest that makes Iran a dangerous place to rear families. In humorous scenes, Marji is alternately suspicious, easily led, cynical, fantasy-ridden, and petulant. Her misdeeds—mocking rules, striking the principal, sassing the religion teacher, threatening Ramin with nails, cutting grammar class—indicate that she has learned insolence from her parents rather than the controlled protest of intellectual Marxists. By her teens, the tone darkens from the droll recounting of misbehaviors to a possibility of arrest and jailing. Ebi and Taji have no alternative but to separate the family, a conclusion that suggests Marji's permanent isolation from home.)

Wisdom

10. What advice makes the greatest impression on Marji?

(In her last days at home, Marji absorbs final words of wisdom from her loved ones. Ebi urges her to remember who she is. The hugs of friends assure her that her peers love her. Grandma spends the last night with Marji and urges her to ignore the stupidity of people who harm her. Grandma wants understanding to override bitterness and vengeance. Like Ebi, she instructs Marji to "be true to yourself.")

How Language Works

Satrapi expresses her attitude toward characters and themes through insightful detail:

1. She pictures Marji as intellectually curious, and eager to try out roles as a prophet or as revolutionaries Fidel Castro, Che Guevara, or Leon Trotsky. Testing her wisdom, she pictures the revolution as a bicycle: "When the wheels don't turn, it falls."
2. Marji's precocious rebellion alarms her parents, who, in an effort to spare her the harsh consequences of bucking the status quo, attempt to prevent her from attending street demonstrations. Already infected with their bold idealism, she retorts, "For a revolution to succeed, the entire population must support it."
3. Marji's free thinking inspires libertarianism and sympathy for the maid, Mrs. Nasrine. Out of class consciousness, Marji wishes that Mrs. Nasrine sat at the table with the family and reports being ashamed to "sit in my father's Cadillac."

4. Marji's maturity coalesces in a street incident where women chant, "Guns may shoot and knives may carve, but we won't wear your silly scarves."
5. The deaths of Neda and Niloufar impress on Marji the real meaning of sacrifice. The shock emerges in a single statement of innocence: "I had no idea."

Across the Curriculum

Research

1. Create a bulletin board listing some major conventions of cautionary tales. Include parental and classroom warnings, trial and error, disobedience, daring, confrontations with authority figures, interrogation, threat, and punishment. Post a list of rules for Marji:
 - Ask before leaving home.
 - Respect teachers.
 - Avoid violence in the streets.
 - Wear a head scarf in public.
2. Divide the class into small groups to list identifiable parts of the action and to place them on a Freytag diagram. Include exposition of the Satrapi family, rising action, climax, falling action, and conclusion. How does Ebi serve a variety of roles—husband, father, teacher, engineer, host, citizen, friend, supporter, observer, reporter, rescuer, traveler, brother, Communist, and rebel? In which part of the Freytag diagram does each role belong?

Foreign Language

1. Make a map of the Middle East, from Egypt to India and north to Turkey. Name the languages common to each, especially Farsi and Arabic.

Cinema

1. On cels of a film storyboard, place the following stage props where they will have the most impact: veil, bathtub, stretcher, whip, knife, photos, telephone, chador, radio, television, cars, bracelet, sheep, suitcases, swan carved out of bread, overcoat, pirated audiocassettes, bandages, buses, MIGs, stairs, making tape, groceries, Michael Jackson button, sneakers, zarb, denim jacket, posters, black curtains, iron, cigarettes, alcohol, cards, chess sets, and luggage.
2. Describe aspects of the graphic novel that are more suited to cartooning, radio, stage,

tableau, illustration, storytelling, puppetry, choral reading, and pageant than to film; for example, Mongol invaders, flashbacks to great-grandpa, BBC news of the bombing, attacks by SAVAK, parent meetings with the school principal, the national anthem played over television, street demonstrations, black curtains over taped windows, brass knuckles made out of nails, God staring at Karl Marx, patients wounded by chemical warfare, and children's torture games.

3. View various films featuring village and community life; e.g., *Watership Down*, *Whale Rider*, *Little Women*, *Silas Marner*, *Not Without My Daughter*, *The Education of Little Tree*, *Ellen Foster*, *The Kite Runner*, *Something Wicked This Way Comes*, *The Joy Luck Club*, *The Good Earth*, *In the Time of the Butterflies*, *And Now Miguel*, *The Last Emperor*, *Walkabout*, and *Places in the Heart*. Discuss why filmmakers focus on the effects of persecution, struggle, journeys, threat, and exclusion on innocent or idealistic people.

Speech

1. Describe in a short speech the effects of isolation, persecution, disease, frustration, separation, failed ambitions, missing parents, sorrow, memories, danger, education, and disagreement on characters in the graphic novel. How does Ebi ennoble people like Ahmad and Siamak's sister, who appear to have failed? Why does the author suggest that martyrs are necessary to a life-and-death struggle?
2. Outline a brief talk on difficult journeys in folklore and literature. Mention Wang Lung's move with his family during a famine in *The Good Earth*, True Son's return to the Delaware village in *The Light in the Forest*, sailing with pirates in *The True Confessions of Charlotte Doyle*, the wanderings of Johnny Appleseed and Marco Polo, Laura Ingalls's narrow escapes in the *Little House on the Prairie* series, Jim Hawkins's voyage in *Treasure Island*, Jo March's sojourn in New York in *Little Women*, the travels of *Sinbad the Sailor*, the desert adventure in *The Little Prince*, and Robin Hood's return from the Crusades. Why does Marji's move to Vienna seem less like an adventure and more like a permanent separation from home, friends, Grandma, and parents?

Psychology

1. Characterize relationships in the graphic novel, particularly husband/wife, Marji/classmates, Marji/cousins, father/daughter, female guards/Marji, Tinoosh's father/guests, Anoosh/Marji, Marji/Grandma, Mali/Taji, mother/daughter, teacher/student, principal/parents, thugs/Iranian women, Satrapis/departing relatives, aunt/shoppers, Satrapis/former prisoners, and Ebi/brothers. Which pair reflects the most trust? suspicion? caution? disagreement? mutual faith? need? hope for a successful revolution?
2. Compose a short outline for an oral report on these character roles: shah, enforcers, pilots, prisoners, hospital patients, victims, teacher, principal, neighbors, shoppers, Jewish neighbors, counterfeiter, airport guards, sellers of contraband, and children of victims. Determine which roles have the greatest influence on Tehran's social structure, survival, and outlook. Why does Ebi fear for his wife and daughter?

Reading

1. Read aloud other literary descriptions of national and legal dilemmas. Include Marie McSwigan's *Snow Treasure* and *All Aboard for Freedom*, Luis J. Rodriguez's *Always Running*, Kaye Gibbons's *Ellen Foster*, Walter Dean Myers's *Monster* and *Shooter*, Gary Paulsen's *The Crossing*, Yoko Kawashima Watkins's *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*, Julie Otsuka's *When the Emperor Was Divine*, Esther Hautzig's *The Endless Steppes*, Lois Lowry's *The Giver* and *Messenger*, Julia Alvarez's *In the Time of the Butterflies*, Conrad Richter's *The Light in the Forest*, and Shirley Jackson's "The Lottery." Discuss examples of cooperation and shared values, for example, the rescue of an infant in *The Giver*, aid to former gang members in *Always Running*, plotting against a dictator in *In the Time of the Butterflies*, escaping Korean soldiers in *So Far from the Bamboo Grove*, accusing a racist murderer in *The Light in the Forest*, transporting the Norwegian treasure in *Snow Treasure*, speaking the name Hirohito in *When the Emperor Was Divine*, and placing an orphan in a home in *Ellen Foster*.
2. Lead a choral reading of Emma Lazarus's poem "The New Colossus." Discuss its value on the Statue of Liberty. Determine how this ode epitomizes the displacement of refugees like

Kaveh, Fereydoon's lover and unborn son, Anoosh, the shah, and Marji.

Literature

1. With a group, list and explain significant actions. Include these: wearing a Michael Jackson button, talking to God, ordering a counterfeit passport, discussing repression with Grandma, drinking alcohol, holding a party, confessing to female street guards, covering windows with masking tape, listening to BBC news, traveling to Vienna, sheltering a Communist, forgiving an oppressor, looking for Neda's remains, flirting at the Kansas restaurant, and visiting Uncle Anoosh one last time. Categorize each under key headings, for example, strengths, disagreements, yearnings, defiance, and good deeds.
2. Explain to a small group the value of living with intellectual activists. What does Marji learn about feminism from her mother and about revolt from her father? What do Anoosh and Grandma teach Marji? What must Marji learn for herself?
3. Contrast minor characters in terms of action, commentary, and significance. Include pilots, Karl Marx, Neda, great-grandfather, the shah, Ali Ashraf Darvishian, Mehri, Hossein, Anwar Sadar, Ramin, counterfeiter, torturers, passport control, President Carter, Fereydoon, Mohsen Shakiba, Kaveh, Taher Talischi, Pardisse, Siamak Jari, Mali, poor boys with plastic keys, Zozo, members of SAVAK, and Laly. Which characters are stereotypes? Which seem like characterizations of real people? Which have the most influence on the action? Which profit most from the revolt against the shah?
4. Write a theme in which you explain the purpose of a minor incident in the action. Choose from these: Marji plays torture, Taji hides posters in Ebi's overcoat, women confront Mali at the grocery store, Grandma feigns faintness from diabetes, Marji reads a comic on dialectic materialism, male cousins enter the Iranian army, Marji hides a cigarette, Ebi is late arriving home, the parents take a vacation to Turkey, vendors sell pirated audiocassettes, and older girls lure Marji to a hamburger hangout.

Geography

1. Place the following sites on a map: Aras River, Abadan, Tehran, Saudi Arabia, Istanbul, Austria, Baghdad, Khorramshahr, Leningrad, Karbala, Racht, Israel, Great Britain, Holland, Switzerland, Alborz Mountains, Mongolia, Iraq, Azerbaijan, Astara, Vienna, Turkey, Italy, Iran, USSR, Los Angeles, and Spain. Locate major settlement by Arabs, Aryans, Europeans, Kurds, and Mongolians.

Math and Computer Art

1. Generate flash cards for the following vocabulary words. Add iconography to give clues to each term: reservoir, BBC, secular, proletariat, Saddam, jerry can, sachertorte, zarb, Luristani, permissive, flagellation, resignation, nuptial chambers, flatulence, espadrille, hypocrite, avant-garde, Mongolian, decadence, Shiite, capitalism, republican, putsch, Kurdish, obligatory, console, ideology, pact, Gandhi, Ataturk, context, diabolical, Lenin, degenerate, fatalism, dialectic, Banisadr, materialism, coup d'état, Freemason, ballistic missiles, guerrillas, Aryans, frivolities, Marie Curie, chador, martyr, tumans, Zarathustra, effigy, transitional, Muslim, wrath, rabble, MIG, Bolsheviks, jackal, Trotsky, Islamic, entourage, Fidel Castro, phenomena, Cyrus the Great, regime, CIA, carnage, euphoria, SAVAK, instinctive, radioactive, clarify, circumspect, Che Guevara, shah, imperialism, Hindu, cadaver, pervert, Princess Leia, prostituting, jasmine, and initiation.

Social Studies

1. Compose a short speech in which you contrast incidents in the graphic novel with current issues concerning prisoners of war, counterfeiting, illegal aliens, border patrols and vigilantism, sanctuary for war refugees, smuggling contraband and pirated tapes, deaths of immigrants, deportation, child abuse, protest marches, capricious arrest and jailing, greed for oil, food shortages, and exile.
2. Explain in a theme why Tehran needs a variety of jobs and professions—police, firefighters, grocers, restaurateurs, clerks, taxi drivers, apartment managers, nannies, maids, media broadcasters, teachers, bus drivers, nurses, doctors, telephone workers, gas station attendants, engineers, and principals.
3. Draw a Venn diagram representing the parallel

lifestyles and activities of Ebi and Anoosh. Note the aspects they share; for example, relatives, talent, determination, hatred of oppression, courage, energy, kindness, family stories, idealism, love of children, and protection of Marji.

Law

1. List proposed changes in American law that would threaten relationships between citizens and Iranian aliens. For example, laws limiting residence of Iranian college students, protecting alien laborers from exploitation, requiring military service of aliens, jailing and deporting alien criminals and terrorists, fining employers who hire illegal workers, ensuring religious freedom, suppressing bullying and racism, and curtailing free schooling and health services to impoverished aliens and to children born in the U.S. to aliens. Which laws would be hardest to enforce? Which would do the most harm to vulnerable Iranians? Which would benefit U.S. citizens? world peace?

Science and Health

1. Present an oral and written summary of international methods of sharing medical technology that might have saved Uncle Taher Talischi from heart disease. Propose ways of aiding civilian hospital patients without jeopardizing the recovery of soldiers, especially those wounded by chemical warfare.

Language

1. Form a team of readers to tape expanded, imaginative episodes of *Persepolis*. Create scenes in which the Satrapis bury and grieve for Anoosh, Grandma writes to Marji in Vienna, Mali returns home and rebuilds, Kaveh loves American comic books, God comforts Marji, and neighbors bury Neda and her family.
2. Define the elements of a cautionary tale by citing scenes from the graphic novel. What actions require caution? Who is in danger? How do Islamic fanatics endanger all of Tehran and its cosmopolitan activities, such as drinking wine and playing cards or chess? Why is secrecy detrimental to Tehran? Which characters accept risk? loss? separation? isolation? torture? death?

Music

1. Research the national anthems of Iran from the

early 20th century to the present time. Compare them to the popular hymn “Ey Iran” (1946) by Hossein Gol-e-Golab. How do the sets of lyrics differ in focus on the land, ruler, citizens, martyrs, civil rights, and God?

Art, Costume Design

1. Using desktop publishing or other media, design an advertisement for jet pilots and mechanics, a layout for a hamburger hangout or school playground, a banner announcing the playing of the national anthem and the sale of veils and chadors, a business card for Ebi or for Anwar Sadat, a list of duties for boy soldiers in minefields and or for border guards at the airport, a wall chart on punishments for smuggling contraband goods or for lying to border guards, an epitaph for Great-Grandpa or Taher Talischi, a list of first aid or travel items needed for a journey to Turkey or Vienna, an extended definition of flashback or fantasy conversation, a city map of Tehran or Vienna, and a sketch of a chador or an F-14.
2. Create a bulletin board illustrating visual scenes from the story. Include visiting Uncle Anoosh in prison, shopping for rice, protesting on Black Friday, finding Neda’s bracelet, honoring martyrs with self-flagellation, sleeping next to Grandma, punishing Ramin, playing the zarb, and seeing Taji faint at the airport.

Drama and Speech

1. Write several conversations that are only implied, such as Taji and Ebi’s discussion of the trip to Zozo’s house in Vienna, Grandma’s farewell to Marji, Mali’s description of her home’s destruction, religion lessons on the war, plans to celebrate the shah’s departure, and grief for Ahmad. Act out your dialogue for an audio- or videotaping.
2. Describe aloud the multiple purposes of protest marches, secret meetings, closed borders, chanting against the shah, executions, burning people in the Rex Cinema, and public enforcers. Why does the shift toward religious fanaticism endanger women? girls? punks? Marxists?
3. Discuss your reaction to upheaval in Tehran. What role would you play in the graphic novel—for example, principal, BBC broadcaster, surgeon, prime minister, jet pilot, jailer, student, cousin in uniform, grocer, boy soldier

with a key, or angry parent? Which characters would you choose for friends or family? How would you react to closing Iran’s borders to travel? What advice would you give Marji about risking one last journey to Vienna? Would you choose school in a German-speaking school? remaining in Tehran with Ebi and Taji? becoming a rebellious citizen or Russian spy?

Composition

1. Make an oral report on the theme of suffering and martyrdom. Which characters are most in need of rescue? support? rehabilitation? forgiveness? thanks? comfort?
2. Compose a first person account of Marji’s arrival at Zozo’s house in Vienna. Make a list of questions for Zozo to ask, such as how Marji got out of Tehran, what Ebi and Taji said at the airport, how Grandma will miss Marji, what Marji wants to study at school, what foods will make her feel at home, and how she will learn German to converse with other students.

Education

1. Sketch a welcoming center where newcomers to Iran can learn Farsi and Arabic and where children can acquire manners, customs, amusements, literacy skills, and books. Divide the complex into study areas, labs, playgrounds, religious training centers, and libraries for pre-schoolers, grade-schoolers, advanced students, and adult learners.

Alternate Assessment

1. List in chronological order and describe significant events connected with Persian history. Mention religious fanaticism, Mongolian invasion, the rape of Niloufar, bombardment with scud missiles, SAVAK, an influx of refugees from the south, closing of universities, Grandpa’s jailings, freeing of pilots, a celebration of Persian history, the Shah’s move to Egypt, confiscation of playing cards and chess sets, the creation of an independent state in Azerbaijan, Neda’s death, the arrest of a Russian spy, depleted grocery shelves, Mali’s arrival in Tehran, Black Friday, and veiling.
2. List events from the graphic novel that express strong attitudes toward kinship, romance,

hope, obedience, parenthood, torture, the future, memories, education, hospitality, courage, celebration, and synergy. Indicate satrapi's apparent opinion on each subject.

3. Compose brief definitions of graphic novel, flashback, Bildungsroman, and cautionary tale as they apply to Persepolis. What changes in the plot would require more flashbacks? How does the novel project hope for Marji? What advice does Marji carry with her to Vienna?
4. Summarize scenes that depict conflict, particularly bribery of street guards, Black Friday riots, F-14 bomb runs, celebrating the Shah's departure to Egypt, mockery of self-flagellation, honor to a victim of cancer, wounds from chemical warfare, the stabbing of a woman in the street, intimidation of a child for wearing tight jeans and a Michael Jackson button, the burning of the Rex Cinema, and beatings with electrical cables.

Vocabulary Test

Choose words from the list below that match lists of synonyms that follow.

avant-garde	ballistic	cadaver	capitalism
carnage	circumspect	clarify	console
context	decadence	degenerate	diabolical
dialectic	effigy	entourage	espadrille
euphoria	fatalism	flagellation	flatulence
frivolities	guerrillas	hypocrite	ideology
imperialism	initiation	instinctive	martyr
materialism	nuptial	obligatory	permissive
pervert	phenomena	proletariat	putsch
ble	regime	republican	reservoir
ignation	secular	transitional	wrath

rab-
res-

- _____ 1. decline, deteriorate, atrophy, worsen, degrade, regress
- _____ 2. ire, anger, outrage, displeasure, fury, animosity, hate
- _____ 3. necessary, essential, compulsory, mandatory, imperative
- _____ 4. massacre, slaughter, butchery, execution, bloodbath
- _____ 5. demystify, elaborate, explicate, expand, elucidate
- _____ 6. mob, rout, horde, throng, jam, pack, crowd, gang
- _____ 7. coup d'état, takeover, revolt, overthrow, insurrection
- _____ 8. intermediate, developmental, provisional, temporary
- _____ 9. suite, following, retinue, staff, backup, support, servants
- _____ 10. elation, exhilaration, uplift, joy, bliss, rapture, ecstasy
- _____ 11. solace, calm, soothe, relieve, allay, cheer, mitigate
- _____ 12. devilish, satanic, evil, malevolent, fiendish, hellish
- _____ 13. cache, escrow, backlog, stash, stockpile, hoard, store
- _____ 14. spontaneous, inborn, unplanned, innate, impulsive
- _____ 15. lax, unstructured, indulgent, lenient, tolerant, liberal

Comprehension Test A

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

Choose an answer to complete each statement below.

- _____ 1. Ebi recognizes
- Ahmad's body at the hospital ward.
 - the chemical torture of Iranian pilots.
 - Taji's handprint on Mehri's face.
 - Marji's handwriting on the letters to Hossein.
- _____ 2. Taji urges her daughter to
- forgive.
 - stop believing that God chose the king.
 - quit smoking.
 - wear a veil over her denim jacket.
- _____ 3. The "deliverers of divine justice"
- rifle through Marji's luggage.
 - murder Siamak Jari's sister.
 - accept Ebi's bribe.
 - search for Mohsen's playing cards and chess sets.
- _____ 4. Anoosh predicts
- his father's rejection of the shah.
 - that F-14s will bomb Tehran.
 - rule by the proletariat.
 - that President Carter will reject the shah.
- _____ 5. The British encourage
- revolutionaries to riot on Black Friday.
 - the sale of oil to Europe.
 - a takeover in Iran.
 - dialectic materialism.
- _____ 6. The universities close
- to halt the teaching of decadence.
 - because fanatics require veiling.
 - before radicals seize the U.S. embassy.
 - because radical men shave their beards.
- _____ 7. Radio news reports
- that Taji's photograph links her to Communists.
 - the Islamic invasion as the work of the prime minister.
 - the bombing of Baghdad.
 - that Iraqi MIGs bombed Tehran.
- _____ 8. The Iranian national anthem
- replaces the Islamic hymn.
 - sounds over the television.
 - plays on loudspeakers during executions.
 - accompanies self-flagellation in the classroom.
- _____ 9. Women in the grocery store
- discuss becoming prostitutes for cash to buy food.
 - ridicule Taji for dyeing her hair blond.
 - blame southern refugees for emptying the shelves.
 - recognize gold keys in the hands of poor boys.
- _____ 10. The black curtains hide
- the glow of cigarettes from F-14s.
 - the Satrapis from fanatic neighbors.

- c. Peyman and Shahab from the army.
- d. Mrs. Nasrine from view while she crushes grapes.

Part II: Identification (20 points)

Which character does the following:

- _____ 1. bathes during the bombardment
- _____ 2. is spotted at Taher's house and executed
- _____ 3. claims to feel faint
- _____ 4. looks like Frankenstein
- _____ 5. confesses to the women's branch of the guardians
- _____ 6. leaves a bracelet behind in a bombed-out house
- _____ 7. is labeled a Russian spy
- _____ 8. explains about rape of arrested women
- _____ 9. is marked out on a photo
- _____ 10. became prime minister

Part III: Explanation (10 points)

Explain the significance of each term below:

1. MIGs

2. tumans

3. scuds

4. flagellation

5. keys

Part IV: Essay Questions (40 points)

- 1. Account for Anoosh's disagreements with his father.
- 2. Defend the decision to send Marji to Zozo's house.
- 3. Compare mistreatment of men, women, boys, and girls.
- 4. Express the author's attitude toward freedom.
- 5. Describe the circumstances that precede release of Iranian pilots.

Comprehension Test B

Part I: True/False (30 points)

Mark each statement either T for true or F if any part is false:

- _____ 1. Uncle Fereydoon proclaimed Azerbaijan an independent state.
- _____ 2. Anoosh gives Marji two swans made from bread.
- _____ 3. Kaveh's parents believe that the Islamic regime is too stupid to last.
- _____ 4. Siamak and his family hide among sheep.
- _____ 5. Marji receives the honor of a last phone call to Anoosh.
- _____ 6. Taji defends Marji's right to defend women's rights.
- _____ 7. The widow declares her elderly husband a victim of rebels.
- _____ 8. Taher needs to travel to Iraq for a heart operation.
- _____ 9. Marji prefers God to Karl Marx or Che Guevara.
- _____ 10. Hossein understands why he must reject Mehri.
- _____ 11. Grandpa was imprisoned in water.
- _____ 12. The last shah's father organized the emperor's overthrow.
- _____ 13. Persia suffered tyranny from Arabs and Mongolians.
- _____ 14. Marji writes a holy book about the fire ceremony.
- _____ 15. Marji believes that martyrdom injects blood into society.

Part II: Matching (30 points)

Match these descriptions with characters or places.

- _____ 1. Kurdish writer
- _____ 2. three-week vacation
- _____ 3. emigrant to Los Angeles
- _____ 4. Jews
- _____ 5. receives a key
- _____ 6. flees to Holland
- _____ 7. counterfeiter
- _____ 8. claims to revere Malcolm X
- _____ 9. immigrates from Iran
- _____ 10. accuses the principal of stealing
- _____ 11. wears jasmine
- _____ 12. faints
- _____ 13. holds a party
- _____ 14. lies about grammar class
- _____ 15. fears knocks on the door

- | | |
|-----------------------|---------------------|
| a. Kaveh | k. Darvishian |
| b. Taher's son | l. Baba-Levys |
| c. Mali | m. poor boys |
| d. Italy | n. 14-year-olds |
| e. Neda | o. Khosro |
| f. Grandma | p. Taji |
| g. Mrs. Nasrine's son | q. Marji |
| h. principal | r. Spain |
| i. Grandpa | s. Reza |
| j. Laly | t. Tinoosh's father |

Part III: Essay Questions (40 points)

1. Explain Anoosh's decision to swim the river and flee to Russia.
2. Account for Marji's knowledge of torture methods.
3. Describe Marji's holy book.
4. Discuss Marji's need for a family hero.
5. Describe how Taher dies.

Answer Key

VOCABULARY TEST

- | | | |
|---------------|-----------------|-----------------|
| 1. degenerate | 6. rabble | 11. console |
| 2. wrath | 7. putsch | 12. diabolical |
| 3. obligatory | 8. transitional | 13. reservoir |
| 4. massacre | 9. entourage | 14. instinctive |
| 5. clarify | 10. euphoria | 15. permissive |

COMPREHENSION TEST A

Part I: Multiple Choice (20 points)

- | | |
|------|-------|
| 1. d | 6. a |
| 2. a | 7. d |
| 3. b | 8. b |
| 4. c | 9. c |
| 5. c | 10. b |

Part II: Identification (20 points)

- | | |
|-------------|--------------------------|
| 1. Taji | 6. Neda |
| 2. Niloufar | 7. Anoosh |
| 3. Grandma | 8. Taji |
| 4. Ebi | 9. Anoosh's Russian wife |
| 5. Marji | 10. Grandpa |

Part III: Explanation (10 points)

1. Iraq's jet fighter planes
2. Iranian currency
3. ballistic missiles
4. ritual self-abuse to express honor to martyrs
5. gifts to boy soldiers to open heaven and reveal a palace and women

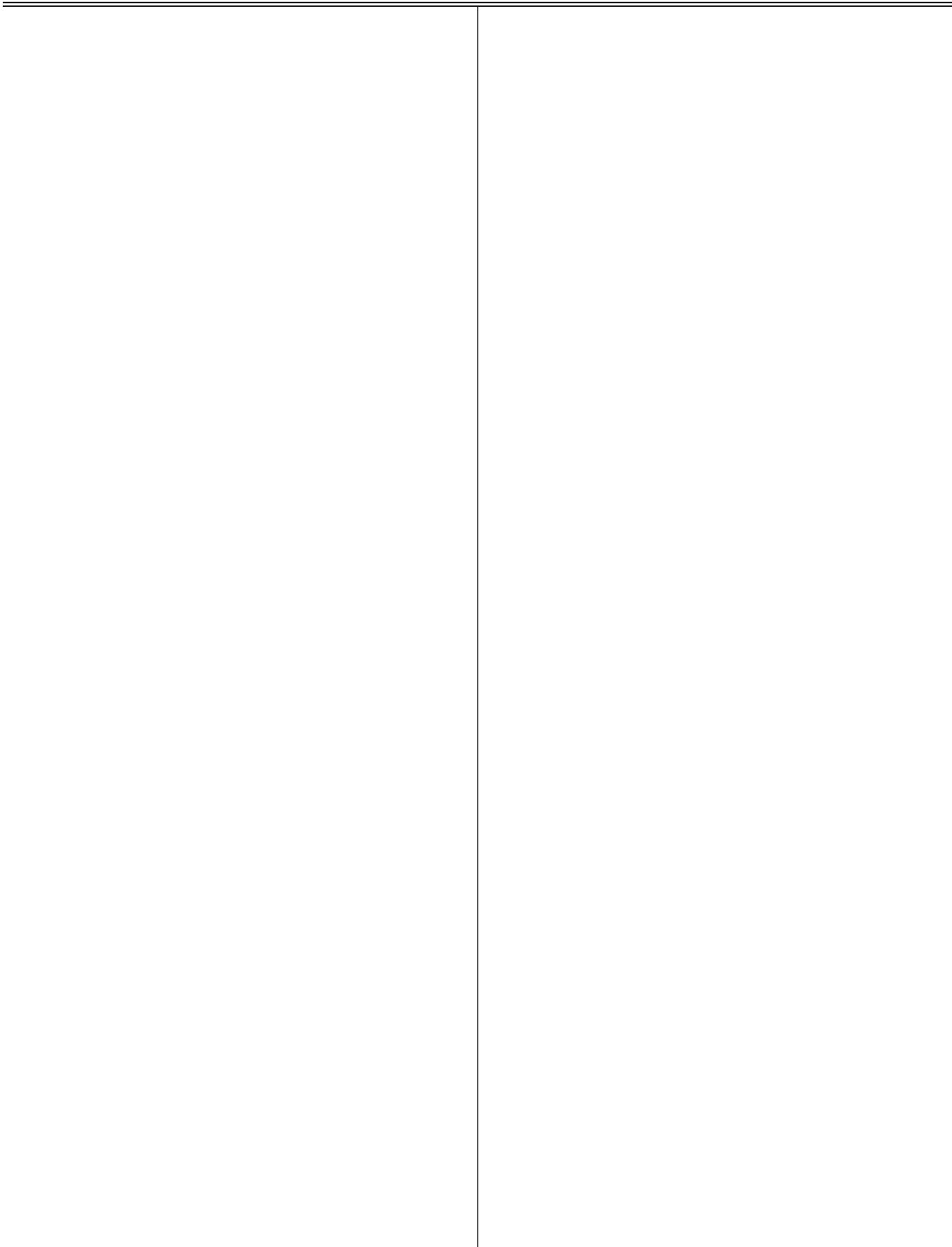
COMPREHENSION TEST B

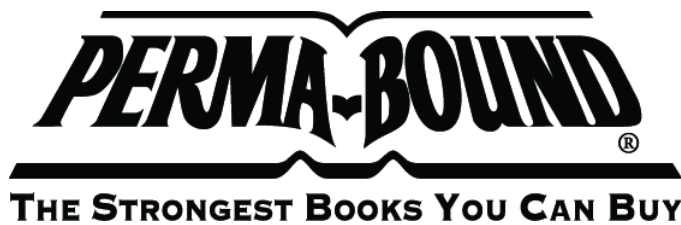
Part I: Multiple Choice (30 points)

- | | | |
|------|-------|-------|
| 1. T | 6. T | 11. T |
| 2. T | 7. F | 12. T |
| 3. F | 8. F | 13. T |
| 4. T | 9. F | 14. F |
| 5. F | 10. T | 15. F |

Part II: Matching (20 points)

- | | | |
|---------|------------|-------|
| 1. k | 6. b | 11. f |
| 2. d, r | 7. o | 12. p |
| 3. a | 8. q | 13. t |
| 4. e, l | 9. a, b, q | 14. q |
| 5. g, m | 10. q | 15. p |





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