

CAUSE AND EFFECT CHART:

Using the chart below, ask students to fill in five important events from the story in the boxes labeled "cause."

For example,
Abdullah gets Wadjda's veil dirty before school.
Wadjda is caught selling trinkets in school.
Wadjda commits to studying for her school competition.
Wadjda declares her plan for the prize money to Ms. Hussa.
Wadjda's mother learns that her husband will marry another woman.

Students will then work in pairs to fill in the effects for each other's chart.
Students will present their completed charts in a class discussion.

Cause:	→	Effect:
Cause:	→	Effect:
Cause:	→	Effect:
Cause:	→	Effect:
Cause:	→	Effect:

STUDENT'S CHOICE:

ACT IT OUT: Small groups of students can choose to act out a scene from the book. They should create props and use dialogue from the story to portray the actions and emotions of the character. Students will perform in front of their peers.

COMPREHENSION STICKS: Provide students with large popsicle sticks. Ask students to develop comprehension questions related to the story. Put all the comprehension sticks inside the cup. Pass the cup around the room and ask students to pull a stick. Students will answer the question on the popsicle stick with help from peers, as needed.

PRAISE FOR

THE GREEN BICYCLE

"A winningly told story of struggle, solidarity, and optimism."
—Kirkus Reviews

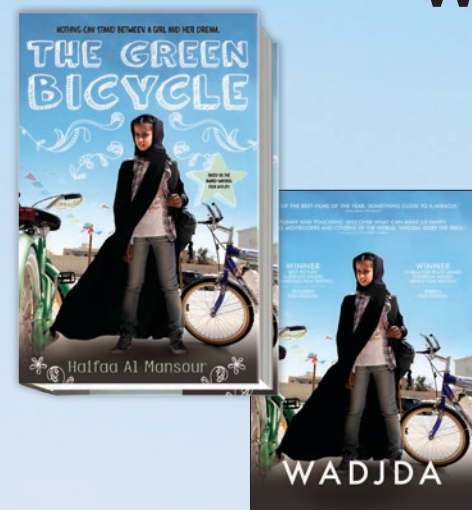
"Wadjda is a well-executed character: despite her feisty nature, she's vulnerable and flawed, and her story will resonate with boys and girls alike."
—School Library Journal

"Al Mansour's debut novel is a revelatory glimpse into a culture unfamiliar to many American readers."
—Booklist

"This novel has a cinematic sense of place... accessibly written and stealthily gripping."
—Bulletin of the Center for Children's Books

"Fans of feisty protagonists will love this book and root for Wadjda from beginning to end."
—School Library Connection

This middle grade novel is based on the acclaimed film
WADJDA!



"A slyly subversive delight."
—Dana Stevens, Slate.com

"Wadjda is something rare."
—The Village Voice

"Guaranteed to charm."
—Variety

"Lively and sly... a cultural thunderclap."
—NPR.org

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

THE GREEN BICYCLE



Haifaa Al Mansour

THE GREEN BICYCLE



In the vein of *The Year of the Dog* and *The Higher Power of Lucky*, this Middle Eastern coming-of-age story is told with warmth, spirit, and a mischievous sense of humor.

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

Set against the shifting social attitudes of the Middle East, *The Green Bicycle* explores gender roles, conformity, and the importance of family, all with wit and irresistible heart.



ABOUT THE AUTHOR:

Haifaa Al Mansour is a Saudi Arabian film director and screenwriter, and the winner of an EDA Female Focus Award. Her first feature-length film, *Wadjda*, won the Best International Feature Audience Award at the Los Angeles Film Festival, among other awards, and is the basis of *The Green Bicycle*. Her next film, *A Storm in the Stars*, starring Elle Fanning, is set to release in 2016. This is her debut novel.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

1. What traits would you use to describe Wadjda's character? What are her strengths and flaws? Use text evidence to support your thinking.
2. How does Wadjda feel about school?
3. What events lead Wadjda to her dream of getting a bicycle?
4. How does Wadjda plan to get the bicycle? Do you think she'll be successful? Why or why not?
5. What is the Quran?
6. How do Abdullah and Wadjda feel about each other? Why do they tease and annoy each other?
7. Who are Fatin and Fatima and why is Wadjda fond of them?
8. Was it right for Wadjda to protect herself instead of providing an alibi for Fatin and Fatima while they are questioned by Ms. Hussa?
9. Why does Wadjda decide not to take the folder from Ms. Hussa's office? What does this decision say about her character?
10. Wadjda adds her name to her family tree only to discover it has been removed. Who do you think took it off?
11. How does Wadjda persuade the shopkeeper to reserve the bicycle for her?
12. Throughout the story, Wadjda's mother struggles between wanting independence and abiding by the rules of her Saudi Muslim culture. Which do you think she really values? Use text evidence to support your thinking.
13. How does Wadjda redeem herself with Fatin and Fatima?
14. Describe Wadjda's relationship with her father. How do her feelings about him change throughout the story? Why doesn't she confront him after his wedding?
15. What does Wadjda's mother do for her at the end of the story? Why?
16. What lesson does Wadjda learn in this story? Discuss the irony of the competition related to Wadjda's ultimate goal.

EXTENSION ACTIVITIES:

WHO WHAT "WEAR"

In this story, the clothing the characters wear plays an important role in understanding the tension between cultural duty and independence for the Saudi women. In small groups, ask students to locate passages and vocabulary in the book that describe traditional Saudi clothing. Make a list of this vocabulary. Provide students with images of men and women wearing this clothing and ask them to label each outfit. Class Discussion: What do these clothes reveal about the Saudi Muslim culture (gender roles, weather etc.)?

Images may be found here:

<http://www.saudiembassy.or.jp/DiscoverSA/TC.htm>

<http://www.thelovelyplanet.net/traditional-dress-of-the-kingdom-of-saudi-arabia/>

COMPARE AND CONTRAST CULTURES:

Create a giant Venn diagram comparing Saudi Muslim and American culture using chart paper that can be displayed in the front of the room. Create a list of cultural categories, for example: clothing, geography, weather, school, family relationships, gender roles, and religion. Provide each student with several small sticky notes. Call out a category. Students will be challenged to fill out a sticky note for each section of the Venn diagram related to that category. After the Venn diagram has been completed for each category, have a class discussion about the similarities and differences between cultures. It may also be useful to locate Saudi Arabia on a world map and show images of the country, the food, the Qur'an etc.

CHARACTERIZATION BAG:

Provide each student with a paper bag. Students will decorate the front of the bag with a picture of Wadjda. On one side of the bag they will list her likes and on the other side they will list her dislikes. On the back of the bag, students will write down three important quotes from the story. Students will find five items to put inside the bag that symbolize an important event in the story. Each student will present their characterization bag to the class, describing the items inside and explaining the importance of the three quotes they selected.

"I think storytelling is a very valuable tool for combating misconceptions and for presenting a first-hand view of our perspective. I really wanted to put a human face on some of the issues that we talk about in such a theoretical way, and you don't have to explain why a little girl would see riding a bike as something that might be fun. As the story developed I constantly tried to look at it from the outside, to see the universal themes that it spoke to. I didn't want to give foreign audiences the false impression that it would be an easy or acceptable thing for a girl to ride a bike around Riyadh, so it was hard not to want to put in a bleaker end to her journey. But I think the positive aspects of the book will help readers relate to the story more and ultimately enjoy reading it."

—HAIFAA AL MANSOUR