

Title: *All-American Muslim Girl*
Author: Nadine Jolie Courtney
Genre: Young Adult - Religion & Belief

Respondent's Name and Grade: Zahra V., 8th Grade

Date Responded To: July 21, 2022

Questions:

1. *What is the main plot of this book?*

The main plot of *All-American Muslim Girl* follows a sophomore girl in high school named Allie. Allie appears to be a typical American girl with red hair and fair skin. She is also smart, has a strong bond with her parents, and has a friendly relationship with a cute boy. Though most people don't know Allie is Muslim, and after a racist interaction with a man and her father on their plane trip to Dallas, Allie realizes that although she identifies as Muslim, she does not practice the religion. This causes Allie to explore deeper into her religion, Islam, and learn more about it.

2. *Which character did you most identify with and why?*

I identified with the main character Allie, the most. The reason being is because like Allie, I am also a Muslim teen. I enjoyed how I could share similar experiences with her, such as being afraid to tell people what religion I follow, because I want to fit in. I also liked how Allie wanted to learn more about her religion, and how her character developed throughout the novel, like how all teens are struggling to fit in, and develop over time.

3. *What do you believe is the main message of this book?*

I believe the main message of this novel is that it is a struggle for teens to fit in, especially when they are young and Muslim. Many challenges come to them, not just with their relationship with God, but with what others will think of them, and it is hard to balance both.

4. *Do you think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story, or did it come across as too "preachy"?*

I think the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story. I believe this because throughout the entire novel, Allie is trying to find out who she really is and connect more with her religion. She shows struggles and hardships she faces, as well as support from the Muslim community. I also think the main message was transparent within all chapters as the book progressed.

5. *If two or more perspectives on an important topic were explored/presented in this book, which one did you agree with and why?*

The two perspectives in this book were that either Allie could agree with her father and not practice Islam to fit in to please others, or she could connect and learn with her religion to please herself. I agree with Allie on connecting with Islam to please herself, because in today's day and age, most teens will do whatever they need to in order to fit in. So, I am glad she took time to worry about herself, and find out who she is.

6. *In what ways (if any) were your beliefs about a topic changed or reaffirmed through reading this book?*

This book reaffirmed the topic of being judged by your skin color. For example, on the plane ride Allie's dad was called a terrorist because his skin tone was brown. This

showed that even though times are changing and the world claims to be “adapting”, there will always be some people who will make judgements before getting to know you and base you on harmful stereotypes.

7. *What perspective, if any, do you think was missing from this book?*

I think the perspective of a practicing Muslim was missing in this book. To elaborate, I feel as though if Allie had a close companion that was a practicing Muslim, they would have been able to guide Allie more through Islam and help her talk to her dad.

8. *Did this book encourage you to pursue any topics further through more reading, research, action, etc., and if so, how?*

Yes, this book encouraged me to look deeper in the topic of religion. I want to do research in the future, and interview different teen Muslims. I want to see how their beliefs and feelings scale on different levels, and how they feel to be a Muslim in America.

9. *What type of reader (based on age, interests, perspectives, etc.) would you suggest this book to?*

I would recommend this book to a teen reader who is interested in the topic of personal development and religion. I believe they would enjoy this book because you can see how it is hard for teens, especially ones that are different from the rest, to fit in society today. Also, as the book progresses, you are able to see Allie’s personal growth about herself along with her connection to her religion.

10. *What other book(s) have you read that you think would make a good addition to this category of the Perspectives Bibliography, and why?*

I believe the book, *Muslims Girls Rise* by Saira Mir would make a good addition to this category of the Perspectives Bibliography. I think this because similar to *All-American Muslim Girl*, this book follows Muslim women and shows the struggles and hardships they have to face in today’s society.

Reviewer Name and Grade: Tatjana T., 11th Grade

Date Reviewed: April 10, 2023

1. The main plot of "All-American Muslim Girl" is about a teenage girl named Allie, who is brought up as an atheist in a liberal white middle-class family. She falls in love with a Muslim boy named Wells, and as their relationship develops, Allie begins to explore her own identity, religion, and the challenges of being a Muslim in America.

2. I most identify with Allie, the main character, because like her, I was brought up as an atheist and have had questions about religion and identity. I can relate to her internal conflicts and struggles as she navigates her own beliefs and the challenges of being in a relationship with someone from a different cultural and religious background.

3. The main message of this book is about self-identity, acceptance, and understanding of different cultures and religions. It explores the complexities of being a Muslim in America, challenges stereotypes, and encourages open-mindedness towards diverse perspectives.

4. I believe the main message of this book was effectively integrated into the story. It did not come off as preachy, but rather as a genuine exploration of Allie's journey towards

understanding herself and others around her. The author portrayed Allie's internal struggles and conflicts in a nuanced and realistic way, without imposing any particular belief system.

5. One of the perspectives explored in the book is the portrayal of Islam and Muslims in America. As an atheist, I initially had misconceptions and stereotypes about Islam, but through reading this book, I gained a deeper understanding of the diversity and complexity within the Muslim community. This perspective resonated with me, as it challenged my preconceived notions and encouraged me to be more open-minded and accepting towards people of different faiths.

6. Reading this book reaffirmed my belief in the importance of understanding and accepting diverse cultures and religions. It also highlighted the significance of self-identity and the complexities of navigating relationships with people from different backgrounds.

7. While the book explores the challenges faced by Muslims in America, it would have been interesting to have a perspective from a more conservative Muslim character to provide a more balanced portrayal of different beliefs within the Muslim community.

8. Yes, this book encouraged me to pursue further reading and research about Islam, diversity, and the challenges faced by Muslims in America. It inspired me to have more open conversations with people from different cultural and religious backgrounds to foster understanding and acceptance.

9. I would suggest this book to young adult readers who are interested in exploring themes of identity, diversity, and relationships across cultural and religious differences. It would particularly resonate with readers who are open to challenging their own beliefs and perceptions.

10. Another book that would make a good addition to this category of Perspectives biography is "The Lines We Cross" by Randa Abdel-Fattah. This novel follows the story of Michael, a boy from a white nationalist family, and Mina, a Muslim refugee from Afghanistan. As their paths cross, they confront their own biases, family expectations, and the complexities of identity and diversity. It addresses issues of Islamophobia, racism, and the challenges of navigating cultural and religious differences.