



An Educator Guide to

"THIS IS THE BOOK, THE ONE I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR MY ENTIRE LIFE."
—S. K. Ali, award-winning author of SAINTS AND MISFITS

HUDA F ARE YOU?

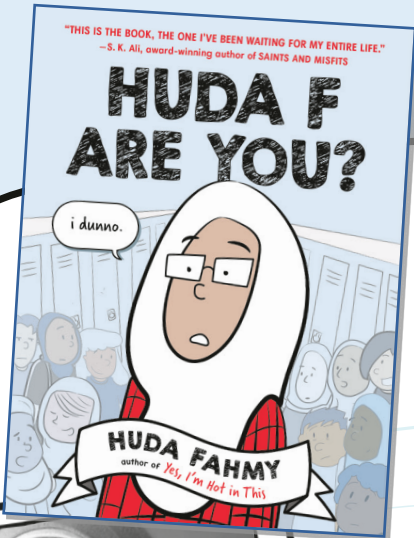
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HUDA FAHMY

author of *Yes, I'm Hot in This*

HC: 9780593324301 | PBK: 9780593324318





OVERVIEW

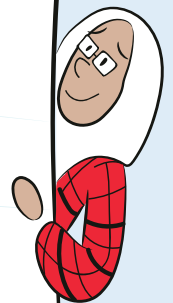
From the creator of the webcomic *Yes, I'm Hot in This*, this cheeky, hilarious, and honest graphic novel asks the question everyone has to figure out for themselves:

Who are you?

Huda and her family just moved to Dearborn, Michigan, a small town with a big Muslim population. In her old town, Huda knew exactly who she was: She was the hijabi girl. But in Dearborn, everyone is the hijabi girl.

Huda is lost in a sea of hijabis, and she can't rely on her hijab to define her anymore. She must define herself. So, she tries on a bunch of cliques, but she isn't a hijabi fashionista or a hijabi athlete or a hijabi gamer. She's not the one who knows everything about her religion or the one all the guys like. She's miscellaneous, which makes her feel like no one at all. Until she realizes that it'll take finding out who she isn't to figure out who she is.

Supporting the national Common Core Standards (CCSS) in reading texts for middle and high school curriculums, *Huda F Are You?* is an appropriate selection for grades 6 and up. The following prompts for a critical analysis of *Huda F Are You?* meet anchor standards for College and Career Readiness and English Language Arts Anchor Standards for Reading.



CONNECT WITH HUDA FAHMY ONLINE!

Instagram and Twitter: @yesimhotinthis · hudafahmy.com

“It is a cliché to jokingly acknowledge that a Muslim kid who grows up in the United States must eventually experience an identity crisis. This is a story of just such an experience.”

–Huda Fahmy

PRE-READING ACTIVITIES

Muslims in America are not a new phenomenon, as many may think. Muslims can trace their history in this country from the time the Spanish brought with them Muslim sailors, merchants, and craftspeople to the first enslaved Africans who were forcibly taken away from their Muslim-majority countries in West Africa. Although the waves of Muslim immigrants varied from time to time based on the policies and world events that shaped the Muslim world, Muslims from parts of the Middle East and South Asia have been settling in communities across the United States for over 100 years. Have students research Muslims in America. Have them create a timeline reflecting the growth of the various Muslim communities in the United States.

Huda Fahmy explains that her parents moved from one city to Dearborn, Michigan, in order to provide their daughters with a better environment. Dearborn has a large, rich history of Arabs and Muslims building the city's community. Allow students to conduct a search for images about the city of Dearborn to understand how that city exemplifies a Muslim and Arab city in the United States. As other immigrants from the past have done, many Arabs and Muslims have historically migrated to large cities like Dearborn in search of economic opportunities. Students should create a slideshow reflecting the impact the Ford company had on the growth of the city of Dearborn and how Ford himself recruited Arabs from countries such as Yemen to work in his factories.

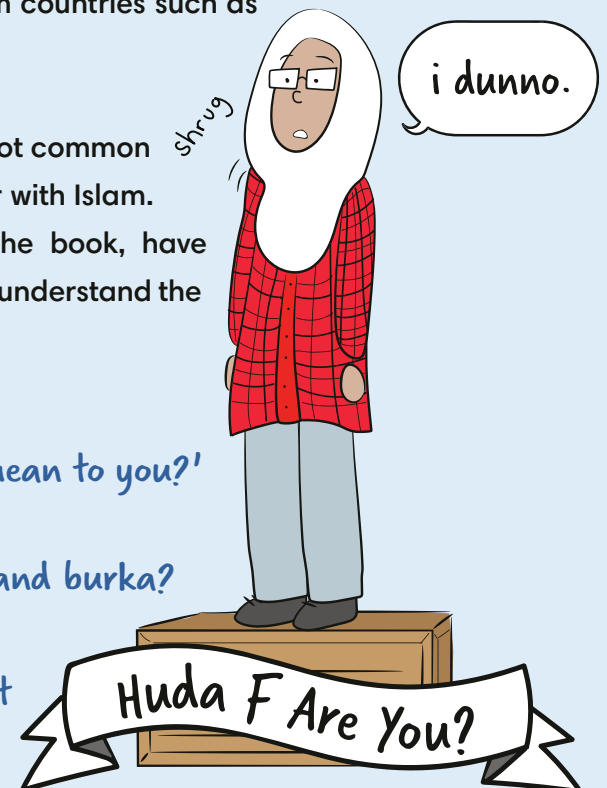
The book examines various aspects of Muslim life that are not common to those who do not practice the religion or are not familiar with Islam. Using the following resources on topics highlighted in the book, have students take notes on a graphic organizer as a resource to understand the topic when it comes up during the reading:

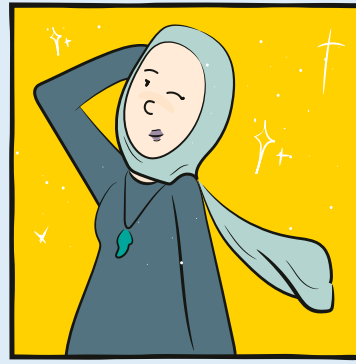
1. Hijab:

- Muslim women answer: 'What does the hijab mean to you?'
- Zahra's Hijab
- What's the difference between a hijab, niqab and burka?

2. Forbidding interest in Islam:

- Islamic Banking and Financing: Why is interest prohibited?

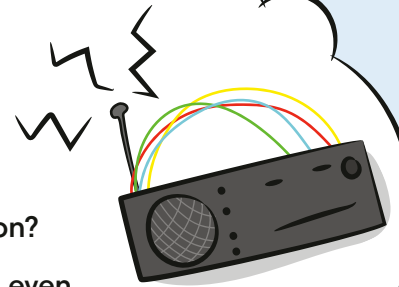




DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

- 1 In the opening of the book, the author has a note to the reader. Why do you believe this message was important to include? How does this help create a better understanding of hijab?
- 2 Huda speaks of eating some delicious zaatar pies (called *manaqish* in Arabic) when she arrives in Dearborn. Zaatar has become a well-used spice in cooking. Have students research the spice and its many uses.
- 3 As you read the book, use a graphic organizer to take notes on the evolving relationship Huda has with her parents.
- 4 On page 13, Huda writes, “I don’t think that is something she’s ever forgotten,” referring to her mother’s experience when she came to the United States and was encouraged to remove her niqab.
 - a What is Huda trying to convey with the image and the quote?
 - b Have you ever had to remove or change something so you could be safer? Explain.
- 5 Explain the family dynamics between Huda and her sisters. What resembles your family or siblings? What is different? Where does Huda fit into the mix between her sisters?
- 6 Huda explains that her parents came from Egypt and Syria looking for a better future, although they believed their stay would be temporary.
 - a Why do you believe Huda’s family put a large emphasis on education?
 - b How do her parent’s expectations add extra “pressure” on Huda and her sisters?
 - c Do you think parents should set expectations for their children? Explain.
- 7 On pages 26–27, Huda is confident she will be at the top of her class. What is she foreshadowing when she says “... she has no idea what’s coming”? What do you predict she will experience?
- 8 Hydra, Honda, and Hubba are some of the “names” given to Huda by her teachers. Have you experienced a teacher pronouncing your name incorrectly? How did it make you feel? Did you help correct the teacher? Explain.
- 9 Knowing how to pronounce a student’s name is important. Here are some resources to help you learn student names:
 - a [How to pronounce student names and why it matters.](#)
 - b [Honor your students’ heritage by pronouncing their names correctly.](#)
- 10 What are the physical changes Huda experiences? How does she express her transformation?

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS (continued)



- 11 Compare Huda's experience as a hijabi in middle school to her experience in high school.
- a How are they the same?
 - b How are they different?
 - c Which experience do you think allowed her more self-expression?

12 Why is fitting in at the high school in Dearborn so difficult for Huda, even when she is now at a school with a lot of hijabi students?

13 Do you agree with Huda's sister when she states that "hijab is not a personality trait"? Explain your answer.

14 Describe the different types of hijabis at her high school. Where did Huda fit in with any or all the groups? Explain how she fit in and how she didn't.

15 Would you say that the different hijabi groups are similar to high school cliques? Explain.

16 Huda describes herself as a "pod person." What does she mean? How does this help her process her own self-determination?

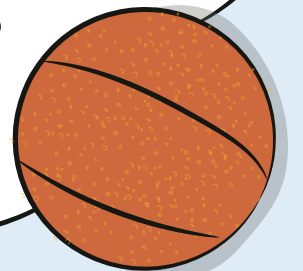
17 Complete the chart as you read about each friend/character.

Friend/Character	What attracted Huda to this friend?
Hailey	
Aliya	
Jon	
Nabz	
Rahma	

18 What are character traits you look for in a friend?

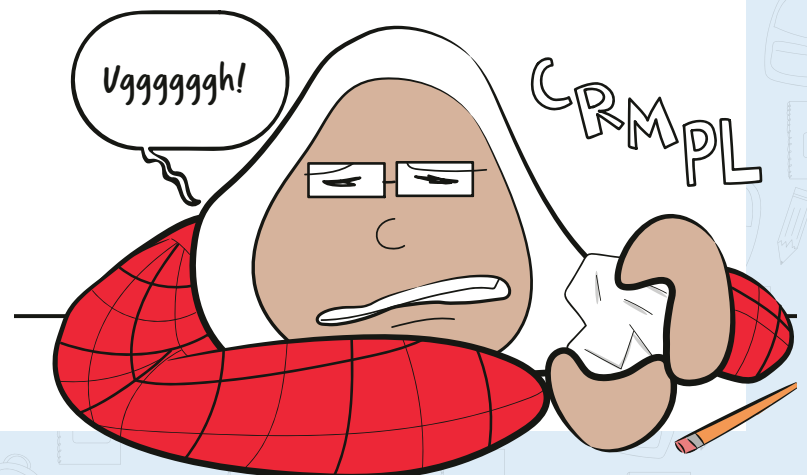
19 How did Huda's parents try to straddle both worlds: being Muslim/Arab and living in America?

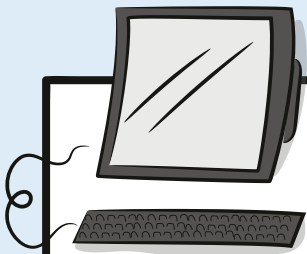
- a How did they help their children develop their religious identity?
- b How did they help their children navigate assimilation and/or trying to fit in?
- c Can you relate to the experiences of Huda and her family? Explain.



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS *(continued)*

- 20** Huda expresses her feelings to Jon. This creates some sort of confusion for Huda.
- a** How does Huda rationalize her emotions?
 - b** How are the expectations for practicing Muslims and dating different from other cultures/religions? How are they similar?
 - c** Why did Jon's reaction surprise Huda?
- 21** Nabz and Aliya both provide Huda with advice after the incident with Jon.
- a** Would you consider their advice good advice?
 - b** What advice would you have given Huda if she was your friend?
- 22** Omar Sheikh is a Muslim student at Huda's school who is accused of making a bomb out of a radio. This fictional account was based on a real event that happened to a Muslim student in Texas.
- a** Read the article: [Muslim teen Ahmed Mohamed creates clock, shows teachers, gets arrested](#)
 - b** How is the article similar to the events written in the book?
 - c** Why does Huda begin to analyze whether or not she has "self-hate" after the incident?
- 23** How do events that target Muslim students in Huda's school complicate her sense of identity?
- 24** Do you believe the school had the right to interrogate only Muslim students after the incident with Omar?
- 25** Huda denies and tries to rationalize how her teacher, Ms. Warren, targets her and other Muslim students.
- a** What does Huda do to excuse her teacher's actions?
 - b** How does Huda react when her mother tries to intervene?
 - c** If you were Huda's friend, what advice would you have given Huda to help her get through the rough time with her teacher and mother?
- 26** What was the turning point for Huda when she realized "she was wrong" about her teacher?
- 27** Huda's halaqa teacher states: *We all make mistakes. In our faith and in our lives. The best of us are those who ask for forgiveness and strive to make things right.*
- a** Analyze the quote. What does this quote mean to you?
 - b** How does this quote help Huda figure out her identity and dilemma with her mother?
- 28** How did Huda make her wrongs into rights with the following people?
- a** Her mother
 - b** Ms. Warren
 - c** Herself
- 29** In 2-3 sentences, explain what you learned about Huda and her lived experience as a teenage girl in high school.
- a** Discuss any new learning.
 - b** Discuss what more you would like to learn.
 - c** Discuss similarities you had with Huda's own story.
- 30** Huda Fahmy wrote this book to help readers understand the importance of knowing what life is like for a growing Muslim American teen. Using information from your notes, discussions, and your own ideas, complete [The 3 Whys from Project Zero](#):
- a** Why might this [topic, question] matter to me?
 - b** Why might it matter to people around me [family, friends, city, nation]?
 - c** Why might it matter to the world?





EXTENSION ACTIVITIES

INDEPENDENT RESEARCH

Huda F Are You? discusses Huda's experiences growing up in a new town and trying to fit in all while balancing her own sense of self. She struggles to navigate how to fit in, even when her school population has students who reflect her own identity. Sadly, Huda experiences some anti-Muslim bigotry that causes her to rethink her own identity. Much of the prejudice that Huda experiences is rooted in a lack of knowledge about the history and cultural perspectives of Muslims in America. Have students answer the essential question: How can schools and communities create welcoming environments for all students and avoid negative generalizations that impact students' social emotional learning? Use the resources below to help students research some important topics that reflect Muslims in America:

- [The US city run by Muslim Americans](#)
- [Muslims in America: A forgotten history](#)
- [World Hijab Day](#)
- [Muslims are a growing presence in U.S., but still face negative views from the public](#)



STANDARDS AND SKILLS

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.6

Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text.

INTEGRATION OF KNOWLEDGE AND IDEAS

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.7

Integrate and evaluate content presented in diverse media and formats, including visually and quantitatively, as well as in words.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.8

Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, including the validity of the reasoning as well as the relevance and sufficiency of the evidence.

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.9

Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics in order to build knowledge or to compare the approaches the authors take.

RANGE OF READING AND LEVEL OF TEXT COMPLEXITY

CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.CCRA.R.10

Read and comprehend complex literary and informational texts independently and proficiently.