

# Reading Comprehension & Classroom Activities

## Home Away from Home



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### BEFORE READING

#### Look Closely at the Front Cover

- What do you see in the illustration?
- Describe the lady and the girl.
- How do you think they are feeling? What clues help you know this?
- Where do you think the story takes place?
- What do you think the story might be about?



Encourage students to make predictions based on the illustration, colors, and expressions.

### DURING READING

Read the book aloud or listen to an audio version together.

Invite students to notice how Nuha's feelings change as the story unfolds.

### AFTER READING

#### Understanding the Story

- In your own words, what was the story about?
- When the story begins, Nuha does not want to visit Oman. Why do you think she feels this way?
- How does Nuha feel at the beginning of the story?
- When Nuha loses her doll, how does that make her feel?
  - Have you ever lost something special to you? How did it feel?
- Why do you think Nuha does not like Oman when she first arrives?
  - Have you ever traveled to a place you didn't like at first?



### LOOKING AT THE ILLUSTRATIONS

- How does Nuha's home look different from Oman?
- What interesting or new things do you notice at the souk (market)?
- What details help show that this place is different from where Nuha lives?



# WRITING ACTIVITIES

## Cultural Traditions

A tradition is something a family passes down from one generation to another. It can be a special activity, food, or way of celebrating holidays or life events.

Omani culture is different from what Nuha is used to in the United States.

- Does your family have a tradition?
  - Examples: movie night, special meals, family gatherings
- Write about one family tradition or draw a picture of it.
- What does this tradition mean to you?



## CREATIVE WRITING

- Write a story about a place you have visited:
  - A grandparent's home
  - A country your family comes from
  - A place you travel to often
- What is it like there?
  - How does it make you feel?
  - Do you enjoy visiting this place? Why or why not?



## AUTHOR'S CRAFT

- Authors use special techniques to make stories fun to read aloud. Can you find examples of these in *Home Away from Home*?
- Look for:
  - 1 Rhymes
  - 2 Onomatopoeia (words that sound like noises)
  - 3 Alliteration (repeating beginning sounds)
  - 4 Metaphors (describing something by comparing it to something else)



# EMOTIONS & FEELINGS

A character's actions, words, and choices help readers understand how they feel—even when the character doesn't say it out loud.

## Reread & Observe

As you reread *Home Away from Home*, pay close attention to Nuha. Create a chart like the one below:

What Nuha Does	Why Do You Think She Does This?	How Is She Feeling?
<b>Example:</b> Hugs her doll tightly at home	Her doll comforts her. It makes her feel safe.	Sad, worried, comforted

## Try It Yourself

- Find two more moments in the story where Nuha does something important.
- Describe:
  - What she does
  - What might be going on inside her heart or mind.
  - How her feelings change over time



## Reflect & Connect

- Have you ever felt the way Nuha felt?
- What made you feel better?
- Who or what helped you feel safe?



**Skill Focus:** Emotional awareness, inference



**Big Idea:** Feelings change—and noticing them helps us understand ourselves and others.





# LANGUAGE & CULTURE

The story includes Arabic words alongside English.



## Notice & Wonder

- Which Arabic words did you hear or read?
- What do you think they mean?
- How did you figure it out—through pictures, context, or explanation?



## Think Deeper

- Why do you think the author chose to include words from another language?
- How do these words help the story feel more real?



## Try This

- Write or draw one new word you learned.
- Do you speak or hear another language at home?
- Share a word that is special to you or your family.



أهلاً وسهلاً



**Big Idea:** Language carries culture, meaning and identity.





# DRAWING & ART

Art helps us tell stories in new ways.



## Draw from the Story

Choose one:

- Draw your favorite scene from the book.
- Draw something new or surprising Nuha experiences in Oman.



## Add Details

- What colors did you use? Why?
- What emotions are the characters feeling in your picture?
- What details help show where the scene take place?



**Extension (Ages 7-9):** Add a speech bubble or thought bubble to your drawing.

# LANGUAGE & CULTURE

At first, Nuha does not want to eat chicken shawarma.

## Notice & Wonder

- Which Arabic words did you hear or read?
- What do you think they mean?

## Make a Personal Connection

- Is there a food you didn't like at first but later loved?
- What helped you try it again?
  - A smell?
  - A friend or family member?
  - Seeing someone else enjoy it?



## Writing Prompt

- A food I tried was \_\_\_\_\_.
- At first, I didn't want to try because \_\_\_\_\_.
- I decided to try it when \_\_\_\_\_.
- It smelled \_\_\_\_\_.
- I tried it because \_\_\_\_\_.
- Now I think it tastes \_\_\_\_\_.
- I felt proud when \_\_\_\_\_.



**Big Idea:** Trying new things can be scary – but also rewarding.

# CLOSING REFLECTION

- How did Nuha change from the beginning of the story to the end?
- What helped her feel more at home?
- What helps you feel at home when things feel new?

## Deeper Reflection

- Nuha's feelings change when \_\_\_\_\_ happens,
- At the beginning of the story, Nuha feels \_\_\_\_\_, but later she feels \_\_\_\_\_.
- This shows that feelings can \_\_\_\_\_.
- I learned that it's okay to feel \_\_\_\_\_ when \_\_\_\_\_.

## Talk About It

- Would you like to travel to Oman?
- Why or why not?
- What do you think Oman would be like?

After reading the story, I feel

- One thing I would want to see in Oman is \_\_\_\_\_.
- I would like to visit the \_\_\_\_\_.
- I think Oman would feel \_\_\_\_\_.
- I would be excited to \_\_\_\_\_.

## BIG IDEA REFLECTION

- Traveling helps us learn about \_\_\_\_\_.
- Visiting new places can make us feel \_\_\_\_\_.
- Even places far away can feel like \_\_\_\_\_.

# HENNA PATTERN MATH

Inspired by: Henna scene in the souk سوق

## Instructions

Henna designs use patterns and symmetry—just like math!

## Activity

- 1 Draw a line down the middle of the hand below.
- 2 Create a pattern on one side.



**STEM Skill:**  
Pattern recognition &  
symmetry



**Big Idea:** Math lives  
in art and culture

# MARKET MATH AT THE SOUK

Inspired by shopping, bartering, and sensory discoveries in the souk.

Nuha and Jadda are exploring the souk.  
Each stall sells something special!



## SOUK PRICE LIST

	Doll .....	\$3
	Shawarma .....	\$2
	Drum .....	\$4
	Henna .....	\$2
	Candy Sticks .....	\$1
	Perfume .....	\$5
	Figs .....	\$2

## PART 1: MATCH & COUNT

### Activity A: Count the Coins

Circle two items you like.

Count how many dollars you need.

I need \$ \_\_\_\_\_ to buy my items.

 Teacher tip: Use counters, play money, or dot drawing.



## PART 2: CHOOSE & ADD

Nuha has \$5.

1. Which of these can she buy? (Circle all that work.)

- Perfume                       Doll + Candy sticks                       Shawarma + Figs  
 Henna + Candy sticks

2. Show your math: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ + \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

## PART 3: SOUK CHALLENGE

Multi-Step Problem

Nuha has \$10 to spend. ✓



3. Show your math: \$ \_\_\_\_\_ + \$ \_\_\_\_\_ = \$ \_\_\_\_\_

3. How much change will Nuha get back from \$10?

$$\$10 - \$ \underline{\quad} = \$ \underline{\quad}$$



### BONUS CHALLENGE (Critical Thinking)

Jadda says,

"We should save at least \$2 for figs later."

- Can Nuha still buy perfume? Why or why not?

Explain your thinking: \_\_\_\_\_

# AT THE SOUK



Inspired by shopping, bartering, and sensory discoveries in the souk

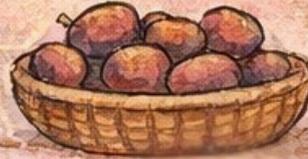
Nuha and Jadda are back at the souk! Solve these math puzzles

## PART 1: MULTIPLYING AT THE MARKET

**1** Nuha made a shopping list but forgot the total cost!  
Can you figure it out?



Nuha's Order:



**4** Candy Sticks   **2** Shawarmas   **6** Figs

Total Cost: \$  +  +  =

## PART 2: DIVIDING THE DEALS

### Sharing the Figs

Jadda bought 18 figs. She will share them equally with her three grandkids.

How many figs does each get?



3 kids:  figs each



## PART 3: SOUK STAR CHALLENGE

Perfume is a popular item!

Hamza sells **3** bottles daily.

**1.** How many bottles does he sell in a week?

3 bottles  $\times$  7 days =  bottles

**SKILLS:**  $\times$   $\div$   $+$   $-$

**SKILLS:** Multiplication, division, problem solving, bartering

**Big Idea:** Math helps us plan, trade, and make

3 bottles  $\times$  7 days =  bottles

**3.** Maya raised her price from **\$6** to **\$8**.

She sold the same 3 bottles in one day.

How much more did she earn?

$\$8 \times 3 =$      $\$6 \times 3 =$   more



# ENGINEERING DESIGN CHALLENGE



## BIG QUESTION

How can we design a souk stall that is strong, useful, and welcoming?

## MATERIALS

(Choose what you have – low prep & flexible)

### Building pieces

- Cardboard (cereal/ shoe boxes)
- Paper towel or toilet paper rolls
- Craft sticks/ popsicle sticks
- Index cards or construction paper
- Paper cups



### Connectors

- Masking or painter's tape
- Glue sticks



## 3 BUILD (15-20 min)

Use your materials to build your stall.

### Engineering tips:

- Roll paper into tubes for strength
- Fold cardboard into triangles
- Use more than one support

## THINK LIKE AN ENGINEER

- What part was hardest to build?
- What made your stall stronger?
- How does good design help shopkeepers?

## STEM CONNECTION

Skill: Engineering design process  
(Imagine – Plan – Build – Test – Improve)

## YOUR DESIGN MUST:

- Stand on its own
- Hold at least 3 items
- Have a roof or arch

## 1 IMAGINE (5 min)

Think about the stalls Nuha and Jadda see in the souk.

- What do stalls need to do?
  - How will people shop here?
- Draw a quick sketch of your stall.

## 2 BUILD (15-20 min)

Before building, decide:

- What will hold it up?
  - Where will the roof go?
- (Older kids: label roof, walls, supports.)



## 4 TEST (5 min)

Place 3 items inside your stall.

- Did it stand?
  - Did anything bend or fall?
- If it falls, that's okay — engineers redesign!



Big Idea: Designs solve real world problems – and can always

# Souk Sensory Science Walk

Inspired by: Smells, sounds, and sights of the souk



## Big Idea

Scientists use their **five senses** to learn about the world—just like Nuha exploring the souk.

## PART 1: SENSORY WALK

Take children on a **slow walk** around an **outdoor space** (schoolyard, garden, park, playground courtyard)



**SEE** • What do you notice?



**HEAR** – What do you hear?



**SMELL** – What do you smell?



**FEEL** – What do you feel?  
(Touch)

Sense	What I Noticed
See	
Hear	
Smell	
Feel	

## PART 2: RECORD YOUR OBSERVATIONS

Take children on a table, clipboard, or sitting area and complete



**SEE** – What do you notice? \_\_\_\_\_



**HEAR** – What do you hear? \_\_\_\_\_



**SMELL** – What do you smell? \_\_\_\_\_



**FEEL** – What do you feel? (Touch) \_\_\_\_\_

## PART 3: REFLECT

Which sense helped you understand \_\_\_\_\_



**TEACHER TIP:** Help kids find safe spots to touch.

Model language: “I notice...”, instead of “I like...”

# Two Dolls, One Me

## Instructions

Nuha has two dolls that are different – but both belong to her.

## Activity

Draw **two** things that represent you:

- One from home
- One from somewhere new

Finish the Sentence:

One from home

One from somewhere new



Finish the Sentence:

I am made of ~~a lot of things~~  
and together they make me.



STEM Skill : Systems thinking



Big Idea: Identity can hold many worlds





# GEOGRAPHY



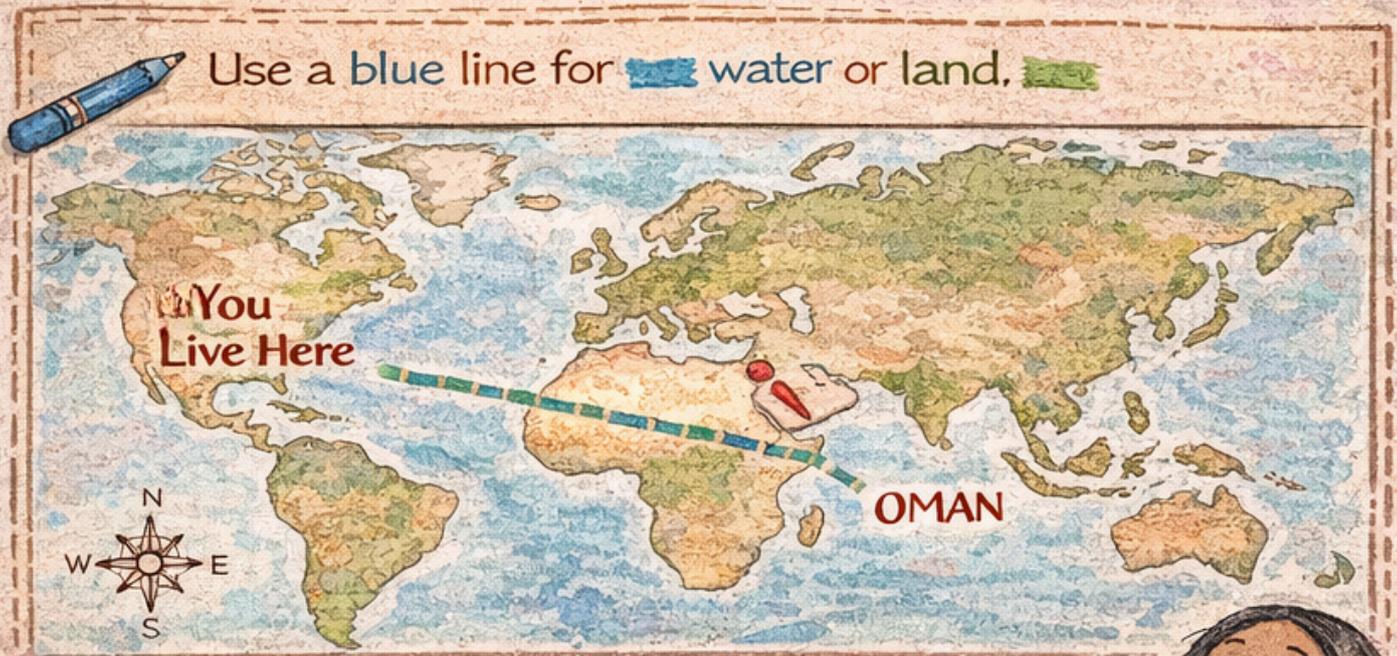
## From Here to Oman

Inspired by: Nuha's journey and the map/back matter



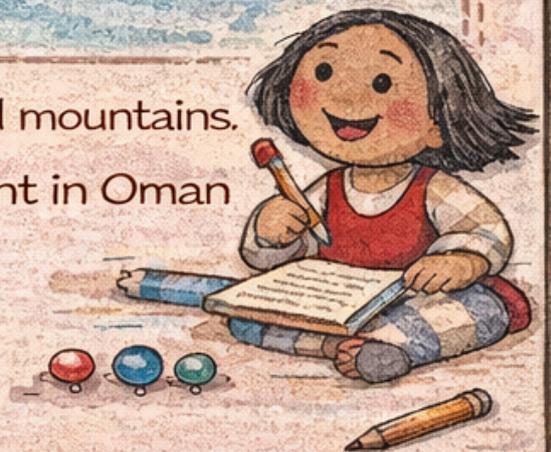
### PART 1: FIND & TRACE (All Ages)

- Activity.**
1. Find where you live on a map,
  2. Find Oman,
  3. Draw a line showing how Nuha traveled.



**Oman** is by the sea and has deserts and mountains. Draw or list one thing that might be different in Oman because of:

- Weather: \_\_\_\_\_
- Land: \_\_\_\_\_



Count how many countries the line passes over.



# SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY -

## CLOTHING & PLACE



### CLOTHING AROUND THE WORLD

Inspired by: Jadda's abaya and the glossary



#### BIG IDEA

- **Activity:** Look closely at the clothes people wear in the story.
- **Answer:** What clothes do people wear in **Oman**?  
What clothes do people wear where **your live**?



Teacher tip: Use language like "I notice..." instead of "I think..."



#### PART 2: DRAW & COMPARE

Draw two outfits:

Outfit from Oman

Outfit from My Community



Colors • Length ✂ length • Patterns



#### PART 3: CLOTHING & ENVIRONMENT

Clothes help people stay comfortable.

Match the clothing to the reason:

Clothing Feature	Why It Helps
 Long sleeves	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Sun <input type="checkbox"/> Cold <input type="checkbox"/> Wind
 Light fabric	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Heat <input type="checkbox"/> Rain <input type="checkbox"/> Snow
 Loose clothing	<input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Air flow <input type="checkbox"/> Decoration



Question: How does weather affect what people wear?



#### SKILLS & SOCIAL STUDIES CONNECTIONS



Skills: Cultural awareness, comparison, observation



Concepts: Culture, environment, daily life, identity



Big Idea: Different traditions, meet the same human needs.

# SOCIAL STUDIES ACTIVITY -

## CLOTHING & IDENTITY

### PART 4: CLOTHING & DAILY LIFE

- People wear different clothes for different activities.
- Circle what people might wear:



- At home
- At school
- At a celebration
- At a market

Question: Why might clothes change for each activity?

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### PART 5: CLOTHING & CULTURE

- Some clothes:
  - Show respect
  - Show tradition
  - Show family or community values

Discussion Prompts:

- Why might Jadda wear an abaya?
- Are there clothes in your family worn for special days?
- How do clothes help people feel they belong?



### PART 6: SAME NEEDS, DIFFERENT WAYS

Finish the sentences:

- Clothes help people stay. \_\_\_\_\_.
- Clothes can show. \_\_\_\_\_.
- Even if clothes look different, people everywhere need \_\_\_\_\_.
- My favorite outfit to wear at home is. \_\_\_\_\_.

