

Readers' Guide
The Complete Persepolis By Marjane Satrapi

First-Year Reading Experience
University of South Carolina
Monday, August 17, 2009

1. What are your thoughts about reading a graphic novel? Why tell the story in this form?
2. What is the importance of the veil in the book?
3. What does the juxtaposition of images on page 102 suggest about Marji's world?
4. How do Marjane's relationships with her father, mother, and grandmother influence her decisions? What role do family stories play in shaping Marji's sense of who she is and who she should be?
5. How are social class, nationality, and gender important elements in Marjane's sense of who she is—and who she can become?
6. Why do you think Marjane makes her reading history part of her story? (What does she read?) How do books help her to understand herself and the world?
7. Why does young Marji think of herself as a prophet? What does the book suggest about the role of religion in the lives of people like Marjane and her family?
8. What are some of the major differences between the Iranian culture Marjane grows up in and the Western culture she tries to adapt to in Austria?
9. Before Marji leaves Iran for school in Austria, her grandmother tells her, "Be true to yourself" (150) and her father says, "Don't forget who you are and where you came from" (152). How does Marjane stay true to herself and to where she comes from?
10. Each time Marjane hits bottom in the book, she decides to remake herself in some way. How does she make and remake herself in the book? How are these selves related?
11. Iranian in the West but Western in Iran, Marjane says she is "nothing": "I had no identity" (272). How does she resolve her cultural identity crisis?
12. How is Marji more like you than you might have imagined?
13. How did you feel when you read the last page? Why do you think Satrapi ends both sections of the book at the airport? What price is Marjane willing to pay for freedom?
14. What is Persepolis? Why do you think Satrapi chose this as the title?
15. What role does the media play in the book? What news stories and images have shaped your impressions of Iran as a nation? How has your reading of Persepolis influenced your perception of Iran and the Iranian people?