



Nobody's Child

Teacher's Guide

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Dundurn 2003
isbn 1-55002-442-6

Pre-reading activities

Look at the cover

What do you think the story will be about?

Why do you think this novel is called *Nobody's Child*?

Reading comprehension

pp 1 - 14

What country does the story take place in? Find it on a map.

What nationality is Mariam?

What is the name of Mariam's home town? Who lives with her?

Where are they going to? Why?

Describe some of the food that Mariam and her family eat. How is it similar/different from food you eat?

pp 15 - 31

Draw a diagram of the village that they visit. How is it different from where you live? How is it the same?

What happens to the people in the village? Why does it only happen to half of the village?

Why does Mariam bring oil to the cave?

pp 32 - 45

Draw a diagram of the inside of Kevork's house.

Why are people afraid of Anna?

What is Abdul Hassan and Amina Hanim's reaction to what happened to the Armenians?

Do you think Mariam trusts him?

pp 46 - 55

How is Kevork's house different from yours? How is it the same?

Draw a picture of a Turkish bath.

Is there a social setting that you know of that is similar to a Turkish bath?

pp 56 - 87

Why do the children leave Kevork's house?

Why do they react differently to Abdul Hassan and Amina Hanim this time?

Is there tension between the Armenian children and their Turkish hosts?

What is different in Abdul and Amina's home? What is the same?

pp 88 - 106

Why do Anna and Kevork walk from roof to roof instead of in the street?

What does the orphanage look like?

pp 107 - 123

How have Kevork, Mariam and Marta changed?

What is the significance of what Marta sees from the roof of her grandmother's house?

pp 124 - 143

What criteria is used to choose who will be deported and who will be spared?

pp 144 - 172

What would you do in Mariam's situation?

Compare Rustem Bey to Captain Sayyid.

pp 173 - end

Would you rather be in Mariam's situation, or in Marta's, or Kevork's? Why?

General questions

Why is the novel called *Nobody's Child*? Who is nobody's child?

At the beginning of the novel, Mariam's mother reads her fortune in the coffee grounds. Did her prediction come true?

Once you've read chapter nine, read pages 104 to 111 in *The Hunger*. Why are these scenes not identical? List how the scenes are different, how they are the same, and what accounts for the discrepancy.

Compare chapter sixteen with pages 120 to 125 in *The Hunger*. What are the differences? Why?

Character study

Who is your favourite character? Why?

Compare Captain Sayyid's personality with Abdul Hassan's

Which character is most like you? Why?

Geography and history

Here is a map of Turkey. Locate Adana. Locate Marash.

<http://www.greece.org/genocide/quotes/p-ge-map-cilicia.html>

Here is a map of the Syrian desert:

http://www.lib.utexas.edu/maps/atlas_middle_east/syria_map.jpg

Can you trace Kevork's deportation march?

What political event happened in Turkey in 1915 to cause the deportations?

What important world event was also happening?

Self and Society

What is happening to the Armenians in Marash? Why?

Give an example of ethnic intolerance that you have witnessed in your own life.

Choose one woman from the novel. How is her life different from yours? From your mother's?

Choose one man from the novel. How is his life different from yours? From your father's?

Music

Find a CD or tape of traditional Armenian music.

Play it for the class.

How does it make you feel?

Art

Illustrate one of these scenes:

the wedding ceremony in the bath house

the interior of Kevork's house

a Turkish market

Critical thinking

Explore the sites below:

<http://www.turkey.org>

<http://www.armenian-genocide.org/map-full.htm>

Why do the two sites not agree? What do you believe? Why?

Why do you think Turkey still denies the Armenian Genocide?

Vocabulary

The following words are used in *Nobody's Child*. Define five, and then use those five in context in sentences.

migrant

latticed

tonir

ojak

piasters

pattens

genocide

deportation

Vartabed

hookah

haremlik

salemlik

Hanim

zaptieh

salvar

circumcision