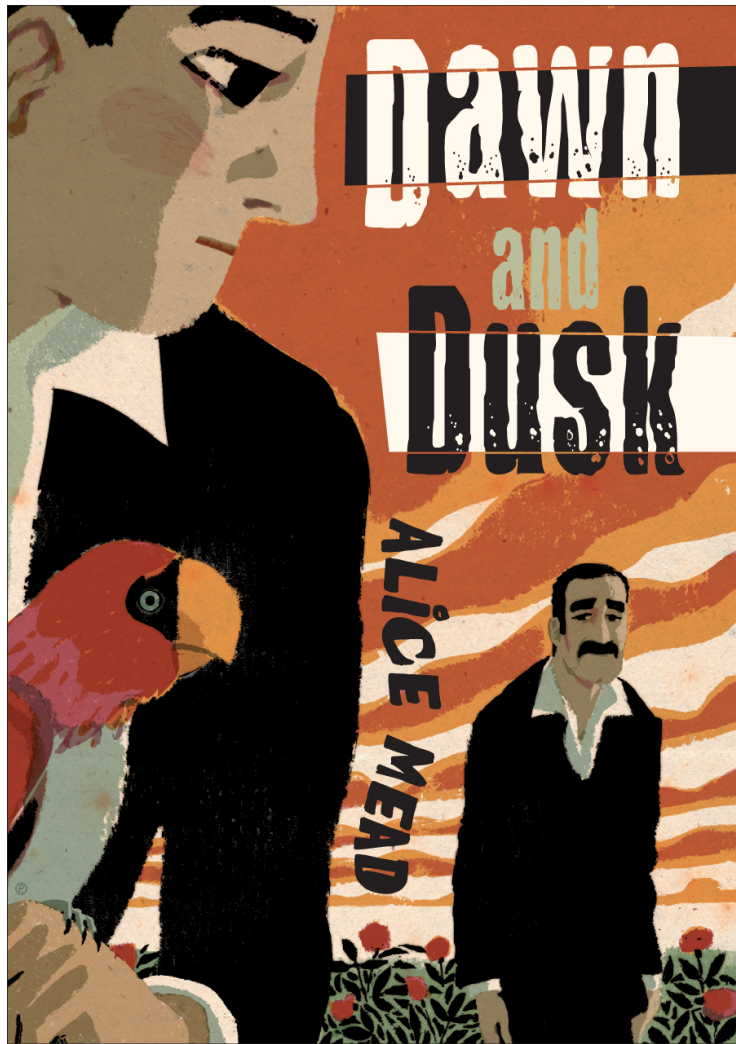


# Dawn and Dusk

TEACHER'S  
GUIDE

GRADES 6-8



## Using *Dawn and Dusk* in Social Studies

*Dawn and Dusk* introduces readers to Iran, a complex country that figures prominently in the daily news. This book provides children with a window into a region beset by conflicts begun years ago and serves as an excellent jumping-off point for learning more about the Middle East, a region that plays an important role in US politics. *Dawn and Dusk*:

- tells the individual story of one Iranian child and his family;
- provides cultural information on the Kurdish minority living in Iran;
- relates the bombing of Sardasht, an incident made possible through international arms sales;
- portrays the Iran-Iraq war, a conflict with global implications;
- shows the tragic human cost of war;
- relates a family's flight toward freedom and eventual immigration to the U.S.;
- portrays different cultures, political perspectives, and world views; and
- tells how one boy must choose between divorced parents and their conflicting political ideals.

*Dawn and Dusk*  
by Alice Mead  
Farrar, Straus & Giroux  
ISBN-13: 978-0-374-31708-9.  
Ages 10-14. \$16.00.

The following pages provide teachers with several suggestions as to how they might incorporate *Dawn and Dusk* into the social studies curriculum. You will also find ideas about how *Dawn and Dusk* can be used across disciplines to build skills in characterization, theme, setting, ethical choices, research, and cultural awareness.

Social Studies Activities	Weapons & War	Geography	Geography
<p>These exercises build the following skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Developing positions</li> <li>• Mapping</li> <li>• Compare and contrast</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>	<p>Azad talks about hearing gunfire and he lives through the chemical bombing of Sardasht. Ask students to <b>research</b> the weapons used by both sides in the Iraq-Iran war. What countries provided these weapons and why? Which type of weapons killed the most people? <b>Compare</b> this to other wars and conflicts, including the current conflict in Iraq. Divide students into two groups, one pro, one con, to <b>discuss</b> whether or not the U.S. should provide weapons to other countries.</p>	<p>Have students trace a <b>map</b> of Azad's flight from Iran to Maine. How many countries does he pass through? How many continents? How many miles did he travel? How does the geography of the region help or hinder his travels?</p>	<p>Have students use several <b>maps</b> to chart Iran's physical features. Ask them to show the distribution of significant resources. How does the geography affect the distribution of people, religious sects, ethnic populations? How does the geography separate and unite the various peoples of Iran?</p>

## Setting the Scene: A Historical Perspective

Azad, a 13-year-old Kurdish boy lives in Sardasht, Iran located along the mountainous border with Iraq. In the 1980s when the story takes place, Iran and Iraq have been at war for years. During the war, Iraqi leader Saddam Hussein was a U.S. ally in the region, and we supplied his forces with weapons.

Despite living in a country ravaged by war, Azad leads a pretty normal life, going to school, playing with friends, and visiting his mother and favorite uncle, who live in a nearby mountain village. Everything changes the day Saddam Hussein gasses Sardasht [with chemical weapons provided by the West], an event that forces Azad to more closely examine his allegiances. Divided by conflicting loyalties between his country Iran and his Kurdish heritage, as well as between his divorced parents, Azad is forced to take sides.

*Dawn and Dusk* provides valuable insight into the lives of children in Iran, a country we know little about, and the life of its large Kurdish minority. Today, the US is caught up in a complex, dangerous involvement in the region. Without the back-story, the brief news-bites we see on the nightly news make little sense.

### ADDITIONAL RESOURCES:

Introduction to Dawn and Dusk

<http://www.flashpoints.info/CB-Iraq.htm>  
(background on Iraq)

<http://www.flashpoints.info/CB-Iran.htm>  
(background on Iran)

<http://www.timeforkids.com/TFK/>  
(background on Iran, Iraq, Middle East)

<http://www.unicef.org/iran/>  
(background on Iran)

<http://www.geocities.com/~ghobad/>  
(Kurdish culture in Iran)

<http://www.khrw.org/>  
(Kurdish refugees in America)

<http://www.un.org/cyberschoolbus/>  
(peace, UN, human rights, discrimination)

Social Studies Activities	Geography	Immigrants	Refugees
<p>These exercises build the following skills:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Research</li> <li>• Developing positions</li> <li>• Mapping</li> <li>• Compare and contrast</li> <li>• Discussion</li> </ul>	<p>Ask students to <b>compare and contrast maps</b> of the Middle East from before WWI and now? after WWII and now? Discuss with students how artificial barriers (country lines) might contribute to conflict between countries, in particular between Iran and Iraq. Could the countries remapping the region have predicted some of the conflicts in the region?</p>	<p>Ask students to <b>discuss</b> the reasons why Azad and his family fled Iran. For what other reasons might a family leave their country of birth? What kind of difficulties did Azad and his family face? What might be strange to Azad about his new home in Maine? What might be similar? Have students decide whether Azad can ever return to Iran and <b>defend their positions</b>.</p>	<p>Azad and his family are refugees. Ask students to <b>research</b> the difference between immigrant and refugee status. How is a person's status decided? <b>Discuss</b> what kinds of rules, privileges, and responsibilities come with being an immigrant to the U.S.? Being a refugee in the U.S.?</p>
	<h3>Minority Cultures</h3> <p>Ask students to photocopy a <b>map</b> of the region, including Iran, Iraq, Syria, and Turkey. Superimpose a map of Kurdistan, as the Kurds view it. How have the Kurds been treated in these countries? Had Azad not left Iran, what might he be doing today (he would be in his early twenties).</p> <p>Have students <b>research</b> why the Kurds want their own country. Ask students to determine if they think an independent Kurdistan is likely and to <b>defend their position</b>.</p>	<h3>Human Rights</h3> <p>The U.N. has identified many human rights which the member countries including Iran have ratified and agreed to uphold. Some of these rights include non-discrimination against ethnic minorities (like the Kurds), freedom of religion, a right to an education, and the right to a political voice.</p> <p>Ask students to <b>research</b> human rights as defined by the U.N. Have students <b>select</b> a human right and study its status in Iran today. Have the students determine what the U.N. might do to improve access to this right for all Iranians. How might Iran react?</p>	<h3>Global Ties</h3> <p>In <i>Dawn and Dusk</i>, Azad hears a chant, "Death to America." Today the U.S. refers to Iran as an "axis of evil." These are two very different views.</p> <p><b>Compare and contrast</b> these divergent views. What does the U.S. views as it's role in Iran and Iraq? How does our history inform our perspective? How does Iran views the U.S. presence in the region? How does Iran's history inform their viewpoint? What are the U.S. interests in the region? How do they affect our decisions about Iran and Iraq?</p>

<i>Dawn and Dusk</i> Across Disciplines	Writing	Language	Arts
<p>The activities at right suggest ways that <i>Dawn and Dusk</i> can be used in other curriculum areas.</p>	<p><b>Characterization</b> Ask students to write a brief incident from one of the characters in <i>Dawn and Dusk</i>, such as Leila or Hiwa</p>	<p><b>Foreign Language</b> Ask students to learn the Kurdish equivalent for some common phrases. (My name is. Hello. Good-bye. etc.)</p>	<p><b>Music</b> Have students listen to some Kurdish music. How does it differ from the music they normally listen to ? How is it similar.</p>
	<p><b>Arabian Tale</b> Have students write a fairy tale in the manner of the <i>Tales of the Arabian Nights</i>.</p>	<p><b>Reading</b> Ask students to take turns reading excerpts from one of the Arabian Nights fairy tales.</p>	<p><b>Art</b> Have students make a tile decorated with traditional Kurdish motifs.</p>
	<p><b>Unity &amp; Diversity</b> Ask students to write an essay about how their lives are similar to and different from Azad's. Consider family, religion, home environment, music, play, food, geography, physical surroundings, cultural standards, political climate, and day-to-day activities.</p>		<p><b>Kurdish Culture Day</b> Ask students to research Kurdish food, art, music, and clothing. Have them incorporate their research into a celebration of the Kurdish New Year on March 20.</p>

## CELEBRATING DIVERSITY, FINDING UNITY

Ask students to explore the different cultures and ethnicities in their own community. Students can prepare a questionnaire asking about family heritage, ethnic background, how they arrived in Maine, and cultural traditions. They can interview grandparents, shop owners, church members, and other adults in their community. The class can compile all the students information and design a display charting all the different kinds of people who live in their community. Ask them to explore how all these distinct individuals come together to create a community.

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