

Essential Questions

The materials in this unit plan are meant to be flexible and easy to adapt to your own classroom. Through reading the book and completing any of the suggested activities, students can achieve any number of the following understandings:

- *Individuals are a product of their society, but not necessarily unified with it.*
- *We develop our beliefs from a wide range of influences.*
- *Children repeat what they are told; adults use critical thinking to draw their own conclusions.*

Students should be introduced to the following key questions as they begin reading, and keep them in mind as they work through the book:

- How do we form our beliefs in life? Are they set in stone, or constantly changing?*
- What does it take to go from being a child to an adult?*
- How does a person survive in and make sense of conflicted world? In what ways must you change, and in what ways can you stay the same?*

These questions can be applied directly to the book:

- How does Marjane form her beliefs as she grows up?*
- When does Marjane go from being a child, to a teenager, to an adult? Why?*
- How do Iranians survive the repressive regime in Iran? How does Marjane survive when is sent to live in Austria?*

Many of the reader response questions and suggested projects relate to these essential questions. Students are encouraged to ask these questions not only of the characters of the book, but of themselves.

