

## Reader Response Questions – Book One

### 1 - The Veil

Why must Marjane start wearing the veil? How do she and her classmates react?

Describe Marjane's relationship with her parents and grandmother. How do they influence her and her relationship with the changing Iranian society?

Why does Marjane want to be "the last prophet?" What would be the purpose of being "justice, love, and the wrath of God all in one?"

### 2 - The Bicycle

On page 10, young Marjane proclaims that "the revolution is like a bicycle. When the wheels don't turn, it falls." What does her drawing in the next frame suggest about this idea? How have her opinions of the Iranian revolution changed from when she was a child?

Why do you think God stops visiting Marjane at the end of the chapter?

### 3 - The Water Cell

What's the difference between what Marjane learns in school about the Shah's power and what her father tells her?

Why was Marjane's grandfather imprisoned? What effect did this have on his family?

### 4 - Persepolis

What is so funny about the "martyr" scene outside the hospital? Why doesn't Marjane get it?

### 5 - The Letter

Why does Mehri's admiring neighbor reject her? Do you think Marjane's father did the right thing by ending the crush?

### 6 - The Party

How does people's behavior change in this chapter after the Shah steps down?

Why does Marjane's mother stop her from terrorizing Ramin? Do you think she succeeds in getting her message across to Marjane?



### **7- The Heroes**

Why were the men who come to Marjane's house imprisoned and tortured?

What effect do their stories have on Marjane?

### **8 - Moscow**

Why does Marjane idolize her uncle Anoosh so much? Do you think she is right to do so?

### **9 - The Sheep**

In this chapter, a family escapes Iran hidden among a flock of sheep -- but what does it mean when we say people act like a herd of sheep? When do the people in this chapter do that?

Why does Anoosh request to see Marjane when he's in prison? How does Marjane react when she gets the news of his death?

### **10 - The Trip**

What changes do the new fundamentalist government make in Iran? How does Marjane's family react?

How does Marjane react to the announcement that Iraq has invaded Iran? How is she dressed in the last frame of the chapter (79)?

### **11 - The F-14s**

Why do you think Marjane thinks her father is unpatriotic for saying he won't fight in the war (81)? Do you think she is right?

In the last frame of the chapter, Pardisse says she wishes her father "were alive and in jail rather than dead and a hero." Do you think you would feel the same way in her place?

### **12 - The Jewels**

What effect does the war have on daily life in Tehran? How do people, including Marjane's parents, act differently?



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## 13 - The Key

What is the purpose of a "nuptial chamber," and why are there so many of them in Tehran?

In this chapter, adults seek to influence the younger population of Iran in different ways. How do Marjane and her schoolmates defy their teachers? And what is the significance of the "golden" key given to boys?

On the last page of the chapter (102), There are only two frames. Compare and contrast their images and their messages. (They look similar but show opposite experiences--what does this say about life and war?)

## 14 - The Wine

Marjane's family enjoys having parties and drinking--what precautions do they take, and why do they continue despite the danger of being found out? Why do people seek to keep their regular routines even in dangerous times?

## 15 - The Cigarette

What understanding does Marjane come to about the war? Why could it have been avoided?

In the last frame, she announces that "with this first cigarette, I kissed childhood goodbye." Do you believe her? What does it take to go from being a child to an adult?

## 16 - The Passport

Why is the Iranian government so strict about letting people out of the country, even if they are gravely ill like uncle Taher? Why is it ironic that his passport finally arrives on the day of his funeral?

## 17 - Kim Wilde

Why does American pop culture have such an influence on Marjane and kids her age? Why are she and her family willing to take such risks to have tapes, posters, and jean jackets?

## 18 - The Shabbat

Why does Marjane's family decide to stay in Tehran, despite the constant threat of bombing?

How does the bombing on her street affect Marjane? Have you ever come home to a major crisis or disaster like she did? How did it change you?

## 19 - The Dowry

Marjane is outspoken at all times--how does this hurt her, and what decision does it lead her parents to make?

What advice does Marjane's grandmother give her the night before she leaves? How do you think Marjane might use this advice once she is in Austria?

