

Recommend Books and Movies about Pakistan

Prepared by the Primary Education Project



Picture Books

The Peace Book By Todd Parr – A delightful picture book that defines the many concrete way in which peace can be shown and given in every day.

Fiction

Caravan, By Lawrence McKay Jr. – A wonderful story about a boy’s first journey on the caravan to the big city with his father.

The Roses in my Carpet, By Rukhsana Khan – A moving story about the harsh realities of the life of a young refugee boy. *(Please note this is more suited for upper elementary, not kindergarten.)*

Shabanu, Daughter of the Wind, By Suzanne Fisher Staples – A novel about the life of a young girl in the Cholistan Desert, struggling to grow up amid the strict limits of her culture.

Haveli, By Suzanne Fisher Staples – The follow-up to *Shabanu*, this story follows *Shabanu* as she matures and the choices she must make in her life’s journey.

Iqbal, By Francesco D’Adamo – A novel about the life of *Iqbal Masih*, a young Pakistani Christian boy who was forced into bonded labor in a carpet factory at the age of 4 in the 1980’s. *For mature students.*

The Crow Eaters, By Bapsi Sidhwa- At the dawn of the 20th century in Pakistan, Freddy Junglewalla moves his family — pregnant wife, baby daughter, and *Jerbanoo*, his rotund mother-in-law — from their ancestral forest home to cosmopolitan Lahore. This exuberant novel, full of rollicking humor, paints a vivid picture of life in the Parsee community. *(Best suited for high school.)*

The following 2 books are about Afghanistan, but are excellent books that have many similar cultural traditions and commonalities to Pakistan.

Kite Runner, By Khaled Hosseini – A novel about the entwined lives of two boys in 1970s Afghanistan, which paints a vivid story of Afghanistan before the arrival of the Soviets, during Soviet domination, and the ensuing takeover by the Taliban. A deeply moving story of betrayal and redemption. *(For mature students).*

A Thousand Splendid Suns, By Khaled Hosseini – Hosseini’s second novel again takes place during the Soviet dominations and the following control by the Taliban. It is a powerful but sensitive portrait of the two wives of an Afghan businessman, and underscores the patriarchal nature of Afghan society. *(For mature students).*

Nonfiction Reference Guides

(Appropriate for elementary)

Eyewitness Islam, By Philip Wilkinson – A Dorling Kindersley reference book on the history and major tenets of Islam. With many pictures and illustrations.

Pakistan, By Kieren Walsh – A reference book that covers in easy to read style the people, life in Pakistan, school and sports, food and holidays, the Muslim world, the future of Pakistan, a list of facts and web links.

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Pakistan, By Sharon Sharth – A reference book that covers the land, flora and fauna, history, Pakistan today, the people, country life and city life, schools, language, work, food, pastimes and holidays, country facts and a web link.

(Appropriate for upper elementary and above)

Books by Carolyn Black

Pakistan, the People- A reference book that covers naming Pakistan, early empires, the British Raj, the peoples, clothing, village life, city life, going to school, fun and games, food, and a story.

Pakistan, the Culture– A reference book that covers the ancient traditions of this new nation, Islam, festival days, family traditions, the arts, architecture, poetry, music and song and storytelling.

Pakistan, the Land– A reference book that covers the Indus river, weather, the Pakistani's, the capital, the cities of the plains and frontiers, history, the economy, mechanization and ancient traditions, travel, and flora and fauna.

Iqbal Masih and the Crusaders Against Child Slavery, By Susan Kuklin – The remarkable story of Iqbal Masih and his struggle to free children from the slavery of forced labor. In his 12 short years of life he brought the issue of child forced labor into the international spotlight. *(For mature students)*.

Feature Films/Documentaries

Class Dismissed in Swat Valley (2009), Unrated but suggested for student 12 and older, 13 minutes- This is the original NYT documentary on Malala. It shares her story about life when the Taliban took over her town and her school was closed. Great documentary that shows a good portrayal of why people must respond to the situation of girls' education in Pakistan.

Osama (2003), *Rated PG-13 for mature thematic elements*, 83 minutes - A 12-year-old Afghan girl and her mother lose their jobs when the Taliban closes the hospital where they work. The Taliban have also forbidden women to leave their houses without a male "legal companion." With her husband and brother dead, killed in battle, there is no one left to support the family. Without being able to leave the house, the mother is left with nowhere to turn. Feeling that she has no other choice, she disguises her daughter as a boy. Now called 'Osama,' the girl embarks on a terrifying and confusing journey as she tries to keep the Taliban from finding out her true identity. Inspired by a true story, Osama is the first entirely Afghan film shot since the fall of the Taliban. (Courtesy IMDb)

Kite Runner (2007), *Rated PG-13 for strong thematic material including the rape of a child, violence and brief strong language*, 128 minutes - In the 70's in Afghanistan, the Pushtun boy Amir and the Hazara boy Hassan, who is his loyal friend and son of their Hazara servant Ali, are raised together in Amir's father house, playing and kitting on the streets of a peaceful Kabul. The movie chronicles their lives, secrets, and journeys of redemption.

PEP Overview (3 minutes) <http://vimeo.com/58613796>

Pakistani Education Overview (3 minutes) <http://vimeo.com/11701858>

(some recommendations have been adapted from the Pennies for Peace curriculum by the Central Asian Institute)