

## A Choose to Read Ohio Toolkit

Use this toolkit to plan book discussions, library programs, or classroom activities.

Meet Ohio native, Chicago-based, award-winning author Jasmine Warga.

Select from a range of discussion questions and extension activities to deepen the experience of reading *Other Words for Home*.

Discover fiction and nonfiction books, articles, websites, and other resources to explore topics and themes in depth.

# Other Words for Home

By Jasmine Warga

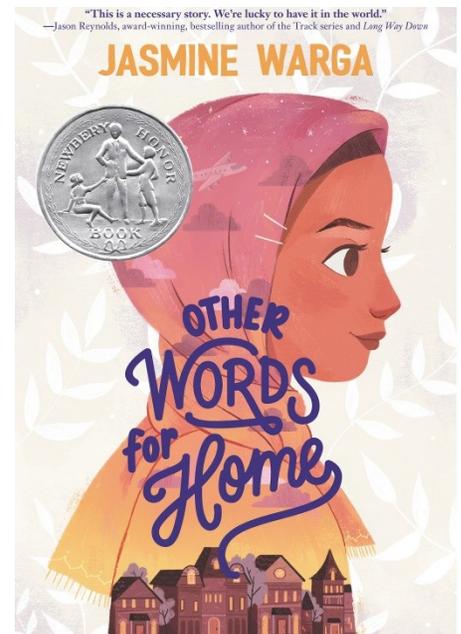


### About the Book

Jude never thought she'd be leaving her beloved older brother and father behind, all the way across the ocean in Syria. But when things in her hometown start becoming volatile, Jude and her mother are sent to live in Cincinnati with relatives.

At first, everything in America seems too fast and too loud. The American movies that Jude has always loved haven't quite prepared her for starting school in the US—and her new label of "Middle Eastern," an identity she's never known before.

But this life also brings unexpected surprises—there are new friends, a whole new family, and a school musical that Jude might just try out for. Maybe America, too, is a place where Jude can be seen as she really is.



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### Book Details

**Other Words for Home** by Jasmine Warga.  
HarperCollins, 2019. ISBN 9780062747808. 352 pages. Ages 8-12.  
Leveled Reading: AR Points 5.0. ATOS Book Level 5.3. 930 Lexile.  
[www.harpercollins.com/products/other-words-for-home-jasmine-warga](http://www.harpercollins.com/products/other-words-for-home-jasmine-warga)

Available as an ebook and digital audiobook through the Ohio Digital Library:  
[ohiodigitallibrary.com](http://ohiodigitallibrary.com)

Available as a downloadable talking book from the Ohio Library for the Blind and Print Disabled:  
[olbpd.klas.com](http://olbpd.klas.com)

Among its other awards, **Other Words for Home** is a 2020 Newbery Honor Book and the 2020 Ohioana Book Award winner for Middle Grade/Young Adult Literature.



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**“There is an Arabic proverb that says: She makes you feel like a loaf of freshly baked bread.**

**It is said about The nicest kindest people. The type of people who help you rise.”**

## About the Author

Jasmine Warga's debut middle grade book, ***Other Words for Home***, is a Newbery Honor Book that also appeared on multiple Best Books lists for 2019. Jasmine is also the author of the novels for teens ***My Heart and Other Black Holes***, which has been translated into over twenty languages, and ***Here We Are Now***. Her latest book for middle grades is ***The Shape of Thunder***. Originally from Cincinnati, she now lives in the Chicago area with her family.

Learn more about Jasmine Warga by visiting her website, where you can read an extended biography ([jasminewarga.com/about](http://jasminewarga.com/about)) and explore an FAQ ([jasminewarga.com/faq](http://jasminewarga.com/faq)).

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## Author Resources

### Jasmine Warga's official website

[jasminewarga.com](http://jasminewarga.com)

### Author page on HarperCollins website

[www.harpercollins.com/blogs/authors/jasmine-warga](http://www.harpercollins.com/blogs/authors/jasmine-warga)

### Publishers Weekly Q&A with Jasmine Warga

[www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/childrens/childrens-authors/article/80127-q-a-with-jasmine-warga.html](http://www.publishersweekly.com/pw/by-topic/childrens/childrens-authors/article/80127-q-a-with-jasmine-warga.html)

### Author Jasmine Warga on Otherness, Empathy, and Getting Messy

[cincinnati.library.org/blogs/post/author-jasmine-warga](http://cincinnati.library.org/blogs/post/author-jasmine-warga)

### Chatting with...Jasmine Warga

[magazine.northwestern.edu/exclusives/chatting-with-jasmine-warga](http://magazine.northwestern.edu/exclusives/chatting-with-jasmine-warga)

### Shake Up the Shelves: Starting the Conversation with Jasmine Warga (video)

[youtu.be/tLK0WJ4MMf8](https://youtu.be/tLK0WJ4MMf8)

Find Jasmine Warga on social media:

Instagram - [jasminewargabooks](https://www.instagram.com/jasminewargabooks)

Twitter - [@jasminewarga](https://twitter.com/jasminewarga)

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## Talk About It!

Topics to share when discussing **Other Words for Home** with young readers.

**Educators:** Every CTRO book may be used to support Ohio's English Language Arts reading, writing, and speaking and listening standards. See examples below. Other Learning Standards such as Social Studies: Historical Thinking and Skills and Social Studies: Human Systems (Grades 3 and 6) may also apply. Discussion questions and educational activities for **Other Words for Home** align with Learning Standards for Grades 3-6.

**Librarians, parents, and others:** These activities are also for library programs, family activities, and other projects. Learning Standards define what students should know and be able to do at each grade. For more information, see the Ohio Department of Education website, [education.ohio.gov](http://education.ohio.gov). From the Topics dropdown menu, click on "Learning in Ohio."

Have you ever had to move away from your home, your school and your friends? If so, how did it feel? How much more difficult do you imagine it would be to do so with a new language and customs?

When Jude first came to America, she thought her English was pretty good. What challenges did she face when she got to Ohio? Why do you think slang can be so confusing to nonnative English speakers?

Why do you think Jasmine Warga titled the book **Other Words for Home**? Do you think that Jude found a home by the end of the book?

When Jude makes friends with Layla, whose family is from Lebanon, cousin Sarah criticizes her for acting like "she's not from here." How do you think that makes Jude feel?

When Jude enters adolescence, her religion requires her to wear a head covering called a *hijab*. What are some customs of other religions to celebrate one's coming of age?

If you were to write a sequel to **Other Words for Home**, would you have Jude returning to Syria? Do you think her father and brother might join her in America?

Jude's new baby sister is named Amal, meaning "hope." Why do you think that name was chosen? How will Amal's life be different from Jude's?

The author provides an extensive glossary of Arabic words. Why do you think she included so many Arabic words in the book?

## Go Further!

Ideas for extending the experience of **Other Words for Home**.

Can you find Syria on a map? Check out "Map of Syria, Middle East" at the Nations Online Project to learn about Syria's location and geography: [www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/syria-map.htm](http://www.nationsonline.org/oneworld/map/syria-map.htm).

Use INFOhio ([infohio.org](http://infohio.org)) or Ohio Web Library ([ohioweblibrary.org](http://ohioweblibrary.org)) to find and read the encyclopedia article "Syria" in World Book Student, 2021.

Then research Syria using additional online resources available to students through INFOhio and to all Ohio residents through Ohio Web Library. If working as a class or group, each student may select a different topic to explore based on the information in the World Book article.

What do you know about your own family's background? Did your ancestors immigrate to the US? If possible, talk with some of your relatives to find out. Do they remember any family stories? Has anyone done genealogical research about your family? (*Teachers and librarians: be aware of family situations such as adoption, foster care, and blendedness that may complicate this activity. See [www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/navigating-family-heritage-assignments-with-adopted-children](http://www.pbs.org/parents/thrive/navigating-family-heritage-assignments-with-adopted-children) for ideas.*)

## Explore More!

Additional ideas and resources to use with **Other Words for Home**.

Do you want to learn more about Jude's homeland and culture? These articles will help!

Jude has many customs that may be new to you. To learn more about her religion and its practices, check out these encyclopedia articles:

"Islam" in World Book Student, 2021

Access through INFOhio ([infohio.org](http://infohio.org)) or Ohio Web Library ([ohioweblibrary.org](http://ohioweblibrary.org))

"Islam" in Kids Britannica, 2021

[kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Islam/353307](http://kids.britannica.com/kids/article/Islam/353307)

Are you wondering about the head coverings that Muslim women often wear? "What's the difference between a hijab, niqab and burka?" BBC News, August 7, 2018

[www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/24118241](http://www.bbc.co.uk/newsround/24118241)

You may not be familiar with some of the food that is mentioned in the novel. Would you like to try cooking some of these items?

Syrian Cooking: Delicious Recipes from Syria, 2021

[www.syriancooking.com](http://www.syriancooking.com)

Do you know what the term "Arab Spring" refers to? Learn about it here:

"What was the Arab Spring and how did it spread?" National Geographic, 2019

[www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/arab-spring-cause](http://www.nationalgeographic.com/culture/article/arab-spring-cause)

## Check It Out!

Recommended for readers of **Other Words for Home**.

Fiction:

**Escape from Aleppo** by N. H. Senzai.

**Escape from Syria** written by Samya Kullab and illustrated by Jackie Roche and Mike Freiheit.

**A Land of Permanent Goodbyes** by Atia Abawi.

**Nowhere Boy** by Katherine Marsh.

**Refugee** by Alan Gratz.

**The Turtle of Oman** by Naomi Shihab Nye.

Nonfiction:

**I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World (Young Readers Edition)** by Malala Yousafzai.

**Muslim Girls Rise: Inspirational Champions of Our Time** written by Saira Mir; illustrated by Aaliya Jaleel.

**Proud (Young Readers Edition): Living My American Dream** by Ibtihaj Muhammad.

**Stormy Seas: Stories of Young Boat Refugees** written by Mary Beth Leatherdale; illustrated by Eleanor Shakespeare.

**The Unwanted: Stories of the Syrian Refugees** by Don Brown.

Choose to Read Ohio, a project of the State Library of Ohio, the Ohioana Library Association, and the Ohio Center for the Book, encourages public libraries, schools, families, and others to build a community of readers and an appreciation of Ohio authors, illustrators, and literature. CTRO is adaptable for use in classrooms, libraries, bookstores, by book discussion groups, families, and other community groups.

Explore Choose to Read Ohio resources & toolkits:  
[library.ohio.gov/ctro](http://library.ohio.gov/ctro).

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