

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt *Iqbal*, Day 1



Key Paragraph, pp. 4–5

“‘When all the lines are erased,’ said Hussain Khan added, ‘when you see this slate wiped completely clean, then you’ll be free and you’ll be able to return home.’ ‘I never saw a clean slate, neither mine nor one of my companions’” (pp. 4–5).

Writing Prompt

Write a narrative paragraph describing reality of child labor.

When answering the question above, consider the following:

- How have children been a source of labor throughout history all over the world?
- How is bonded labor a part of some countries’ economic system?
- Who is Fatima and how is she a bonded child laborer?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt *Iqbal*, Day 2



Key Paragraph, p. 22

"I did not know him. He could have been just a braggart, or maybe even truly crazy, but still I believed him. I went back to my bed and spent the night restlessly" (p. 22).

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are Fatima. In 2-3 narrative paragraphs, write a journal entry retelling Iqbal's story.

When answering the question above, consider the following:

- Where did Iqbal come from?
- How does his carpet weaving skills compare to the other children?
demonstrates his superb ability to impressively weave carpet?
- What does Iqbal think about the debts the children are working for?

How have specific events in your life helped prepare you to courageously face difficult times you might encounter in the future? Were the events like Fatima's or different?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt *Iqbal*, Day 3



Key Paragraph, p. 34

"Iqbal was pale, too, but not as pale as Hussain Khan. He took the knife that we all used to cut the ends of the knots, raised it above his head, and seemed to look each of us in the eye. Then he calmly turned and cut the carpet from top to bottom, right in the middle" (p. 34).

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are Hussain. Write a narrative letter to a friend describing Iqbal's stunt with the Blue Bukhara carpet.

When answering the question above, consider the following:

- Who is Iqbal?
- What happened when Iqbal presented the Blue Bukhara carpet?
- How did you (Hussain) discipline Iqbal?
- How did you feel at the end of the day?

How might the children dealt with Hussain's mistreatment of them the past three years if they knew they had rights to protect their welfare and could report Hussain's mistreatment of them?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt *Iqbal*, Day 4



Key Paragraph, p. 44

“For a second I thought it would be better to go back, but then I felt ashamed. I turned to look at Salman: He was probably afraid too, but he knew he had to try first. After all, I was only a girl, right? And Ali was too little” (p. 44).

Writing Prompt

Write a narrative paragraph about the steps you would take to help Iqbal if you were one of the children in this carpet workshop. Describe what you would do first, second, etc.

Knowing about children being sold into slavery in other countries produces feelings of injustice. What kind of inner fortitude does it take to help children in our world to not be enslaved to anyone and have a life filled with both courage and commitment for what is right?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt *Iqbal*, Day 5



Key Paragraph, p. 55

“Fatima,’ he said in a low voice, ‘next spring you and I are going to go and fly a kite. Remember that, no matter what happens” (p. 55).

Writing Prompt

Imagine you are Twig. Write 2-3 narrative paragraphs as a journal entry describing your new home and work place.

When answering the question above, consider the following:

- Describe the living and working conditions.
- Who is Iqbal?
- How do the children take responsibility for each other?
- How are the children courageous?

How should a person stand up for what is right in the midst of difficulty, knowing there may be people who ridicule, or viciously verbally attack any person who is showing courage in such a difficult circumstance? How would you respond to such a situation?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt *Iqbal*, Day 6



Key Paragraph, p. 66

“Hussain was pale. He moved restlessly, unable to decide what to do. He tried to shout over our voices, but couldn’t. You could see that he loathed us and that he would like to see us dead. But even he knew that wasn’t possible” (p. 66).

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are one of the police officers that returned Iqbal to the factory. **In 2-3 narrative paragraphs, write a police report about how you met Iqbal and returned him to the factory. Include a final paragraph with a description of what actually happened (including the bribe).**

If everyone helped the weaker people in a society when they are threatened, how much stronger would our society be with giving fair treatment to all people?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt *Iqbal*, Day 7



Key Paragraph, p. 78

“Maria’s efforts were greatly rewarded one night, when we finally managed to decipher the handout that Iqbal brought back from his first escape. It seemed as if suddenly and miraculously, all those little marks we had drawn in the sand, those strange, incomprehensible pothooks, assumed meaning. We saw a sentence form on the paper all by itself – I swear we didn’t do anything. It just came together, and it told us things” (p. 78).

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are Iqbal. Write a narrative journal entry (2-3 paragraphs) about your experience in the city.

When answering the question above, consider the following:

- What was it like to work in the market square for the butcher?
- What did you see on the bus ride?
- What did you see in the market square?
- What “souvenir” did you take back?

Have you ever wondered how many children in the world cannot read? Some live in poverty and have never seen a book. Other children must work to support their family with the basics just to survive. How might we help all children have the chance to read?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt *Iqbal*, Day 8



Key Paragraph, p. 91

“That same evening, after dinner, Iqbal made a solemn declaration to the men and women who were meeting in the downstairs room.

‘I want to stay and help you free all the children who are slaves in Pakistan’ (p. 91).

Writing Prompt

Write a letter (2-3 paragraphs) to Iqbal describing how you could help him accomplish his goal to free all the children enslaved in Pakistan. Include a narrative paragraph describing what he needs to do to be a lawyer to free the children.

What happens when the people of the world respect one another and do not enslave others? How does exploitation affect a culture, does it strengthen it or tear it apart?

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt *Iqbal*, Day 9



Key Paragraph, p. 106

“There was something else he wanted to say to me. He lowered his voice to a whisper. A truck as passing down in the street, and I could barely hear him. ‘I was scared, Fatima. But please, please don’t tell anybody’” (p. 106).

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are the international correspondent that interviewed Iqbal and Eshan. reporter. **Write a narrative article describing their efforts to free child slaves. How were they successful? What challenges do they face? How do they keep hope? Include a quote from Iqbal in your article. Draw a picture that corresponds with the article. Life is filled with difficulties we all must face from time to time, how does understanding fortitude help us to face difficult times in our lives better?**

Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

Iqbal, Day 10



Key Paragraph, p. 119

“Try not to be sad, Fatima. He changed our lives and will be with us forever. I told Eshan Kahn that I’ll be the one to study and go to the university. I’ll be a lawyer, and I’ll fight to free all the slaves in Pakistan and all over the world. And for the first time in my life, I’m not afraid either” (p. 119).

Writing Prompt

Pretend you are Maria. **In 2-3 narrative paragraphs, write a eulogy for Iqbal’s funeral. The eulogy should narrate Iqbal’s life story and the legacy he has left behind.**

When answering the question above, consider the following:

- Where does Iqbal come from?
- How has he escaped slavery?
- How has he given hope and inspired other enslaved children?
- How has he lived a life for a purpose bigger than himself?

Some people choose to destroy what is good and promote what is evil. When we stand up and speak out with courage for what is right and good, who can stop such a powerful message of truth that frees people?