

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 1*



#### Key Paragraph, p. 2

“Though I was eager to see the harem, I was a little bit scared, too. I had heard the tales of fountains running run with blood after the Sultan discovered his first wife with another man. He had slain her and all of her servants and slaves—every grown woman in the harem, save for his own mother. The Sultan vowed then and there that no woman would ever betray him again. That’s why he started killing off his wives” (p. 2).

#### Writing Prompt

Has the author done a good job getting your attention? Are you curious what will happen next? **Write an argumentative paragraph arguing either for or against Susan Fletcher’s style of writing. Are the events of the novel clear to you? Why or why not. What could she have done to make the story more interesting? Do you think the characters are credible? What do you think about the Sultan’s “reasoning?”** Maintain a formal tone in your paragraph and conclude your paragraph with a summary of your views.

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 2*



#### **Key Paragraph, p. 20**

“The lives of all the young women in the harem—all the young women in the city!—rested upon those slender shoulders. Depended upon her ability to please a man who would slay her for a yawn. Hung by a thin thread by a tale I had heard from a beggar in the bazaar. And, now that I had seen the terror behind the mask of Shahrazad’s serenity, I only revered her the more. She was the bravest person I had ever seen in my entire life” (p. 20).

#### **Writing Prompt**

In what ways is Shahrazad doing her part to honor all the women around her? In what ways is the Sultan not respecting the fact that each person has worth and the right to respect? **Write a paragraph in which you argue either for or against the statement that Marjan makes: “She was the bravest person I had ever seen in my entire life.”** From your impression of Shahrazad from the readings, do you believe she is a brave person? Why or why not? Use evidence from the book to support your claim. Conclude your paragraph with a summary of your viewpoint. When you finish your assignment, publish it on the online forum of your choice (Google Docs, Blog, etc.) and share it with your peers. Be sure to read at least one of your peer’s assignments before tomorrow’s class.

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 3*



#### **Key Paragraph, p. 22**

“Sometimes, when you wish for a thing and then it comes true, you discover that maybe you didn’t think through your wish all the way to the end...My auntie Chava used to say that wishing has power. That when you wish for something you are concentrating on it. And when you concentrate on a thing, you help bring it about” (p. 22).

#### **Writing Prompt**

“When you concentrate on a thing, you help bring it about.” This quote from today’s key paragraph focuses on dedication and the power of wishing. **Today, write two paragraphs. In the first paragraph, describe a time when one of your wishes came true. What was your wish? How did it come true? Then, write a second, argumentative paragraph claiming that your concentration on your wish helped bring it about. How did you concentrate on it? What actions did you take to help bring it about? Be sure to conclude your second paragraph with a summary of your stance. Maintain a formal tone throughout the assignment.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 4*



#### Key Paragraph, p. 30

“My auntie Chava used to tell me to chew my words before letting them out...if you let your words go buzzing out of your mouth like bees, she always told me, they will come back and sting you” (p. 30).

#### Writing Prompt

Marjan thinks before she speaks several times in this chapter and that probably saves her from getting into trouble. **Write a paragraph in which you argue either for or against thinking before you speak. Provide one or two examples from your own personal life as well as from the novel to support your claims. Be specific and provide as many details as possible. Provide a counterargument somewhere in your paragraph and be sure to maintain a formal tone throughout. Conclude with a reiteration of your stance. Upload your work to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Docs, etc.), and be sure to share it with your classmates. Make sure you read at least one of you peer’s assignments before tomorrow.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 5*



#### **Key Paragraph, p. 47**

"I had the strangest sensation then, as if my heart were cracking in my chest, as if it were crumbling apart like dried clay. The Sultan abhorred deception. He was famous for it. There was saying in the city: *like lying to the Sultan*. Eating poison was like lying to the Sultan" (p. 47).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Pretend you are Shahrazad. **Write an argumentative paragraph in which you claim that the Sultan is too controlling. Specifically, what has he done to you that you believe is unjust? Use details from the text but also feel free to be creative and invent instances you can imagine happening between Shahrazad and the Sultan. Make sure you conclude with a reiteration of your stance and maintain a formal tone throughout the paragraph.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 6*



#### **Key Paragraph, p. 56-57**

“She can’t keep up this storytelling forever—can she? She’s got to run out of them someday.’ The Khatun made a grumbling noise. Then, ‘When *you’re* queen,’ she said, ‘I’ll keep you well supplied with stories’” (p. 56-57).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Do you enjoy the author’s use of suspense in this chapter? **Write a paragraph either for or against the suspense. Was it helpful for you to imagine the situation that Marjan found herself in? Why or why not? Provide a counterargument in your response and maintain a formal tone throughout.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 7*



#### **Key Paragraph, p. 68**

“They didn’t summon me that day. And all the time I worried: Had they found the storyteller? If they had, did he know the rest of the tale? Shahrazad had said she could stretch out the part I had already told her for three more nights. Now only two were left. If she didn’t have the tale...Dread clung to me like a damp gown. I wished there were something I could do” (p.68).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Have you ever felt like you were in a situation that you had no control over?

**Write an argumentative paragraph in which you claim that you had the power to change the situation. What would you do differently? Draw on past experiences and be creative in your response. Make sure to conclude with a reiteration of your stance. When you have completed your assignment, upload it to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Docs, etc.), and share it with your classmates.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 8*



#### Key Paragraph, p. 71

“When I’m scared, I like to think about the brave people in stories I know. And I think, maybe I could be like *that*” (p. 71).

#### Writing Prompt

In today’s reading, Marjan displays courage in the task that she is assigned. **Write a paragraph that argues that Marjan is a heroine. Use specifics from the novel as well as your own opinions to support your claim. Does she act with justice? Why or why not? Research other women in history you believe to be heroines, using reliable print and digital resources. What do these women and Marjan have in common?**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 9*



#### **Key Paragraph, p. 93**

“My bad foot was throbbing again. My knees felt weak; I let them fold. I sank down into the dirty street, put my head down on my knees. I felt numb. What I wanted to do more than anything was to make my way somehow back to Auntie Chava’s house and enfold myself in her arms. But I couldn’t” (p. 93).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Marjan’s foot really hurts. She feels like the boy has let her down and tricked her. Yet something keeps her going. Have you ever been in a situation where you felt you couldn’t go on or couldn’t complete a task, but did? What happened? What motivated you to finish? If you didn’t finish, what might have helped you finish? Was it the *right* thing to do?

**Write an argumentative paragraph in which you claim that you would have never completed a task if it weren’t for a motivating force. What motivated you? How did it help you achieve your task? Why couldn’t you have succeeded without that motivating factor? Conclude your paragraph with a reiteration of your stance and be sure to maintain a formal tone throughout. When you have completed your assignment, upload it to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Docs, etc.). Share your works with your classmates and be sure to read at least one of your peer’s paragraphs before tomorrow’s class.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 10*



#### Key Paragraph, p. 111-112

“Marjan. I have told tales of good women and bad women, strong women and weak women, shy women and bold women, clever women and stupid women, honest women and women who betray. I’m hoping that, by living inside their skins while he hears their stories, he’ll understand over time that women are not all this way or that way. I’m hoping he’ll look at women as he does at men—that you must judge each of us on her own merits, and not condemn us or exalt us only because we belong to a particular sex.’

‘She was educating the Sultan. Enlarging his view of the world’” (p. 111-112).

#### Writing Prompt

This quote by Shahrazad supports the idea that in order to spread justice, one must be educated about the ways of the world. **Write an argumentative paragraph in which you claim that Shahrazad’s words reflect this quarter’s theme of Justice Requires Restraint. Is Shahrazad trying to teach respect, in that every person has worth? Explain. Is she trying to teach the Sultan restraint, in that there are things we don’t do because they could harm another person? What does it mean to enlarge another person’s view of the world? Be sure to maintain a formal tone throughout your paragraph and conclude with a reiteration of your stance.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 11*



#### Key Paragraph, p. 124

"I knew she did it to protect me. But I would never forgive her for it. I couldn't" (p. 124).

#### Writing Prompt

Put yourself in Marjan's shoes. She obviously still has some anger towards her mother. From Marjan's perspective, **write an argumentative letter addressed to Marjan's mother. In the letter, claim that Marjan's mother's actions were just/unjust. Why do you feel this way? Provide opinions or facts to back up your stance. Be creative as possible. When you have finished your assignment, upload it to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Doc, etc.) and then share your work with your classmates. Be sure to read at least one of your peer's letters before coming to class tomorrow.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 12*



#### Key Paragraph, p. 125

“Stories are thick with meanings. You can fall in love with a story for what *you* think it says, but you can’t know for certain where it will lead your listeners...People take what they need from the stories they hear” (p. 125).

#### Writing Prompt

Do you agree with the statement that stories are *thick with meanings*? What does that mean exactly? Write 1 paragraph clarifying the statement and explaining what you think it means. **Then, write an argumentative paragraph arguing either for or against the statement that stories are thick with meaning. What do you think the author is trying to say by including that statement in today’s reading? What’s one of the most powerful stories you have ever heard? Was what you took away from it what was intended? Be sure to conclude with a reiteration of your stance. Also, maintain a formal tone throughout your writing.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 13*



#### Key Paragraph, p. 140

“While Ayaz was tying Dunyazad’s blindfold, I turned to the storyteller.

‘You will send the birds with the rest of the tale, won’t you? Send them soon?...’

‘Don’t worry, Little Pigeon.’ His voice was gentle, warm, the way it sometimes sounded in his story. Though he didn’t smile, his eyes crinkled at their edges, as if I amused him.

‘Go along home, now. You can rely on me’” (p. 140).

#### Writing Prompt

In today’s reading, Marjan and Dunyazad are forced to trust the mysterious storyteller. Do you think this is wise? **Write an argumentative paragraph in which you claim that the storyteller is either trustworthy or untrustworthy. What evidence from the novel supports your opinion? Have you ever been in a situation where you had to trust someone who you didn’t know very well? How did you feel? How did the situation turn out? Foreshadow: what do you think will happen to Marjan and Dunyazad when they trust the storyteller? Be sure to conclude your writing with a reiteration of your claim. Also, maintain a formal tone. When you have completed your assignment, upload it to the online forum of your choice (Google Docs, Blog). Make sure to share it with your classmates.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 14*



#### **Key Paragraph, p. 154**

“Where are you, Marjan? Hold out your hand.’ Dunyazad patted down my arm to my hand, grasped it, pulled me along behind her.

‘There’s not much time,’ she said. ‘Make sure people see you, so they know you’re here. I have to get my sister...I’ll see you in the morning’” (p. 154).

#### **Writing Prompt**

Describe how Marjan’s and Dunyazad’s relationship has changed. What did they used to be like together? How do they treat each other now? **Write an argumentative paragraph from Marjan’s perspective, claiming that you and Dunyazad have become friends. Do you think they have gotten to be friends through going through so many tough situations together? Do you think friendships grow when we share tough times with friends and weather the storm together? Make sure to use a formal tone in your writing. Also, conclude your paragraph with a reiteration of your stance.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 15*



#### Key Paragraph, p. 168

“‘I’m not ashamed of loving him,’ she said. ‘There’s nothing wrong with loving someone. It’s hating—that’s what’s wrong’” (p.168).

#### Writing Prompt

Shahrazad comes to love the Sultan and has compassion for the pain he suffered when his first wife betrays him. Does that mean that Shahrazad thought it was okay to kill all those wives? **Write an argumentative paragraph that claims that love is not the same as approving of one’s actions. Can we love someone but not support his or her behavioral choices? Do we have an obligation to try and help them make better choices for themselves and others for the good of the whole? How can we help the people we love to act with justice? Be as specific as possible and make sure to conclude your writing with a reiteration of your stance.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 16*



#### Key Paragraph, p. 177

“The door opened—just a crack. I saw movement behind it, and then all at once the door swung wide and a man was standing on the step. A jagged, puckered scar ran from his forehead across an eye to his chin. He stared at me with his one good eye, clutching the hilt of a huge scimitar” (p. 177).

#### Writing Prompt

This chapter is filled with action. Many unexpected things happen in quick succession. The last paragraph of the chapter ends with Marjan’s encounter with a mysterious, scarred man. What do you think about this character we have just been introduced to? Using the limited information, you have been given, **write an argumentative paragraph in which you claim that the scarred man is either a ‘good’ or a ‘bad’ character. What makes you think he is either good or bad? Do you think you can judge someone’s character by their appearance? Why or why not? Make sure to maintain a formal tone throughout the paragraph. When you have finished your assignment, upload your work to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Doc, etc.). Make sure to share your work with your classmates.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 17*



#### **Key Paragraph, p. 187**

"It seemed that in this world we were piling up hurt upon hurt, and hate upon hate, and then hurt upon hurt again. Forgiveness. We couldn't forgive. We could only hate when we were hurt? And then the hurt and the hate would start up again—all in a terrible circle" (p. 187).

#### **Writing Prompt**

In today's key passage, Marjan describes a 'terrible circle' of hate and hurt. She believes that hurt fuels hate, and produces more hurt to others. **Write 2 argumentative paragraphs today. In the first paragraph, argue whether or not you agree with Marjan's belief in the circle of hate and hurt. In a second paragraph, make a claim about the way that this 'circle' that Marjan describes could be broken. Will love break the circle? Trust? Friendship? Honesty?**

**Pick a few values you think will help break the circle and describe why you think they are essential. Make sure to maintain a formal tone throughout your paragraphs. Conclude each paragraph with a reiteration of your stance.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 18*



#### Key Paragraph, p. 191

“For just a moment, I allowed myself to imagine Farah finding the coins—the surprise and wonder on her face. I imagined all the food jars overflowing, a plump wet nurse feeding the babies, and servant helping Farah with her work” (p.191).

#### Writing Prompt

Farah and her husband decide that allowing Marjan to stay with them is a risk that they are not willing to take anymore. However, despite all the hardship Marjan is experiencing she still leaves money for Farah. Would you have acted kindly and left the money if you were in Marjan’s situation? **Write an argumentative paragraph either arguing in favor or against Marjan’s choice to leave the money. What could you have spent that money on instead of giving it away? Think about a time you have done something nice for someone when they didn’t expect it. How did it make them feel? How did it make you feel?**

**Make sure to conclude your paragraph with a reiteration of your stance. When you have completed your assignment, upload it to the online forum of your choice (Blog, Google Doc). Make sure to share your work with your classmates, and make sure to read over a few of your peers’ assignments.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 19*



#### **Key Paragraph, p. 204**

"I glanced at him again. Pain was flooding his eyes. A spasm shuddered across his countenance, and the stone façade broke. Crumbled. The muscles in his face were working, struggling for control. He bowed his head, covered his face with his hands, and I heard a sharp intake of breath that might have been a sob" (p. 204).

#### **Writing Prompt**

How does the Sultan react to finding out that Shahrazad loves him? Does he believe Marjan? **Write an argumentative paragraph arguing whether or not you believe the Sultan believes Marjan or not. What evidence from today's readings supports your claim? How would you feel if you were in his situation? What do you think he will talk to Shahrazad about in private? Make sure to maintain a formal tone in your writing and conclude with a reiteration of your stance.**

## Character Based Literacy Program Writing Prompt

### *Shadow Spinner, Day 20*



#### **Key Paragraph, p. 206**

“The thing about life is, no matter what happens to you, it goes on. What seems like an ending is really a beginning in disguise” (p. 206).

#### **Writing Prompt**

In what ways are endings like beginnings? **Write an argumentative paragraph in which you claim that endings are, in fact, like beginnings. Has there ever been a time in your life where you felt like it was the end of something, but then later realized it was the beginning of something else? Make sure you employ a formal tone throughout your writing, and conclude with a reiteration of your stance.**