



Arabian Nights

adapted by Dominic Cooke
directed by Daniel Gidron

Performance Guide

How to Use This Performance Guide

Thank you for taking the time to look over our Performance Guide for *Arabian Nights*. This guide contains information about the show to help enrich your students' experience.

The Performance Guide is divided into four sections:

- **Get Ready** to help you and your students prepare to see the show;
- **Deepen Understanding** to explore specific elements or themes from the show, and;
- **Reflect and Connect** to further engage students in the show they have seen;
- **Performance Guide Tools** to further enhance the guide activities.

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Curriculum Connections

The questions and activities in this Study Guide connect with many of the standards in the MA Curriculum Frameworks for **Arts, English Language Arts** and **History and Social Science**. The following list is a sampling of standards that connect with the lessons in this guide. These standards are taken from the Massachusetts Department of Education Curriculum Frameworks (www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current):

Theater Arts Curriculum Frameworks:

In THEATER, students will:

- Demonstrate an understanding of the playwright as a collaborating artist who works with the director, actors, designers, and technicians (2.12)
- Read plays from a variety of cultures and historical periods, describe their themes, interpret their characters' intentions and motivations, and determine their staging requirements (3.1)
- Rehearse and perform a variety of dramatic works for peers or invited audiences (3.6)
- Attend live performances of extended length and complexity, demonstrating an understanding of the protocols of audience behavior appropriate to the style of the performance (5.11)

In CONNECTING ART TO OTHER DISCIPLINES, students will:

- Describe the purposes for which works of dance, music, theatre, visual arts, and architecture were and are created, and, when appropriate, interpret their meanings (PreK–12 STANDARD 6: Purposes and Meanings in the Arts)
- Describe the roles of artists, patrons, cultural organizations, and arts institutions in societies of the past and present (PreK–12 STANDARD 7: Roles of Artists in Communities)
- Demonstrate their understanding of styles, stylistic influence, and stylistic change by identifying when and where art works were created, and by analyzing characteristic features of art works from various historical periods, cultures, and genres. (PreK–12 STANDARD 8: Concepts of Style, Stylistic Influence, and Stylistic Change).

MA English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science and Technical Subjects Curriculum Frameworks

Reading Standards for Literature, Grades 6–12. Students will:

- Cite strong and thorough **textual evidence** to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text (standard 1).
- Determine a **theme** or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text (standard 2).
- Analyze the impact of the author's choices regarding how to develop **and relate elements of a story or drama** (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed) (standard 4).
- Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze **the impact of specific word choices** on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful (standard 5).
- Relate a work of fiction, poetry, or drama to the seminal ideas of its time. Analyze a work of fiction, poetry, or drama using a variety of critical lenses (e.g., formal, psychological, **historical**, sociological, feminist) (standard MA.8.A.).

English Language Arts History/Social Science standards:

- **Writing standard:** introduce a topic and organize complex ideas, concepts, and information so that each new element builds on that which precedes it to create a unified whole (standard 2a).
- **Reading standard:** synthesize information from a range of sources (e.g. texts, experiments, simulations) into a coherent understanding of a process, phenomenon, or concept, resolving conflicting information when possible (standard 9).

MA History and Social Science Curriculum Frameworks:

Grades 8–12, Concepts and Skills in History and Geography. Students will:

- Show connections, causal and otherwise, between particular historical events and ideas and larger social, economic, and political trends and developments (concept/skill 7).
- Interpret the past within its own historical context rather than in terms of present-day norms and values (concept/skill 8).

About Central Square Theater

Central Square Theater (CST) is a state-of-the-art theatrical arts facility where audiences find, under one roof, the distinctive repertoires of two award-winning, professional companies, Underground Railway Theater (URT) and The Nora Theatre Company (The Nora), as well as collaborative projects drawing on their creative synergy. A cultural anchor in the community, schools, families, and community groups benefit from outreach and educational programs, and the local economy is boosted by the over 26,000 audience members that visit CST each year and enjoy the multicultural, multi-generational, urban environment of Central Square, Cambridge. As the first permanent home for both theater companies, Central Square Theater is a vibrant hub of theatrical, educational and social activity, where artists and audiences come together to create theater vital to the community. The theater is dedicated to providing affordable ticket prices for underserved communities and offers free or discounted tickets to many local non-profit organizations.

The Nora Theatre Company began in 1987 with a production of Edna O'Brien's play, *Virginia*, about the celebrated author Virginia Woolf, at the former Lyric Stage space on Charles Street. Committed to producing illuminating contemporary and modern classic theater and to championing the voice of women, the company has, since that time, staged 68 productions. Before moving to Central Square Theater in 2008, The Nora also resided at the Harvard Freshman Union where it established an internship program with Harvard freshmen, and at Boston Playwrights' Theatre where audiences were introduced to many of the 37 plays which were given their Greater Boston, New England, or World premieres by the company. Throughout its history, The Nora has received many awards and citations for the high quality of its work including seven Elliot Norton Awards, five IRNE Awards, and mentions in 'Best of' lists from, among others, The Boston Globe, EDGE Boston, and Boston Phoenix. In 2008, the company began a collaboration with Girl Talk Theatre, an organization that uses the art of theater to empower poor, homeless, and marginalized women.

Underground Railway Theater creates live performance in the activist and collaborative spirit of its namesake. Through interdisciplinary inquiry and partnership, URT creates accessible theater of great beauty and social content – theater that challenges and delights, informs and celebrates. Through its productions and a constellation of education and outreach programs, URT activates commitments to cultivating local artists of all ages and to creating new work. Founded in Oberlin, Ohio, one of the stops on the Underground Railroad, URT toured nationally for 30 years before becoming a resident company at CST. Through its work with symphony orchestras, URT has represented Massachusetts at over a dozen U.S. theater festivals and also in France, Canada, Spain, Taiwan, Greece, and Hong Kong. Awards for theater and public education include those from Our Place Theater Project, the Environmental Protection Agency, and the Cambridge Peace Commission. The company has been cited for excellence

About *Arabian Nights*

Arabian Nights is an adaptation of *One Thousand and One Nights*, a collection of folk tales from the Middle East and Asia. The original production was adapted and directed by Dominic Cooke, performed at The Young Vic, London, UK in 1998. CST's production premiered in winter 2011, and we are delighted to revive this enchanting show.

The play opens in ancient Persia, where the vengeful and tyrannical king, Shahrayar, rules the land. Shahrayar, was not always this way. His bitter vengefulness sprung-up after he was betrayed by his beloved wife. From that moment on, he swore to marry for just one night; and in the morning, he would order his newly-wed's execution. 1001 nights, brides and lives passed this way until the wily, young girl, Shahrazad —the King's Secretary's daughter —came up with a plot to end this miserable tyranny. She marries Shahrayar and then every morning, as daybreak approaches, she weaves a tale so wonderful, the king's imagination is captured and he agrees to keep her alive for one more day. As she tells her many tales —stories about enchanted caves, flesh-eating ghouls, talking birds and flying men —they are brought to life on stage for our imaginations to feast on. At the heart of *Arabian Nights*, is a story about the power of the imagination to heal, inspire, and transform. In the Performance Guide Tool section, you will find a history of *Arabian Nights* as a whole, as well as individual histories of each tale within Cooke's adaptation.

CST's production of *Arabian Nights* uses dance, puppetry, movement, and voice to breathe life into these 1000 year old tales, and tells this story as magically as Shahrazad told hers.

Get Ready:

Attending a Live Performance

Attending a live show is a unique experience. Going to see a play can be a great opportunity for students, but there is a lot of responsibility that goes with it. In a play, the actors are live onstage in front of the audience. This means they can hear (and sometimes see) the audience. How you react as an audience member affects what the actors do onstage. Because of this, the audience is often considered another character in the show.

Teachers: Before you come to the theater, please talk with your students about seeing a play and what is expected of them during a live show. Here are some important etiquette points to remember when going to the theater:

- There is no food, candy or gum allowed in the theater.
- Cell phones, mp3 players and other electronic devices should be turned off and put away for the performance. If audience members take these items out during intermission, they need to be completely turned off when the show starts again.
- During the performance students should focus their energy and attention on the action happening onstage.

We encourage you to use the questions below to have a conversation with your students about attending the theater:

- Have you ever performed in front of an audience in a play, dance performance, concert or sporting event? What about doing a report or presentation in school? Do you enjoy doing this? Why or why not?
- How aware were you of the audience and their reactions during your performance? How did their presence affect your performance?
- Can you imagine (or have you experienced) performing in front of an audience that was clearly not interested in what you were sharing? How did you know? Did this affect your performance/presentation?

After the show, students will have a chance to talk with the actors in the production and ask them questions about the show. Ask students to write down some possible questions they could ask, using the prompts below:

- What is one question you have about the show before you see it?
- What is one question you might ask an actor in the production?
- What is one question you might ask the director or playwright of the show?
- What is one question you might ask one of the designers (lighting designer, costume designer, set designer, sound designer)?

Get Ready:

Storytelling

“If you listen carefully, at the end you’ll be someone else.” -- From *The Mahabharata*, an Indian epic.

Throughout history, every society has had its stories and storytellers. It is widely thought that storytelling began as chants or simple songs. These chants explained natural phenomenon, such as why the sun rises, or described people with superhuman abilities. Often, storytelling would combine music, dance and poetry to create a moving and memorable tale. While many members of the community would participate in storytelling, those that were especially adept, became teachers, entertainers and cultural advisors for the community. In Europe during the Middle Ages, storytellers would travel to the courts of rich and important people to perform. As well as traditional tales, their performances could cover topics from historical events and current court gossip to medicine. While some tales would be recited from memory, others might be improvised on the spot or adapted to suit the whims of royalty.

Many storytellers traveled not only around the country but around the world, swapping tales as they went. Often, they would take just the parts of a tale they liked best. Other times, they probably forgot the exact details of a particular story and filled in the blanks with their own inventions. Typically, these stories were passed on orally, and not in writing, and as a result tales ended up evolving and changing with each re-telling. Consequently, it can be difficult to say precisely where a particular tale came from. It is interesting to think that hundreds and hundreds of years ago, when for the most part societies were fairly cut-off from each other, cultures across the world were exchanging stories and influencing each other in this way.

A Storyteller's Vocabulary List

From storyarts.org

Plot: The sequence of events from which a story, play, song, puppet show, song, etc. can be made

Retell: to restate in one's own words

Version: One of many possible presentations of the same plot

Character: People, animals, or other communicating entities in the tale

Narrator: The presenter of the tale

Ask:

Why tell stories? Discuss as a class.

Activity: (timed activity)

- In one minute write down as many stories' or folktales' title as you can remember
- Review your list. Next to each title, write down one sentence that summarizes 'the lesson' or 'the message' of each story.

Deepen Understanding: Be the Storyteller



Discussion:

In *Arabian Nights*, Shahrazad would stop a story at a crucial point. Why do you think she did that?

Activity: *Group Storytelling*

- In pairs or small groups, think of an adventure story. This can be a retelling of a folktale, familiar story, or a new story
- As a group, make an outline of your story: (use the Plot Structure Scenario Tool, pg. 13)
- With your group members, through improvisation or writing, begin to construct your story
- Stop the story at a crucial point
- Present your story to the class through improvisation or re-telling
- Ask the class, "How might this story end?" Gather responses
- In your group, chose an ending from the class responses or devise a new one
- In your group, complete the story. Present the whole story to the class

Alternate

- Pass your story to another group and let them devise the ending. Share.

Reflect and Connect:

Meet an Actor

Elbert Joseph performs many characters in *Arabian Nights*: Jester, Baba Mustapha, Headsman, Beggar, Baker, Steward in *The Story of the Envious Sisters*. He has acted locally at American Repertory Theater, Wheelock Family Theatre, Harwich Junior Theatre, and other companies. He is an American Sign Language Coach and Interpreter, having acted as interpreter for Gershwin's *Porgy and Bess* at American Repertory Theater, *Billy Elliot* at Opera House, and *Wicked* at Opera House as well as coach for *West Side Story* and *Rock of Ages* at Colonial Theatre. Elbert, better known as EJ, was interviewed by Maggie Moore Abdow, Underground Railway Theater Education Director, about his experience as a Hard of Hearing actor in *Arabian Nights*.



Maggie: You are an actor. Do you prefer to be identified as a “hard of hearing” actor? What is it like to work with a “hearing” cast?

EJ: Yes, I do identify as Hard of Hearing actor. If I go to a theatre conference I fight for and encourage diversity and inclusion in theatre and inclusion of Hard of Hearing actors on stage. I become an Access and Diversity Individual. It can be a very growing experience with challenges, frustration, and excitement at the same time for everybody. Sometimes, Hearing actors will talk at the same time and forgot to notice that I am Hard of Hearing. There is a time and place and I have wished they would learn some sign language so I can be part of their conversation.

Maggie: *Arabian Nights* performances rely on actors to be excellent storytellers. In your performance, how do you approach the various methods of storytelling? Sign, physical movement, and verbal?

EJ: Funny. I was talking with Mimi Huntington (The Nora Theatre Company Artistic Director) last year before the auditions and I mentioned to her that Deaf culture strongly believes in storytelling. Also, my grandmother was a Storyteller. I would listen to her everyday -never got tired of it--even when she would tell it again and again. I’ve missed her everyday. I think back to storytellers I have seen and learned from, how they expressed themselves by using gestures, facial expressions and certain levels of voices. That's how I coordinated my performance—from those experiences.

Maggie: You are the ASL (American Sign Language) Coach for Actor Training. What is like to teach sign to non-bilingual actors?

EJ: I want it to be clear I am an ASL Coach for Theatrical Interpreters. As Sign Master for non bilingual actors, it’s fun because I am curious about how much they do know about ASL, wondering if they have met a Deaf person, seen interpreters, or have taken an ASL class. I teach them sign and they have to learn and practice everyday. Their hands need to be fluent and at the same time they have to use their facial expression, sign and say their lines at the. Sign Language has to be clear and clean, just like speaking your lines have to be clear and clean. Trust me, during the performances, they can’t slack off on their sign because the audience would know Sign Language.

Maggie: You’re such a physical actor---it’s fascinating to watch. What is your training?

EJ: You know - people always say that to me-- that I am a physical actor. However, I truly never thought that before. I always think of myself as an actor deeply passionate about theatre. I got my training from Wheelock Family Theater, Pah! Deaf Youth Theater and Boston Arts Academy.

CONNECT:

After seeing his performance in *Arabian Nights*, what is one question you have for EJ?

Reflect and Connect: Write a Review

After your students have seen *Arabian Nights* ask them to be theater critics and write a review of the show. Here are some questions you can use as prompts in your writing:

- What was the most compelling or intriguing aspect of the production you saw?
- What questions did you have about *Arabian Nights* or what was something that confused you?
- Can you make any connections between this play and other plays you have seen? Between the play and books you have read or movies you have seen? Between the play and something from your own life? Compare and contrast the play to these other stories.



We love to hear from students and teachers who have come to see shows at Central Square Theater. If your students have written a review of the show or generated any other work based on their experiences at the theater, please send work to:

Central Square Theater ATTN: Education

450 Massachusetts Ave Cambridge, MA 02139 Or e-mail work to edu@undergroundrailwaytheater.org

Performance Guide Tool: The History of *Arabian Nights*

There is no single author of *Arabian Nights* or —as it used to be known— *One Thousand and One Nights* (which was its title until its translation into various European languages). *Arabian Nights* is a collection of tales from the Middle East and Asia, which began as folk stories and passed from generation to generation and place to place via the spoken word. The earliest evidence of the tales was found in Syria in 1948. Scholars dated a small piece of manuscript to be from the 9th century and to contain reference to Shahrazad and *One Thousand and One Nights*. Until then, scholars believed that the earliest written manuscripts were from the 13th or 14th century.

Stories continued to be added to these manuscripts, and tales already written down were rewritten or adapted. However, a core group of stories — present in most of the manuscripts — emerged and remain with us today. One of those manuscripts fell into the hands of Antoine Galland, a Frenchman who began translating *Arabian Nights* into French in 1703. His French edition contained a number of stories that were not present in the manuscript he translated from, yet were compelling enough for future translators and editors to retain in their own translations. In the 1880s, John Payne compiled the first full English translation, closely followed by Richard Burton in 1886, who blatantly plagiarized Payne while adding his own tales to the mix. Dominic Cooke's adaptation of *Arabian Nights* contains tales from the early manuscripts, from Galland's additions to his French translation, and one from Burton's imagination.

This diverse collection of tales emphasizes what some scholars refer to as the "snowball effect" of *One Thousand and One Nights*, though it seems more similar to a flawed game of Telephone played throughout centuries. There is much we do not and cannot know about the origins of *Arabian Nights*. What is clear, however, is the persistence of these stories and the complex traditions from which they originate. Just as Shahrazad tells stories to Shahrayar in order to save herself from death, people from various cultures told these wonderful tales in order to keep their beliefs and traditions alive.



Performance Guide Tool: The Stories of *Arabian Nights*

Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves

The Story of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves is one of the numerous “orphan tales” — tales found in Galland’s French translation, which were not present in the manuscript he was translating from. In 1709, Galland was introduced to Hanna Diab, a Maronite monk from Aleppo, Syria. They met in Paris, through the traveler Paul Lucas, a mutual friend. Diab, like Shahrazad, seemed to have a perfect memory and was able to recount countless stories off the top of his head. Diab told Galland an assortment of stories from his homeland, which Galland then included in his translation of *Arabian Nights*. Galland’s journal from May 27, 1709 relates the story of *Morgiane’s Tricks or the Forty Robbers Exterminated by the Skill of a Female Slave*. The story Galland wrote in his diary was extremely concise; at barely six pages long, it was far shorter than the tale he eventually included in his edition of *Arabian Nights*. Clearly, Galland embellished and altered the tales told to him by Diab, introducing animals that would not have been familiar to a Syrian storyteller and altering the name of the protagonist from Hogia Baba to Ali Baba. It is safe to assume the story of Ali Baba derives from, and is set in, Syria, as Syria was Diab’s homeland. Given the history of Ethiopian enslavement in Syria, it is likely that the clever slave girl, Marjanah in Cooke’s *Arabian Nights*, is Ethiopian in descent.

The Story of the Little Beggar

The Story of the Little Beggar —as it is called in Cooke’s adaptation of *Arabian Nights* —is based on *The Hunchback’s Tale*. *The Hunchback’s Tale* was in the manuscript Galland translated, and is one of the few “core” stories that are found in multiple early manuscripts. The tale is set in China, where the king’s favorite comedian, the Hunchback, has been invited to dinner at the tailor’s house after amusing the tailor and his wife with his drunken antics. The tale goes on much in the same way as Cooke portrays it in *Arabian Nights*, though the original version places an emphasis on religious diversity. In the manuscript version, the Hunchback’s body is passed along in the following order: from the Muslim tailor, to the Jewish doctor, to a Muslim steward, to a Christian broker. After the scene in which each of these men confess to killing the very-much-alive Hunchback, they are then told to go before the king, who asks: “Have you ever heard anything more amazing than the adventure of the hunchback?” From there, the men each tell their own individual stories to impress the king, adding to the number of stories in *Arabian Nights*. *The Hunchback’s Tale*, therefore, is established as a framing device for Shahrazad to tell more stories to her king in order to stay alive. The tale probably derives from Baghdad, though it is set in China. China was a trading partner of Baghdad until 869, when Chinese rebels slaughtered thousands of foreign merchants from the Middle East in the trading post of Guangzhou, China.

The Story of Es-Sindibad the Sailor

The Story of Sindibad, or Sinbad as he is commonly known, was written sometime after 846. We know it was written around this time as it is set in Baghdad during the reign Caliph Haroun al Raschid. Raschid ruled the area now know as Iraq from 786 to 809 and makes frequent guest appearances in *Arabian Nights*. In Cooke’s *Arabian Nights*, Sindibad tells a poor man, also named Sindibad, a story about just one of his many epic journeys. This differs from the early manuscripts, in which Sindibad is described as telling seven tales about seven journeys. In fact, Galland wanted to translate a solitary manuscript of Sindibad’s seven journeys before he even knew the entirety of *One Thousand and One Nights* existed. Although Sindibad’s telling of his seven journeys takes a total of seven days, Shahrazad’s telling of the story of Sindibad, interspersed with other stories along the way, takes thirty nights. As she recites the stories to the King, she times it so that dawn breaks within the middle of Sindibad’s journeys, never at the end, in order to create cliffhangers and keep the King’s headman at bay. Some speculate there are far too many cultural and historical errors within Sindibad’s tales for it to have been written by a genuine traveler. Details of foreign countries within Sindibad’s tales of his journeys were likely borrowed from Ibn Khordadbeh, a Persian geographer and author of the earliest Arabic account of geography, *The Book of Roads and Kingdoms*. Some scholars firmly argue that Sindibad’s seven journeys were loosely based on Homer’s *The Odyssey*. However, there is no concrete evidence to validate this claim.

Performance Guide Tool: The Stories of Arabian Nights, Cont'd

How Abu Hassan Broke Wind

This fun little story has no Arabic precedent, so far as any scholars have found. It would seem that Richard Burton, who translated *Arabian Nights* into English, sneaked this story into his edition. Richard Burton was an English geographer and explorer, amongst many other things, and it is possible that he heard the story *How Abu Hassan Broke Wind* while traveling around the globe. Although he was a highly respected, knighted captain, he had a reputation for having a rather dirty mind. His obituary in *The Athenaeum* read: "It is true he was ill fitted to run in official harness, and he had a Byronic love of shocking people, of telling tales against himself that had no foundation in fact." His reputation as a fabricator with a bawdy sense of humor, along with a number of stories he added to *Arabian Nights*, persists to this day.

The Story of the Wife Who Wouldn't Eat

In Cooke's adaptation of *Arabian Nights*, *The Story of the Wife Who Wouldn't Eat* is presented as its own, individual tale. In the Galland translation, however, it is *The History of Sidi Nu'uman*, one of three stories within *The Caliph's Night Adventure*. The titular Caliph is the previously mentioned Haroun al Raschid, ruler during the time of Sindibad's journeys. The Caliph wakes up in a foul mood and desires some entertainment. When he sees a young man, named Sidi Nu'uman, whipping his horse, the Caliph asks to hear this man's story. Set in Baghdad, this story is yet another "orphan," as it cannot be traced back further than Galland's French translation. It is likely based on *The Merchant and the Demon* tale, one of the "core" stories found in numerous early manuscripts. In this tale, the titular merchant accidentally kills a demon's son. While the merchant prepares to face his death at the hands of the demon, three old men stumble upon him and, upon hearing his sad tale, decide to wait with him to witness the outcome. When the demon approaches, the three old men tell tales of human-animal transfiguration to the demon in order to help save the merchant's life.

The Story of the Envious Sisters

The Story of the Envious Sisters is yet another "orphan" tale that has no discernible manuscript source, yet was included in Galland's French translation. It is certain that in May of 1709, Galland noted in his journal that he had been given *The Story of the Two Sisters*, presumably by Hanna the Maronite monk. He then renamed it, *The Story of the Two Sisters Who Envied Their Cadette*. Due to its fairytale qualities, scholars from various European, as well as Middle Eastern, countries have claimed its cultural origins as their own. Galland placed this story last in his edition, perhaps indicating his perception of its significance.



Performance Guide Tool: Plot Structure Scenarios

Revised by Heather Forest Copyright © 2000, storyarts.org

Travel through the sections below and choose one or several elements from each. Tell, write or verbally improvise a story that utilizes all the elements chosen. For improvisational fun...put each element on a card and randomly select character, setting, problem and solution.

Introduce Character(s)

- girl
- boy
- animal
- man
- woman
- idea
- spirit
- machine
- thing
- plant, etc.

Problem

- Caught stealing
- Told a lie
- Saw or heard a secret
- Lost something
- Been captured
- Under a spell or curse
- Goes to forbidden place
- Finds forbidden object
- Has enemy
- Is undervalued
- Is unrecognized
- Causes jealousy
- Forgets something
- Broke something
- Does not like something
- Needs something
- Needs to escape or hide
- Needs to rescue someone
- Needs to rescue something
- Needs to prove worth

Setting

Environment:

- farm
- village
- otherworldly
- city
- mountains
- forest
- arctic
- ocean
- desert

Time:

- olden
- modern
- future

Inner Traits

Inner Traits That Cause Original Trouble:

- Is greedy
- Dangerously curious
- Doesn't follow advice
- Is lazy
- Is pessimistic
- Is blindly in love
- Is enraged & seeks revenge
- Is naive & trusting
- Is clumsy
- Is untrained
- Lacks confidence
- Is foolish

Inner Traits That Aid Solution:

- Is courageous
- Is resourceful
- Is imaginative
- Is kind
- Is generous
- Is clever
- Is loyal
- Is strong
- Is optimistic

Solution

- Has helper
 - Magical
 - Non-magical
- Is rescued
- Is transformed
- Discovers skill
- Finds magic
- Helps self:
 - Exercises cleverness
 - Uses inner traits
- Journey undertaken to obtain solution

Conclusion

- Returns to original setting new in some way:
 - Is rewarded
 - Is wiser
 - Is transformed
 - Comes with gift or treasure

End

- Lives well
- Passes luck or reward on to others
- Has positive impact on the world
- Offers wisdom

Resources for Further Study

Looking for more ways to explore and share the *Tales of the Arabian Nights* with young people?

Start with some of these suggestions from the Cambridge Public Library Youth Services Department!

Picture Books

The Rose's Smile: Farizad of the Arabian Nights. Retold by David Kherdian. Illustrated by Stefano Vitale. Henry Holt & Company. 1997. [J 398.2 Kherdian ROS](#)

Separated from their royal parents at birth, a brother and sister must travel to find a Talking Bird, a Singing Tree and the Water of Gold before they can be reunited.

The Seven Voyages of Sinbad the Sailor. Retold by James Riordan. Illustrated by Shelley Fowles. Frances Lincoln. 2007. [J 398.2 Riordan](#)

All seven wild voyages presented in accessible picture book format, illustrated with simple, cartoonish paintings.

Sinbad the Sailor. Retold and illustrated by Marcia Williams. Candlewick Press. 1994.

[J 398.2 Williams SIN](#)

A comic-book style depiction of Sinbad's voyages featuring fierce wild beasts and unfathomable treasure.

Sinbad: From the Tales of the Thousand and One Nights. Retold and illustrated by Ludmila Zeman. Tundra Books. 1999. [J 398.2 Zeman SIN](#)

Gorgeous golden paintings depict one of Sinbad's adventures in this rich picture book.

The Tale of Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves: A Story from the Arabian Nights. Retold by Eric Kimmel. Illustrated by Will Hillenbrand. Holiday House. 1996. [J 398.2 Kimmel TAL](#)

Entertainingly illustrated, this clever retelling will have picture book readers shouting "Open Sesame!"

Longer Retellings

Aladdin and the Enchanted Lamp. Retold by Philip Pullman. Illustrated by Sophy Williams. Scholastic. 2005. [J 398.2 Pullman ALA](#)

The classic tale of clever Aladdin, his powerful jinnies, the brave princess and the evil-hearted Moor — a delicious, rollicking read-aloud.

The Arabian Nights. Translated by Sir Richard Burton. Canterbury Classics, 2011. [J 398.2 Arabian](#)

This reproduction of the 1932 Modern Library edition includes 21 stories from Sir Richard Burton's multi-volume translation along with his extensive explanatory notes.

The Arabian Nights. Retold by Wafa' Tarnowska. Illustrated by Carole Henaff. Barefoot Books. 2010.

[J 398.2 Tarnowska ARA](#)

With a large format and rich jewel-toned illustrations, this volume's eight newly translated tales from the Arabian Nights will enchant young listeners.

Arabian Nights: Three Tales. Retold and illustrated by Deborah Nourse Lattimore. HarperCollins. 1995.

[J 398.2 Lattimor](#)

Dark, magical illustrations draw young readers and listeners into three tales retold from the Arabian Nights: "Aladdin," "The Queen of the Serpents," and "Ubar, The Lost City of Brass."

Genies, Meanies, and Magic Rings: Three Tales from the Arabian Nights. Retold by Stephen Mitchell. Illustrated by Tom Pohri. Walker & Company. 2007. [J 398.2 Mitchell GEN](#)

With humor to soften harsher plot points, "Ali Baba and the Forty Thieves," "Aladdin and the Magic Lamp," and "Abu Keer and Abu Seer" come to life in 178 pages. Afterward included.

Informational Books

Life in the Medieval Muslim World (series). Written by Kathryn Hinds. Marshall Cavendish. 2009. [J 909.09 Hinds](#)

This four-volume set includes *Faith, The Palace, The City, The Countryside*. Perfect for an older reader interested in the history, culture and traditions that gave rise to some of the tales.

Fiction for Older Readers

Between Two Ends. Written by David Ward. Amulet Books. 2011. [J WAR](#)

While exploring his grandparents' dusty library, 12-year-old Yeats encounters a pair of pirate-shaped bookends who can talk. That's not nearly the strangest thing that happens in this literary mystery and family drama that takes Yeats right into the world of the Arabian Nights.

The Book of Wonders. Written by Jasmine Richards. HarperCollins. 2012. [J RIC](#)

When an evil ruler captures her sister in this fantasy chapter book, 13-year-old Zardi finds herself on a rescue mission led by Captain Sinbad himself!

Through the Skylight. Written by Ian Baucom. Illustrated by Justin Gerard. Atheneum, 2013. [J BAU](#)

In a story with a time-travelling twist, three modern day children find themselves back in time on a dangerous adventure laced with elements of the Arabian Nights.