

## **Tales from Baghdad**

### **Discussion materials regarding customs, traditions and values**

#### **SINBAD**

##### **Customs and traditions**

*We can discuss a number of customs arising in the story and whether or not they are similar to our own.*

1. There are only men in the cafés
2. Smoking hookah
3. The suitor asks the father's permission to marry his daughter
4. Mosques, minarets, the muezzin

##### **Values**

1. Wars. Why do they start? Who starts them?
2. The commitment of giving one's word
3. Non-verbal communication
4. Courage and fear. How do we feel when faced with the unknown?
5. Learning through experience. Is good intent enough?
6. Oil. Why do we need it? What it is for? What countries produce it?
7. Weapons. Besides depleted uranium bombs, are you aware of any other kinds of weapons? Effects. What countries produce them? What countries are buying them?
8. Rich and poor countries.

#### **ALI BABA**

##### **Customs and traditions**

1. Being buried facing Mecca
2. Use of donkeys as a means of transportation

##### **Values**

1. Family. Brothers and sisters that are brought up the same way can be very different. Do you know anyone like this?
2. Illegal trade and the black market. Does anything go where money is concerned?
3. Is it permissible to defend ourselves if we are attacked?
4. Courage and fear in the face of danger. How can we react?
5. How do we put our lives on the right track? What are the limits? Ambition, lack of scruples, people acting in good faith, simple people...
6. Death and the afterlife. Will we be rewarded for our actions once we are dead? Will bad people pay for their crimes?
7. What is an emerging country? Why is China considered one?
8. How do we perceive and treat foreigners? How do we feel and how are we treated in other countries?

9. Would you invite a stranger to stay in your home? Do they do this in other countries? Can we trust strangers?
10. The use of codes and passwords in the story allows people to enter the cave. What codes or passwords do we use?
11. Have you ever considered leaving the country where you were born? Have you ever left it? Would you?
12. Mourning a loss: changing country, losing a loved one, losing an object that is important to us, losing someone's love ...

## **ALADDIN**

### **Traditions and customs**

1. The headscarf. Is it for culture, religion, tradition? Different ways of dressing.
2. The story talks about the pleasure of smell. Is smell always a pleasure? What pleasures do you think are within our reach and which ones are not?
3. The text talks about a typical joke in Iraq. Do you like telling jokes?
4. The job of the scribe. What other jobs appear in the story? Which occupations have been lost and which ones are still practiced?

### **Values**

1. You can experiment with the senses of taste, smell, sight and touch. Put yourselves in the place of a blind person or a deaf person.
2. Concept of time. Does time fly when we are having fun? And when we are not? Do all countries experience the same concept of time?
3. What does life offer us? What is important to us and what isn't? Are we open to all the possibilities?
4. The courage to begin again after a loss or a disaster.
5. How one can lose everything in a second. The ephemeral nature of things. What importance do we give to what we have? What is the most important: the future, the past or the present?
6. Can a person be only good or bad, or both? What is each of us like?
7. Is falling in love with someone who is different from us a good or bad thing? Is it complicated? Let's talk about prejudices
8. Think about situations in which women are a minority and how they are treated, and vice versa.
9. Can getting to know people help us to understand them? Do you believe that different peoples can respect each other even if they have different cultures and traditions?
10. If you had a lamp like Aladdin, what would you ask for? As yourself, or if you were poor, if you were rich...