

LESSON FOR FATIMAH ASGHAR'S "SUPER ORPHAN"

Read "Super Orphan" by Fatimah Asghar at : <https://aaww.org/fatimah-asghar-two-poems/>

Discussion questions for "Super Orphan":

Poet Emily Yoon says Fatimah Asghar's poetry "does not provide answers but encourages questions; does not instruct but still teaches." When Asghar asks, "Are all refugees superheroes," what possibilities do you think she wants the reader to imagine? What kinds of situations, feats, challenges, and characteristics are involved in being a superhero? How would these experiences relate to the experiences of refugees, orphans, or others in vulnerable situations?

Making Connections:

City Lore is an organization that provides programming in support of the arts and history of New York City, where 6 in 10 residents are first generation or the children of immigrants. A recent exhibition, *What We Bring: New Immigrant Gifts*, featured portraits of and stories about the cultural contributions immigrants bring to the city and to the United States at large. Learn more about the exhibition here (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CXr-y9JvDYs>), here (<https://www.locallearningnetwork.org/journal-of-folklore-and-education/current-and-past-issues/jfe-vol-4-2017/what-we-bring/>), or here (<http://citylore.org/what-we-bring/>).

Writing Activities:

After reading Fatimah Asghar's "Super Orphan" and viewing City Lore's online exhibit of *What We Bring: New Immigrant Gifts*, consider how both use everyday objects as symbols of personal identity and power. Write a response in which you reflect on how both of these sources do so in a way that invites audiences from other cultures to consider this idea more empathetically.

Alternately, respond creatively: Consider how, as with the image of Batman's cape, Asghar imbues an object both with personal loss and with power. Compare this with Marcus Malchijah's personal symbol of a hat and the story of how he became a milliner, featured in the City Lore exhibit (<http://vwce51jxcxi5acko2u00fothu.wpengine.netdna-cdn.com/wp-content/uploads/2018/09/Marcus-Malchijah-page-1.pdf>). Is there some symbol, such as a family heirloom, that represents both loss and identity for you? Describe it and write its story as an extension of your story.