



## Rickshaw Girl

*Mitali Perkins , Jamie Hogan (Illustrator)*

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In her Bangladesh village, ten-year-old Naima excels at painting designs called alpanas, but to help her impoverished family financially she would have to be a boy--or disguise herself as one.

## Rickshaw Girl Details

Date : Published February 1st 2007 by Charlesbridge

ISBN : 9781580893084

Author : Mitali Perkins , Jamie Hogan (Illustrator)

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Genre : Fiction, Childrens, Middle Grade, Cultural, Realistic Fiction, Asia, Family

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## From Reader Review Rickshaw Girl for online ebook

### Donna Dobihal Smith says

Some complex issues are dealt with in an approachable way for young readers in this absorbing story with interesting, likable characters, a touch of suspense, and a satisfying ending. A great first book club choice.

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### Kelly L says

Perfect choice for our first whole class literature circle read aloud book for the school year. Like the character, our students are 10 year olds. I'm so grateful we were able to have a book that is at the PERFECT reading level for their abilities and yet a fabulous read and a great piece of diverse literature. Our girls were shocked at the idea of arranged marriages (not directly in the book, but we had to discuss why Naima can't just talk to Saleem when she wants to.) It can be quite challenging to find an interesting book that is written at the proper reading level for our students and to be able to find culturally diverse literature is so GREAT!

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### Becky says

Second book for our mother/daughter book club. About a young Bangladesh girl who wishes she could have been born a boy to be able to help support her family. The story is a little tied up in a bow, but I think that it introduces some interesting concepts for my 2nd graders (the ability to go to school for free, gender roles, thinking outside of the box, cultural norms, etc).

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### Rifat Sharna says

"Rickshaw Girl" - A beautiful story of a young girl in Bangladesh who wishes she could be a boy to help support her family. The story is a little tied up in a bow, but I think that it introduces some interesting concepts for my 2nd graders (the ability to go to school for free, gender roles, thinking outside of the box, cultural norms, etc).

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### Andee says

A lower-middle grade novel about an artistic girl in Bangladesh wishing she could help earn money for her family. Since she is not a boy, she is expected to stay home and help her mother. However, when she severely hinders her father's only way of making money, she takes it upon herself to look for a job. Will she be able to get one even though she's female?

A strong story for girls in a hopefully more progressive India. I'd recommend this for 3rd-5th grades. A positive look at a different culture complete with explanations of vocabulary terms. Rickshaw Girl is on tap to become a movie. I'll look forward to seeing how the story expands.

## **Brittany Clark says**

The Rickshaw Girl is a fictional story about a young girl growing up in Bangladesh named Naima. In order to make ends meet, her father had to borrow money to buy a rickshaw and must make payments. Naima wants desperately to help her family, but girls are not allowed to work, and she has no brothers to take on some of the labor. When Naima accidentally breaks her family's rickshaw by attempting to learn to ride it, she feels very guilty and becomes determined to gather some money to help her family. Naima finally decides to dress as a boy in order to go to work painting alpanas in order to help her family make a living.

The Rickshaw girl is an excellent way to introduce the inequities between men and women and gender roles to elementary aged children in a gentle way. This story is very interesting to children, and offers many ideas and perspectives to consider. It features a captivating plot, with an interesting conflict and resolution. Furthermore, the illustrations are beautiful, and help to enhance the story and keep the child's attention.

The author of this book, Mitali Perkins, offers her insider experience and understanding as an Indian woman, and tells the story in a way where people from her culture represent "good" characters, and there are no negative stereotypes present. The characters are complex, and the language they speak is also representative of this culture.

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## **Joshua Jenkins says**

Finding diverse books that accurately represent global cultures can be difficult. I find too often that the texts rely heavily on stereotypes or the plots are much too common (ever read a young adult book about Native American cultures that didn't discuss alcoholism?) We also face a politically charged climate where librarians and teachers may feel extra cautious when selecting diverse books. Fortunately, the push for diversity in library collections has led to publishers selecting excellent quality books that speak to people from all walks of life.

Rickshaw Girl by Mitali Perkins is less a novel than a novella. I read it cover to cover in about 40 minutes. The author was born in India and raised in the United States, but her family's history is solidly rooted in Bangladesh, the setting of the story. Mitali and her husband returned to Bangladesh where she began to support efforts at empowering women and the poor to lift themselves out of poverty through innovation, entrepreneurial pursuits, and education.

The story opens as Naima and her family struggle with poverty in their Bangladeshi village. Her father is in debt after purchasing a new rickshaw, a human-powered taxi that is propelled similarly to a bicycle. The rickshaw is brand new and in immaculate condition. The family anticipates serving many wealthy customers who will want to ride in such a fine vehicle.

To read my full review, visit my site: <https://mrjthelibrarian.com/2017/02/0...>

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### **Int'l librarian says**

It took me a little more than an hour to read this book, and I thoroughly enjoyed it from start to finish. This is a Girl Power book that does very well to keep the Power from escalating into ALL CAPS superhero territory.

I like how Betty's first experience with the rickshaw is kind of sad and funny at the same time. It could have been a slapstick moment, but the storyline is too sincere to let this happen. There are limits to what Betty can achieve in Bangladesh, but that doesn't mean her life has to be hopeless.

Even better, Perkins is able to share a vision to encourage any young girl to act upon her best intentions.

And it all wraps up very quickly. It's not a dense read, or especially complex. But it's not a slight read either. It's warm-hearted and comforting, and that's plenty.

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### **Mitali says**

I wrote it, so if I don't love it, then who else is going to?

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### **Panther Library says**

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### **Laura Noto says**

Summary-

Rickshaw Girl is a book written for 2nd to 5th graders. The story takes place in a village of Bangladesh. Naima is a young girl who is a skilled painter of alpanas. She lives in a village with her mother, father, and younger sister. Unfortunately, their family does not have very much money and females aren't allowed to work. After Naima ruins her father's rickshaw by trying to ride it she is guilty and desperate to make some money for her family. She disguises herself as a boy and goes to find a job painting rickshaws. In a turn of events the rickshaw shop owner ends up also being a woman and she teaches Naima that the times are changing and girls can make money too.

### Response-

This book was entertaining, educational, and enjoyable. It features many Indian words (alpana, a-re, Bangla, biryani, eesh, International Mother Language Day, kurta, lungi, rickshaw, roshogollah, salwar kameez, saree, tabla, and taka) throughout the story and then there is a glossary to reference at the end of the story. This book did a wonderful job describing the typical events of a child living in this village. The author described how their home looked, what they wore, what they did in a typical day, and the dynamics of their family. I liked how Naima challenged the status quo by attempting to get a job. This book teaches many lessons. It demonstrates another culture, it teaches children that women and men are equal, and there is a morality lesson that says you should try to make up for your mistakes.

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### **Gin says**

91 pgs, Quick paced, solid characters, nice insight to the heritage and culture of Bangladesh, satisfying resolution that offers hope. Set in Bangladesh

Bangla words in italics can be found in a glossary at the end of the book and simple pencil sketch illustrations help define parts of the story

Setting: Bangladesh

10 year old girl Naima is the main character

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### **Regina says**

Loved it! Beautiful story of a girl in a Bangladeshi village. She wants to take some of the financial pressure off of her father by taking fares on his rickshaw. Alas, she's a girl and is not allowed to work. Since the family has two daughters and no sons, the situation is dire. She discovers that, through her artistic talent in creating alpanas (the patterns painted on homes in her village for special holidays), she can still help the family and perhaps forge her own career in a male-oriented society.

I like the accessibility of this story for younger readers--79 pages, followed by a glossary and author's notes that add understanding of new concepts for the reader. The charcoal illustrations are perfect, especially for new chapter readers who are transitioning from picture books and beginning readers.

This book would be great for a class read-aloud or book club choice for 3rd-4th graders. Collaborate with the art teacher to have students draw alpanas for a book-related project. Who doesn't love to doodle? But with design, planning, and lots of circles, squares, swirls, and paisleys, think of what fun you can create!

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### **Louise Jones says**

I loved this as although obviously for young children it explained how the culture differences exist especially in other countries and was interested in the designs and the designs and shows how boys and girls shld be treated equally i would be interested to read more of this country BANGLEDASH !! I WLD RECOMMEND IT TO ALL AGES JUST SO YOU THINK FOR A MO

## Erin says

This sweet story of a Bangladeshi girl wanting to help her family won me over. It's a very quick read, but appropriate for many ages — from 2nd graders graduating from beginning chapter books to middle schoolers in need of high/low books. Authentic “alpana” drawings interspersed throughout the text add a nice element to the reading experience.

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