

Approved for use in English IV

Summary of the Work:

Kabul under the Taliban, a devastated city ruled by executions and crows, where laughing in public brings down the wrath of the religious police. This is the world in which Yasmina Khadra-the pseudonym of a former officer in the Algerian army-sets his cauterizing novel of fanaticism and tenderness. With an implacable eye, Khadra follows two couples: Mohsen and Zunaira are dispirited survivors of Afghanistan's educated middle class; Atiq is a brutish jailer bound by a debt of gratitude to his dying wife, Musarrat. One day the horrified Mohsen finds himself taking part in a stoning of a condemned prostitute, an action that will impel all four characters toward new destinies. As spare as carved bone and filled with images that explode like bombs, *The Swallows of Kabul* is a work of haunting power.

Rationale:

The Swallows of Kabul is intended to compliment the Contemporary World literature, senior English IV option. Yasmina Khadra is the nom de plume of the Algerian army officer Mohammed Moulessehoul, who is the author of four other books published in English. He took the feminine pseudonym to avoid submitting his manuscripts for approval by military censors while he was still in the army. This novel is an exceptional look at the destruction of the individual, and society under a corrupt and oppressive government rule.

Professional Reviews and/or Critical Essays:

Most recent critical essays may viewed on a number of websites including Amazon.com

* Print resources are available from the library media center and libraries in the district. Contact any library media specialist to view the scholarly sources.

* Scholarly reviews are also available online through Books in Books in Print and Gale. Contact the library media specialist to obtain username and password information to access the subscription database of full-text reviews.

Noted Distinction:

- Fiction

Readability:

- Lexile Score:
- Readability Level:

Learning Resources Guidelines:

- The novel meets the Learning Resources Guidelines.

Standard Alignment: ([link](#))

Approval:

Submitted to Committee:

Approved for Adoption:

Notes on the Text:

(The best way to evaluate and understand a novel is to personally read the book in its entirety.)

The Swallows of Kabul provides examples of:

- psychological realism
- internal and external conflict
- surrealism

Connection to the Curriculum:

World Literature is devoted to the study of classical World and British Literature, exploring the hero and other archetypes through Ancient, Medieval, Renaissance, and Contemporary periods. First semester stories will concentrate on myth and archetypal patterns in stories about Beginnings, Endings, Monsters, and Monster Slayers and Heroes. Students will be able to recognize, appreciate, and express the unity and diversity of the human experience as expressed through world mythology, literature, and culture. The focus of writing will be refining and expanding effective writing skills through critical and analytical writing, timed writing, and research.

Additional Connections:

(AP, Honors, Essential/Applied, Dramas, Films, etc.)