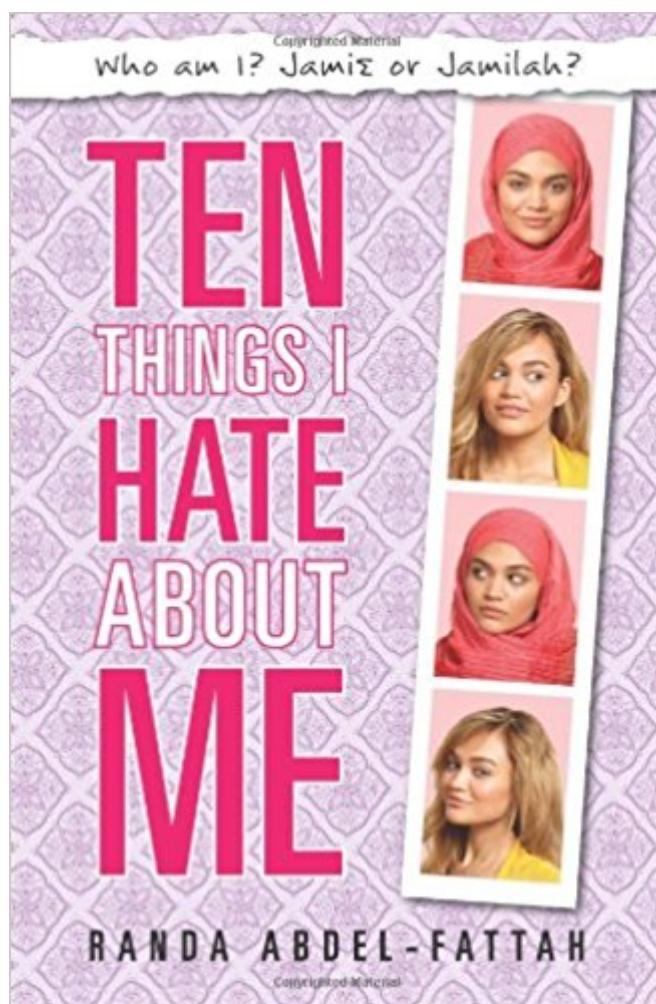


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Ten Things I Hate About Me



Synopsis

Randa Abdel-Fattah's novel about about finding your place in life . . . and learning to accept yourself and your culture is now in paperback!"At school I'm Aussie-blonde Jamie -- one of the crowd. At home I'm Muslim Jamilah -- driven mad by my Stone Age dad. I should win an Oscar for my acting skills. But I can't keep it up for much longer..."Jamie just wants to fit in. She doesn't want to be seen as a stereotypical Muslim girl, so she does everything possible to hide that part of herself. Even if it means pushing her friends away because she's afraid to let them know her dad forbids her from hanging out with boys or that she secretly loves to play the darabuka (Arabic drums).

Book Information

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Best Sellers Rank: #720,227 in Books (See Top 100 in Books) #111 in Books > Children's Books > Geography & Cultures > Explore the World > Australia & Oceania #481 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Social & Family Issues > Family > Parents #788 in Books > Teens > Literature & Fiction > Religious

Age Range: 12 and up

Grade Level: 7 and up

Customer Reviews

Jamilah Towfeek hides her Lebanese-Muslim background from the other kids at her Australian school "to avoid people assuming I fly planes into buildings as a hobby." She dyes her hair blonde, wears blue contacts and stands by when popular kids make racist remarks. Passing as "Jamie" is fraught with difficulties: she can't invite friends to her house, lies to cover up her widower dad's strict rules and reveals her true self only to an anonymous boy she meets online (her e-mail address is "Ten_Things_I_Hate_About_Me"). Tensions at home and school culminate when the band she plays in at her madrassa (Islamic school) is hired to perform at her 10th-grade formal. Abdel-Fattah (Does My Head Look Big in This?) follows a predictable pattern and uses familiar devices, such as

the understanding teacher ("If [your friends] don't know the real you, then you've already lost them"). On the other hand, the author brings a welcome sense of humor to Jamilah's insights about her culture, and she is equally adept at more delicate scenes, for example, Jamilah's father recounting memories of Jamilah's mother. For all the defining details, Jamilah is a character teens will readily relate to. Ages 12+ "up. (Jan.) Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

Grade 7 Up "Lebanese-Australian Jamilah has two lives. At school she is blond-haired, blue-eyed (thanks to contact lenses) Jamie. At home she is Jamilah, a rebellious, but dutiful, daughter of a strict, widowed father. She keeps both her Muslim and Lebanese identities a secret at her high school because the most popular students make fun of anyone who is even vaguely "ethnic." The warm, nurturing nature of her home life (even with its limitations) is often contrasted to the cold environment in the homes of some of her friends. Not surprisingly, over the course of the book, her perspective changes. By the end, Jamilah decides to be herself in a very public and satisfying way. Fans of Abdel-Fattah's *Does My Head Look Big in This?* (Scholastic, 2007) will snap this title up, but the book will also appeal to teens who like stories about outsiders finding their place in the world. "Kristin Anderson, Columbus Metropolitan Library System, OH Copyright © Reed Business Information, a division of Reed Elsevier Inc. All rights reserved. --This text refers to the Preloaded Digital Audio Player edition.

This book is written more for a teen audience and I am not a teen. However, I came across the title and thought it sounding like a good book. It really addresses being comfortable with who you are and choosing your own identity. Many of the other reviews are basically summaries so I will not retell the story but its an easy read and I definitely recommend it. It does deal with some racial issues. It is set in Australia and the main character is Muslim.

I bought the book for my niece, and she loves it. Shipping and handling was great, would recommend it for girls.

Actual Rating: 3.25Review can also be seen here:[...]I recently bought this book due to my interest in reading contemporary stories featuring Muslim main characters, particularly women and teenagers. I am not Muslim myself, and don't see myself converting to the Islam faith, but I love reading about characters with different faiths and lifestyles. To be honest, I don't see many

differences from faith to faith, so why not diversify my reading with characters who are faiths that are not my own(FYI, for now Im Agnostic, but I feel as though faith may guide me towards Buddhism).Now, Ten Things I Hate About Me? Hmmm....This book was just alright. It centered around an Australian born 15 year old named Jamilah Towfeek. Her parents were originally from Lebanon, and are Muslim. Apparently Australia hasn't quite got the memo when it comes to diversity, so anything outside of being Anglo-Saxon Australian was considered un-Australian. Since Jamie lived her school life as "Jamie" and dyed her hair blonde, and wore blue colored contacts, she gave no reason for her fellow Anglo-Saxon classmates to judge her in the same ways they judged the students who were "ethnics."A lot of this book made me uncomfortable. It's well written, and depicts a teenager as accurate as I remember being one, but the racism is quite ugly, and it's sad that the youth is brought up with such hate, even now. Explaining what I liked and wasn't sure about would be much easier.What I liked:I felt as though the pacing is good, short books tend to be better at pacing than longer ones. It didn't reveal information too soon or too late, so that was a thumbs up. I suppose it's consistent. Jamilah doesn't really steer far from being the kind of girl she is. The backstory is well thought out, and not too much is revealed too soon and the story doesn't take too much time dwelling on backstory.There's plenty of conflict. Jamilah is someone who deals with racism indirectly, as her classmates know nothing about her heritage. It's kind of sad, but she would rather sit and take abuse, than be true to herself. She also is in a constant battle with her father. He does not approve of her doing certain things. To me he's the standout character. I loved Hakim. He was a grieving widower having to pick up the where his wife left off in raising his children. Jamie often thought he was being strict, but what good parent isn't a little overprotective? Too much of Western culture is centered on sex, drugs, and alcohol, I dont think it's asking too much to want to shield your children from negativity. Let's face it, kids are doing it, but I don't think it's wrong of a parent for wanting the best for their children.I do think the book is unique, or at least to me. I don't read a lot of books centered on Muslim teenage girls. Especially from Australia.I don't find there to be many issues toward the language, but I'm American, so anything I read Im going to assume to be difference in dialect or lack of knowledge or cultural awareness. Jamilah's in a band at her madrasa class(Arabic class) and her bandmates are overly exaggerated hip hop fans. Their dialogue may just be a result of thinking that's how Americans talk. Her POV is clear, as it's first person and never steers from that. There's an acceptable amount of space between beats and dialogue, and the editing is an industry standard.The book title is intriguing. Makes me wonder what the ten things are. And the cover gives me an idea that she's going through an identity crisis.Things Im not crazy about:While there is plenty of diversity, and I mean main character type diversity,

Jamilah herself is so ashamed of her heritage in the company of Anglo-Saxon descended Aussies. So much of her opinion on herself, and other non Anglo-Saxon Aussies comes from the opinion of the so called "real" Australians." Let's not put sugar on s***. I hated her crush. He was chauvinistic , racist and too arrogant for his age or own good. But I think I actually hated Jamilah more for taking the abuse. Culture and race is kind of where a person like me draws the line. She's relatable but only when she's proud of herself. I don't suppose her passing for "white" is a new story. To be honest, I've never considered the Lebanese to be anything but white, so Im confused about why it's seen as so negative. I suppose perhaps it's common to be considered white in one country, then to immigrate to another and be considered a different race, but she was so eager to not be a "loser" that taking the backhanded racism came with her passing. It really didn't raise the self esteem of young Muslim girls to me. Mind you this is just my opinion, but I never felt as though Jamilah reached her epiphany on how to see herself. She didn't come to any conclusion on her own, she only came to decisions after many tried to convince her to feel that way. She was also so un-appreciative of her father. Perhaps this is a bias of mine. I have such a great appreciation for immigrant parents. They often sacrifice their own happiness for better opportunities for their children, and Jamilah just didn't see that. I think I kind of liked this book. I didn't love it, but didn't hate it. I would probably read from this author again, but I just didn't find it was a great representation of proud Muslim young women.

2.5 stars. There's just something about contemporary books that I find boring, especially when compared to fantasy. So yes, this did bore me...I found myself not caring enough about the story and characters to want to keep reading. But I pushed myself to finish it, and I'm glad to say that the last few chapters were more interesting than the rest. I wasn't expecting to love it when I picked it up though, and my feelings are still the same as my expectations before I read it. Jamilah has never exposed her Lebanese and Muslim heritage to her classmates at school in fear of ridicule. However, due to certain events in tenth grade, she's constantly thinking about this matter and worrying about it. Especially when she meets guys in school and online who encourage her to be true to herself. She feels oppressed by her widower father who is extremely strict. The book is about Jamilah's journey to accept herself in all places. The majority of the characters I either felt ambiguous to or disliked them. Only a select few I liked, including Timothy and Amy. There were several times when I didn't even like Jamilah for her being meek and selfish. She improved a lot by the end, and her weak traits were probably done on purpose, but I still didn't enjoy reading it. Timothy was a great person, and I wish he was in the book more often, but seeing that it's mostly centered around

Jamilah's life, Timothy took a back seat. In fact, I wish there were more details in general about everything. See, as I mentioned before, the main problem I had was that I couldn't bring myself to care much about the book. I was bored and it didn't spark my interest. I really don't have much against it, and I agree that it has a very good theme. So do I recommend it? Not really, because it was boring for me. But if you're specifically looking for a self-acceptance novel with non-Caucasian involved problems, then you should consider this book.

Although straight forward in themes and morals, this story was presented gracefully with enough humor that the possibly tired plot was quite enjoyable. I loved exploring race and high school politics with the main character, Jamie. Jamie is a sophomore in high school. She dyes her hair blonde and wears blue contact lenses to hide her heritage from the school. At home she goes by Jamilah and participates in Lebanese-Muslim culture with her family. She's not allowed to go out with friends per her dad's request, which is a source of conflict for her because she wants to have a social life and not be seen through prejudiced eyes. Her biggest refrain is that she does not want to be seen as just another stereotype. Although this book was written rather simply, I enjoyed getting to know the characters. Farrah filled this book with quirky lines like, "Man, I was angrier than a constipated giraffe." This is definitely a book better suited for a younger audience, but it does speak simply about race, stereotypes, prejudice, and how to navigate being true to yourself. Set in Australia, I got a new perspective on racism/race dynamics in another country, as so much of what is here about is just racial tension in the US or sometimes Latin America. And, of course, who doesn't love a book with strong family ties and a happy ending? *Ten Things I Hate About Me* definitely has a 90s family movie kind of vibe, and I loved it!

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