

Kid book explains Muslim way

At a young age, Nazli Currim's mother gave her a needle to learn to sew, and her father gave her a pen and paper to write. To pay homage to both of them, she's published a book.

Born in India, Currim spent her childhood surrounded by scores of classic novels. From Tennyson and Dickens to Shelley and Shakespeare, her father taught her to love reading. Her mother taught her lessons of love and



**Lindsey Walker
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kindness for those around her through their Muslim faith.

In her book, *Grandma Lives With Us*, Currim used her literature knowledge and her love for her mother to share a message that had yet to be told.

"There are no books like this that I know of," said Currim. "There just aren't any children's books about Muslim Americans."

The story explores the ties between a Muslim American girl and her grandmother after the grandmother comes to live with the family. Although the book is fictional, Currim says that the character of "Nani" is based on her mother.

"After my dad passed away, my mom came to live with us and I really want people to see the value of these types of relationships," said Currim, who thinks

that the elderly are a great asset.

Currim uses the story to teach people about the often misunderstood Muslim religion. The book contains a glossary of the few Muslim terms she uses.

"I think it's so important for people to understand and respect each other," said Currim.

The book combines a passion she has for teaching children. With nearly 40 years of teaching experience before she retired to take care of her mom, she says that it is one joy that has been hard for her to leave behind.

"I never tired of teaching. Now I'm doing some 'meet the authors' in schools, which means I get to read my book to kids. I'm back in my element and it's such an enjoyment for me," said Currim.

Illustrated by Kadhima Ren Tung, who was only 13 at the time she did the illustrations, the story is full of colorful images of the girl, "Imaan," and her adoring grandmother as they learn and grow together.

Currim says she's been surprised by the book's reception by adults.

"I wanted to impress on the little minds that it's important to take care of and respect adults. I didn't know it would carry a message for the adults, too," said Currim.

The book is available at Changing Hands bookstore or at www.NazliCurrim.com.

E.J. Anderson and Lindsey Walker are mother-daughter. Send comments and story ideas to ej5kids@cox.net.