



## ENGLISH III – MR. RIVENESS SUMMER READING ASSIGNMENT

The 2022 Summer Reading Assignment is *Everything Sad is Untrue* by Daniel Nayeri. This is an autobiographical YA (Young Adult) novel originally published in 2020.

Although the book is considered autobiographical, it weaves fiction and fact as it chronicles the memoir of an Iranian refugee child who moves to Oklahoma in the 1990s.

Complete the reading and these assignments over the summer and be prepared to discuss the book and participate in classroom activities over the book during the first week and a half of classes in August. You will be tested over the book at the beginning of the second full week of classes. Exact dates will depend on which class block you are in and will be announced to your class on the first day of school.

### PRE READING & BACKGROUND INFO

#### IRAN FAST FACTS:

**PRONUNCIATION:** ee-RAHN

**FORMERLY KNOWN AS:** Persia

**FORM OF GOVERNMENT:** Islamic Republic

**CAPITAL:** Tehran

**FIRST IN COMMAND:** Supreme Leader (appointed by Islamic clerics called the Assembly of Experts)

**SECOND IN COMMAND:** President (elected by the people)

**OFFICIAL LANGUAGE:** Farsi

**MONEY:** Rial



Author Daniel Nayeri

Strong religious beliefs have been a part of Iranian's lives for thousands of years. Almost all Iranians are Muslim, or followers of Islam. The religion is central to daily life.

Iran has a rich tradition of art, literature, poetry, music, cuisine, and architecture. Ancient Iranian thinkers wrote influential texts on philosophy and medicine, and it was an Iranian Mathematician who invented algebra. Iran's universities are among the most respected in the Middle East.



Iran is one of the oldest nations in the world, with a history dating back tens of thousands of years. The country's first great city, Susa, was built around 3,200 BC. Iran has extensive oil reserves, but its economy has been hit hard

by a trade ban imposed by the United States since the shah was ousted in 1979. Allegations that Iran supports terrorism and a belief that it is developing nuclear weapons has led to further isolation in recent years. Oklahoma is the main setting for the book. Daniel, his mother, and sister are all refugees who fled from Iran. Daniel mentions making goody bags for American Soldiers in “the war” beginning on page 70. This is referring to Operation Desert Storm (The Gulf War).

## ASSIGNMENT: HIGHLIGHTING – TEXT EVIDENCE OF THEME

In literature, a theme is a life lesson, meaning, moral, or message about life or human nature that comes through in the text and plot. Theme is what the story teaches readers. A theme can be a word or a statement and you don’t have to agree with it to identify it. Them is not the topic, the author’s purpose, or a summary.

The overarching theme present in this book is Truth. As you read, use a highlighter to highlight text evidence of this theme.

## READING RESPONSE QUESTIONS

As you read the novel, respond to each of the following questions on your own paper or document.

1. Daniel mentions that he enjoys the Calvin and Hobbes comics on page 37. Consider why he may like this comic based on how he describes it.
2. Consider Daniel’s description of how Persian love stories go on pages 75-86. Briefly explain what this means for him as a young student maneuvering through adolescence while trying to fit in and survive.
3. On pages 127-136, Daniel admits to making a part up. Why do you believe he did this and why do you think he chose to admit this to the reader?
4. On page 273, Mrs. Miller asks Daniel: “At the beginning of the year you said the truest thing about a person was whose blood they had in their heart... What happened?” What do you think Mrs. Miller is getting Daniel to realize here?
5. Why does Daniel tell us about the lies he has told? What are these lies and do you agree with why he says he told them? What do you think would have happened if he had been honest?