

HOWEVER TALL THE *mountain*

A DREAM, EIGHT GIRLS, & A JOURNEY HOME

By Awista Ayub

Are you a member of a book club or soccer team that is reading HTTM and would like to have author, Awista Ayub, lead a discussion? If so, please send an e-mail to bookclub@awistaayub.com

Discussion Questions for “*However Tall the Mountain*” by Awista Ayub

- The title of the book comes from an Afghan proverb: “However tall the mountain, there’s always a road.” Why do you think the author chose this proverb as the title of the book?
- In the beginning of the book, Awista writes that the hyphen in Afghan-American “includes and divides.” What does she mean by this? How does her own journey bridge the divide between her Afghani and American lives?
- Samira’s extended family and her neighbors openly object to her going to America to play soccer. Why do you think her parents encourage her, despite the objections of those around them?
- When Samira returns to Afghanistan after visiting America, she has a very hard time readjusting to her old life. Why is it so hard for her? What about America, and her friends, draws Samira away from her family and her country?
- When Robina’s friend Tamana is taken out of school by her family, she writes to Robina, “You’re very lucky.” Do you consider Robina lucky? Does she think she is lucky? After reading this book, do you consider yourself more or less fortunate?
- All the girls have a difficult time problem-solving peacefully and working as a team. Why is that? Why is it difficult for them to trust one another? Once they become a team, the bond is very important to them. What does the team offer each of them? What does being a team mean to them?
- How is Ariana different from the other girls on the team? Is she more independent? Stronger? Why is Ariana switching to another team such a betrayal to the rest of the girls?
- What does it mean for the girls’ soccer team to play in Ghazi Stadium? How is it significant to them? How is it significant to the entire nation of Afghanistan?
- Why do you think Awista is so motivated to bring sports to the girls of Afghanistan? Do you think it is a worthwhile goal? Why or why not? What can be gained by giving children the opportunity to play sports?
- What did you learn about Afghanistan from reading this book? Did any of the country’s history surprise you?