

# Home

*A new younger brother seemed like a good idea.*

## About the Story

**Lexile:** 690L

For qualitative complexity factors, go to Scope Online.

### Learning Objective:

to analyze character development and complete an in-role writing task

**Key Skills:** author's craft, inference, details, character, text structure, interpreting text

### Essential Questions:

- What is a family?
- How do we learn and grow as people?
- What do we do when things turn out differently than we expected?

### Standards:

The article and lesson support these Common Core anchor standards: R.1, R.2, R.3, R.4, R.5, W.2, W.9, SL.1, L.4, L.5, L.6

For more standards information—including TEKS—go to Scope Online.



## Your Teaching Support Package

Find your full suite of support materials at [scope.scholastic.com](https://scope.scholastic.com).

### Audio:

- Author Read-Aloud
- Vocabulary
- Text to Speech

**Literature Connections:** ideas for connecting to curricular texts

### Skill Building Activities to print, project, or share digitally:

- Close Reading and Critical Thinking
- **Core Skill Workout:** Inference
- **Literary Elements:** Character Thinking Tool
- Choice Board
- Quiz\*
- Contest Entry Form

\*Available on two levels

# Step-by-Step Lesson

Close Reading, Critical Thinking, Skill Building

## 1. Preparing to Read 5 minutes

### Do-Now: Journal (5 minutes)

- Post this prompt in your classroom or virtual hangout: *Where are you in your family tree? Are you the oldest, middle, youngest, or only child? What are the advantages and challenges of your special position in your family?* Invite volunteers to share their responses.

## 2. Reading and Discussing 45 minutes

- Have a student read the As You Read box on page 20 or at the top of the digital story page.
- Read the story once through as a class. Optionally, have students listen to author Hena Khan read the story while they follow along. (The **audio read-aloud** is located in the Resources tab in Teacher View and at the bottom of the story page in Student View.)
- Divide students into groups to read the story again, pausing to discuss the close-reading questions that appear in the margins. Have students record their answers in the margins or on the Close-Reading Questions activity. *Tip: If you're remote, you can have each group respond in a shared Google Doc or discuss the questions in their own chat rooms.*

### Close-Reading Questions (10 minutes)

*The close-reading questions can be shared in printable or interactive form.*

1. **What other sensory details does the author use in the first two sections?** (author's craft, p. 21) *Other sensory details include the references to the air-conditioning in the taxi, the sound of Baba's broken Arabic, the "square gray building," the "slap of our shoes against endless stone steps in the sweltering stairwell," Aleena saying that she is too hot to smile, and the sweat that drips down the back of her neck.*

2. **What details in this section show that Aleena is excited about adopting Hakeem?**  
(details, p. 21) *Details showing that Aleena is excited include that she has brought Hakeem gifts; that her heart is pounding in her chest before she meets Hakeem; that she describes meeting Hakeem as the moment she's been waiting for since her parents asked her if she would welcome a little boy into the family a year ago; that she is willing to miss the beginning of middle school to be there when her family first meets Hakeem; that she has been learning Arabic; and that her mother feels it's necessary to remind Aleena that Hakeem can't leave with them right away (which suggests that her mother knows this is what Aleena wishes for).*
3. **Is meeting her new brother going the way Aleena expected? Explain.** (inference, p. 21)  
*So far, things are not going quite as Aleena expected. She expected Hakeem to embrace her and her family as soon as he saw them, but it's not clear that he even recognized them, and he was definitely more interested in the ball than in them. Aleena also expected Hakeem to love all of her gifts, but he wasn't that interested in most of them.*
4. **What do you think Aleena didn't consider when she said yes to adopting Hakeem?**  
(inference, p. 23) *You can infer that Aleena didn't understand that there would be challenges involved in bringing a 4-year-old boy from another country into their family. She seems surprised that Hakeem has a lot to learn—because of both his age and his different background. She seems to have thought about only the fun side of getting a new little brother.*
5. **Not everything Aleena says about Hakeem is negative. Find other places in the story that suggest she admires, appreciates, or cares about him.** (character, p. 23) *Aleena says several times that Hakeem is cute, mentioning how he is always trying to get her to laugh and how he repeats what people say. She also says that he turns to her when he wants to know something, which suggests a closeness between them. In general, she portrays him as sweet and affectionate, even though she is frustrated by him.*
6. **Why is this moment when Aleena defines “home” for Hakeem important? Hint: Think about the end of the story.** (text structure, p. 23) *These lines are important because they connect to the last lines of the story, when Aleena says that she is the one who taught Hakeem what “home” means. These lines also help develop the idea that Hakeem looks to Aleena when he wants to learn something.*
7. **Why might her friends' comments affect Aleena this way?** (character, p. 24) *Hearing her friends make the sort of comments that she herself has been making seems to make Aleena realize how selfish and unsympathetic such comments are—and by extension, how selfish and unsympathetic her attitude has been. Hearing her thoughts expressed by her friends seems to allow Aleena to step back and take a look at herself.*

8. Aleena taught Hakeem that “home” refers to their house. What else could she mean by this? (interpreting text, p. 24) *Aleena might mean that in forgiving Hakeem and bringing him back to the party to blow out the candles, she was teaching him that home is a place where you are loved and cared for.*

- As a class, discuss the following questions.

### Critical-Thinking Questions

(5 minutes)

*The following questions can be shared in printable or interactive form.*

1. How do our families shape who we are? *Answers will vary.*
2. What makes a good home? *Answers will vary.*

## 3. Skill Building and Writing

20 minutes

- Have students complete the **Character Thinking Tool**. This activity will help them organize their ideas in preparation for the writing prompt on page 24 in the printed magazine and the bottom of the digital story article.
- Alternatively, have students choose a culminating task from the **Choice Board**, a menu of differentiated activities.