Playing Atari with Saddam Hussein
Jennifer Roy with Ali Fadhil

GENRE: Historical Fiction

BOOK SUMMARY
Ali loves soccer, video games, comics, and American television programs. He is a normal eleven-year-old boy living in Basra, Iraq; and Saddam Hussein is the dictator that led Iraq into a war. Ali’s neighborhood must deal with bomb and food shortages during the forty-three days of the “Video Game War”.

BOOK TALK
Ali pretends to be Superman capturing Saddam Hussein and kissing Lois Lane! If only it were that easy; but for Ali, he is living through a war. Schools are closed; there are food shortages, and he is forced to witness a public execution. Real life is not a comic for this young boy living in Basra and in the shadows of Saddam Hussein’s goons.

LINKS TO HELPFUL WEBSITES
● Official Website: http://www.jenniferroy.com/playing-atari-with-saddam-hussein/
● Author: http://www.jenniferroy.com/
● Other: https://hmhco-v1.prod.webpr.hmhco.com/shop/books/Playing-Atari-with-Saddam-Hussein/9780544785076
● TeachingBooks.net through INSPIRE: www.teachingbooks.net/qlmbtgk

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS
1. Ali’s family sits down to a “picnic of war” with flatbread, date cookies, and Coca-Cola. What foods would you savor if you knew that supplies could be cut off? Chapter 1, Page 3
2. Ali sings the theme song for the Muppet Show to distract himself from bombs being dropped in his town. What would you do to create a distraction? Chapter 4, Page 17
3. Playing Atari with Saddam Hussein is based on a true story. Why do you think this book is historical fiction and not nonfiction?

IF YOU ENJOYED THIS BOOK, YOU MIGHT ALSO LIKE
● I Survived Series by Laura Tarshis
● Yellow Star by Jennifer Roy
● Projekt 1065 by Alan Gratz

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