



# LIBRARIES ARE HAVENS

Please join us to uplift the libraries, librarians,  
and children of Gaza.

Story Sunbirds+IBBY



**iBBY**

INTERNATIONAL  
BOARD ON  
BOOKS FOR  
YOUNG PEOPLE

# LIBRARIES ARE HAVENS

Two IBBY Palestine libraries were established in Gaza in 2008, one in Rafah, one in Beit Hanoun. From one of the librarians, Abla (paraphrased in parts):

“

..the library was the warm place for many children to express their talents and creativity. When the library started, it was a small room...The number of books was small but...it grew and developed...it was bombed and destroyed. We rebuilt the library, with equipment and furniture.

Before this genocide we had almost six thousand books, among them scientific and medical encyclopedias. The activities of the library were varied, the educational and cultural aspects, borrowing books, internal and external borrowing...drama, theater, popular games, heritage, dancing. There was emphasis on the psychological aspect, because our children are always in need of stress-release activities. We implemented many psycho-social activities. We would [take] day trips to heritage places in Gaza and parks.



”

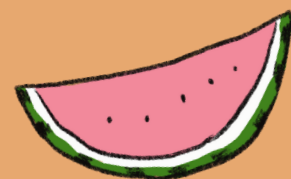
As of 2024, both libraries have been bombed. One is completely destroyed. The other is severely damaged. Now, everyone connected to the libraries is struggling to get food, water, clothing, and daily essentials for survival. IBBY and the Story Sunbirds are raising money for a LIBRARIES ARE HAVENS campaign to try to help them.

**How is a library a haven to you or your community?**

Write your ideas or a poem.

Draw what this makes you think of.

Talk in a group about answers to this question.



# LIBRARIES ARE HAVENS

## How can we honor the libraries of Gaza?

The UN reports that 13 public libraries have been damaged or destroyed since 2023. That doesn't include school or other libraries, including one of the largest, Al-Aqsa University's or the Edward Said Library, which opened in 2017 through the efforts of poet Mosab Abu Toha and housed English-language books.



“

The attacks on Gaza's libraries are targeting not just the buildings themselves, but the very essence of what Gaza represents. They are part of the effort to erase our history and prevent future generations from becoming educated and aware of their own identity and rights. The decimation of Gaza's libraries is also aimed at destroying the strong spirit of learning among Palestinians.



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—Shahd Alnaami, writer from Gaza



## Create a tribute to a lost library of Gaza.

Find out about one of the libraries that's been destroyed that provided a haven for children.

Create a tribute to that library. This could be a piece of writing, a poster, a 3D model, a presentation, a drawing, or something else!

# LIBRARIES ARE HAVENS

## Help make a little liberation library.

A liberation library has children's books that uplift Palestinian children and all children. It includes titles that show how books and libraries are havens. It includes books that are truthful and inspire community, freedom, care, and that we all matter and belong!

Yours might be a school or library display, a bag of books to bring along anywhere you go to share with friends, or a small collection to read with or give to others.

### POSSIBLE TITLES FOR YOUR LITTLE LIBERATION LIBRARY

#### Picture books by Palestinian creators:

- *A Map for Falasteen* by Maysa Odeh illustrated by Aliaa Betawi
- *Homeland* by Hannah Moushabeck illustrated by Reem Madooh
- *These Olive Trees* by Aya Ghanameh
- *Halal Hot Dogs* by Susannah Aziz illustrated by Parwinder Singh
- *The Book That Almost Rhymed* by Omar Abed illustrated by Hatem Aly
- *Kamal's Key* by Rifk Ebeid illustrated by Sophia Soliman
- *Eleven Words for Love: A Journey Through Arabic Expressions of Love* by Randa Abdel-Fattah illustrated by Maxine Beneba Clarke
- *Sitti's Secrets* by Naomi Shihab Nye illustrated by Nancy Carpenter
- *Hilwa's Gifts* by Safa Suleiman illustrated by Anait Semirdzhyan



#### Middle grade and YA books by Palestinian creators:

- *We Are Palestinian: A Celebration of Culture and Tradition* by Reem Kassis illustrated by Noha Eilouti
- *How Did We Get Here? City Heights* by Haneen Oriqat illustrated by Chey Diehl
- *Tasting the Sky: A Palestinian Childhood* by Ibtisam Barakat
- Young adult:
- *Squire* by Nadia Shammass illustrated by Sara Alfageeh
- *Baddawi* by Leila Adbelrazaq
- *They Called Me a Lioness: A Palestinian Girl's Fight for Freedom* by Ahed Tamimi and Dena Takruri



# LIBRARIES ARE HAVENS

**Help make a little liberation library.**

## POSSIBLE TITLES FOR YOUR LITTLE LIBERATION LIBRARY

### Picture books that show how libraries are havens:

- The Great Banned-Books Bake Sale by Aya Khalil illustrated by Anait Semirdzhyan
- The Library Bus by Bahram Rahman, illustrated by Gabrielle Grimard
- A Library by Nikki Giovanni, illustrated by Erin K. Robinson
- Go Forth and Tell: The Life of Augusta Baker, Librarian and Master Storyteller by Breanna J. McDaniel, illustrated by April Harrison
- Mama's Library Summers by Melvina Noel, illustrated by Daria Peoples
- Planting Stories: The Life of Librarian and Storyteller Pura Belpré by Anika Aldamuy Denise, illustrated by Paola Escobar
- Love in the Library by Maggie Tokuda-Hall, illustrated by Yas Imamura
- Dreamers by Yuyi Morales

### Picture books that touch on community, justice, freedom, history!

- Lost Words: An Armenian Story of Survival and Hope by Leila Boukarim illustrated by Sona Avedikian
- Jovita Wore Pants: The Story of a Mexican Freedom Fighter by Aida Salazar illustrated by Molly Mendoza
- We Are Still Here!: Native American Truths Everyone Should Know by Traci Sorell illustrated by Frané Sorell
- We are Water Protectors by Carole Lindstrom, illustrated by Michaela Goade
- Hey, Wall: A Story of Art and Community by Susan Verde, illustrated by John Parra
- Salat in Secret by Jamilah Thompkins-Bigelow illustrated by Hatem Aly
- Insha'Allah, No, Maybe So by Rhonda Roumani and Nadia Roumani, illustrated by Oliva Assar
- In My Mosque by M.O. Yuksel, illustrated by Hatem Aly

**AND SO MANY MORE!**





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# LIBRARIES ARE HAVENS

## *IBBY Libraries Before*



# LIBRARIES ARE HAVENS

## *IBBY Libraries After Bombings*





## IBBY library before and after bombings.

