



Name \_\_\_\_\_

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# Kareem Between

## by Shifa Saltagi Safadi



Read Aloud Video

Here is a little background information about our First Chapter Friday title and its creator. Feel free to add your own notes and thoughts in the bottom box.

### What's It About?

Seventh grade begins, and Kareem's already fumbled it. His best friend moved away, he messed up his tryout for the football team, and because of his heritage, he was voluntold to show the new kid—a Syrian refugee with a thick and embarrassing accent—around school. Just when Kareem thinks his middle school life has imploded, the hotshot QB promises to get Kareem another tryout for the squad. There's a catch: to secure that chance, Kareem must do something he knows is wrong.

Then, like a surprise blitz, Kareem's mom returns to Syria to help her family but can't make it back home. If Kareem could throw a penalty flag on the fouls of his school and home life, it would be for unnecessary roughness. Kareem is stuck between. Between countries. Between friends, between football, between parents—and between right and wrong. It's up to him to step up, find his confidence, and navigate the beauty and hope found somewhere in the middle.

AR Reading Level: 4.7

### Who Wrote It?

Shifa Saltagi Safadi is the National Book Award Winning author of *Kareem Between*, the *Amina Banana* series, and several picture books, including *The Gift of Eid*. She was born in Syria and immigrated to the US with her parents when she was a young girl. When she got married, she moved to the Chicagoland area and says she is a Midwest gal, through and through! She is a bilingual Arabic/English speaker, and is very familiar with the challenges of learning English and navigating two languages. Shifa also used to be a teacher and a book reviewer. Shifa loves to cook and says her favorite foods are Shakriyeh, a lamb yogurt stew served with rice, as well as cheeseburgers with extra



onions (yummy) and of course, CHOCOLATE CHIP COOKIES! You can learn more about Shifa (and get free printables and activities for her books) here: <https://shifasafadi.com/>

Lexile Level: Unavailable

I want to read this book: YES / NO

☆ ☆ WHAT I THINK ☆ ☆

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