



AUTHOR

Fidan Meikle is an Azerbaijani-British writer, linguist and translator, who lives with her husband and children in West Lothian, Scotland. *My Name is Samim* is her debut novel.

WEBSITE

<https://fidanmeikle.com/>

LINKS

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=CJZpiKbWiUJ>

Fidan Meikle reads a short 4 minute extract from the book.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=STchQkVchIq>

A 5 minute Newsround film about a thirteen-year-old refugee from Ghazni who loves football, just like Zayn!

<https://discoverkelpies.co.uk/wp-content/uploads/2025/06/My-Name-is-Samim-classroom-resource-pack.pdf>

Comprehensive pack of resources for teachers.



MY NAME IS SAMIM

Older Readers Shortlist 2026

INTRODUCTION

Fidan Meikle says: 'Thirteen-year-old Samim is a loyal friend, a gifted chess player – and a **refugee**. Even after he makes the long, dangerous journey from Afghanistan to the UK, his safety isn't guaranteed. Can Samim convince the authorities to let him stay. *My Name is Samim* is a **heartbreaking** yet **hopeful** story of **courage**, **resilience** and **friendship**. Highlighting the experiences of young refugees and **asylum seekers**, readers will **empathise** with Samim as he strives for a safe home and better future'.

<https://discoverkelpies.co.uk/2025/04/my-name-is-samim-a-note-from-the-author/>

The story is told retrospectively by Samim during the **interviews** with his social worker. In the UK, Samim is still **grieving** the loss of his family and friends, as well as facing new challenges, principally in the form of a school **bully** called Max. The book, however, ends hopefully.

ACTIVITIES

Read and research the background to the story. Look at this article about Afghanistan, for example:

<https://kids.nationalgeographic.com/geography/countries/article/afghanistan>

Write and illustrate a poem about an aspect of the story that inspires or moves you. Look at some published poetry (see below) for inspiration.

Create a collage version of the map of Samim's journey shown at the beginning of the book.

NOW READ ON

Choose Love by Nicola Davies & Petr Horáček (Graffeg, 2022) Moving poetry inspired by the real-life experiences of refugees.

On the Move: Poems About Migration by Michael Rosen & Quentin Blake (Walker Books, 2022) Includes a section of poems about global experiences of migration.

Seven Million Sunflowers by Malcolm Duffy (Zephyr, 2024) Winner of the Older Readers' category of the CBA in 2025, this is another story about the plight of refugees – this time Ukrainians.