



Curriculum Units by Fellows of the National Initiative
2026 Volume IV: Resistance from Aristotle to Star Wars

Historicizing Tyranny and Resistance in Persepolis

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Watching the political events of our world unfold can be a scary thing. Now, more than ever, teachers and students should be thinking about and discussing tyranny and resistance, and there is no better way to do this than through literature. Written for my IBHL English I class, this unit will use the graphic novel *Persepolis: The Story of a Childhood* by Marjane Satrapi to navigate these difficult topics and to use a story from the past to make sense of our present and hopefully change our future. This unit is less about the content of *Persepolis* and more about its historical context and reading the book through this lens of power and resistance.

By using what seems to be a “simple” graphic novel, I will pair *Persepolis* with Aristotle’s definition of tyranny, protest posters of the Iranian Revolution of 1979, the Ayatollah’s propaganda, and excerpts from *Remembering Akbar* to bring this black-and-white story into a collage of color, rendering the historical context of the novel into something that they can see, understand, and explore. At the end, students will create their protest and propaganda simulation, overthrowing a fictional queen.

(Developed for IBHL English I, grade 11; recommended for AP Language and Composition, grade 11, and English II, grade 10)

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