



# From Far Away

*Talespinners*  
Collection



## FROM FAR AWAY

This touching story tells of Saoussan, a young girl struggling to adjust to a new world after being uprooted from her war-torn homeland. She has come to seek a quieter and safer life in Canada although memories of war and death linger, and she must cope with a new language and culture. **From Far Away** speaks to the power within us all to adapt like Saoussan and to welcome a newcomer.

**From Far Away** is part of the NFB's *Talespinners* collection. Created for children aged five to nine, *Talespinners* uses vibrant animation to bring popular stories from a wide range of cultural communities to the screen.

**Directors:**  
Shira Avni, Serene El-Haj Daoud  
**Producer:** Michael Fukushima

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[www.nfb.ca/talespinners](http://www.nfb.ca/talespinners)

6 minutes 39 seconds  
C9100 021



Closed captioned.  
A decoder is required.

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National Film Board of Canada  
PO Box 6100, Station Centre-Ville  
Montreal, Quebec H3C 3H5

Printed in Canada

From Far Away



Based on the book by  
**ROBERT MUNSCH AND SAOUSSAN ASKAR**



VHS  
C9100 021



A National Film Board of Canada Production



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## FROM FAR AWAY

### Study guide

#### A. Welcoming a Newcomer

Imagine that a new student from a foreign country will be coming to your class who doesn't speak English or French. How will you make her feel welcome? Brainstorm ten words, phrases or sentences to teach her so that she will feel comfortable at school and on the school bus. Would you change anything if the new student were a boy? Why?

#### B. Halloween

How did Halloween become associated with pumpkins, skeletons, black cats, witches, orange-and-black things and candy? What is the origin of this holiday? Where in the world is it celebrated? Why is it not celebrated everywhere?

#### C. Fears

Everybody has experienced fear. When you were younger, what were you afraid of and how did you deal with this fear? Who helped you?

#### RELATED NFB VIDEOS

**A Monster's Calling:** An animated tale of a monster that roams the house at night scaring the children, knowing what each one is afraid of.

**Glasses:** An animated tale of a little boy in Grade 1 who is humiliated in the classroom and on the playing field because he can't see well. A pair of glasses changes everything!



Written by:  
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**JESSE VINET**

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Digital imaging specialist:  
**NORMAND GAUTHIER**

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**NORMAND ROGER**

With the  
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**JEAN-BAPTISTE ROGER**

Re-recording:  
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**JEAN PAUL VIALARD**

Executive producer:  
**ISOBEL MARKS**  
**DAVID VERRALL**

Producer:  
**MICHAEL FUKUSHIMA**



Born in Petakh Tikvah, Israel, in 1974, **Shira Avni** was raised in Montreal. An incorrigible doodler and puppet maker, Shira found herself graduating Magna Cum Laude from Concordia University with a BFA in Animation in 1998. Her student work earned her the Dean's Award in 1997 and the Cinema Prize the following year. Her first film, *48 Second Blues*, won Best Animated Video at the Montreal World Film Festival's student competition in 1997. Shira's graduate studies at the Art Institute of Chicago began in 2001. **From Far Away** is her first professional film.



**Serene El-Haj Daoud** was born in Riyadh, Saudi Arabia, in 1975, where she lived as a Palestinian refugee until her family immigrated to Montreal in 1989. She graduated from Champlain Regional College in Creative Arts in 1995 and completed her BFA in Film Animation at Concordia University. Serene received several grants and awards at Concordia for her student films, including the Zlatko Grgic Award in 1996, and the Dean's Award the following year. Her films *The Poem*, *The Riddle*, and *Underneath All Currents* were screened at Concordia's Animation Festival in 1998. *The Poem* was also shown as part of the student competition of the 1997 Montreal World Film Festival.

Direction and animation:  
**SHIRA AVNI**  
**SERENE EL-HAJ DAOUD**

For more teaching ideas, recommended reading  
and related NFB videos, visit:

**[www.nfb.ca/talespinners](http://www.nfb.ca/talespinners)**

Order number  
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Based on the book  
**From Far Away**  
by Robert Munsch and Saoussan Askar  
First published by Annick Press Ltd, Toronto.  
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