**Biography**:

Since the age of 8, Nadine Kaadan hasn’t stopped writing and illustrating children’s books - she simply knew that it was her calling in life. She started distributing her first children’s magazine to her 5th grade classmates, and 20 years later she is an award winning children’s book author and illustrator, whose mission it is to spread reading culture in the Arab world, in a way that is inspired by Syria’s rich heritage. Her stories sometimes touch on delicate subjects like children with special needs, or like the current troubled situation in the Arab world, and other times they are just plain fun.

Nadine is from Damascus, Syria, now living in London where she completed her Masters in Communication Design in Kingston University, and a Masters in Art and Politics at Goldsmiths University. Her book *Answer me, Leila!* won the Anna Lindh award for the best fiction book for children with special needs in 2011, and is now being used to teach the Arabic language at Harvard University and Tufts University. The book was featured in the Guardian under the title [‘Disability Inclusive Books That Should Be Available In English’](https://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/gallery/2015/dec/08/disability-inclusive-books-that-should-be-available-in-english) and was described as ‘a badly needed story for young people’.

Her latest book [*Tomorrow*](https://lantanapublishing.com/products/tomorrow) published by Lantana Publishing, is about the daily life of a little boy during the Syrian conflict and is based on her own experience living in Syria during the first year of war. The book was highly recommended by *Corriere della Serra*, Italy, under the title [‘I drew a dream of peace for Syria’](http://lettura.corriere.it/disegno-sogni-di-pace-in-siria/), and was nominated for Kate Green Medal 2019. Tomorrow was also included in USSBY Outstanding International Book and was shortlisted for The Little Rebel Awards 2019.

Nadine is passionate about championing empowered and inclusive representation in children’s books especially in the UK where is badly needed. Her title [*The Jasmine Sneeze*](https://lantanapublishing.com/search?type=product&q=the+jasmine+sneeze), published by Lantana Publishing, is one of the first children’s books in the UK that touches on Syria’s long and proud culture and heritage in a period of history marred by war. the Jasmine Sneeze it was also reviewed in [the Guardian](https://www.theguardian.com/childrens-books-site/2016/mar/31/preview-the-bookish-fun-at-the-just-so-festival) as one that ‘…sheds welcome light on Syria…and is beautifully illustrated and enormously entertaining’.

Nadine has been invited to various literature including [Edinburgh Book Festival 2020](https://www.edbookfest.co.uk/the-festival/whats-on/picturing-tomorrow-with-nadine-kaadan/player), Brighton Festival 2019, Imagine Children’s Festival 2019, London Literature Festival 2017, the Cambridge Literature Festival 2016.

Also, she has been invited to speak at several international book fairs and conferences including the London Book Fair2015, the Gothenburg Book Fair2016, Bookseller conference2018, Abu Dhabi Book Fair 2017 and the Arab Conference at Harvard University 2018.

Her work with young refugees was featured in a [BBC short film](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/av/world-middle-east-37387264/writer-nadine-kaadan-helps-syrian-children-understand-war) under the title ‘Writer Nadine Kaadan Helps Syrian Children Understand War’, and [CNN Connect the World program](http://edition.cnn.com/videos/world/2017/06/29/nadine-kaadan-childrens-book-author-syria-war-ctw.cnn) among others.

She is the 2019 winner of [the Arab British Centre Award for Culture](https://www.harpersbazaararabia.com/people/news/winners-of-the-biennial-arab-british-centre-award-have-just-been-revealed), and was nominated for the Asian Women Of Achievement Award 2020.

Nadine was selected as one of The [BBC 100 Women](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-55042935) 2020’s ‘most influential and inspiring women’; and was featured on their [BBC 100 Women Masterclass](https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/live/world-55102451?ns_mchannel=social&ns_source=twitter&ns_campaign=bbc_live&ns_linkname=5fc3f94a10a1c302d6fbf323%26How%20to%20diversify%20your%20child%27s%20bookshelf%262020-11-30T15:26:41%2B00:00&ns_fee=0&pinned_post_locator=urn:asset:bbdccde4-5f57-4727-89dd-8f382091a91b&pinned_post_asset_id=5fc3f94a10a1c302d6fbf323&pinned_post_type=share) under the title ‘How to make bedtime stories more diverse and less sexist’.

Twice named a judge for the children’s writing competition at the Tower Hamlet Schools Library Services, she regularly visits schools across the UK to read her books and give writing and illustration workshops for children of different ages. She is also regularly invited as a keynote speaker for various occasions such as The Big Translate event and the Prizegiving Ceremony at Abbot’s Hill school.

Since the beginning of the pandemic Nadine has been creating fun and engaging workshops online for children to enjoy from home with several institutions such as [the Mosaic Room](https://mosaicrooms.org/event/story-time-with-nadine-kadaan-answer-me-leila/) and [Lancaster Literature Festival](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=sT0rKQxvpUc).