

# *DELILAH DIRK AND THE TURKISH LIEUTENANT*

By Tony Cliff



*Grade Level (6+)*

*Lexile Level: 440L*

## *Synopsis:*

Nineteenth-century treasure hunter Delilah Dirk has a wealth of knowledge and set of lethal skills picked up from her adventures around the world. Her swordsmanship in particular is tested when she robs a wealthy but dishonorable Sultan in Constantinople. She soon crosses paths with Mr. Selim - an artisan tea maker and member of the Sultan's Turkish Janissary Corps. They end up fleeing the city together in her flying boat- and what follows will have every reader questioning the difference between what is fair and what is right. This excellent, historical/fantasy/adventure story will blow you away, and have readers begging for the next installments.

## *Author Website:*

<http://www.tonycliff.com/>

## *Graphic Novel Website:*

<http://www.delilahdirk.com/>

## *Twitter*

[@TangoCharlie](https://twitter.com/TangoCharlie)

[@delilahdirk](https://twitter.com/delilahdirk)

## *Additional Materials:*

Discussion Guide from Macmillan

<http://images.macmillan.com/folio-assets/discusion-guides/9781596438132DG.pdf>

SLJ Interview with Tony Cliff

<http://blogs.slj.com/goodcomicsforkids/2013/09/11/interview-tony-cliff-and-delilah-dirk-and-the-turkish-lieutenant/>

Let's Get Busy Podcast - Tony Cliff

<http://www.allthewonders.com/podcasts/tony-cliff-lets-get-busy-episode-242/>

*Curricular Connections:*

- Social Justice/Fairness
- Heroism
- Point of View
- History of the Janissary Corps (Ottoman Empire) (grade 7 - Social Studies)

*Lesson Ideas:*

- **Bravery/Heroism**

“It takes a great deal of bravery to stand up to our enemies, but just as much to stand up to our friends.”

(A quote from Harry Potter and the Sorcerer's Stone)

There is evidence of bravery in both Selim and Delilah - have students identify which character is more heroic? Ask students to create a “trading card” for Selim and Delilah highlighting their strengths as the heroes of the story.

- **Point of View/Art & Text interplay**

Is the text of the story always supported by the art? How does the story told in images differ from the text on pages 134-135? Have students create a one page comic which includes the point of view of one character, but has the art tell a story that is in third person omniscient that conflicts with the story of the unreliable narrator.

Have students use an organizer to help them develop their frames:

	<b>What is stated (text)</b>	<b>What really happens (visual)</b>
<b>Beginning</b>		
<b>Conflict</b>		
<b>Resolution</b>		

- **Fairness**

(adapted from:

<http://www.learningtogive.org/units/character-education-fairness-grade-6/fair>)

In Delilah Dirk a recurring theme is the idea of fairness, and what is right. Post the following definitions of fairness around the room and ask students to read them over.

[http://www.learningtogive.org/sites/default/files/handouts/Fairness\\_Definitions\\_0.pdf](http://www.learningtogive.org/sites/default/files/handouts/Fairness_Definitions_0.pdf)

Which of these definitions do you agree with (have students stand by their answer. If there is only one person by a definition, allow that student to move towards their 'second favorite' definition, and allow them to bring along parts of their first definition, and possibly combine the two. Have students discuss why they chose that answer with others in their group - they may like others, but they should focus on the positive aspects of the chosen definition. Allow one member from each group to share out.

Now allow students to shift groups and repeat the activity for the following questions:

- Which definition do you think Selim would most agree with?  
What evidence from the graphic novel supports this?
- Which definition do you think Delilah would most agree with?  
What evidence from the graphic novel supports this?
- Which do you think the Sultan would agree with?  
What evidence from the graphic novel supports this?

Allow students time to write a reflection:

Did you find yourself agreeing with some people and disagreeing with others about fairness? Why do you think different people have different ideas about fairness?  
Is it possible to solve a conflict in which every party thinks the resolution is just?

*Suggested Companion Titles:*

- Sequel : *Delilah Dirk and the King's Shilling* by Tony Cliff
- *Nimona* by Noelle Stevenson
- Tower of Treasure series by Scott Chantler

*Professional Reviews:*

- *Booklist* starred, 6/1/2013
- *Kirkus Reviews* starred, 6/15/2013
- *Publishers Weekly* starred, 6/1/2013
- *School Library Journal*, 7/1/2013
- *Teacher Librarian*, 4/1/2014
- *Voice of Youth Advocates (VOYA)* starred, 8/1/2013