

When you **interact with the text**, you also interact with the author. Even if you cannot personally talk with the author, you might wonder how the author's writing connects with his or her experiences, as well as your own. As you read what Marjane Satrapi says about why she wrote *Persepolis*, think about the parts of the book you have read. Use the **Response Notes** to write about the connections you see.

On Writing *Persepolis* by Marjane Satrapi

Why I Wrote *Persepolis*

From the time I came to France in 1994, I was always telling stories about life in Iran to my friends. We'd see pieces about Iran on television, but they didn't represent my experience at all. I had to keep saying, "No, it's not like that there." I've been justifying why it isn't negative to be Iranian for almost twenty years. How strange when it isn't something I did or chose to be?

After I finished university, there were nine of us, all artists and friends, working in a studio together. That group finally said, "Do something with your stories." They introduced me to graphic novelists. . . .

Writing a Graphic Novel Is Like Making a Movie

People always ask me, "Why didn't you write a book?" But that's what *Persepolis* is. To me, a book is pages related to something that has a cover. Graphic novels are not traditional literature, but that does not mean they are second-rate. Images are a way of writing. When you have the talent to be able to write and to draw it seems a shame to choose one. I think it's better to do both.

We learn about the world through images all the time. In the cinema we do it, but to make a film you need sponsors and money and 10,000 people to work with you. With a graphic novel, all you need is yourself and your editor.

Of course, you have to have a very visual vision of the world. You have to perceive life with images; otherwise it doesn't work. Some artists are more into sound; they make music. The point is that you have to know what you want to say, and find the best way of saying it. It's hard to say how *Persepolis* evolved once I started writing. I had to learn how to write it as a graphic novel by doing.

What I Wanted to Say

I'm a pacifist. I believe there are ways to solve the world's problems. Instead of putting all this money to create arms, I think countries should invest in scholarships for kids to study abroad. Perhaps they could become good and

Response
Notes

