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Imagine if Bilbo Baggins in *The Hobbit* by JRR Tolkien never decided to go on an adventure. Imagine if he never made brave choices and decisions to risk his life to help his friends. Have you ever wondered how large of a role a character's choices and decisions play in a story? Have you ever wondered how big of an influence a character's choices and decisions make on their identity? Choices and decisions constitute a substantial influence on a character's identity and determine his or her future in Deborah Ellis's book *The Breadwinner*, and many others.

For example, Parvana displays the character trait of bravery, which makes up a substantial part of her identity. Parvana demonstrates her bravery by showing that she's willing to do whatever it takes to protect her family, even though it puts her at risk. When Parvana's father gets arrested, Parvana decides to proceed with her mother to jail in protest of getting her father released. "I'm here for my father!" (pg. 43). This quote occurs after Parvana's Father gets arrested and thrown in jail because he went to a University in England. Parvana and her Mother venture to jail to protest in hopes of getting him released. Parvana does this even though she knows that she will probably get beaten by the Taliban and maybe even taken away from her family. This quote exhibits Parvana's willingness to protect and stand up for her family, reflecting her brave identity. If Parvana did not make these kinds of decisions to protect and provide for her family, then the entire story would have gone much differently.

Parvana also displays the character trait of selflessness, which she demonstrates when she decides to do the shopping by herself. Parvana and her sister Nooria start arguing about who should go out and buy food in the marketplace in their father's absence. Their mother refuses to arise from sleeping because she is depressed about the loss of her husband. Either Parvana or Nooria has to venture to the marketplace to purchase food for their family. Parvana has never ventured outside by herself buying things for her family, although she knows that she is the only one that can get away with it, so she volunteers to do it. "What should I buy?" (pg. 52). Parvana says this when she volunteers to venture out and buy food in the marketplace for her family, demonstrating how she puts her family's needs in front of her own. Parvana makes this decision knowing it puts her at risk because girls remain forbidden to venture outside by themselves. Parvana decides to do this because no one else in her family can go outside. If Parvana had not made the selfless decision to venture out into the marketplace to purchase food for her family, then her family would have starved to death.

Alternatively, Parvana makes brave choices and decisions in the social part of her life. For example, when she ventures out in the marketplace disguised as a boy, she discovers a girl crying who lost her family to the Taliban. When she sees this, Parvana sneaks the girl onto the streets illegally to provide refuge for her at her house. This decision displays brave behavior because she decides to help someone else when it puts herself at risk and puts their needs in front of hers again. This reflects her brave outgoing identity and how it has a substantial impact on the setting in the story.

If Parvana had not made all of these decisions, she and her family would have gone down a much darker path, and her identity would be much different. Readers look for characters with

entertaining identities. A character's choices and decisions constitute the largest part of their identity and determine what will happen in the story.