



Who is Malala?

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*"One child, one
teacher, one book
and one pen".
Malala*

Introduction

Imagine not seeing your room again. It's probably full of your things: clothes on the floor, school prizes, photos, your childhood teddy bears, books, your music collection. Imagine not seeing your pets or your friends again.

This is exactly what happened to a young girl. Aged 14 at the time, Malala's entire world changed in one morning, when she was shot by a Taliban bullet. She was flown out of her native Pakistan while still unconscious, and she and her family were not able to return. They were forced to live in exile in Birmingham, England.

"In some parts of the world, students are going to school every day, it's their normal life. But in another part of the world, we are starving for education....it's like a precious gift, it's like a diamond."

Malala

Some say Malala will never return home, but she firmly believes in her heart she will. Malala often reflects on her new country and on the conveniences she now has, such as running water and the flick of a switch for light, but she misses her oil burning lamps, the high snow topped mountains, the green fields, the wild flowers, and especially her childhood best friend.

Question: What do you know about the Taliban?

Activity: Research the history of the Taliban and record your findings.

Reflect: Imagine you are in exile in Pakistan. Find out about the culture, food, language, money and religion there. Set up a blog posting your research.



The Heroine Malala

When Malala was born, nobody congratulated her father. She was the family's first born, but a girl born in a land where rifles are fired in celebration of a son, where daughters are hidden away in the dim light, was not to be celebrated. A girl's role in life is to look after their home and to give birth to their own children.

Malala's father did not care that his first born was a girl and he told people, "I know there is something different about this child". He named her Malala.

Malala is a popular name in Afghanistan in honour of a 19th century heroine also called Malala. In 1880 there was a war between Britain and Afghanistan. During one particularly difficult battle, during which the men from Afghanistan were losing and giving up, so the heroine Malala took off her veil and shouted from the battle field, that they should not be cowards and give up. Malala was shot, but it inspired the men to continue, and they won the battle. Every time Malala's father told her this story she would feel a sense of honour to be called this great name.

Fact: Malala belongs to a tribe called Pastituns. They are a proud people of many tribes split between Pakistan and Afghanistan.

To Do: Find out who you are named after.



A Normal Life

Malala was like most 14 year old girls, she fought with her brother, hated getting up in the mornings and was a daydreamer. Her best friend Moniba was always by her side, they listened to Justin Bieber, watched the Twilight movies and liked to try different face creams. It was expected the girls would become Doctors or Teachers (these were regarded as respected professions) if they got the chance, since being a girl was not respected in their country. Moniba wanted to be a fashion designer. Malala, never afraid to stand up for herself, dreamed that she would become an inventor or politician. The education system was different in Pakistan, even though Malala worked hard and was always top of her class, the examiners allowed them to write anything but half way through correcting the students work the examiners would get tired from reading and stop examining the papers and give them any result they wished.

To Do: Think about your plan for your own life. What would you like to do?

Malala had won an award for campaigning for peace in her valley and for the right for girls to go to school. "My plan is to learn more about history, to meet interesting people and listen to their opinions", said Malala



Having Faith

Malala's father often spoke out against the Taliban. They came to power during Afghanistan's long civil war. Although they managed to hold 90% of the country's territory, their policies—including their treatment of women and support of terrorists—ostracized them from the world community.

Malala started speaking at events with her father to campaign for girls' education and against the Taliban. As a result, Malala's family got a lot of threats from the Taliban. But Malala was not scared. If they did come after her, she thought, she could always talk to Moniba about it, and pray to God for strength. She did wonder what she would do if she was attacked. She thought about whether or not she would hit her attacker, but thought that, if she did that, there would be no difference between her and the terrorist. So, she decided she would say, "Ok, shoot me, but first listen to me. What you are doing is wrong. I'm not against you personally. I just want every girl to go to school".

Let us make our future now, and let us make our dreams tomorrow's reality.

Read more: The Taliban – <http://www.infoplease.com/spot/taliban.html>.



"Who is Malala?"

Tuesday October 9 2012, was a typical morning for Malala and her school friends, except this morning they have an exam. Malala and her friends joked with their bus driver Bhai Jan, a name which means brother. Suddenly, a young man waved down the bus and asked "Is this the Khushal school bus?" Since Malala started speaking at events with her father to campaign for girls' education and against the Taliban, journalists often came to talk to them, but not like this. Something was different.

The young man asked, "Who is Malala"? No one answered but as she was the only one without her face covered, he fired a gun shot at her. Malala squeezed Moniba's hand and slumped forward. The man shot twice more, and these shots hit the two girls behind her, Shazia and Kainat Rice. It is said the gunman's hand was shaking as he fired the shots.

All I want is an education, and I am afraid of no one.



Malala and her life today

This is the story behind how Malala and her family now live in exile. She has received a lot of support since the shooting. She was shot in the face, but her facial nerves have recovered and she had an implant inserted to help her hearing. For the most part, then, she can live like a normal teenager again. She has made new friends in England, but Moniba is still her best friend and they Skype all the time. Malala also keeps in touch with the other two girls, Shanzia and Kainat, who were shot that morning.

Malala's mother had no education background but now attends a language center to learn how to read and write. Her Father works for the Palestinian consulate and is adviser for global education for the United Nations. In the last year, Malala has worked as an education activist and, through the Malala Fund, she has travelled to places where children are deprived of education. She has set up many projects. Malala has also spoken to world leaders, and made a speech to the United Nations in 2013. She was named by Time magazine as one of the most influential people and, in 2014, Malala was the youngest ever to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. So much has changed for this girl, but she still remains the same: strong, independent and motivated. She is still a typical teenager, who fights with her brother and still has her father call her in the mornings to get up for school.

"We realise the importance of our voices only when we are silenced".

I do not even hate the Talib who shot me. Even if there was a gun in my hand and he stands in front of me, I would not shoot him.

Malala Quotes

"The terrorists thought they would change my aims and stop my ambitions but nothing changed in my life except this: weakness, fear and hopelessness died, strength, power and courage was born"

"So let us wage a glorious struggle against illiteracy, poverty and terrorism. Let us pick up our books and our pens, they are the most powerful weapons"

"We must believe in the power and strength of our words – our words can change the world".

"My Mother always told me, 'Hide your face when people are looking at you'. I would reply, 'It does not matter; I am also looking at them'."

"God has given me this new life, and this is a second life, and I want to serve the people. And I want every girl, every child to be educated"

"I am excited today that I have achieved my dream of going back to school. I want every girl in the world to have this basic opportunity".

"To all the girls who have faced injustice and have been silenced, together we will be heard".

Malala Yousafzai's speech at the Youth Takeover of the United Nations

<https://secure.aworldatschool.org/page/content/the-text-of-malala-yousafzais-speech-at-the-united-nations/>

Malala Yousafzai 2014 Nobel Peace Prize Speech

<http://youtu.be/66tIRm91F8>

Malala Facts

Imagine being called out of class to be told you won the Nobel peace prize! <http://www.bbc.com/news/world-europe-29564935>

Malala Yousafzai

Intro
Malala Yousafzai is an ordinary school-going teenager, just like you, but her fearless nature and daring acts have made her famous across the world.

Born
Malala Yousafzai was born in a small town of Mingora in Pakistan.

Ever since her childhood, Malala was a brilliant student and featured amongst the top-scoring students of her class. She used to write on the Internet about her tough life in Pakistan and her desire to attain education safely and freely.

In countries like Pakistan and Afghanistan, there are certain sects of people that believe that girls should only be trained to do household chores. According to them, Malala was committing a serious crime by encouraging girls to pursue education.

October 9, 2012
On October 9, 2012, Malala was shot by a terrorist group, Tehrik-e Taliban Pakistan, when she was returning from school. Malala was hit in the head and the neck, but she miraculously survived the injuries. This condemnable act of the terrorists, instead of instilling fear and discouraging the girls worldwide, endeared this brave little girl to everyone around the world and further strengthened the girl education campaign.

mocomi.com

National Peace Award

In recognition of her pioneering work, Malala was honoured with many awards. In 2011, she was awarded Pakistan's National Peace Award for raising her voice against the gender bias.

Malala Day
Malala was also invited to speak in the United Nations Youth Assembly about the importance of education for girls. To honour Malala's noble efforts and to remind us that gender bias is unfair in today's society, the UN has declared that Malala's birthday, July 12, will be celebrated as Malala Day.

Harvard's Humanitarian Award
Malala was awarded the Harvard's Humanitarian Award of the Year in September 2013. In the same month, she was presented with an Honorary degree at Edinburgh University. She was also bestowed with the International Children's Peace Prize from a Dutch children's rights organization.

RAW (Reach All Women)
In October 2013, Malala was awarded the RAW (Reach All Women) in War Anna Politkovskaya Award in London and in November 2013, Malala received 'The Women of the Year Fund Honoree Award' at the Glamour Women of the Year Awards in New York.

Malala was also nominated for the 2013 Nobel Peace Prize and more than 300,000 people from every corner of the world signed a petition, advocating her as the rightful candidate. Though Malala could not get the Nobel Prize, she continues to inspire millions of girls to have the courage in them to put an end to the gender bias and other social evils prevalent in the society. We salute this brave girl!

Interesting facts

- Malala used to write a blog for the BBC, under a pseudonym, describing in detail her life under the oppressive rule of Taliban.
- Malala, who is just 16 years old, has toured the entire world to promote the cause of education for the girl child. Many famous people and luminaries have invited her to meet them, including the Queen of England.
- She was recently voted as one of the 100 most influential people in the world.
- Malala believes, "You are not powerful, if you have a gun, because with a gun you can only kill. You are powerful when you have a pen because through a pen you can save lives and that's the change we want to bring in our society." Isn't that truly inspiring for all of us?

To do

Despite her youth, Malala Yousafzai, has already fought for several years for the right of girls to education and has shown by example that children and young people too can contribute to improving their own situations. She has done this under dangerous circumstances. We should all take lead from her struggle and commitment. It shows you can work for social justice at any age.

Why don't you:

- Volunteer: Use some of your free time this summer to volunteer and work with the poor. Find out what opportunities exist at your local parish, charities or another organisation.
- Get involved: With organizations such as Amnesty International, Trócaire, Concern or Goal. It's easy to show your support through volunteering, petition signing, letter writing or attending local human rights events.
- Donate books: Reading not only educates; it exercises the imagination. Donate old books to your local school, library or an after-school programme
- Volunteer: Sign up now to volunteer in a reading programme or other programmes for children.
- Reflect on the importance and meaning of education
- Learn to interpret a great speech
- Commemorate Malala day on the November 10
- Watch Emma Watson's speech on Feminism:
<http://youtu.be/p-iFl4qhBsE>
- Watch this clip which teaches us to try our best no matter how big or small our contribution is:
http://youtu.be/-btl654R_pY
- Follow Malala on Twitter: Malala Yousafzai @Official_Malala
- Write your own speech on behalf of your class and send to the United Nations on how much Malala has inspired and influenced you to speak out for education for all.





***"Tell me, what is it you plan to do with
your one wild and precious life?"***
Mary Oliver