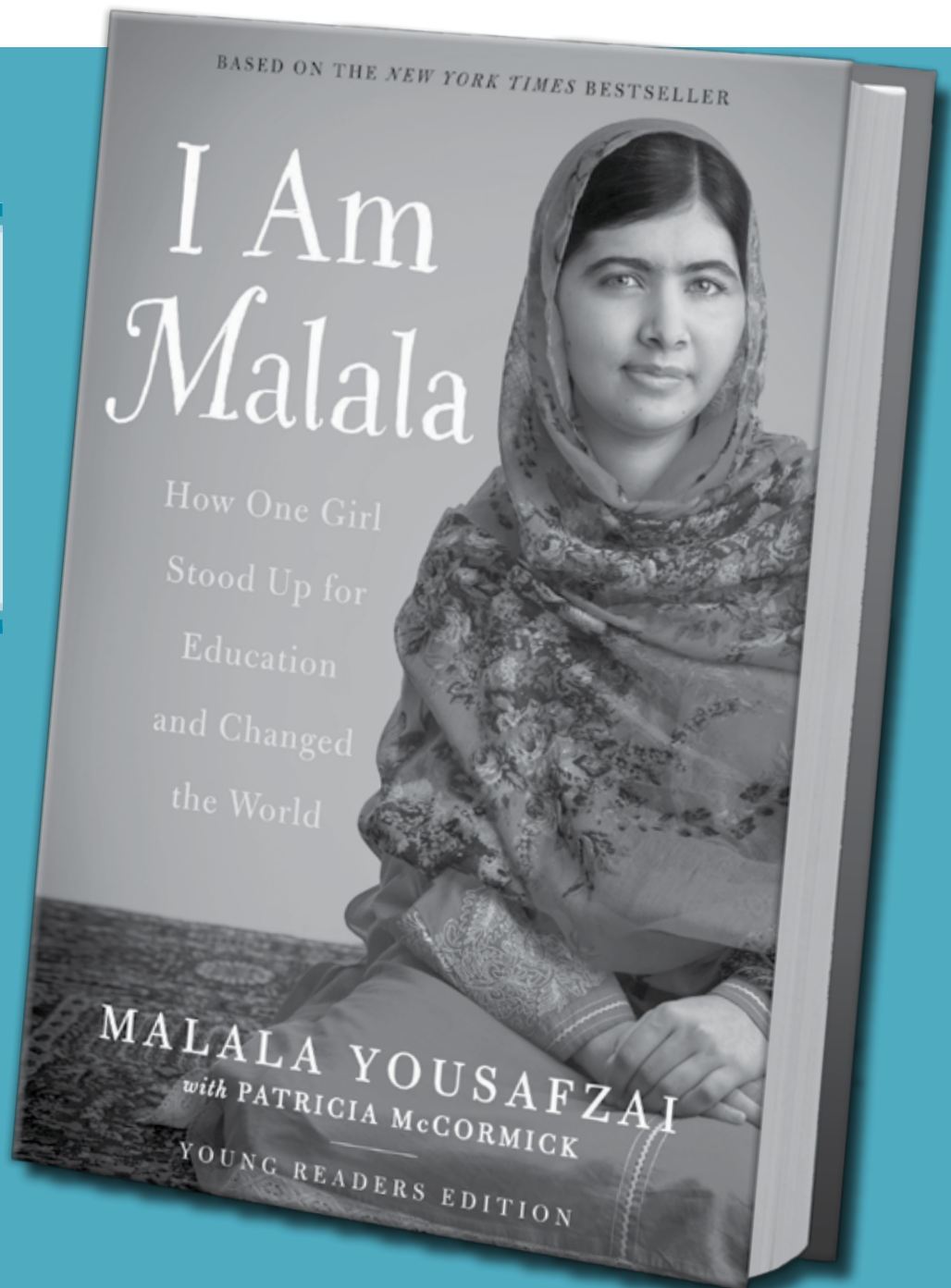


# I Am Malala

## Curriculum connections

- ❖ Autobiography
- ❖ World Studies
- ❖ Women's Studies

**Ages: 10 and up**



by MALALA YOUSAFZAI  
with PATRICIA McCORMICK

## PRE-READING ACTIVITY:

Display a map of Pakistan and point out the Swat Valley region where Malala lived. Ask students what they know about the Pakistani culture. Then have them read the Prologue to the book and list at least five facts about Pakistani culture and their beliefs. Allow time in class for students to share their lists. Then have them make a prediction about Malala's cause.

*Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading: Informational Literature: Key Ideas & Details RI. 5-8.2.*

## DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

Discuss the structure of the book. What is the purpose of the Prologue? How does it entice readers to want to know more about Malala? She divides her story into five parts. How is each part significant to the "whole" story? What is the purpose of the Epilogue? Discuss how it may encourage readers to follow Malala's continued journey.

Foreshadowing is a literary device that gives the reader a hint about events to come. Malala says, "I'd had a strange, gnawing feeling that something bad was going to happen." (p. 9) What does this foreshadow?

Describe Malala's family. How do she and her brothers interact like most siblings? Explain how her family is different from her relatives in the rural mountain village of Shangla. Contrast the views of Malala's mother and father toward women. How does her mother change after Malala is shot?

Malala is named for the Malalai, the Pashtun heroine who was an inspiration to her people for her courage. Debate whether Malala's father had great plans for his daughter when he named her. How does Malala live up to her name? Cite specific passages from the book that best illustrate Malala's courage. How is Malala inspired by her father's courage? Explain how it takes courage for anyone to stand up for change.

The code of purdah requires women to cover themselves in public. Malala notices that the women who visit her home are different when they remove the headscarves and veils. What does she see in them that they don't

see themselves? How does watching these women cause Malala to make a declaration about the kind of Muslim girl and woman she wants to be? Why does this determination shock and upset her mother and her extended family? How does visiting women relatives in Shangla make Malala confused and sad about the role of women?

Contrast the way boys and girls are treated in Pakistan, beginning at birth. Malala's father places her name on the family tree. It is the first female name on the family tree in 300 years. Explain the symbolism of this bold act by her father. Malala's father tells her that he will protect her freedom. (p. 25) Why does he blame himself when the Taliban attacks Malala? How does her mother soothe his thoughts?

Malala values education, and takes pride in being an excellent student. Some American students take education for granted. What might Malala say to these students?

Safina, the girl next door, is younger than Malala, but they have been friends since Malala was eight. Malala is convinced that Safina has stolen her toy telephone, and in turn Malala steals earrings from Safina. Why is Malala so worried about what her father will say? Instead of reprimanding her, he consoles her with the following saying from a story he heard as a boy: "A child is a child when he's a child, even if he's a prophet." (p. 16) What does this say about mistakes? How does the saying help Malala forgive herself?

The Pashtunwali code has a tradition of revenge. How is this in conflict with what Malala's parents teach their children? After stealing from Safina, Malala learns that revenge is bitter. How does this lesson define her character, and the kind of woman she wants to become?

Discuss how militant groups like the TNSM instill fear in the Pakistani people? In 2005, an earthquake devastated Pakistan. Explain how the TNSM used the "nation's fear for their gain." (p. 31) Maulana Fazlullah, one of the leaders of the TNSM, runs an illegal radio show and threatens people who are "un-Islamic." Why are people

so swayed by his views? What is ironic about the mufti that comes to Malala's home and insists the Khushal School be closed?

Explain the following quote: "Inside the Khushal School, we flew on wings of knowledge." (p. 34). Why are these extremists threatened by educated girls? At what point does the school fall under "the shadow of Radio Mullah"?

Describe Malala's friendship with Moniba. Why does Moniba become angry when Malala confesses that she is Gul Makai, the writer of the diary? How does Malala know that Moniba won't tell her secret? Explain how Malala is wise beyond her years?

Discuss the meaning of the following simile: "My father is like a falcon, the one who dared to fly where others would not go." (p. 47) Malala's father takes on the Taliban by writing a letter to the newspaper, and receives praise from friends. Explain the metaphor: "You have put the first stone in standing water." (p. 49) What is the stone? What is the water?

Define terrorism. At what point does Malala understand the true meaning of terror? How is terrorism different from war? What does Malala mean when she says, "War and Terrorism had become child's play". (p. 77) The Pashtunwali code prohibits the killing of women, but the Taliban murdered Benazir Bhutto, the first woman prime minister of Pakistan. How does this brutal act cause Malala to step up her efforts on behalf of Muslim women and girls?

How does Malala's family see possibility when others see danger? Discuss how Malala becomes "immune to fear."

Malala says that so many Pakistani people have a negative view of the United States. What does Malala discover about Americans when she comes to the United States to speak at the United Nations? After the terrorist attack on September 11, 2001, many Americans voiced hatred toward Muslims. What might these Americans learn from Malala's story?

Define social justice. Trace Malala's cause for social justice from the beginning of the book to the end. Malala

says, "My face is my identity." (p. 18) How is her face a symbol of hope for Muslim girls throughout the world? What lessons might all girls, regardless of culture or religion, take from Malala's story?

*Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading: Informational Text: Key Ideas & Details RI. 5-8.1, 5-8.2, 5-8.3; Craft & Structure RI. 5-8.5; Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RI. 5-8.8; History/Social Studies: Craft & Structure RH. 6-8.5, RH. 6-8.6; Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 5-8.4, L. 5-8.5; Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration SL. 5-8.1, 5-8.3; Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas SL. 5-8.4, 5-8.6.*

## CLASSROOM ACTIVITIES

Islam is the second largest religion in the world. Tell students that there are five tenets of Islam. Then divide the class into five groups and assign each group one of the tenets of Islam to explore. The following website is helpful: [www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/muslims/etc/what.html](http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/muslims/etc/what.html).

Have each group prepare five open-ended questions for class discussion that demonstrates Malala's strong Muslim beliefs and her commitment to living a life based on each tenet.

*Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading: Informational Text: Key Ideas & Details RI. 5-8.1; Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RI. 5-8.7; Speaking & Listening: Comprehension & Collaboration SL. 5-8.1, SL 5-8.3; Language; Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.3.*

Malala and her family visit relatives in the mountain village of Shangla for Ramadan. She makes reference to fasting. Ask students to find out the details of the month long celebration of Ramadan ([www.history.com/topics/holidays/ramadan](http://www.history.com/topics/holidays/ramadan)). In what other ways do Muslims celebrate this holiday? Instruct students to write a short entry about Ramadan for a book called *Holidays of World Religions*.

*Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.2; Research to Build & Present Knowledge W. 5-8.7; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1, L. 5-8.2; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.3.*

Instruct students to research the Little Rock Nine, the students who integrated Central High School in Little Rock, Arkansas, in 1957. Then have them write a letter that one of these students might write to Malala after she is attacked and hospitalized in Birmingham, England. What might the person say about courage and their common cause for social justice? Allow time in class for students to share their letters.

*Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Production & Distribution of Writing W. 5-8.4; Research to Build & Present Knowledge W. 5-8.7.*

Malala's family bought a television when she was eight. The Magic Pencil, a show about a boy who could make things real by drawing them, was her favorite program. She dreamed of owning a "magic pencil." Have students write an essay that supports the idea that Malala's voice is a "magic pencil" for Muslim girls. Make specific references to the book to support thoughts. Encourage peer editing for clarity, spelling, and grammar.

*Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.1; Production & Distribution of Writing W. 5-8.4, W. 5-8.5; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1, L. 5-8.2.*

Malala uses the name Gul Makai and writes a diary for the BBC about life under the Taliban. Ask students to use books in the library or sites on the Internet to review information about Anne Frank and the diary she kept while her family was in hiding during the Holocaust. Then have them write a poem called "Malala and Anne." Allow time in class for students to read aloud their poems.

*Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading: Informational Text: Integration of Knowledge & Ideas RI. 5-8.9; Production & Distribution of Writing W. 5-8.4; Research to Build & Present Knowledge W. 5-8.7; Speaking & Listening: Presentation of Knowledge SL. 5-8.6; Language Convention of Standard English L. 5-8.1.*

Malala says, "The Taliban shot me to try to silence me. Instead, the whole world was listening to my message now." (p. 143) Have the class create a feature news

story about Malala and her plight for the education of girls and women in Pakistan using video footage found on the Internet. Include interviews with the following: Malala, her mother and father, Benazir Bhutto's children, Asif Ali Zardari, Moniba, Angelina Jolie, Gordon Brown, Shiza Shahid, and other Muslim girls in Pakistan, the United States and Great Britain. Title the news story, and include appropriate music and graphics. Share the story with the school via the school-wide network.

*Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.3; Production & Distribution of Writing W. 5-8.6; Speaking & Listening: Presentation of Knowledge & Ideas SL. 5-8.4, SL. 5-8.5, SL. 5-8.6; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.3.*

On her sixteenth birthday, Malala is invited to speak at the United Nations. Read about the United Nations, why it was formed and its four main purposes ([www.un.org/en/aboutun/index.shtml](http://www.un.org/en/aboutun/index.shtml)). Then have students write a press release for the United Nations announcing Malala's appearance. Include why she was chosen and how she represents the overall mission of the United Nations.

*Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.2; Research to Build & Present Knowledge W. 5-8.7; Language: Conventions of Standard English L. 5-8.1L. 5-8.2; Knowledge of Language L. 5-8.3.*

Read the Universal Declaration of Human Rights ([www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/universal-declaration-of-human-rights/articles-1-15.html](http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/universal-declaration-of-human-rights/articles-1-15.html)). Have students discuss why Eleanor Roosevelt felt this declaration was so important. Then have them write a feature story about the declaration for the school newspaper. Make reference to Malala's story when explaining why the United Nations stands behind individuals like her.

*Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Reading: Informational Text: Key Ideas & Details RI. 5-8.1; Writing: Text Types & Purposes W. 5-8.2.*

## VOCABULARY/USE OF LANGUAGE

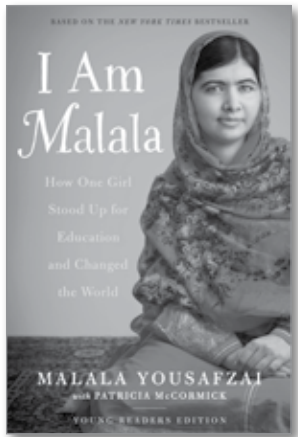
Students should be encouraged to refer to the glossary in the back of the book for the meaning of unfamiliar Pakistani words. Have them jot down other unfamiliar words and define them, taking clues from the context. Such words may include:

**Cheeky** (p. 8), **banter** (p. 8), **fickle** (p. 13), **raucous** (p. 18), **melancholy** (p. 19), **vulnerable** (p. 31), **blasphemy** (p. 32), **pious** (p. 32), **virtuous** (p. 38), **charisma** (p. 39),

**edits** (p. 46), **flogging** (p. 46), **infidel** (p. 48), **din** (p. 52), **waver** (p. 62), **pseudonym** (p. 68), **cower** (p. 69), **wrath** (p. 69), **imposition** (p. 82), **pockmarked** (p. 92), **torrential** (p. 96), **futile** (p. 97), **apartheid** (p. 98), **encased** (p. 152), **porous** (p. 178), and **covertly** (p. 179).

Correlates to Common Core Language Arts Standards in Language: Vocabulary Acquisition & Use L. 5-8.4.

## about the book



**I AM MALALA**  
**HOW ONE GIRL STOOD UP FOR EDUCATION AND CHANGED THE WORLD**  
by Malala Yousafzai  
with Patricia McCormick  
HC 978-0-316-32793-0  
Also available in downloadable audio and eBook formats

*I Am Malala. This is my story.*

Malala Yousafzai was only 10 years old when the Taliban took control of her region. They said music was a crime. They said women weren't allowed to go to the market. They said girls couldn't go to school.

Raised in a once-peaceful area of Pakistan transformed by terrorism, Malala was taught to stand up for what she believes. So she fought for her right to be educated. And on October 9, 2012, she nearly lost her life for the cause: She was shot point-blank while riding the bus on her way home from school.

No one expected her to survive.

Now, Malala is an international symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest-ever Nobel Peace Prize nominee. In this Young Readers Edition of her bestselling memoir, which includes exclusive photos and material, we hear firsthand the remarkable story of a girl who knew from a young age that she wanted to change the world—and did.

Malala's powerful story will open your eyes to another world and will make you believe in hope, truth, miracles, and the possibility that one person—one young person—can inspire change in her community and beyond.

## about the author



Photo © Mark Tucker

Malala Yousafzai was born in 1997 in the Swat Valley of Pakistan. In her short lifetime, she has already experienced devastating changes in her country, which has been transformed from a once peaceful land to a hotbed of terrorism. Malala, who now lives in Birmingham, England, says she has been given a second life, which she intends to devote to the good of the people and her belief that all girls everywhere deserve an education. The fund she started can be found at [MalalaFund.org](http://MalalaFund.org).



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