Malala Yousafzai
PAKISTAN

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Pakistan Country Facts

Pakistan is located in South Asia and borders India, Afghanistan, Iran, and China. Most of Pakistan is desert terrain, although there are high mountains in the north which create an arctic climate. Pakistan suffers from a large number of earthquakes, which are the source of a lot of death and destruction since the country boasts the sixth largest population in the world, with over 193 million people (as of 2016). The vast majority of Pakistan is Muslim (96 percent), with small Christian and Hindu communities. Pakistan gained its independence in 1947, when the British officially left India, and the area once known as British India split into two sovereign states: India and Pakistan. Islamabad is the country’s capital. Pakistan is an Islamic state. Major languages spoken in Pakistan include English, Urdu, Punjabi, Sindhi, Pashto, and Balochi.

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Cultural Immersion Activity Ideas

1. Show students the flag of Pakistan and allow time for them to draw and color the flag. (Or leave the flag uncolored until after you learn about Pakistani Truck Art, introduced below, and then decorate the flag in this unique style).

2. Research/Visual/Kinesthetic Integration: Pakistan’s Vibrant Culture
   a. Using this short video as a guide, divide the class into four groups, giving each group one topic to research and present to the class (Pakistan’s social etiquette, Pakistani food, Pakistani festivals, and Pakistani weddings).
b. Encourage the groups to find as many pictures and/or short video clips as they can, or even to enact the celebration, meal or wedding for the class, creating a colorful and vibrant presentation as a reflection of Pakistan’s colorful and vibrant culture.

3. Culinary Integration: The Tastes and Aromas of Pakistan

a. Invite someone from your community who has ties to Pakistan and its traditions to come speak to the class about his or her cultural heritage. If they are able, suggest that they bring with them some traditional Pakistani food for the students to sample.

b. Pakistan is known the world over for several of its traditional meals, including Biryani, Korma, and Kebabs. Together as a class, research these different foods, finding a variety of recipes online that can easily be recreated on the school premises (some resources listed below). If it is not possible to cook at school, arrange for a variety of these dishes to be made and brought to the school (at home or ordered in from a local Pakistani restaurant). Share this meal together as a class, remembering to incorporate any elements of Pakistani culture and etiquette you’ve learned about.

c. Alternatively, if your time or context makes a full meal impossible, consider preparing and sharing one or more of Pakistan’s specialty drinks, such as Kashmiri chai or mango lassis. Perhaps your students could enjoy a cup of Kashmiri chai as they listen to you read Pakistani picture books or as your class listens to Pakistani music.

4. Art Integration: Pakistani Truck Art

Pakistan is known for its intricate truck art. Watch Arwa Damon’s short video on Pakistani truck art, and/or view this picture gallery of a variety of trucks. This unique art form could be explored in a number of different ways, depending on the students’ age level and available time frame.

Some possibilities:

a. Print or display a few examples of patterns/pictures found on truck art and distribute blank postcard-size card stock, and markers or paint to
each student. Ask students to recreate the pattern or to design their own picture inspired by the pattern. Then, after your study of Malala, the students can use these “Truck Art Postcards” to write notes to Malala, responding to what they’ve learned about her life and her work for peace. Alternatively, these postcards can be used to write thank you notes to teachers and administrators in your school, expressing gratitude for the gift of education (after learning about the value of education from Malala).

b. Practice drawing or painting patterns and pictures in the style of Pakistani truck art. Decorate the Pakistani Flag with this style of art, or after the study of Malala, decorate her Peace Tree Leaf in this style as a reminder of her cultural context.

c. If colorful and patterned duct tape (or other tape) is available and students are old enough to work with exacto knives, allow the students to try their hand at tape art like the artists in the Arwa Damon video. Perhaps they could make a patterned border for a classroom bulletin board, decorate their Peace Journals, or decorate their Pakistani flags. (This is a more difficult skill than the students may realize after watching the Pakistani artists. Be sure to present the activity as an act of appreciation for the artistry required, so as to foster admiration and not cause too much personal frustration).
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. Google Maps/Google Earth, focusing on Pakistan
2. Flag of Pakistan and flag coloring sheet
3. Slideshow of Pakistan (7 pictures of the Swat Valley)
4. Pakistan's Most Wild and Beautiful Places (National Geographic)
5. Short video of Pakistan
6. Around Pakistan in Ten Fun Facts
7. Song of Lahore: Award-winning documentary about the lives and cultural heritage of Pakistan's classical musicians, documenting their journey to a performance with Wynton Marsalis in New York City
9. Pakistan: Culture and Traditions (video)
10. Good sources for Pakistani recipes:
    - My Tamarind Kitchen
    - This Muslim Girl Bakes
    - Haffa's Kitchen Adventures
11. Picture Books:
    a. P is for Pakistan (World Alphabets) by Shazia Razzak
    b. King for a Day, Ruler of the Courtyard and others by Rukhsana Khan
    c. Bano, Billoo, and Amai: The Paper Doll Book by Fauzia Aziz Minallah (Learn about food, dress, languages, etc, of different regions of Pakistan)
    d. Pakistan (Enchantment of the World) by Liz Sonneborn: Middle years book exploring Pakistan's history, culture and geography
BACKGROUND

The Taliban and Girls’ Education

The Taliban are a fundamentalist Muslim militant group that first emerged in northern Pakistan in the early 1990s (though they had long held almost complete power in neighboring Afghanistan). In Pakistan, the Taliban set up their headquarters in the North West Frontier Province (NWFP), an area bordering Afghanistan and dominated by the Pashtun tribal culture. The Taliban promised the Pashtuns living there that they “would restore peace and security and enforce their own austere version of Sharia, or Islamic law, once in power” (“Who Are the Taliban”). In so doing, the Taliban removed themselves from Pakistan’s judicial and social framework, declaring themselves to be a law unto themselves, accountable to no one.

Far from bringing about peace, the Taliban imposed a strict form of Sharia law wherever they gained a foothold and severely oppressed the people who came under their influence. People caught thieving were executed; men were forced to grow beards; women were made to wear the all-covering burka; television, music, and the cinema were all banned; and – most devastating of all – children were discouraged and even banned from attending school.

Wherever they secured their dominance, the Taliban were ruthless in their campaign against education. But it wasn’t just education in general that the Taliban were against. Rather, it was female education in particular they were seeking to abolish. Waging an extremely violent campaign to keep girls from going to school, the Taliban’s crusade reached its climax in December 2008 when they issued an edict declaring that all schools in the NWFP with female enrolment must shut down by January 15 – or face the consequences. By then, people knew that the Taliban did not make such threats in vain; many people who were proponents or supporters of female education had already been targeted and killed, and hundreds of schools had already been bombed and destroyed. Even though many schools did not re-open after the winter holiday that year, the Taliban were ruthless in their enforcement of the edict. True to their word, the Taliban forced 900 schools to close in the Swat Valley alone, depriving hundreds of thousands of students (mostly girls) of an education. Between 2009-2012 it is estimated that the militants bombed at least 838 schools, killing at least 30 children and injuring at least 100 more.

“Education was a threat to [the Taliban] because it gives you the power to question things, the power to challenge things, the power to be independent”

- MALALA
The Taliban’s reign of terror was so successful that even after the Pakistani military regained control of the Swat Valley in 2009, about “120,000 girls and 8000 female teachers were too scared to return to school” (“Pakistan,” GCPEA). This is because, though the Pakistani military had managed to push the Taliban out of the Swat Valley, small pockets of militant groups continued to filter back into the area and terrorize people who were not keeping to the Taliban’s strict code of conduct. One father told a local news agency that he and other parents in the region couldn’t “risk sending our daughters to school,” adding: “I have seen dead bodies, beheaded bodies with my own eyes. I don’t want to be made an example of!” (qtd. in “Pakistan,” Relief Web).

Though the military had regained control, the Swat Valley was far from being a safe place. It was out of this context that Malala Yousafzai emerged, bravely raising her voice against men who would much rather she remain silent.

**ENGAGE**

**Key Vocabulary Words**

Female Education  
Discrimination (gender)  
Taliban

**Discussion Questions**

1. How would your life change if you were never allowed to go to school again (in person or online)? How would your future plans and opportunities change? How would your perception of yourself change? Others’ perception of you?

2. How would your family’s life be different if your mother had never learned to read or write?

3. Why is access to education such a powerful tool of control? Why do you think groups in power would want to limit people’s access to education?

4. Have you or someone you know ever been discriminated against because of your/their gender? Describe this situation and how it made you feel.

**Activity Ideas**

1. **Boys Only: A Lesson in Discrimination**

   a. Without any explanation, begin the class by sending all the girls out of the class, asking them to wait quietly outside the room. Proceed with class as normal for a few minutes before inviting the girls back into the room.

   b. Ask the students—both the girls and the boys—what this experience felt like, how it felt to be left out or to remain in class when others were excluded, etc.

   c. Use this experience as an introduction to the Taliban and the way it
prohibited girls from going to school, even to the point of death if they disobeyed and tried to continue their education.

2. Real Life Integration: The Power of Education
   a. For one day, have students record every example of reading or writing having an impact on their life or their family’s life. This should include every time they or one of their family members needed to be able to read, write, or understand math to accomplish something—from reading a recipe to getting onto the right bus, etc—and also the broader effects—their house was bought with money from their parents’ jobs which required reading and writing, their parents can drive because they could read the driving test, etc.
   b. Spend time sharing and discussing these lists as a class, imagining how different their lives would be without the education they and their family members have received.

3. Real life/Kinesthetic Integration: Silenced
   a. The Taliban is intent on silencing the voices of females and proponents of female education (As students will soon discover, the Taliban went to violent extremes to try to silence Malala’s voice). Plan an Hour or Day of Silence as a reminder of the people around the world who do not have freedom of speech and what it feels like to not be able to express yourself. Have each student commit to absolute silence for one hour or day (clarifying exceptions as needed in other classes, for example). Be sure students communicate this ahead of time to families and teachers, explaining the purpose of the Hour or Day of the Silence (a great opportunity for teaching others about this important issue!).
   b. Ask students to keep a journal throughout the hour/day, reflecting on their emotions and challenges.
   c. Debrief about this experience as a class, connecting it to the importance of freedom of speech and to places in the world where people live without that freedom.

4. Math Integration: The Crisis in Numbers
   a. Give students time to collect current statistics about the number of children and/or girls who are unable to receive an education in different areas around the world. The Fast Facts feature on the UNICEF Education page includes a number of relevant statistics.
   b. Individually or in pairs, ask students to give meaning and perspective to these statistics by comparing them to numbers they’re familiar with (e.g. There are as many children denied education worldwide as the entire population of Italy. Or twenty two percent of Sub-Saharan children do not go to school. In our town, that would mean 1,000 children who would have to stay home).

"Let us pick up our books and pens. They are our most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world.”
- MALALA
c. Next ask students to choose the statistics from this research that they find the most important or astounding and convert them into a visual, such as the appropriate type of graph or pictograph, that could communicate the numbers most effectively.

d. Display these graphs around your classroom or school on eye-catching posters to help educate your community about this important issue.

5. Writing/Interpersonal Integration: Remembering to Be Grateful

a. After learning about the many children worldwide who are denied an education because of discrimination, poverty, violence or disaster, spend time as a class acknowledging the immense privilege of your own access to education. Many students may have always considered school to be a burden instead of a great privilege that other children are literally willing to die for. Give them time to write or draw a private response to this realization.

b. Distribute small blank cards to your students (perhaps decorated with the students’ Truck Art from your study of Pakistan or with the students’ reflective drawing from this activity). Ask each student to write a Thank You card to someone who has contributed to their education. This could be a parent, a significant teacher, a school bus driver or a janitor, each who have made the students’ school experience possible. Be sure to review basic letter writing format and etiquette, encouraging the students to be specific in their gratitude.

c. Distribute these cards to their intended recipients. Consider integrating the skill of writing Thank You cards into your classroom activities throughout the year, fostering a spirit of gratitude and positive communication in your students.

6. Literary/Creative Writing Integration: Learning through Stories

There are many excellent picture books about the rights of children and the value of education (See Additional Resources). If possible, gather as many of these books as you have access to and incorporate them into your study (even older students can enjoy listening to a good story):

a. Consider having an extended story time when students can sit comfortably on the floor, enjoy Pakistani chai or mango lassis, and listen to you read the books, ideally discussing each one after you read it and allowing students to respond to what they hear.

b. Students could also read one or more of these books to another class or to the whole school during an assembly, using it as a starting point of a larger presentation about children’s right to education.

c. Few children’s books deal directly with the situation in Pakistan under the Taliban. Ask students to write their own simple story about an imagined child in Pakistan who faces an obstacle to his or her education, using what they’ve learned so far in your study of Pakistan and the Taliban. This could be expanded into an entire children’s book unit with
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illustrations and final products, or students could simply read their stories aloud to each other.

ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. A Walnut Tree (film): Award-winning documentary about an old man, internally displaced by the conflict between the Pakistan government and the Taliban, reminiscing about his homeland.

2. Inside the Taliban (National Geographic Documentary): A documentary about the Taliban, for older students only.

3. “Who Are the Taliban?” BBC News

4. Right to Education (Theirworld)

5. Education and schools (UNICEF)

6. The Breadwinner by Deborah Ellis (book) and The Breadwinner (animated film): A middle years novel and film adaptation about life under the Taliban for a brave young girl and her family. Although the book and film are set in Afghanistan, the depiction of life under the Taliban closely resembles the similar situation in Pakistan. Mud City by Deborah Ellis, the third book in the Breadwinner series, is set in Pakistan.

7. Picture Books from around the world about the rights of children and the value of education:
   a. I Have the Right to Be a Child by Alain Serres: A picture book that helps young students understand what it means to be a child with rights (including the right to education).
   b. Razia's Ray of Hope: One Girl's Dream of an Education by Liz Suneby: A young girl in Afghanistan dreams of going to school.
   c. Nasreen’s Secret School: A True Story from Afghanistan by Jeanette Winter: Set in Afghanistan, this is the story of a girl who learns the healing and transformative power of education.
   d. Waiting for the Biblioburro by Monica Brown: Tells the story of a young girl in Columbia who has limited access to books and learning, and whose world is changed with the arrival of a traveling library.
   e. Josias, Hold the Book by Jennifer Elvgren: The story of a boy in Haiti who discovers how learning to read can help him grow a better garden and provide food for his family.
   f. Armando and the Blue Tarp School by Edith Hope Fine and Judith Pinkerton Josephson: Set in Mexico, this story is about a boy who learns to read and write and managed to save his village as a result.
   g. Gift Days by Kari-Lynn Winters: After her mother's death a Ugandan girl struggles with all the household responsibilities until her family finds a way to help her go to school.
   h. Elena’s Story (Tales of the World) by Nancy Shaw: Little Elena in Guatemala struggles to balance school and house work, but through
learning to read she discovers the gift of both.

i. *Running Shoes* by Frederick Lipp: A girl in Cambodia is given a pair of shoes so that she can walk to school each day. Learning to read and write is the gift she gives in return.

j. *Yasmin’s Hammer* by Ann Malaspina: The story of a girl in Bangladesh who longs to go to school but is forced to work instead, until she comes up with a plan that will change her life.

**Malala Yousafzai’s Story**

“I tell my story not because it is unique, but because it is the story of many girls... I speak – not for myself, but for all girls and boys. I raise up my voice so that those without a voice can be heard”

- MALALA

**Biography**

Malala (pronounced Ma-la-leh) Yousafzai was born in 1997 into a Muslim family living in the Swat Valley in the northern mountains of Pakistan. She lived in the region’s largest town, Mingora, until a Taliban activist shot her in the head on October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen years old. She was then airlifted to a hospital in Peshawar and from there transferred to the United Kingdom where she could receive specialized medical treatment. Malala and her family remain in England till today, making Birmingham their home – at least for the time being.

**What problems did Malala face?**

The problem for Malala (and thousands of others) was the discrimination she faced for being a girl, particularly in the area of education. Historically, the Swat Valley had once been a stronghold of education, producing educated girls and boys and upholding a “proud record” in comparison to other areas in Pakistan: as early as the 1950s, “Swat became known across Pakistan for the number of professionals it was producing – especially doctors and teachers” (Husain). This was an unusual accomplishment. According to a UN study, even in 2016 some 5.1 million children were out of school in Pakistan – two-thirds
of them girls. But when the Taliban took hold of Swat in late 2007, militant Islamism began to creep into the region, with “radio broadcasts threatening Sharia-style punishments for those who departed from local Muslim traditions” (Husain). For Malala, this culminated in the edict issued by the Taliban that all girls were henceforth forbidden from going to school.

For thousands of Pakistani girls, receiving an education was a means of empowerment. By refusing these girls an education, the Taliban promptly shut the door on any opportunities for a better future. The ban on education was inconceivable to Malala, who was raised in an academic environment. Her father, Ziauddin, had founded a small school before she was born, and by the time Malala was old enough to attend, the school numbered over 1000 students, both boys and girls. The family took it for granted that all their children, including Malala, would receive an education at that school. But in the wake of the Taliban’s edict, though Ziauddin held out as long as he could (insisting that both boys and girls should be able to attend his school), he was eventually forced to close as the army was unable to offer him adequate protection from Taliban militant forces.

The ban on female education was unbearable for eleven-year-old Malala, who wrote in her diary: “How can they stop us going to school? . . . It’s impossible, how can they do it?” (“Diary of a Pakistani Schoolgirl”). It was beyond her comprehension that such an edict could actually be carried out. This is because for Malala, receiving an education was the only way to true freedom, as she explains: “For my brothers it was easy to think about the future . . . They can be anything they want. But for me [as a girl] it was hard and for that reason I wanted to become educated and empower myself with knowledge” (“Diary”). But the Taliban promptly shut the door on a better future for Malala (and every other girl pursuing an education) by forbidding her from going to school.

What was Malala’s approach to these problems?

Malala refused to give in to the Taliban and decided – quite bravely – to speak out against their edict. Malala understood that “education was a threat to [the Taliban] because it gives you the power to question things, the power to challenge things, the power to be independent.” The Taliban, she explains, “were not about [the Muslim] faith. They were about power” – and they would stop at nothing to hold on to that power (He Named Me Malala). Their tactic was simple: to instill fear in everyone living within their sphere of influence. Those who did not abide by the Taliban’s edicts were sought out and killed, their bodies often left in the marketplace as a warning sign to everyone else that this is the end of anyone who would dare to challenge them. They instilled fear in children by bombing over 400 schools, causing students and teachers alike to stay home, afraid that they might be killed in one such bombing. It was a reign of terror, which few people had the courage to speak out against. And it was, for the most part, successful. But Malala, young though she was, understood
one thing very well: that “there is a moment when you have to choose whether to be silent or to stand up” *(Named)*. This was one of those moments. Would she sacrifice her love of learning, her desire for an education, because she was afraid of the Taliban? Or would she have the courage to stand up for what she believed in – no matter the cost?

Remarkably, at eleven years old, Malala chose bravery over cowardice — and sealed her place in history as a result. Her education meant too much to her to simply let it slip through her fingers. “We realize the importance of light when we see darkness,” Malala would later say. “We realize the importance of our voice when we are silenced. In the same way . . . we realized the importance of pens and books when we saw the [Taliban’s] guns” (“Speech at the United Nations”). So when an opportunity was given her to convey to the world – in the form of a blog – what was happening in the Swat Valley, Malala did not hesitate to grab hold of it. Encouraged by her father and with his unwavering support, Malala took up her pen and began to write. “I will get my education,” she told her readers, “if it is at home, school, or any place” (“Diary”). Malala hoped that through her writing she would be able to raise global awareness concerning her plight. A journalist for the BBC World News Service asked her to keep a diary of her experiences, and these were subsequently published on the BBC’s website. Her entries captured people’s attention in a way that news briefs could not. People all over the globe started reading about the day-to-day challenges of a girl living under the repressive Taliban regime. Through her writings, Malala gave the struggle for girls’ education a human form and voice. She wrote a total of 35 entries, all the while using a pen name and keeping her identity secret. Malala’s diary was an incredibly powerful medium for drawing both attention to and sympathy for the cause of female education in Pakistan. “This is our request to all the world,” she pleaded with her readers. “Save our schools. Save our world. Save our Pakistan. Save our Swat” (“Diary”).

The Taliban were finally defeated by Pakistani government forces in 2009, and in the wake of their defeat Malala grew bolder. Though the risk was still high (as the Taliban were still killing people who did not adhere to their stringent laws, and students – particularly girls – were still too scared to be seen in school), Malala allowed a documentary to be made about her, thus uncovering her true identity. She wrote articles for Pakistani newspapers in which she openly campaigned for girls’ equal right to education, and she also began speaking out in public, agreeing, for example, to be interviewed on Pakistani television. As a result of all her lobbying, it was not long before Malala grew in prominence, both within Pakistan and outside it. She knew she was putting her life at risk, but being denied her basic human right to education was not something she was willing to accept quietly, without a fight. Silence was what the Taliban wanted of her. Silence was what she refused to give them.
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What was the outcome of the stand Malala took?

Malala spent two years openly campaigning for female education, refusing to give in to fear or be cowed by anyone or any threat. Then, on October 9, 2012, when she was just fifteen years old, Malala was shot in the head by a Taliban activist as she sat in a bus on her way home from school. After shooting her, the Taliban issued a statement which said that they were targeting Malala specifically because “she has become a symbol of Western culture in the area; she [is] openly propagating it” (qtd. in Walsh).

They (wrongly) assumed that punishing her for not adhering to their oppressive code of conduct would finally put an end to her campaign. But Malala did not die that day; and neither did her courage. “[The Taliban] thought that the bullets would silence us,” Malala would later say. “The terrorists thought that they would change our aims and stop our ambitions, but nothing changed in my life except this: weakness, fear and hopelessness died. Strength, power and courage was born” (“Speech”).

Malala’s injury was life-threatening, and many did not believe she would survive the gunshot wound, which had shattered her skull and wreaked havoc in her brain. Initially Malala was airlifted to a hospital in Peshawar, but when the complex nature of her injury became evident, she was evacuated to the United Kingdom, where a team of medical experts worked round the clock in an effort to save her life. News of Malala’s shooting reverberated across the globe as Malala was by now an internationally known figure. By openly telling her story, Malala had long since captured people’s imagination and won sympathy for her campaign on a much wider scale. Now, as news of her dire situation spread, people everywhere found that they were emotionally invested in the life of this young girl from Pakistan, and prayers were lifted up for her recovery from every corner of the world. Overnight, Malala became a symbol of something much bigger than the plight of girls in Pakistan. As she lay fighting for her life in a hospital bed in the UK, Malala’s plight became the plight of every girl and woman living in repressive communities all over the world. People needed to know that her fight for equal education had not been in vain; that her courage in the face of fear and oppression would bring real change. Her survival would be a signal of hope.

After days in a coma, Malala finally opened her eyes and the world breathed a sigh of relief as her doctors asserted that her life was no longer in danger. But she had a very long road to recovery ahead of her, both physically and emotionally. Malala’s family had followed her to the UK – there was no thought of going back to Pakistan, since the Taliban had promised to kill Malala if she returned. The Yousafzais now faced the difficult task of building their life from scratch in a foreign country, far from the people and places they had known and loved – far from the only place they called home. But regardless of the challenges, Malala and her family knew that her story had taken on new significance, and must continue to be told, even from this new place. The campaign for equal education for girls and boys was far from over. Malala would continue to fight for this right, no matter where in the world she was.
In an ironic twist, by shooting her in the head, the Taliban had inadvertently turned Malala into a celebrated champion for girls’ education all over the world. “I tell my story not because it is unique,” Malala would later say, “but because it is the story of many girls . . . I speak—not for myself, but for all girls and boys. I raise up my voice . . . so that those without a voice can be heard” (“Malala Fund,” “Speech”).

**Malala’s Impact**

Malala’s courage, her willingness to risk her life in order to be a voice for the voiceless, and her near-death experience, combined to give her a unique platform from which to conduct her campaign for equal education for girls as well as boys. Speaking at the UN on her sixteenth birthday, Malala stressed the fact that her goal is to create equal opportunities for all. In a remarkable extension of forgiveness, she told the audience:

> I'm not against anyone, neither am I here to speak in terms of personal revenge against the Taliban, or any other terrorist group . . . I'm here to speak about the right of education for every child. I want education for the sons and daughters of all the Taliban and all the terrorists and extremists. I do not even hate the Talib who shot me. Even if there is a gun in my hands and he stands in front of me, I would not shoot him. This is the philosophy of nonviolence that I have learnt from Gandhiji, Badshah Khan and Mother Teresa.

In 2014, Malala was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize for her “struggle against the suppression of children and young people and for the right of all children to education” (“Malala Yousafzai – Biographical”). She was seventeen at the time, and the youngest person to ever win a Nobel Peace Prize. Today Malala continues to advocate for female education through her organization, the Malala Fund, which “through education, empowers girls to achieve their potential and become confident and strong leaders in their own countries” (“Malala Yousafzai – Biographical”). As of 2018, there are over 130 million girls worldwide who are not able to go to school. Malala's work is more needed today than ever. So let us, together with Malala, “wage a global struggle against illiteracy, poverty and terrorism and let us pick up our books and pens. They are our most powerful weapons. One teacher, one book, one pen, can change the world” (Malala, “Speech”).

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“*I want education for the sons and daughters of all the Taliban and all the terrorists and extremists. I do not even hate the Talib who shot me*”

- MALALA
ENGAGE

Key Vocabulary Words

Right to Education
Freedom of Speech
Courage/Bravery
Gender Discrimination

Discussion Questions

1. In what ways is Malala different from the other peace heroes you have studied so far? In what ways is she the same? In what ways is Malala different from you? And in what ways is she the same?

2. Consider the saying, “The pen is mightier than the sword.” Why do you think reading and writing can have more of an impact than fighting or using violence? Can you think of examples of people using words instead of violence to bring change? What are some examples of books that have impacted the world in a positive way? What is a book that has impacted your own life?

3. “I want education for the sons and the daughters of all the extremists especially the Taliban”— Malala. Why would Malala say that she wants education for the children of the Taliban?

4. Malala has said, “Peace is necessary for education.” In what ways is peace necessary for education and in what ways is education necessary for peace?

5. “Let us pick up our books and pens. They are our most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world.”— Malala.
   How did Malala’s pen change Pakistan? How can your “pen”—your writing, your ability to tell your story and talk about what matters to you—change the world? Be as specific as you can.

Activity Ideas

1. Make a leaf for your peace tree
   with Malala Yousafzai’s name on it. Ask the students what words they want to write on the leaf that will help them remember her best.

2. Speech/Creative Writing Integration: “Now it’s Time to Speak Up”
   Malala’s speech to the United Nations General Assembly is a powerful document touching on many important issues related to peace, education, and human rights. Consider studying this speech as a class.
   Some options are:
   
   a. Beginning at “Dear sisters and brothers, now it’s time to speak up” (or
a different point of your choosing), give each student a sentence or section to memorize, then present them in succession for each other, another class, or your entire school.

b. Have students, individually or in small groups, answer the following questions: What are the various issues and human rights that Malala references? How do they connect with each other (e.g. How does gender inequality connect to poverty or peace)? Who does she list as her own peace heroes? What are some of Malala's character traits and values as evidenced in this speech? List quotes to support each trait/value.

c. Ask students to select a quote from the speech that they find especially powerful and use it to create a poster or picture quote. If possible, display these in your school or on school computers.

d. Have students write their own speeches, inspired by Malala's speech.
   - Studying Malala's speech, discuss its structure, effective rhetoric tools, and strategies for powerful speech delivery.
   - Ask students to imagine being invited to speak to the UN General Assembly. What issue would they most want to bring to the world's attention? What action would they like to request of world leaders? Have students write their own UN speech, modeled loosely on Malala's speech.
   - Alternately, students could write speeches for their classmates, school, or family members about the importance of education and the plight of girls around the world who are denied access to education. Ask them to end with a clear call to action for the audience: How can local people make a practical difference in this given situation?
   - Give students the opportunity to practice their speeches and then deliver them for an audience (For example, at your Girls' Education Campaign Day, in activity number 6 below). If a live audience isn't possible, consider filming the speeches and posting them on a class website.

3. Technology Integration: Words, Our Most Powerful Weapons

a. Even before Malala was shot, she was drawing the world's attention to human rights violations in Pakistan through her blog posts on the BBC. Spend some time reading these posts as a class.

b. Set up a class blog or individual blogs for each student where students can write about the issues that matter to them—either specifically about the issues they're learning about from their study of Malala or other peace/human rights issues. Work to establish a readership for the blog, allowing students to work for change through the power of writing and educating the public.

c. Girls in your class might consider submitting their writing to Assembly, the online publication created by the Malala Fund to highlight the voices of girls around the world.
4. **Writing Integration: My Courage**

Ask students to write a personal essay entitled “My Courage,” responding to the following prompt: Describe a situation or challenge near you that needs to change, explaining why this matters to you. What can you do about it? How can you be courageous to bring positive change?

5. **Fine Arts Integration: Inspired by Malala**

   a. As a class, create a short play that re-enacts Malala’s story – Malala as a child in school, the rise of the Taliban, the ban, Malala’s campaign, the shooting and its aftermath, and Malala’s work since then. Present the play for your school or on your Girls’ Education Campaign Day (activity number 6 below).

   b. Ask students, individually or in small groups, to highlight an aspect of Malala’s story that is significant to them in a creative art form: a song, a painting, a short film. Present these works of art to your class or on your Campaign Day.

6. **Community/Research Integration: Girls’ Education Campaign Day**

Prepare for and organize a day at your school to raise awareness about girls’ education around the world. Allow your students to brainstorm the information and activities they want to include.

Some possibilities to consider:

   a. Have students research the work done by international organizations to promote girls’ education worldwide. Their findings can be collated in a multi-media presentation, including individual stories, pictures, and videos to be presented on your Campaign Day. Alternately, they could set up individual visual displays around the classroom for each organization, which guests could view throughout the day.

Possible organizations to highlight:

- ActionAid
- CARE
- Educating Girls Matters
- Girls Learn International
- Girl Rising
- Global Campaign for Education
- Global Education First Initiative
- Global Partnership for Education
- Half the Sky
- Let Girls Learn: USAID and Peace Corps
- Save the Children
- Teachers Without Borders
- The Working Group on Girls
United Nations Girls’ Education Initiative

b. To introduce your guests to Malala’s story, stage your play about her life (activity number 5a above).

c. Display or perform your students’ art works inspired by Malala’s life (activity number 5b above).

d. Screen Malala’s UN speech in full for your guests. Or, if time allows, screen the documentary He Named Me Malala. (For more information on screening the film, consult the Host a Screening Toolkit on the Malala Fund website.)

e. Give students the opportunity to present their own advocacy speeches (from activity number 2d above) on an issue that is important to them.

f. Start a fundraising campaign, either through the Malala Fund tool or individually, to help support Malala’s organization or any of the other initiative that works to promote girls’ education.

g. After the event, write postcards to Malala to tell her about your Campaign Day, or simply to send a message of gratitude or appreciation for the work that she does. The Malala Fund page has a digital platform for sending postcards. For the front of the postcard, consider uploading a photo of the students’ Truck Art from your study of Pakistan.

7. Commitment Cards:

Have the students prepare “Commitment Cards” relating to what they have learned about Malala. Ask them to think about the things that were important to her and choose one theme that they want to commit to. Give them time to make the card, with colors and drawings etc. Have each of them write out their commitment, encouraging them to think of specific ways they can carry them out (“I commit to ---, especially in---”). Students can then share their commitments with a partner, paste them into their Peace Journals, or display them in the classroom.
ADDITIONAL RESOURCES

1. *I am Malala: How one Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World* (Young Readers Edition) by Malala Yousafzai and Christina Lamb

2. *Who is Malala Yousafzai* (Who Was? Series) by Dinah Brown

3. *Real Kids, Real Stories, Real Change: Courageous Actions Around the World* by Garth Sundem: Stories of teens and children who have made a difference in their world, for students inspired by Malala to learn about other young people standing up for what they believe.

4. *He Named Me Malala* (Documentary film)

5. *My Daughter Malala* (TED talk) by Ziauddin Yousafzai. (Also consider the TED playlist “The Importance of Educating Girls” for further inspiring talks on this issue).

6. *A Message From Malala* (A TED Blog Video): Malala could not accept an invitation to speak at a TED conference because she has vowed to never miss another day of school. She sent this message instead.

7. Malala’s *Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech*

8. Malala’s Speech to the United Nations (*video* and *text*)

9. *Malala Fund*: Includes information about Malala, the work she continues to do, and many opportunities to get involved in her advocacy work.

10. *Assembly: A Digital Newsletter from the Malala Fund*

11. *Dear Malala, We Stand With You* by Rosemary McCarney: This book is written as a letter to Malala alongside a photo gallery of girls around the world. It is a message of solidarity and an inspiring call to action, and could be used as a springboard for students writing their own letters to Malala.

12. Picture Books:
   b. *Malala: A Hero for All* (Step into Reading level 4) by Shana Corey
   c. *For the Right to Learn: Malala Yousafzï’s Story* by Rebecca Langston-George
   d. *Malala, a Brave Girl from Pakistan/Iqbal, a Brave Boy from Pakistan: Two Stories of Bravery* by Jeanette Winter
   e. *Malala’s Magic Pencil* by Malala Yousafzai
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