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## WHO IS MALALA YOUSAFZAI?

On October 10, 2014, it was announced that Malala Yousafzai won the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize. She shares the prize with Kailash Satyarthi, a children's rights' advocate from India. Malala Yousafzai is seventeen years old and the youngest person ever to receive a Nobel Peace Prize. She was shot in the head in 2012 by the Taliban because of her outspoken views about girls' education in Pakistan and other parts of the world where girls are prevented from getting an education. The committee chose Yousafzai and Satyarthi for the prize because they believe children's rights are essential to long-term peace, stating, "It is a prerequisite for peaceful global development that the rights of children and young people be respected."

This lesson provides an opportunity for students to learn about Malala Yousafzai, why she won the Nobel Peace Prize and to explore activism projects to address areas of injustice they see in the world.

**Grade Level:** grades 4–7

**Time:** 45–60 minutes

**Common Core Anchor Standards:** Reading, Speaking and Listening

**Learning Objectives:**

- Students will learn about Malala Yousafzai and why she won the Nobel Peace Prize.
- Students will explore quotes by Malala Yousafzai for their meaning and connection to their own lives.
- Students will reflect on areas of injustice in the world and begin to construct an activism project to address those issues.

**Material:**

- "Malala Wins Nobel Peace Prize" (*Time for Kids*, October 10, 2014, [www.timeforkids.com/news/malala-wins-nobel-peace-prize/182746](http://www.timeforkids.com/news/malala-wins-nobel-peace-prize/182746)), one for each student
- *Malala Yousafzai, UN Youth Assembly* video (2013, 17 minutes, United Nations, <http://webtv.un.org/watch/malala-yousafzai-addresses-united-nations-youth-assembly/2542094251001/>)
- [\*Malala Quotes\*](#) (cut out in advance, one quote per small group)
- [\*Small Group Discussion Worksheet\*](#) (one per small group)
- [\*Transcript of Malala Speech at United Nations\*](#) (one for each student)

**Vocabulary:**

Review the following vocabulary words and make sure students know their meanings. (See ADL's "[Glossary of Education Terms](#).")

- activist
- dignity
- drone
- equality
- flourish
- injustice
- ignorance
- Nobel Peace Prize
- ordinary
- pseudonym
- suppression
- Taliban

**INFORMATION SHARING: NOBEL PEACE PRIZE AND MALALA YOUSAFZAI**

1. Ask students: *Does anyone know what the Nobel Peace Prize is?* Explain that it is one of five Nobel Prizes created by an inventor in Sweden named Alfred Nobel. For more than one hundred years (since 1901) the prize has been awarded every year for those who have promoted peace in the world. The prize includes a medal, a personal diploma and a large sum of prize money. Over the years, winners have included Martin Luther King, Jr., President Barack Obama, Mother Teresa, Nelson Mandela and Elie Wiesel. (To learn more about past Nobel Peace Prize recipients go to <http://nobelpeaceprize.org/>)
2. Ask students: *Has anyone heard of Malala Yousafzai?* Explain that Malala Yousafzai is a Pakistani seventeen year old girl who won the Nobel Prize for Peace in October 2014. Malala is the youngest person to ever be awarded the prize. In 2012, when Malala was fourteen years old, she was shot in the head while she was on a bus filled with schoolchildren. She was singled out because she had been speaking out about schooling for girls worldwide as well as in her country of Pakistan, where girls do not have as many educational options and opportunities as boys. When she was 11 years old, the Taliban (an extremist group who believes girls should not go to school or have independence) took over her town of Mingora and for several months, her school was closed. She started writing a blog under a pseudonym detailing her life under Taliban occupation, their attempts to take control of the Swat Valley, and her views on promoting education for girls in the valley. Malala wants to be a doctor and wants to make sure all girls (as well as boys) can realize their dreams through education. Pakistan has the second highest number of children out of school (8.3 million in 2012) and the Pakistan Ministry of Education reports that their overall literacy rate is 46% and only 26% of girls are literate.

Malala survived the attack and since then, has published a book about her life, gave a speech at the United Nations, was awarded Pakistan's National Youth Peace Prize and has now won the Nobel Peace Prize. A foundation called the [Malala Fund](#) has been established to help empower girls in four specific countries—Pakistan, Nigeria, Jordan and Kenya.

**READING ACTIVITY**

1. Distribute a copy of the *Time for Kids* article, "[Malala Wins Nobel Peace Prize](#)," and have students read it silently for 10 minutes.
2. After students are done reading, engage in a class discussion by asking the following questions:
  - What did you learn about Malala that you did not know?
  - Did you find anything surprising?
  - What did it mean that Malala has "never been ordinary?"

- Why do you think Malala won the prize?
- Why do you think the Taliban does not want girls to get an education? What do you think about that?
- What do you think Malala will do in the future?

### ANALYZING QUOTES

1. Divide students into groups of three. Distribute a different [Malala Quote](#) and a [Small Group Discussion Worksheet](#) to each small group. Explain to the groups that they will have 10 minutes to read the quote together and then record the answer to the three questions on their worksheet which are as follows:
  - What does the quote mean (in your own words)?
  - Why do you think Malala said it?
  - Do you agree with the quote? Why or why not?
2. After working in small groups, have each group report back to the rest of the class by sharing their quote and their responses to the questions.
3. Engage students in a discussion by asking the following questions:
  - Did you learn anything new about Malala from the quotes?
  - What do you think of Malala?
  - In your opinion, did she deserve the Nobel Peace Prize? Why or why not?

### VIDEO ACTIVITY (OPTIONAL, BUT STRONGLY ENCOURAGED)

1. Explain to students that on July 12, 2013, Malala spoke at the United Nations. Distribute a copy of the [Transcript of Malala Speech at United Nations](#) to each student and instruct them to follow along as they watch a video of Malala delivering the speech.
2. Show the video [Malala Yousafzai, UN Youth Assembly](#) (17 minutes) where Malala speaks about the importance of education.
3. Engage students in large group discussion by asking some or all of the following questions:
  - How did you feel while you watched the speech?
  - What is the main message in Malala's speech to the United Nations?
  - Malala says, "They thought the bullet would silence us, but they failed." What does she mean by this?
  - Who is Malala speaking for?
  - What does Malala believe about people's rights?
  - Why does she mention Martin Luther King, Jr. and Nelson Mandela?
  - Why does she believe so strongly in non-violence?
  - What other parts of the world does Malala speak about and why?
  - What is she asking the world leaders to do?

- How did the United Nations respond to her speech?
- What do you think of Malala?

## BEING AN ACTIVIST

1. Ask students: *Does anyone know what the word “activist” means?* Define activist as someone who campaigns or strongly advocates for a cause for social change. Ask: *Is Malala an activist? How is she an activist? What social change is she working towards?*
2. Ask: *Can you think of other activists that you either know personally or you have heard about?* Explain that an activist can be someone in your neighborhood or community who is trying to do something about animal rights (e.g. someone who helps find homes for stray dogs) or someone more famous, like Malala who is working on behalf of girls’ education worldwide. Record their ideas on the board.
3. Then ask students: *What are some situations in your school, community or the country that are unjust and that you want to change, things that involve bias or discrimination in some way?* Record these on the board/smartboard. Narrow the list down to 4–5 possible issues they will work on. Have students form small groups based on their preference for one of these issues.
4. Instruct students to work together in their small groups to develop a preliminary plan to:
  - a. identify the problem they want to solve
  - b. clarify the ultimate goal or outcome they want to achieve
  - c. brainstorm possible actions to meet that goal
  - d. make a list of what people and resources are needed
  - e. develop a timeline for getting particular tasks or goals completed
5. Allow each group 10 minutes to work through their chosen idea. In order to bring these projects to fruition, allow several weeks and designate class time as well as homework assignments to complete the projects.

## ADDITIONAL READING AND RESOURCES

### Print Material

- [“Her ‘Crime’ Was Loving Schools”](#) (*The New York Times*, October 10, 2012)
- [“Malala’s Nobel is ‘for all girl students of Pakistan’”](#) (*USA Today*, October 10, 2014)
- [“Nobel winner Malala urges kids to stand up for rights”](#) (*USA Today*, October 10, 2014)
- [“Malala Yousafzai, Youngest Nobel Peace Prize Winner, Adds to Her Achievements and Expectations”](#) (*The New York Times*, October 10, 2014)
- [Alarming situation of education in Pakistan](#) (UNESCO)
- [“Pakistan’s educational challenges”](#) (CNN, October 10, 2014)
- [“The 5 Most Important Things Malala Has Done in 2014”](#) (*The Huffington Post*, October 10, 2014)
- [Malala Is Free As a Bird – and a Nobel Prize Winner](#) (*The Washington Post*, October 10, 2014)

Websites

- [Times Topics: Malala Yousafzai](#) (The New York Times)
- [The Nobel Peace Prize](#)

Children’s Books

- *Dear Malala: We Stand with You* by Rosemary McCarney (Preschool-grade 3)
- *I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for Education and Changed the World* (Young Readers Edition) by Malala Yousafzai (Grades 5 and up)
- *Malala, A Brave Girl From Pakistan/Iqbal, A Brave Boy from Pakistan* by Jeanette Winter (Preschool-grade 3)
- *Malala Yousafzai: Warrior with Words* by Karen Leggett Abouraya (Grades 3–5)
- *Malala Yousafzai and the Girls of Pakistan* by David Aretha (grades 7 and up)

## COMMON CORE ANCHOR STANDARDS

Content Area/Standard
Reading
Standard 1: Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
Speaking and Listening
Standard 1: Prepare for and participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations with diverse partners, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
Standard 2: Integrate and evaluate information presented in diverse media and formats, including visually, quantitatively, and orally.

## MALALA QUOTES

(Cut the quotes into strips of paper and distribute one quote to each small group.)

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

I speak not for myself but for those without voice... those who have fought for their rights... their right to live in peace, their right to be treated with dignity, their right to equality of opportunity, their right to be educated.

When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful.

I think life is always dangerous. Some people get afraid of it. Some people don't go forward. But some people, if they want to achieve their goal, they have to go. They have to move...

Let us remember: One book, one pen, one child, and one teacher can change the world.

I raise up my voice, not so I can shout but so that those without a voice can be heard...we cannot succeed when half of us are held back.

I don't want revenge on the Taliban; I want education for sons and daughters of the Taliban.

I was a girl in a land where rifles are fired in celebration of a son, while daughters are hidden away behind a curtain, their role in life simply to prepare food and give birth to children.

They cannot stop me. I will get my education, if it is in [the] home, school or anyplace.

I have the right of education. I have the right to play. I have the right to sing. I have the right to talk. I have the right to go to market. I have the right to speak up.

I think that the best way to solve problems and to fight is through dialogue, is through [a] peaceful way, but for me the best way to fight against terrorism and extremism is just simple thing: educate the next generation.

# SMALL GROUP DISCUSSION WORKSHEET

Small Group Members: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Record your quote: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Instructions:** Discuss the following questions as a group and record your answers.

1. What does the quote mean (in your own words)?

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\_\_\_\_\_

2. Why do you think Malala said it?

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3. Do you agree with the quote? Why or why not?

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\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

## TRANSCRIPT OF MALALA SPEECH AT UNITED NATIONS

"In the name of God, The Most Beneficent, The Most Merciful, Honorable UN Secretary General Mr. Ban Ki-moon, Respected President General Assembly Vuk Jeremic, Honorable UN envoy for Global education Mr. Gordon Brown, Respected elders and my dear brothers and sisters. Today, it is an honor for me to be speaking again after a long time. Being here with such honorable people is a great moment in my life. I don't know where to begin my speech. I don't know what people would be expecting me to say. But first of all, thank you to God for whom we all are equal and thank you to every person who has prayed for my fast recovery and a new life. I cannot believe how much love people have shown me. I have received thousands of good wish cards and gifts from all over the world. Thank you to all of them. Thank you to the children whose innocent words encouraged me. Thank you to my elders whose prayers strengthened me. I would like to thank my nurses, doctors and all of the staff of the hospitals in Pakistan and the UK and the UAE governments who have helped me get better and recover my strength.

I fully support Mr. Ban Ki-moon the Secretary-General in his Global Education First Initiative and the work of the UN Special Envoy Mr. Gordon Brown. And I thank them both for the leadership they continue to give. They continue to inspire all of us to action.

Dear brothers and sisters, do remember one thing, Malala Day is not my day. Today is the day of every woman, every boy and every girl who have raised their voice for their rights. There are hundreds of Human rights activists and social workers who are not only speaking for human rights, but who are struggling to achieve their goals of education, peace and equality. Thousands of people have been killed by the terrorists and millions have been injured. I am just one of them. So here I stand.... one girl among many.

I speak - not for myself, but for all girls and boys. I raise up my voice - not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard. Those who have fought for their rights: Their right to live in peace. Their right to be treated with dignity. Their right to equality of opportunity. Their right to be educated. Dear Friends, on the 9th of October 2012, the Taliban shot me on the left side of my forehead. They shot my friends too. They thought that the bullets would silence us. But they failed. And then, out of that silence came, thousands of voices. 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. I am the same Malala. My ambitions are the same. My hopes are the same. My dreams are the same.

Dear sisters and brothers, I am not against anyone. Neither am I here to speak in terms of personal revenge against the Taliban or any other terrorist group. I am here to speak up for the right of education of every child. I want education for the sons and the daughters of all the extremists especially the Taliban.

I do not even hate the Talib who shot me. Even if there is a gun in my hand and he stands in front of me. I would not shoot him. This is the compassion that I have learnt from Muhammad-the prophet of mercy, Jesus Christ and Lord Buddha. This is the legacy of change that I have inherited from Martin Luther King, Nelson Mandela and Muhammad Ali Jinnah. This is the philosophy of non-violence that I have learned from Gandhi Jee, Bacha Khan and Mother Teresa. And this is the forgiveness that I have learnt from my mother and father. This is what my soul is telling me, be peaceful and love everyone.

Dear sisters and brothers, we realize the importance of light when we see darkness. We realize the importance of our voice when we are silenced. In the same way, when we were in Swat, the north of Pakistan, we realized the importance of pens and books when we saw the guns. The wise saying, "The pen is mightier than sword" was true. The extremists are afraid of books and pens. The power of education frightens them. They are afraid of women. The power of the voice of women frightens them. And that is

why they killed 14 innocent medical students in the recent attack in Quetta. And that is why they killed many female teachers and polio workers in Khyber Pukhtoonkhwa and FATA. That is why they are blasting schools every day. Because they were and they are afraid of change, afraid of the equality that we will bring into our society.

I remember that there was a boy in our school who was asked by a journalist, "Why are the Taliban against education?" He answered very simply. By pointing to his book he said, "A Talib doesn't know what is written inside this book." They think that God is a tiny, little conservative being who would send girls to the hell just because of going to school.

The terrorists are misusing the name of Islam and Pashtun society for their own personal benefits. Pakistan is peace-loving democratic country. Pashtuns want education for their daughters and sons. And Islam is a religion of peace, humanity and brotherhood. Islam says that it is not only each child's right to get education, rather it is their duty and responsibility.

Honorable Secretary General, peace is necessary for education. In many parts of the world especially Pakistan and Afghanistan; terrorism, wars and conflicts stop children to go to their schools. We are really tired of these wars. Women and children are suffering in many parts of the world in many ways. In India, innocent and poor children are victims of child labor. Many schools have been destroyed in Nigeria. People in Afghanistan have been affected by the hurdles of extremism for decades. Young girls have to do domestic child labor and are forced to get married at early age. Poverty, ignorance, injustice, racism and the deprivation of basic rights are the main problems faced by both men and women.

Dear fellows, today I am focusing on women's rights and girls' education because they are suffering the most. There was a time when women social activists asked men to stand up for their rights. But, this time, we will do it by ourselves. I am not telling men to step away from speaking for women's rights rather I am focusing on women to be independent to fight for themselves. Dear sisters and brothers, now it's time to speak up.

So today, we call upon the world leaders to change their strategic policies in favor of peace and prosperity. We call upon the world leaders that all the peace deals must protect women and children's rights. A deal that goes against the dignity of women and their rights is unacceptable. We call upon all governments to ensure free compulsory education for every child all over the world. We call upon all governments to fight against terrorism and violence, to protect children from brutality and harm. We call upon the developed nations to support the expansion of educational opportunities for girls in the developing world. We call upon all communities to be tolerant - to reject prejudice based on cast, creed, sect, religion or gender. To ensure freedom and equality for women so that they can flourish. We cannot all succeed when half of us are held back. We call upon our sisters around the world to be brave - to embrace the strength within themselves and realize their full potential.

Dear brothers and sisters, we want schools and education for every child's bright future. We will continue our journey to our destination of peace and education for everyone. No one can stop us. We will speak for our rights and we will bring change through our voice. We must believe in the power and the strength of our words. Our words can change the world because we are all together, united for the cause of education. And if we want to achieve our goal, then let us empower ourselves with the weapon of knowledge and let us shield ourselves with unity and togetherness.

Dear brothers and sisters, we must not forget that millions of people are suffering from poverty, injustice and ignorance. We must not forget that millions of children are out of schools. We must not forget that our sisters and brothers are waiting for a bright peaceful future. So let us 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 child, one teacher, one pen and one book can change the world. Education is the only solution. Education First.”