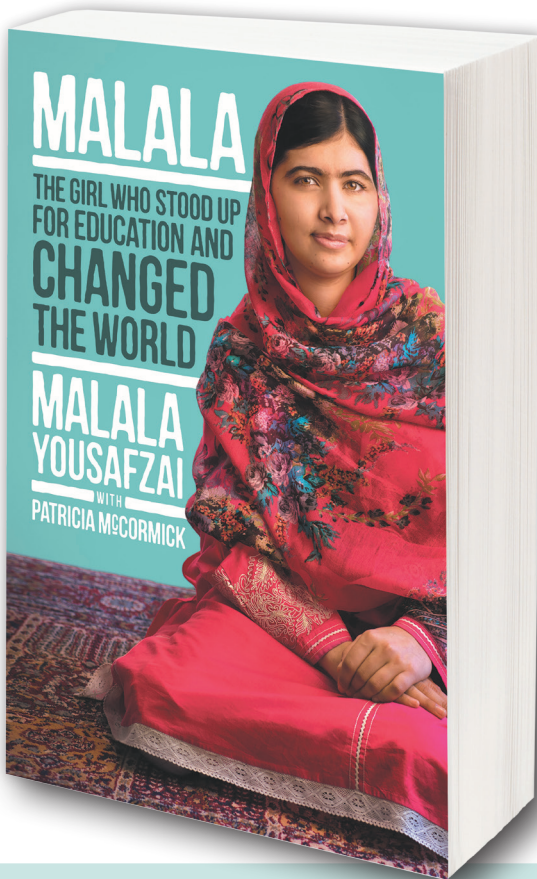


MALALA

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THE YOUNG READERS' EDITION

TEACHERS' NOTES



These teaching notes will be useful in addressing the Australian Curriculum: English and History for students in Years 6 and 7.

THEMES EXPLORED

Identity
Family relationships
Cultural and Social Differences
Education
Courage
Adjustment
War

VALUES EXPLORED

Compassion
Fear
Resilience
Hope

LEARNING OBJECTIVES

- Identify and explore ideas and viewpoints about events, issues and characters represented in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1619)
- Make connections between students' own experiences and those of characters and events expressed in texts drawn from different historical, social and cultural contexts (ACELT1613)
- Analyse strategies authors use to influence readers (ACELY1801)
- Plan, draft and publish imaginative, informative and persuasive texts, choosing and experimenting with text structures, language features, images and digital resources appropriate to purpose and audience (ACELY1714)
- Experiences of Australian democracy and citizenship, including the status and rights of Aboriginal people and/or Torres Strait Islanders, migrants, women, and children. (ACHHK114)
- Stories of groups of people who migrated to Australia (including from ONE Asian country) and the reasons they migrated, such as World War II and Australian migration programs since the war. (ACHHK115)

BEFORE READING

Response to the Cover:

The cover of the book shows Malala wearing a hijab. Write a few notes on what you think the book will be about. How much do you think Malala's skin colour and clothing influenced your assumptions?

Before Reading:

Reflect on what you may already know about Malala's story from the media.

AFTER READING

First Response:

After reading, make notes about your response to Malala's story.

- What did you think and feel when you were reading this book?
- Did you learn anything that you did not know before?
- Were you reminded of anything while you were reading? Perhaps you have heard about similar stories? Perhaps it reminded you of something you have learned in History? Or something you had heard about in the news?
- After you had finished reading, did you have any unanswered questions?

Explore Your Ideas:

Make a list of any questions that you have. You may want to group them. For instance:

- Questions that are answered in the book.
- Questions that only Malala would know the answer to.
- Big questions with lots of possible answers.
- What do you think the key ideas in the book are? Do they help answer any of your questions?

Six Word Story:

Using only six words, sum up *Malala* and its story line. You may choose to do this from the point of view of Malala.

Point of View:

Malala is narrated from Malala's first-person perspective. How does this influence your response to her story? Would the story have as much impact if it was told in the third person?

Book Review:

Write a short book review of the novel to provide your opinion. Discuss the writing style, characters, plot and action. Does this story also appeal to boys? Why and why not?

Visualise the Landscape:

Find Pakistan on the map. Swat is a valley and an administrative district in Khyber Pakhtunkhwa Province, located close to the Afghanistan-Pakistan border. The rural part of Swat has high mountains, green meadows and clear lakes. In groups, complete a research activity and present to the class five facts about Swat which are not covered in the book.

Adjustment:

Malala and her family find it hard to adjust to the move to Birmingham. Pick three things that you would find difficult to give up about life in Australia? Discuss with other students.

- ▶ **ACTIVITY:** Discuss different reasons why a family might have to leave their country after a war.
- **EXTENSION:** Write a personal reflection of a major change that you have experienced in your life. How did you cope? Did your experience teach you any important lessons or change you in any way?

Migration:

Malala and her family move to Birmingham. What are reasons you know of that influence people's decisions to move to Australia? What are reasons people might choose to leave Australia?

- ▶ **ACTIVITY:** Share the stories of people in your class. There may be people from a range of backgrounds who will tell stories you've not known about them. Some of them may even have been refugees.
- **EXTENSION:** Australians refer to refugees who arrive in Australia by boat as 'boat people'. What are some misconceptions about boat people and how does the media propagate these stereotypes?

Compare and Contrast:

Pakistan is in the bottom ten countries for the proportion of poorest girls who have never even spent time in a classroom. Only six countries are in a worse situation. Almost two-thirds of the poorest girls in Pakistan have never been to school.

- ▶ **ACTIVITY:** As a research project choose another country to compare to Pakistan where women do not attend school – Somalia, Niger and Guinea are examples.
- **EXTENSION:** Do you think opportunities for women in education in Australia are equal? Use examples to back up your thoughts.

Prologue:

In the prologue of the book Malala outlines what happened in the lead-up to the shooting. What effect does this have on the reader? Why do some texts use a prologue and others do not?

A Childhood like Any Other:

Malala loved to play cricket with her friends just like many children in Australia do. Find other similarities to her life in Swat and yours in Australia.

THEMES

Think about some of the themes in the book that you might like to explore. Some ideas are suggested below.

What is Important to Me?

‘My friends and I should be talking about Bella and Edward or Fruity from the Indian TV show *Son Pari*; if those topics were off limits for the time being, we could talk about cricket or annoying little brothers or a hundred other things.’

Through her story Malala tells us about the things she values and prizes. Freedom of speech, free education, access to contemporary fiction, television programmes like *Son Pari* and *Ugly Betty*, and playing cricket.

- Make a list of things that you think Malala values and suggest why these things are important.
- Some things may seem comparatively small or trivial but are they?
- Are there any rights or freedoms that you value especially highly?

Education

‘I’m not afraid of anyone. I will get my education. Even if I have to sit on the floor to continue it. I have to continue my education and I will do it.’

Malala describes how she and her father campaigned for girls’ right to education even in the face of personal danger, knowing that they might have to pay the ultimate sacrifice.

- Why do you think that Malala and her father considered education to be so important?
- Do you think you would make the same choice as Malala?
- Do you have a similar view about the importance of education?

The Best in People and the Worst in People

‘I would never talk back to my elders. In my culture, one must never disrespect one’s elders – even if they are wrong. But when I saw how hard these women’s lives were I was confused and sad.’

Malala’s story shows us the worst in people and their potential for cruelty but it also shows the very best

and the lengths that people will go to protect others, or to act for the common good.

- Talk about other situations you know of where people have shown great courage in the face of adversity.
- Edmund Burke said, 'All that is necessary for the triumph of evil is that good men do nothing.' How does this resonate with Malala's story?
- What governs the choices people make about the way they behave towards others?

To Speak or to Say Nothing?

'My father was unhappy, but again he held his tongue. My father, who had dared to talk back to the Taliban, was learning that sometimes saying nothing speaks just as loudly.'

- Why do you think Malala makes this observation?
- Are there times when it is best not to speak out and times when it best to make your voice heard?

Family

'I was lucky that I had parents who encouraged me despite the fear we all felt.'

Malala's family is very important to her and her story tells how her father's influence and mother's support have helped shape her character.

- What views and opinions do you share with the rest of your family?
- Do you have any views or opinions that are different?
- How does that shape you?

Losses and Gains

Malala tells the reader about her new life in England and the opportunities and differences it brings.

'What an interesting country this is, where some girls are free to cover their bodies and others are free not to.'

Here we also have projectors and laptops, videos and Wi-Fi and classes such as music, art and computer science, and even cooking (which I hate). It was a bit of a shock coming from Pakistan, where school was just a teacher and a chalkboard. At times, I wish I was back home in that simple schoolroom with no computers. But then I think of how my old friends would love all this fancy technology and these special classes. Sometimes I feel sad that my old friends don't have all the wonderful things students have here. And sometimes I feel sad that they have what I don't: one another.'

- If you had to leave your home and live in another country what would you miss most about the life you had to leave behind?
- What do you think would be a newcomer's first impressions of Australia?

Different but the Same?

Malala tells us how she has adapted to her new school friends:

‘At first I wondered how I could ever be friends with these girls. I have seen and experienced things they couldn’t even imagine. But as time went on I realised they have had experiences I can’t imagine. What I’m finding is that we have much more in common than we have different and every day we learn something new from one another.’

- In what ways do you think all people are similar and in what ways do you think they are different?

UN Convention: The Rights of the Child

Discuss what you know about the UN Convention: the Rights of the Child. You may wish to briefly review the articles here: www.unicef.org/crc/files/Rights_overview.pdf

- Which rights were violated in Malala’s situation? The right to education and the goals of education are perhaps the most obvious but there are others which also apply.
- In your view, who is (or should be) responsible for protecting children’s rights across the world?

Campaigning Children

‘This was my calling. Some powerful force had come to dwell inside me, something bigger and stronger than me and it had made me fearless.’

‘I raise up my voice not so that I can shout, but so that those without a voice can be heard.’

Malala’s story is a compelling one, and it is all the more powerful given the age at which she started campaigning for girls’ education and freedom of speech.

History has seen some remarkable young people who have shown wisdom and courage beyond their years. Can you think of any examples?

Malala was awarded the International Children’s Peace Prize in 2013.

Visit the website and read the stories of previous winners: www.childrenspeaceprize.org

A Girl like Any Other

After reading Malala’s story, do you think she is an ordinary or an extraordinary girl?

Give reasons for your answer.

- ▶ **ACTIVITY** – Hold a debate based on the above question. Was Malala an ordinary girl in an extraordinary situation or was she extraordinary to begin with?

Giving Back

Malala has set up her own organisation called the Malala Fund. She wanted to raise her voice on behalf of the millions of girls around the world denied the right to go to school. Malala used her situation to make a difference to the lives of others. As a group, discuss ways you can give back in your own community and make a difference to people’s lives.