



# *I am Malala*

By Malala Yousafzai

*First published in 2013*

## **Genre and Subject**

*Autography*

*Children's Rights—Pakistan*

*Taliban*

## **Synopsis**

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education.

On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive.

Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she has become a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize.

*I Am Malala* is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons.

*I Am Malala* will make you believe in the power of one person's voice to inspire change in the world.

## **Author Biography**

Malala Yousafzai, the educational campaigner from Swat Valley, Pakistan, came to public attention by writing for BBC Urdu about life under the Taliban. Using the pen name Gul Makai, she often spoke about her family's fight for girls' education in her community. In October 2012 Malala was targeted by the Taliban and shot while returning home from school. She survived and continues her campaign for education. In 2011, in recognition of her courage and advocacy, Malala was nominated for the International Children's Peace Prize and won Pakistan's first National Youth Peace Prize. She is the youngest person ever to be awarded a Nobel Peace Prize and has received numerous other awards, including the International Children's Peace Prize (2013), the Sakharov Prize for Freedom of Thought, and the Amnesty International Ambassador of Conscience Award. Malala now attends the University of Oxford and continues to champion universal access to education through Malala Fund ([malala.org](http://malala.org)), a non-profit organisation that invests in community-led programs and supports education advocates around the world.

## Discussion Starters

1. Would you have had the bravery that Malala exhibited and continues to exhibit?
2. Talk about the role of Malala's parents, especially her father, Ziauddin. If you were her parents, would you have encouraged her to write and speak out?
3. How does Malala describe the affect of the growing Taliban presence in her region? Talk about the rules they imposed on the citizens in the Swat valley. What was life like?
4. Mala has said that despite the Taliban's restrictions against girls/women, she remains a proud believer. Would you—could you—maintain your faith given those same restrictions? \*
5. Talk about the reaction of the international community after Malala's shooting. Has the outrage made a difference...has it had any effect?
6. What can be done about female education in the Middle East and places like Pakistan? What are the prospects? Can one girl, despite her worldwide fame, make a difference? Why does the Taliban want to prevent girls from acquiring an education—how do they see the female role? \*
7. This is as good a time as any to talk about the Taliban's power in the Muslim world. Why does it continue to grow and attract followers...or is it gaining new followers? What attraction does it have for Muslim men? Can it ever be defeated?

\* *Lit Lovers* received an email sharing the following perspective, which draws a clear distinction between the Muslim faith and Taliban practices. The email relates to Questions 4 and 6, respectively:

*There is no "overt" Muslim prejudice against women. Although there are some customs in Islam specifically intended for women, these customs are for a reason. Everything has a reason. The Taliban, however, take things to a far new level. They overtly shed women of certain rights they deserve. There is a distinction between Islamic rules and customs and Taliban discrimination.*

*Muslims do not prevent women from acquiring an education. It is the Taliban that does so. Educating women is encouraged in Islam. One of the biggest Muslim scholars was in fact a woman.... Like Malala, I am sad the Taliban carry out their activities in the name of Islam. And I am glad her story is being heard... —Sarah, a student.*

### If you liked this book, you may also like...

- Blasphemy: the true heartbreaking story of the woman sentenced to death over a cup of water by Asia Bibi
- I am Nujood, age 10 and divorced by Nujood Ali
- The lost boy: tales of a child soldier by Ayik Chut Deng

Author biography from—<https://www.hachette.com.au/malala-yousafzai/>

Discussion questions from—<https://www.litlovers.com/reading-guides/14-reading-guides/non-fiction/9457-i-am-malala-yousafzai?start=3>

Read Alikes from—<https://www.whatshouldireadnext.com/isbn/0316322407> and [goodreads](#)