

Extracts and notes for teachers and librarians on *Malala: My Story of Standing up for Girls' Rights* by Malala Yousafzai

INTRODUCTION

Malala: My Story of Standing Up for Girls' Rights by Malala Yousafzai is suitable for teaching to children aged 7+. The four extracts included in this Teachers' Pack are linked to important themes in the story and accompanied by corresponding discussion questions and activities. Together, they provide the perfect resource for KS2 classes – developing literacy and creative writing skills and stimulating debate in PSHE lessons, tutor time or assemblies.

CONTENTS

EXTRACT 1: (taken from chapter 1)

THEME: Gender Equality

Objectives: To explore the subject of gender inequality in society today; to share our own experiences and views regarding gender.

EXTRACT 2: (taken from chapter 2)

THEME: The Magic Pencil

Objectives: To consider how we could change the world for the better; to respect the voices and beliefs of our peers.

EXTRACT 3: (taken from chapter 5)

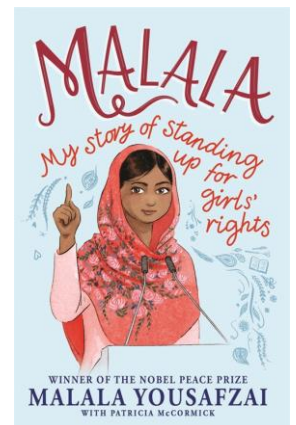
THEME: Terror

Objectives: To explore the subject of terrorism; to empathise with the feelings of characters in the book.

EXTRACT 4: (taken from chapter 16)

THEME: Hope and Truth

Objectives: To create a campaign poster to raise awareness about the importance of education; to identify the importance of hope and truth in order to change the world.



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ABOUT THE BOOK

Before Malala was an internationally known activist, she was simply a young girl who stood up for what she believed in. When girls in her once-peaceful area of Pakistan were told they couldn't go to school, Malala risked her life for their right to be educated.

Discover the remarkable true story of a young girl who refused to be silenced. In her own words, Malala shares the value of speaking out against hate and offers an inspiring message of determination and hope.

EXTRACT 1: GENDER INEQUALITY (chapter 1)

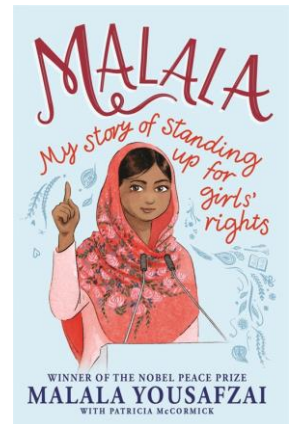
When a boy is born in Pakistan, it's cause for celebration. Gifts are placed in the baby's cot. The boy's name is inscribed on the family tree. But when a girl is born, no one visits the parents.

My father paid no mind to these customs. I've seen my name --- in bright blue ink – right there among the male names of our family tree. Mine was the first female name in three hundred years.

Sometimes, when I thought about the future, I remembered the kite-flying contests we had as kids. The boys who wanted to win tried to cut the other kids' kite strings. I always felt a bit sad to see the pretty kites sputter to the ground.

I worried that my future could be cut down just like those kites – simply because I was a girl.

As Safina and I got older, we'd be expected to cook and clean for our brothers. We couldn't be lawyers or engineers, fashion designers or artists – or most other things we dreamed of. And we wouldn't be allowed to go outside our homes without a male relative to accompany us.



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EXTRACT 1

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

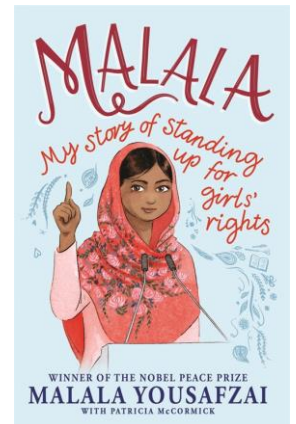
- How is the birth of a girl treated differently compared to the birth of a boy in Pakistan?
- How does Malala's father defy tradition when she is born? What does this tell you about him?
- Why do Malala and Safina worry about their futures? Is this fair that they should have these worries?
- Can you think of other jobs or roles that girls or women find it difficult to access? Can you think of any barriers or challenges that men face in society?
- How can we break down these gender barriers? Why isn't this always easy to do?

ACTIVITY

ACTIVITY: GIRLS AND BOYS

Subjects: Literacy, PSHE

- Think about what it means to be a girl or a boy in different parts of the world and society.
- In your class, try to pair up boys and girls together where possible. Then, using post-it notes or sticky bits of paper, write down words typically associated with your partner's gender, then stick it on them. For example, "strong" or "intelligent".
- Once both class members have at least five adjectives on them, take it in turns to compare what words have been attributed to girls and boys. Discuss together as a class; are there any patterns in the words that have been chosen for each gender? Why do you think these patterns occur? What does this tell us about society? Why are the words that we use to describe each other so powerful?



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EXTRACT 2: THE MAGIC PENCIL (chapter 2)

Sometimes Safina and I watched Shaka Laka Boom Boom, a show about a boy named Sanju, who could make anything real by drawing it with a magic pencil. If he was hungry, he drew a bowl of curry, and it appeared. If he was in danger, he drew a policeman. He was a little hero, always protecting people.

I began to dream about a magic pencil of my own. At night I would pray, God, please give me Sanju's pencil. I won't tell anyone. Just leave it in my cupboard. I will use it to make everyone happy. Then I would check the drawer. But the pencil was never there.

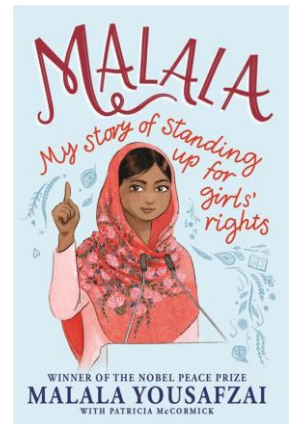
I really wanted the magic pencil when my mother asked me to take rubbish to the dump near our house. Then I could have erased it all: the smell, the rats, the giant mountain of rotting food. I was about to toss our potato peels and eggshells onto the rubbish heap one afternoon when I saw something move. I jumped.

It was a girl my age. She and some boys nearby were sorting through rubbish. I wanted to talk to them, but I was scared.

Later that night I asked my father about the children. Why weren't they in school?

He told me that these children sold what they found at the dump to help feed their families; if they went to school, their families would go hungry.

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EXTRACT 2

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

- What power does the magic pencil possess?
- What else do you think Malala would use the magic pencil for if she could get one?
- Imagine you have acquired a magic pencil; what would you use it for?
- Why are the children at the dump not in school? Why might Malala consider herself lucky compared to them?
- Without an education, what do you think the future will look like for these children at the dump?

ACTIVITY:

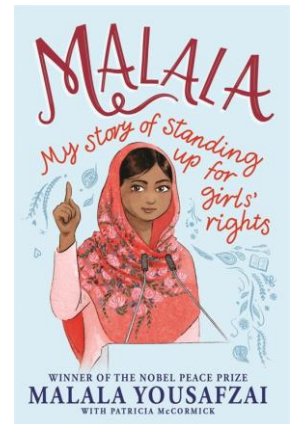
ACTIVITY: THE CIRCLE

Subjects: Literacy, PSHE, Speaking and Listening

- Everyone sit in a circle facing each other, with the teacher holding a beanbag or ball to start.
- The teacher will start the game by asking a question; then the teacher will gently throw the beanbag or ball for another student to catch. The student who catches must answer before throwing it onto the next person. Do this until all students have answered the question. The rules are that no one else is allowed to speak apart from the person holding the beanbag or ball.
- Repeat this for different key questions that relate to the key themes of Malala's book.

Examples of questions could be:

- What are you most grateful for in life?
- If you had a magic pencil what would you change and why?
- As well as Malala, who else do you find inspiring?



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EXTRACT 3: TERROR (chapter 5)

Another day I found my father with his head in his hands. "Oh, jani," he said, "the world has gone mad." He told me that Fazlullah's men had destroyed a girls' school in a nearby town.

I felt my heart drop. I could not imagine why anyone would want to rob children of the chance to learn to read and write. Why was a school building such a threat to the Taliban?

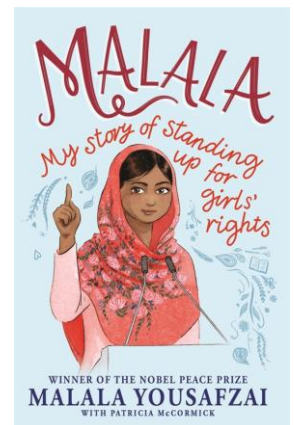
Please, God, I prayed, help us to protect our valley and to stop this violence.

Every day, Fazlullah's men struck a new target. Stores, roads, bridges. And schools.

Most of the attacks were outside Mingora, but soon they got closer. One day I was cleaning dishes in the kitchen, and a bomb went off so close that the whole house rattled and the fan over the window fell.

I had grown up hearing the word terrorism, but only now did I understand it. Terrorism is different from war – where soldiers face one another in battle. Terrorism is going to sleep at night and not knowing what horrors the next day will bring. It is walking down your own street not knowing whom you can trust. It is the enemy everywhere and the attacks coming out of nowhere.

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EXTRACT 3

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

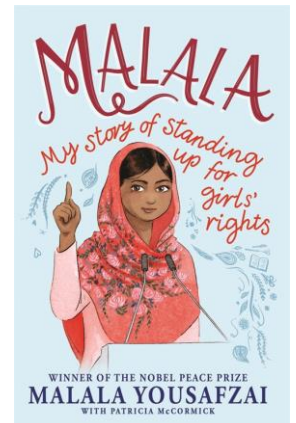
- What do you think Malala's father means when he says that "the world has gone mad"?
- How is terrorism 'different from war'? Do you agree with Malala?
- What emotions do you think Malala feels living under the daily threat of terrorism?
- Why do you think schools pose such a threat for the Taliban? What do they symbolise?
- How do you beat terrorism? Why isn't this easy to do?

ACTIVITY:

ACTIVITY: DEBATE

Subjects: Literacy, PSHE, Speaking and Listening

- Based on what you have read and seen in the media, reflect on what you know about terrorism.
- Splitting into groups, on a large sheet of flip chart paper note down the headings: Who, What, Why, Where, When, and How. In your groups, discuss and write down some ideas about what terrorism is and how it affects people using these headings to guide you.
- Use your flip chart paper in a class discussion about the impact of terrorism across the world today.



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EXTRACT 4: HOPE AND TRUTH (chapter 16)

When I finally watched the news, I learned that a spokesman for Fazlullah said the Taliban had been “forced” to shoot me because I would not stop speaking out against them.

They had warned me, they told the press, but I wouldn’t stop.

My other crimes? I spoke for education and peace. In their terms, I was speaking for Western education, which was against Islam, in their opinion.

The Taliban would try again to kill me, Fazlullah said. “Let this be a lesson.”

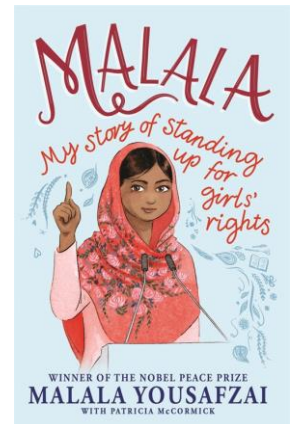
It was a lesson, indeed. My mother was right when she quoted from the Holy Quran. “Falsehood has to die,” she had told me all those years earlier, when I was considering doing the blog for the BBC. “And truth has to come forward.”

Truth will always triumph over lies. This is the true Islamic belief that has guided us on our journey.

The Taliban shot me to try to silence me.

But the whole world was listening to my message now.

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EXTRACT 4

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS:

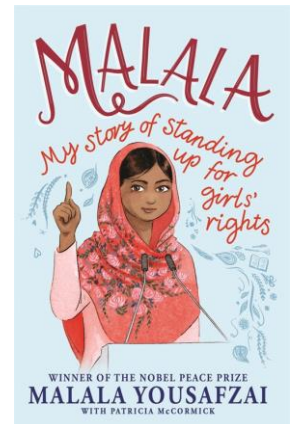
- Why do you think Fazlullah and the Taliban feel that they 'had been "forced" to shoot' Malala? Do you agree that they had no choice?
- How do the views of Malala's mother differ from those of the Taliban? Why is this significant in terms of religion?
- What is Malala fighting for? Why will she not be silenced?
- How did the BBC help to spread Malala's message across the globe? How can the media be a powerful tool when it comes to revealing 'truth'?
- Why is it important for the whole world to listen to Malala? What can we learn from her experiences?

ACTIVITY:

ACTIVITY: EDUCATION

Subjects: Art & Design, Literacy, PSHE, Writing to Persuade

- In her book, Malala is extremely passionate about the importance of education and this is something that she continues to campaign for today.
- Using all that you have learnt from Malala and in your classroom activities, create a Campaign Poster to demand that all children across the world are able to go to school and get an education. Use your poster to raise awareness about this important issue and to persuade the public that this is a cause worth fighting for.
- Put your posters on display and ask your teacher to share what you have done on social media for all the world to see.



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