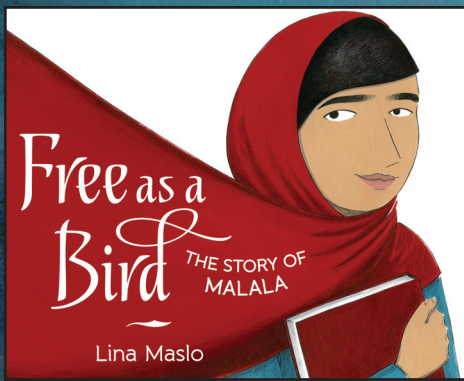


One child,
one teacher,
one pen, and one book
can change the world!

ACTIVIST MALALA YOUSAFZAI

A stylized illustration of Malala Yousafzai. She is depicted from the chest up, wearing a vibrant red hijab and a blue long-sleeved shirt. Her hair is black and styled in a short, straight cut. She has a calm, determined expression, looking slightly to the right. She is holding a red book with both hands in front of her. The background is a dark, textured blue, suggesting a night sky or a deep sea. The overall style is that of a hand-drawn or painted illustration with visible brushstrokes and a soft, realistic shading on her face.



Free as a Bird

THE STORY OF MALALA

by Lina Maslo

About the Book

Through lyrical, compelling prose, Lina Maslo tells the incredible story of Malala Yousafzai, a courageous Pakistani teenager who advocates for girls' education worldwide. Malala challenged her country's history and culture while fighting for justice and education for all children. Even when the dangerous Taliban infiltrated her country, she and her family continued bravely promoting their beliefs. Malala was shot by the Taliban on her school bus when she was 15 years old and nearly died, but this did not deter her quest for freedom and girls' education. Malala became the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize, and she continues this important work today, traveling around the world to champion education for all children everywhere.

Discussion Questions

- ◆ On the dedication page, the author includes a quote from Malala's father. Read it aloud and ask the students to explain its meaning.
- ◆ When Malala was born, people said, "A girl. . . . What bad luck." What does that tell you about the culture of her country? Did her father share this belief? How do you know?
- ◆ Was Malala's name appropriate for her? Why or why not?
- ◆ What did Malala's father do for a living? How did this affect Malala?
- ◆ In Pakistan, what were women expected to do when they grew up? How did Malala feel about this?
- ◆ Malala's father said, "Malala will be free as a bird!" What did he mean? How did he encourage her?
- ◆ What happened when the "new enemy" (the Taliban) rose to power? How did Malala and her family respond?
- ◆ After Malala was attacked by the Taliban, where was she taken to recover?
- ◆ How did Malala react to being attacked?
- ◆ What character traits would describe Malala? Why?
- ◆ Malala says, "When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful." How does her life exemplify this statement?



Extension Activities

Freedom Fighters. After reading and discussing this book, ask students to research another person who fought for freedom and equality. If this unit occurs during Women's History Month, students should focus on female freedom fighters such as Harriet Tubman, Mary McLeod Bethune, Eleanor Roosevelt, Susan B. Anthony, Indira Gandhi, or Rosa Parks. Have students share their research with the class by creating a poster highlighting the most important aspects of this person's life.

Speak Up! Show students the video of Malala addressing the United Nations Youth Assembly (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3rNhZu3ttIU>). Ask students to record five ideas from

her speech that stand out to them. After viewing the video, have students work in pairs or small groups to share and discuss what they recorded. As an extension, have students write and present their own speeches about the importance of education for all children.

Free-for-All. Hold a debate in class about freedom in America. What does freedom mean? In what ways are we free? Is everyone free? Have students prepare statements to support their ideas, which they then present to the class. Encourage the students to support or refute their classmates' statements with their own beliefs about freedom.