

Little People, BIG DREAMS™

TEACHERS' GUIDE



Malala Yousafzai

Little People, BIG DREAMS™

Written by Maria Isabel Sánchez Vegara

Illustrated by Manal Mirza

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

Malala Yousafzai was born in Pakistan to a family who valued education. When she was 10 years old, a violent group called the Taliban invaded the valley where she lived and said girls could no longer go to school. Malala and her friends didn't agree with this, but they decided to fight back with words instead of violence. The Taliban attacked Malala and her friends one day on their way home from school. Malala made an amazing recovery and continued to fight for her dream that all children get the education they deserve.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS IN THIS UNIT

1. What big dream did Malala dream for herself and all girls and women around the world?
2. What was the name of the violent group that took control of the Swat Valley?
3. How did the Taliban try to stop Malala?
4. Who helped Malala with her dreams?
5. What was the award that Malala was the youngest person ever to receive?

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. On p. 5, we learn that the Taliban banned things that Malala loved like flying kites, listening to music, and taking photographs, and this made her sad. Ask students to share activities they love and would be really sad if someone said they weren't allowed to do anymore.
2. Malala and her friends spoke up about things when they didn't agree with what the Taliban was doing (p. 8). Ask students to identify something they don't agree with and discuss if they've ever

thought of fighting against it. It could be an expectation at home like having to make your bed in the morning, one at school like only getting a 20-minute recess, or a larger issue of which they're aware in the country or the world. Why was Malala justified in speaking up for what she believed in, and how does her situation compare to the examples students came up with?

3. On p. 9, readers learn that Malala used the name of a favorite storybook heroine when she wrote her diary entry for BBC. Explain that this is a pen name (or pseudonym) and have students share what pen name they would choose for themselves. It could be from a book, like Malala chose, or it could be from a favorite TV show, movie, or game. Why was this their choice?

4. Malala received letters from children all over the world after she was attacked. Ask the students why they think she was able to affect so many people who hadn't even met her.

5. Malala decided to stand up for what she believed in, even though she was very afraid of the Taliban. When is a time the students were afraid but chose to be brave instead?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. Malala wanted to prove to everyone that girls can have big dreams too (p. 4). Have the students make a list of dreams they have. These can be short-term or long-term dreams or goals. For those who are able, they can turn their list of dreams into a vision board with pictures and words cut out from magazines that represent their dreams for the future. Have a "Dream Day" for all students to share their dreams with each other and perhaps even invite their families.

2. Malala fought for every child's right to go to school. On p. 8, we can see some posters but we can't tell what they say. Provide poster board and art materials and let the students create their own posters to support Malala's mission.

3. Show the page on which Malala is writing in her diary explaining about her life (p. 9). Provide each student with a page that looks like a diary entry and invite them to write about their day or an important moment in their lives.

4. **Speak Up for Yourself Scenarios:** Work with the school's social worker or guidance counselor if possible to come up with different age-appropriate scenarios in which the students would need to speak up for themselves like Malala spoke up for herself and girls everywhere. Examples could be someone steals a toy from them, a friend gets mad and says something unkind, or a classmate takes their spot in line, etc. Have students role-play, ensuring that an adult is there to facilitate the interaction and keep it positive.

