

From the Director of **WAITING FOR SUPERMAN** and Academy Award® Winner **AN INCONVENIENT TRUTH**

HE NAMED ME **MALALA**

ONE CHILD, ONE TEACHER, ONE BOOK AND ONE PEN
CAN CHANGE THE WORLD.



Parent Discussion Guide

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Adapted from Participant Media and Journeys in Film Discussion Guide

PG-13

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Parent Discussion Guide

He Named Me Malala

He Named Me Malala is a new film that tells the story of Malala Yousafzai, the young Pakistani student who spoke out for girls education and was shot in the head by the Taliban on her way home from school.

Malala survived the assassination attempt, spent many months in recovery and then continued her fight on behalf of all girls denied an education. Malala became the youngest person ever to win the Nobel Peace Prize, when she won the prize last year at 17 years old.

The film provides a starting point for families to discuss injustice, forgiveness, courage, family and the importance of education.

Please use this guide as a resource to help your family discuss the film's themes, foster awareness of issues surrounding girls' education and take action to help girls around the world. There is no right or wrong way to use this guide; every family can find something that relates to their own lives in *He Named Me Malala*.



KNOW BEFORE YOU GO:

The film is rated **PG-13** because it deals with complex and difficult themes and includes some graphic imagery including still shots from the interior of the bus where Malala was shot. For families with younger children (10-12), we recommend discussing Malala's story, what happened to her, and her response with them before viewing the film. You can read Common Sense Media's review of the film [here](#).



Build background knowledge: Malala's story



Born in 1997 in Mingora, Pakistan, Malala is the oldest of three children. Ziauddin, her father and a teacher and founder of a school, was determined to give her a good education - and she loved being in the classroom. Her mother, Tor Pekai, had only one year of formal education as a child. Following her father's example, when religious extremists began to suppress and destroy schools, Malala began to speak in defense of girls' opportunities for education. She was threatened by the Taliban but continued to blog for the BBC, speak in public and give interviews promoting her beliefs.

In 2012, her school bus was ambushed by the Taliban and she was shot in the head; two of her friends were also wounded. She was treated in a military hospital in Peshawar, Pakistan and then in Birmingham, England. Though she was in critical condition and part of her skull had to be replaced, Malala survived. Her family moved to England, where she and her brothers, Kushal and Atal, now attend school. The Malala Fund, established by Malala and Ziauddin, works to empower girls globally through education to achieve their potential and be agents of change in their communities. Malala has received many awards including the Nobel Peace Prize in 2014.

Build background knowledge:

Other key concepts

Pakistan ▶

Much of *He Named Me Malala* takes place in Malala’s home country of Pakistan, a nation of approximately 180 million people. Although Pakistan today is considered an Islamic state, the country has been home to many civilizations over time. Malala’s home was in the Swat Valley, part of the province of the northern province of Khyber Pakhtunkhwa. The area has a strong Buddhist heritage, in addition to its Islamic roots. The Swat Valley is only about a hundred miles northwest of the capital, Islamabad, but remains isolated because of the mountainous terrain that surrounds it. It is often referred to as “the Switzerland of Asia”, because of its snow-covered mountain peaks.

Islam:

Islam is the second largest religion in the world. The religion has five tenets, known as the Five Pillars of Islam. They are: declaration of faith, prayer, giving charity, fasting during the month of Ramadan and Pilgrimage. A follower of Islam is called a Muslim.

What Muslims believe:

<http://www.pbs.org/wgbh/pages/frontline/shows/muslims/etc/what.html>



Pashtun:

An ethnic group of more than 50 million who live in Afghanistan and Pakistan, Pashtuns have long been renowned as determined fighters who fiercely defend their territory. In 1878, the British invaded Afghanistan for the second time, and in 1880, Afghanistan forces defended their homeland in the battle of Maiwand. Many Pashtun women played important roles on the battlefield, caring for the wounded and bringing water and spare weapons. Malalai, the teenage daughter of a shepherd from a nearby village, was among them. When the Afghan fighters’ morale was fading during the battle, Malalai seized a flag and encouraged them, turning the tide of battle. Although she was shot and killed, she was buried with honor and lived on as revered Pashtun folk heroine. Malala’s father named her in honor of Malalai.

Key vocabulary

Familiarity with these terms will help children understand the film and the context surrounding Malala's story.

Taliban: Fundamentalist Islamic organization in Afghanistan and Pakistan that opposed secular education for girls

Maulana Fazlullah (Nicknamed Radio Mulla): One of the leaders of Pakistan's Taliban who uses a radio show to threaten people who are "un-Islamic"

Sharia: Islamic laws governing crime, politics, economics and daily life

Hijab: Veil some Muslim women use to cover their hair when in public



Terrorism: The use of violence or intimidation for political reasons

Coma: A state of prolonged unconsciousness that can be caused by a severe injury or illness

Extremist: A person who believes in (and advocates for) extreme political or religious views



Tanya Maloff

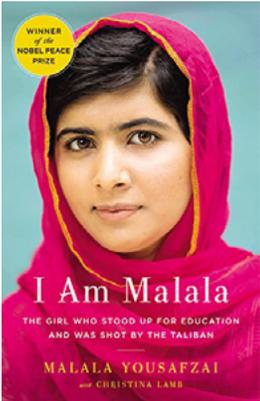


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Refugee: Someone who is forced to leave their country because of fear of persecution because of race, religion, nationality, membership of a social group or political opinion



Understanding the story: Resources



I AM MALALA BY MALALA YOUSAFZAI WITH PATRICIA MCCORMICK

Malala’s bestselling book on her experience can provide excellent background knowledge and understanding of the story before viewing or as be used as an extension to deepen interest in the messages after the film. *I am Malala* comes in a young reader’s version.



THE MALALA FUND,

<http://www.malala.org/>

In 2014, Malala started The Malala Fund to support girls around the world. Check out the website to find an easy-to-read biography and videos including Malala’s Nobel Peace Prize lecture, and information about the Malala Fund’s work.



PRE-VIEWING DISCUSSION QUESTIONS AND ACTIVITIES

Use these open-ended questions and activities to foster conversation and reflection before seeing the film.

1. Find a map of Pakistan and point out the Swat Valley and major cities like the capital Islamabad. Look for pictures (online or in books) of the region and discuss what you know and what questions you might have about the culture and country.
2. Why is schooling important? How would you feel if you were told you could not go to school?
3. Can you think of times in history when groups of people have been excluded from activities because of their religion, gender, race or ethnicity?
4. One of Malala’s most famous quotes is: “One child, one teacher, one pen can change the world.” What do you think that means?



During the movie

“**Look-fors**” can be a helpful tool to absorb the film and guide viewers toward themes and messages for later discussion. Parents can review the post-movie questions that highlight the

similarities and differences between the typical life of a family in the United States and Malala’s family with kids before seeing the film to promote active viewing and engagement.

After the film

You’ve built background knowledge and seen the film - congratulations! Now have a longer conversation with your family about Malala, her work and education around the world. Dinner time is a great opportunity to ask open-ended questions

and ask each family member to respond with their unique perspective. Families can find information about how to facilitate dinner time discussions at The Family Dinner Project in the list of suggested resources below.



**USE THESE OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS TO GAUGE UNDERSTANDING
ELICIT PERSONAL RESPONSES INSPIRED BY THE FILM.**

- ? How is our family like Malala’s?
How are we different?
- ? Describe how Malala is a typical teenager.
How do her relationships with her brothers and parents remind you of your own life?
- ? How are Malala’s schools in the United Kingdom and Pakistan similar or different?
- ? Malala’s dad, Ziauddin Yousafzai, chose his daughter’s name based on the story of a heroine. What do you think about his choice? Are there any stories that have influenced names in our family?

- ? Malala and her father inspire one another in many ways. Who inspires you? Why?
- ? Why do you think the Taliban see education as a threat?
- ? How would you feel if you had to leave your home and friends because it was not safe for you to stay? Can you think of other examples in history where this might have happened? Do you know anyone who has experienced this first-hand?
- ? How do you think the world would change if more girls in countries like Pakistan were able to attend school?
- ? Have you ever been in a situation where standing up for the right thing was difficult or scary? What did you do?
- ? Do you see girls or women being discriminated against in your own life?

➤ **ANOTHER WAY TO PROMPT CONVERSATION IS TO DISCUSS SOME OF MALALA'S INSPIRING QUOTATIONS FROM THE FILM AND WORK.**

Pick a quote and have each member of the family share what it means to them. Rotate through the family so that each individual has the chance to choose a passage to discuss.

"She's not independent or free, because she's not educated."

"When the whole world is silent, even one voice becomes powerful."

"In some parts of the world, students are going to school every day. It's their normal life. But in other parts of the world, we are starving for education...it's like a precious gift. It's like a diamond."



LEARN MORE:

- Malala Yousafzai’s speech to the United Nations:
<https://secure.aworldatschool.org/page/content/the-text-of-malala-yousafzais-speech-at-the-united-nations/>
- Malala’s 2014 Nobel Peace Prize speech:
<http://community.malala.org/malala-nobel-prize-speech-871079750.html>
- 5 things you should know about the Malala Fund:
<http://community.malala.org/5-things-you-should-know-about-the-malala-fund-1223970699.html>
- Malala on the Daily Show with Jon Stewart:
<http://thedailyshow.cc.com/full-episodes/rilcea/june-18--2015---malala-yousafzai>
- Other movies that highlight issues facing girls and young people around the globe and the potential for youth to be agents of change
 - o [Girl Rising](#)
 - o [The Revolutionary Optimists](#)
- Explore TheFamilyDinnerProject.org for ways to facilitate “food, fun and conversation about things that matter.”
- Common Sense Media’s review of the film:
<https://www.common Sense Media.org/movie-reviews/he-named-me-malala>



Take action:

Creating change starts with small actions. Just like Malala stood up, we all have the chance to advocate for tolerance and education for all children and girls around the world.

It starts with a simple question: How can we help? By asking your children what ideas they have to stand up for every girl's right to receive a quality secondary education, they are more apt to feel motivated to take action.



HERE ARE SOME IDEAS FOR GETTING MORE DEEPLY INVOLVED WITH THE MALALA FUND AND ADVOCATING FOR CHANGE FOR CHILDREN AROUND THE GLOBE:

- Raise your voice and sign the [petition](#) demanding world leaders fund, measure and protect education for all girls.
- Spread the word about Malala's life, work and message by posting a picture on Instagram or social media that includes a selfie and a personal response to *He Named Me Malala*. Use the hashtags **#HeNamedMeMalala** and **#withMalala** and tag **@malalafund** on Instagram
- Join Malala's movement to ensure all girls have access to a quality secondary education. Follow along on social media for updates on Malala's work and impact.



www.malala.org/



[instagram.com/malalafund](https://www.instagram.com/malalafund)



www.facebook.com/MalalaFund



www.youtube.com/user/MalalaFund



twitter.com/MalalaFund



- Keep up with Malala’s blog to see how the work of the Malala Fund is having an impact: <http://community.malala.org/>
- Organize your friends or book club if you have one to read books that deal with issues surrounding girls, children and education. Start with *I am Malala* by Malala Yousafzai with Patricia McCormick.
- Read the *Universal Declaration of Human Rights*. Write a story for school (or to send to your local paper) about the declaration and Malala’s work. <http://www.youthforhumanrights.org/what-are-human-rights/universal-declaration-of-human-rights/introduction.html>
- Start a school club focused on education and girls. Invite special guest speakers from girls’ or women’s groups (you could even Skype with representatives from NGO organizations doing work in a country that you are interested in).
- Submit your original artwork raising awareness around girls’ education to the **#withMalala** global online art project at www.withmalala.org.
- Learn ways to take action with with your child. Visit <http://www.malala.org/students> to view the student toolkit.
- Help fundraise to support the Malala Fund and be a champion for education projects in countries like Pakistan, Nigeria, Lebanon, Jordan, Sierra Leone and Kenya. (Babysitting, bake sales, jewelry making, 5k races, and car washes are great ways to get started.)
- Volunteer at a local, national or global charitable organization of your choice that supports empowering girls.



➤ CELEBRATE INTERNATIONAL DAY OF THE GIRL

- International Day of the Girl is on October 11, 2015. Learn more: <http://dayofthegirl.org/>
- Spend the day **#withMalala** by seeing the film October 9-11 when it opens in a theater near you.
- Attend the film with your family, organize a field trip with your class, troop, team or club. Learn how to see the film with a group at <http://www.malala.org/film>
- Girls everywhere, especially those affected by conflict, have the right to receive 12 years of free, safe, quality education. **Sign this [petition](#) demanding world leaders fund, measure and protect education for all girls.**
- Amplify your voice through local media. Write an op-ed or blog post for a local newspaper about why safe and quality secondary education for every girl matters. We'll help you get started with this brief [how-to guide](#).