

Malala Yousafzai

Fact File



Name: Malala Yousafzai

Date of Birth: 12th July 1997

Place of Birth: Mingora, Swat Valley, North Pakistan

Who Is She? A Pakistani activist who gained fame and respect throughout the world for her courageous campaigning for every child's right to education.

Malala's Childhood

Malala was born and raised in the Swat Valley. Her parents named her after Malala of the Maiwand: a courageous woman who helped to protect her village from invasion over 100 years before. Malala's father, Ziauddin Yousafzai, was the Principal of the local girls' school. Her mother, Toor Pekai Yousafzai, took care of the family home. Not every girl in Pakistan went to school but Malala's parents firmly believed in equal rights for boys and girls. Malala has two younger brothers, Khushal and Atal, and her parents wanted to ensure that she had the same education and opportunities as them.

Malala loved going to school yet, at the time in Pakistan, all schools for girls were being ordered to close. After age 11, Malala was unable to go to school like her brothers had.



Malala's Rise to Fame

Malala's father encouraged her to write an anonymous blog to tell the world about the difficult days in the Swat Valley. This was a risky topic for a young girl to speak about at the time so, in order to protect her identity, she wrote using the name Gul Makai.

Malala's Rise to Fame**8th Feb 2009**

I am sad watching my uniform,
school bag and geometry box.

Before long, Malala's blog became very popular and she was even interviewed for a television documentary. As her popularity grew, she went on to win several peace awards and attended a lot of important events. During this time, she would speak out about her views on the unequal treatment of girls in Pakistan and around the world.

Some people did not agree with what Malala had to say; they did not want her views to become well-known. Due to this, Malala was injured as she travelled on a bus home from school. Despite being very ill, Malala made a miraculous recovery and was released from hospital less than three months later. Messages of sympathy and support for Malala flooded in from around the world.

Continuing Activism

Malala was determined to continue speaking out about the right to education for all. Only nine months after her injury, Malala took to the stage at the United Nations (the organisation which aims to ensure world peace and security) on her 16th birthday. "My dreams are the same," she bravely stated. The United Nations named the day, 'Malala Day'.

Malala continues to campaign for equal rights in education. At the age of 17, she was the youngest person in the world to receive the Nobel Peace Prize: an important award given annually to people who do outstanding work to contribute to world peace.

Malala now lives in England with her family and has completed a degree in Philosophy, Politics and Economics at Oxford University. With the help of her father, Malala has started a charity called The Malala Fund, which aims to support girls from around the world to be able to learn and lead.

**Benazir Bhutto**

Malala considers Benazir Bhutto, the first female leader of Pakistan to be her role model. She says her dream is to be a politician like her: a job where she can help to make a difference.



