

DURHAM COUNTY LIBRARY

Discussion Guide

I Am Malala
by
Malala Yousafzai
(Back Bay Books: New York, 2015)

Author:

Malala Yousafzai was born in 1997 in Pakistan. She is a Pakistani school pupil and education activist from the town of Mingora in the Swat District of Pakistan's northwestern Khyber Pakhtunkhwa province. She is known for her education and women's rights activism in the Swat Valley, where the Taliban had at times banned girls from attending school.

[From: Litlovers.com]

Summary:

When the Taliban took control of the Swat Valley in Pakistan, one girl spoke out. Malala Yousafzai refused to be silenced and fought for her right to an education.

On Tuesday, October 9, 2012, when she was fifteen, she almost paid the ultimate price. She was shot in the head at point-blank range while riding the bus home from school, and few expected her to survive.

Instead, Malala's miraculous recovery has taken her on an extraordinary journey from a remote valley in northern Pakistan to the halls of the United Nations in New York. At sixteen, she has become a global symbol of peaceful protest and the youngest nominee ever for the Nobel Peace Prize.

I Am Malala is the remarkable tale of a family uprooted by global terrorism, of the fight for girls' education, of a father who, himself a school owner, championed and encouraged his daughter to write and attend school, and of brave parents who have a fierce love for their daughter in a society that prizes sons.

[From: Litlovers.com]

Questions:

1. Would you have had the bravery that Malala exhibited and continues to exhibit?
2. Talk about the role of Malala's parents, especially her father, Ziauddin. If you were her parents, would you have encouraged her to write and speak out?
3. How does Malala describe the affect of the growing Taliban presence in her region? Talk about the rules they imposed on the citizens in the Swat valley. What was life like?
4. Mala has said that despite the Taliban's restrictions against girls/women, she remains a proud believer. Would you—could you—maintain your faith given those same restrictions?
5. Talk about the reaction of the international community after Malala's shooting. Has the outrage made a difference...has it had any effect?
6. What can be done about female education in the Middle East and places like Pakistan? What are the prospects? Can one girl, despite her worldwide fame, make a difference? Why does the Taliban want to prevent girls from acquiring an education—how do they see the female role?
7. This is as good a time as any to talk about the Taliban's power in the Muslim world. Why does it continue to grow and attract followers...or is it gaining new followers? What attraction does it have for Muslim men? Can it ever be defeated?

[From: Litlovers.com]