

Independent reading: i am malala

Religion



Cultural Connections

Malala Yousafzai is the protagonist, narrator, and author of *I Am Malala*. She is born into a religious Pakistan family in Swat during a time of women oppression. Malala makes a point to write about her happiness and freedom before Taliban took over. Her Pakistan heritage encourages many cultural traditions including dressing conservatively. Women are instructed to show respect by wearing burkas, which covered their face and body. The role of women is to cook and care for their families, " We'd [women] be expected to cook and serve our brothers and fathers.

While boys and men could roam freely about town, my mother and I could not go out without a male relative to accompany us, even if it was a five-year-old boy! This was the tradition". Malala is a smart girl who had correct morals and beliefs. Her two priorities are religion and education. Malala does not agree with Taliban laws, including the emphasis of education only available for men. Malala's father, too, believes that such a thing was wrong. Her father and the holy Quran support her to stick up for what she believed in.

She speaks on behalf of the community and those who were afraid to speak up, " The more interviews I gave, the stronger I felt and more support we received". This courage leads her to win the Nobel Peace Prize. Written in her perspective, Malala uses many of her own experiences throughout the novel. " She [Amoeba] always says, 'I have four brothers, and if I do even the slightest thing wrong they can stop me from going to school". Malala

explains both the history of women oppression and her own personal experiences to depict the horrible conditions in Pakistan.

Vocabulary in Context

Charisma: compelling charm that can inspire devotion in others; " Even today people elk of Mr.. Bout as a man of great charisma". This word attracted me because it is in 100 Words to Make You Sound Smart. It promotes Mr. Bathtub's character. Chapatti: unleavened flattened made from flour and water; " My mother made our usual breakfast of sugary tea, chapattis, and fried egg". This word attracted me because I was unfamiliar with it. It describes the food Mammal's culture eat on a normal day.

Martyr: a person who is killed because of their religious beliefs; " Some of the girls refused, saying that their teachers had taught them that to become a martyr s a glorious thing". This word attracted me because I was unfamiliar with it. It encourages religion as the number one priority in their culture.

Unexamined: Islamic soldiers; " The unexamined will find you wherever you go'. I chose this word because it is an Urdu term. It describes the threat to Mammal's father, telling him to shut down his school.

Blasphemous: profound; " Muslims widely considered it blasphemous and it provoked so much outrage that it seemed people were talking of little else". I chose this word because it reminded me of 'lurid' from 100 Words to Make You Sound Smart. It describes how angry Muslims were about the book published that was considered a parody of the Prophet's life. Burma: a long garment that covers everything from head to toe that Muslim women wear in

public; " Wearing a Burma is like walking inside big fabric shuttlecock with only a grille to see through and on hot days it's like an oven".

This word attracted me because it was surrounded by similes. It describes the clothing women had to wear, supporting the idea that women do not have it easy. Aba: affectionate Urdu term meaning " father"; " Aba, I am confused. ' I told my father". This word attracted me because ABA means father in Hebrew, too. This word describes how Mall was bilingual as sometimes she refers to her father in Urdu.

Barbaric: exceedingly brutal; " If anything the Taliban became even more barbaric". This word attracted me because my brother used to use it frequently in his vocabulary. This word describes how cruel and powerful the Taliban became. Commiserated: express sympathy or pity; " When I was born, people in our village commiserated with my mother and nobody congratulated my father". This word attracted me because I was unfamiliar with it. It describes the tragedy that it was to be a girl at the time.

Autonomous: having self- government; "... We went with the newly created Pakistan but stayed autonomous". This word attracted me because I was unfamiliar with it. It is used to describe the independence once Britain divided from India.

Writers' Reflection

Throughout the novel, despite all of her misfortunes, Mall manages to keep a strong and optimistic attitude. Even in the hospital while she was struggling to survive, Mall does not want to seek revenge on the people that hurt her, " I didn't even think a single bad thought about the man who shot me? I had

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no thoughts of revenge? I just wanted to go back to Swat. I wanted to go home" (282). This quotation shows how Malala never had bad intentions.

She believes that if one takes revenge for wrongdoings done to them, the fighting would go on and on, "There is no time limit" (39). Malala's writing is consistent in that she effectively delivered personal and emotional stories. She uses figurative language including imagery and similes to create a picture in readers' minds to help them further understand her perspective, "Our words were like the eucalyptus blossoms of spring tossed away on the wind". This quotation explains how her voice was not heard right away.

It took time and effort, and so will most things people speak up for. She teaches readers not to give up on what matters to them. She uses a metaphor to describe the relationship between her and her father. "...L was his universe" (246). Together, they worked to get their voices heard. The diction throughout the novel is mostly informal. However, towards the end when she wins the award and meets highly respected officials, her speech becomes more formal, "I will request you all, and I will request that if you can help us in our education, so please help us".

Overall, I enjoyed Yousafzai's story. I think that she shared many important lessons. Reading the book in her perspective opened my eyes and made me grateful to have as much freedom as I do. It amazes me that I am the same age as Malala, for she has accomplished so much in her life. Malala Yousafzai is an inspiration to me and an inspiration to all.