



A Person of Commitment - MALALA YOUSAAF'ZAI



Malala Yousafzai

My Chosen Person of
Commitment

By *****



Who is Malala Yousafzai?

Malala Yousafzai, best known as simply, 'Malala', is a 23 year-old Pakistani activist for female education. She is known widely as a strong human rights advocate and as the youngest recipient of the Nobel Peace Prize.



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Why did I choose Malala?

I chose Malala because I think she is an inspiration to all people, but women and girls in particular.

I didn't want to pick *any* committed person, it had to be a person with beliefs/values that I agree with and can back.

It had to be a person that connected with me. For example, I couldn't have chosen Father Peter McVerry, because, whilst he is a committed religious person with beliefs/values that I would agree with, nothing about him sticks with me, and when doing my CBA, I wanted to feel inspired to research and to learn new things about my chosen person.

And there was Malala. A person I related to, with beliefs/values that I would agree with and a person who I was inspired to research and learn new things about.

This is because Malala is making a positive impact on the world for women and girls just like you and me, who unfortunately are born into patriarchal countries where they have little to no rights.

Malala is a remarkable woman and the world needs more people like her, people who will stand up for their values and what's important to them.

What are Malala's beliefs/values?

Religion

Religion is a strong belief of Malala as she is a firm follower of the faith of Islam.

However, whilst Malala is a devout Muslim, she often clashes with the teachings of the Taliban who are a violent and powerful group of Muslim extremists in her home country. This is because, the Taliban take the words of the Qur'an out of context and believe women should not have access to an education (among other things).

This clearly did not sit right with Malala, as education is one of her main values.

And it was Malala's clashes with the Taliban's beliefs that lead her to get shot on the way home from school.





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What are Malala's beliefs/values?

Human Rights

Malala's values in human rights come hand in hand with her religious faith in Islam. This is because Muslims believe human rights help to create a more equal society.

So as you can imagine, when Malala saw the injustice in her country enforced by the Taliban, she had to do something.

This is because Malala believes education is a human right and that girls have as much right to learn to read and write as boys do.

Girls' Education

Malala has a strong belief in girls' education because she understands how it can change the lives of girls and women and give them the tools to become empowered and independent.

In an op-ed from the Guardian in 2014, Malala wrote... (next slide)



**“Education is the best
weapon we have to fight
poverty, ignorance and
terrorism.”**





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Personal thoughts on Malala so far...

Before I move on to how Malala has lived out her beliefs/values, some of which you already know, I think it is important to give my personal thoughts on Malala and her beliefs/values so far.

First of all, I think Malala shows immense courage in her beliefs/values. This is because, yes- like many, Malala has opinions, but in the society she lived in, to speak out about her beliefs and values, and risk the Taliban, I think that is a hugely brave thing to do.

Next, is the respect I have for Malala for continuing in her faith in Islam, even though it was challenged many times. For example, being shot in the head?

If I was Malala, I would start doubting my faith - but Malala didn't. She remained strong in her religious beliefs and remembered her values and that she was a committed person who would not just give up on her faith.



How has Malala lived out her beliefs/values?

Malala has lived out her beliefs/values in many ways, by:
Co-founding the **Malala Fund** with her father, Ziauddin.

- The Malala Fund is an international, non-profit organization that advocates for girls' education.
- The Malala Fund invests in education programmes to help girls go to school and reach their full potential.
- As of July 2020, the organization has 48 staff and supports 58 advocates working across Afghanistan, Brazil, Ethiopia, India, Lebanon, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey.

Founding **Auxilo Finserve Private Limited**

- **Auxilo Finserve Private Limited** in simple terms, is a private limited company Malala founded to help provide education loans (paying for college, private school, etc.)



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How has Malala lived out her beliefs/values?

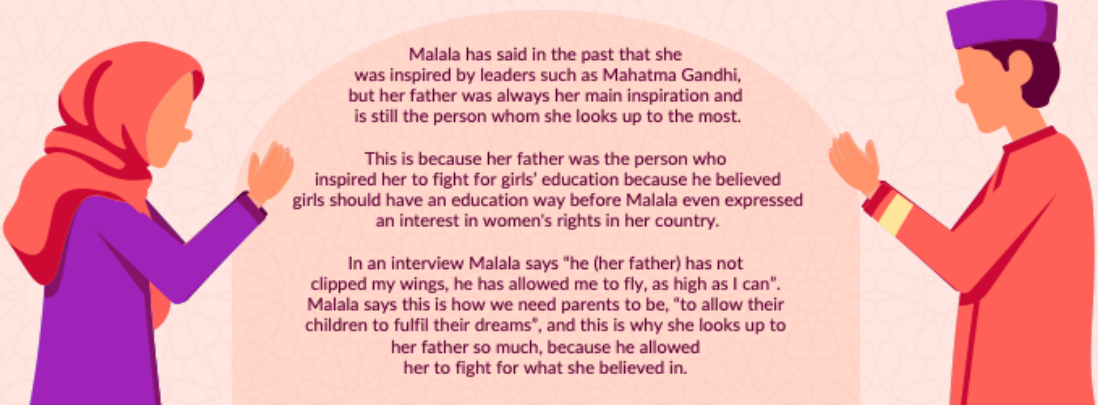
Speaking out against the Taliban, by:

- Writing about life with the Taliban in her personal blog and in newspaper articles.
- Speaking about how they terrorized her village on TV channels and getting statements published by local, national and international newspapers.
- Speaking in front of the public for the rights of children and the rights of girls to get an education.

Standing up to the Taliban, by:

- Organising protests against the ban on education for girls.
- Attending school regardless of the education ban.

Who and what influenced Malala's beliefs?



Malala has said in the past that she was inspired by leaders such as Mahatma Gandhi, but her father was always her main inspiration and is still the person whom she looks up to the most.

This is because her father was the person who inspired her to fight for girls' education because he believed girls should have an education way before Malala even expressed an interest in women's rights in her country.

In an interview Malala says "he (her father) has not clipped my wings, he has allowed me to fly, as high as I can". Malala says this is how we need parents to be, "to allow their children to fulfil their dreams", and this is why she looks up to her father so much, because he allowed her to fight for what she believed in.



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How has Malala made a positive contribution to the world?

Since she was shot by the Taliban in 2012, Malala has made so many positive contributions to the world, which show her pledge of commitment to her beliefs and values.

Here are just some of her many contributions to the world; on a local, national and international level:

- When she took the U.N. by storm with her inspirational speech on girls' and women's education/rights (short extract on next slide).
- When she reminded the world that Islam is not a violent religion and that a group of extremists (the Taliban) does not represent Islam.
- When she spoke up to former president Barack Obama about education and girls' rights.
- When she helped Syrian children to escape their war-torn country.
- When she urged the president of Nigeria to get the girls who were kidnapped from their schools back home and in safe hands.



Short extract from Malala's speech at the U.N.



full version can be found on YouTube here:
https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=QRh_30C8i6Y



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Reflection of CBA

I chose Malala Yousafzai as my chosen person of commitment because she is very committed to living out her beliefs/values through her words, actions and contributions to the world.

I now understand that being committed to all your beliefs/values is not an easy thing and that sometimes our faith is tested, but we must choose to keep going.

I now realise that Malala is an inspiration to all because she shows commitment in every aspect of her life, including with her family, her journey in faith, her beliefs/values, etc.

For me this is important because being committed to something is hard and often we may feel like giving up, but having a role model can sometimes be all you need, a person to look up to, a person to *inspire* you. It made me think about my own personal values/beliefs and what actions I will do in the future to live them out.

I now wonder if Malala feels fulfilled with her contribution to the world or if she will keep campaigning for girls' and women's rights as long as she lives.

I am left with the question, what is Malala doing now and what are her future ambitions?

Doing this research was interesting for me because, whilst I already knew a bit about Malala, I learned where her inspiration came from, why she does what she does and why commitment is such an important value to Malala.

The things I learned from studying my chosen person might influence my own life by encouraging me to speak up when I see injustice and to be committed to what I do and to never give up no matter how hard it gets.

Personal thoughts on my CBA process

Doing this project, I have learned a lot, from facts about Malala's childhood to new words I have discovered through researching.

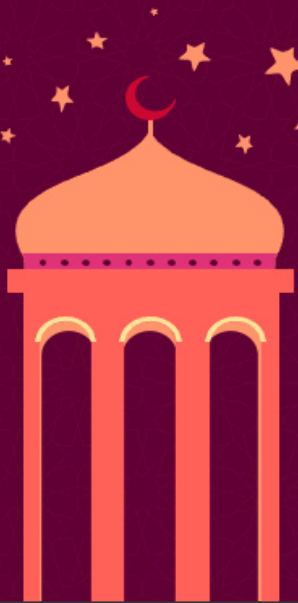
This project, in a way, means something to me, not just because I have to do it as part of my RE course but because – living in a developed country like Ireland, we all take our education for granted and it is something that girls like Malala would die for. All they want is to go to school while we will do anything to get out of it.

And I think this contrast is very interesting and from hearing Malala's fight for her own education, I now have a new appreciation for mine.





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**“When the whole world is silent,
even one voice becomes
powerful.”**

*-Malala Yousafzai, I Am Malala: How One Girl Stood Up for
Education and Changed the World*



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TEACHER ANNOTATIONS USING THE FEATURES OF QUALITY

The annotations capture observations by the teacher, using the features of quality, with a view to establishing the level of achievement this work reflects. The annotations and judgments were confirmed by a Quality Assurance group, consisting of practising teachers and representatives of the NCCA, the Inspectorate, the State Exams Commission and the Junior Cycle for Teachers support service.

TEACHER ANNOTATIONS

Feature of Quality 1 The report displays a good understanding of the task and some very good research. The research is comprehensive in its scope when it deals with detail about Malala's life and values and her work as an advocate of the right to education for girls. There is less research evidence evident in regard to Malala's Islamic faith which is mentioned as a source of her values, but not fully explored. Also, it would have been helpful if the sources of evidence/research that informed this piece of work were explicitly named (either threaded throughout the report or listed at the end).

Feature of Quality 2 The report focuses on Malala's values of equality, human rights and education and identifies the different sources of these values in Malala's life. Her father is acknowledged as a particularly influential source for these values with her Islamic faith identified as another key influence. While the report states 'Malala's values in human rights go hand in hand with her religious faith in Islam' this is not explained or probed further. It would have enhanced this report to explore this further by naming the core values or beliefs of Islam that correspond to Malala's values and offering some ideas for how a modern reading of the Qur'an might support Malala's commitment to justice and equality (e.g. Qur'anic instruction not to harm oneself or others, that a person shows belief in Allah by love of his brother/sister).

There are clear and convincing examples of different ways that Malala lives out her values and beliefs. There is also clear evidence of how she made a positive difference in the world and this is presented in examples that are both wide ranging and specific. As mentioned above, it would have enhanced the report if all this could have been more clearly linked to her religious values and beliefs.

Feature of Quality 3 The student's personal voice is strong in this report, evidenced in the personal reflections threaded throughout and the report concludes with extended insightful reflection on what the student has learned and what it means for them. So overall the reflections are very good for a student at this stage of their learning.

OVERALL JUDGEMENT:



Above Expectations