

# OUR RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION



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## Lesson Summary

In this session the group will consider the importance of being able to access education, and look at the ways that different young people, around the world have tried to ensure education access was expanded to cover everyone. The case study focuses on the the work of Malala Yousafzai.

## Learning Objectives

- To think about the value of education, and the different important ways it can affect us.
- To learn about the different groups of people who have been denied an access to education,
- To find out about Malala Yousafzai, her life, and her work to promote girls and women's access to education.

### United Nations Sustainable Development Links

- Quality Education
- Gender Equality

### Curriculum Links

- English
- Personal Social and Health Education
- Citizenship

### British Council Core Skills

- Critical Thinking and Problem Solving
- Student Leadership
- Collaboration and Communication
- Citizenship

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## Activity 1: Malala Yousafzai

**Requires:** Slides 2-9, Worksheet source 1

**Preparation:** Ensure that you have enough copies of Source 1 printed out for the group.

- Run through slides 2-8 with your group.
- Ask students to get into pairs, read the quotes from Malala in source 1 from the worksheet, and then ask them to answer the questions on slide 9 with their partner.
- Draw the whole group back together, and pose the questions to individual pairs, asking them to share their answers with the class. Ensure that you give space for other people to respond and put forward their views.

*Slide 9 Questions for discussion:*

1. What kind of person does Malala seem to you? Why do you think that?
2. Why does Malala believe that education is so important?
3. What lessons can we learn from Malala's story that we can use in our own lives?
4. Why do you think Malala has been so inspiring for so many people?

## Partner School Activities

If you are working with a partner school you could:

- Share ideas and thoughts from your discussions or have a shared debate on an online platform.



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## Source 1

*Quotes from – I Am Malala: The Girl Who Stood Up for Education and Was Shot by the Taliban*

"Let us pick up our books and our pens," I said. "They are our most powerful weapons. One child, one teacher, one book and one pen can change the world"

"The Taliban could take our pens and books, but they couldn't stop our minds from thinking."

"Education had been a great gift for [my father]. He believed that lack of education was the root of all of Pakistan's problems. Ignorance allowed politicians to fool people and bad administrators to be re-elected. He believed schooling should be available for all, rich and poor, boys and girls."

"I don't want revenge on the Taliban, I want education for sons and daughters of the Taliban."

"We want to be free to go to school or to go to work. Nowhere is it written in the Quran that a woman should be dependent on a man. The word has not come down from the heavens to tell us that every woman should listen to a man"



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## Activity 2: Discussion exercise

*No preparation required in advance*

- Ask students to imagine that the government has just passed a law which restricts access to education. Inform them that under this law, which is meant to save the government money, schools will not be open to everyone, and instead will only be open to young people who cannot afford to pay for private schooling. This will mean that all students will be means-tested based on what their parents earn. Ask them whether they think this law would be fair or not, and to justify their answers.
- Try to steer the conversation towards why it would be unfair to have such an education policy- ask the students what education is for and what it gives them. Try to highlight the following factors:

### **Education**

- Helps individuals understand the world around them
  - Provides the opportunity for access to better jobs and increases students' earning power
  - Helps us engage in day-to-day activities- reading food labels while shopping, or paying bills for example.
  - Allows young people to form friendships/ relationships with people their own age
  - Educated people are more able to engage in politics and civil society, giving them power
  - Education can spark passions and interests which are valuable in and of themselves- literature, art, drama, sports, etc
- Follow this up by asking students what would happen if only some people (for example rich people, men, racially-privileged groups) had access to education while the rest of the population did not.



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## Activity 2: Discussion exercise Cont.

- Try to highlight the following...
  - Only certain groups would get access to better jobs- meaning there would be wealth and social inequality
  - There might be reduced numbers of people entering trades like engineering, medicine, and law, which would mean day-to-day life would be more difficult for everyone.
  - Only certain groups would have access to political positions- meaning that they might make decisions that only benefit the group that they came from, and lead to worse treatment for others eg. women, working-class people, people of colour.
  - Some groups of people might feel more isolated and alone, which might have negative impacts for their mental health.
- Finally, ask students what they could do if such a law was in place. What would they do to try to ensure that more people had access to education? During/after the discussion, point out that young people have been involved in trying to broaden access to education in lots of different ways.
- Some have set up their own schools and universities which are free or cheap to attend, and have got funds for these from trade unions, political groups, and charities.
- Some have tried to get the schools/universities that they attend to offer free courses for people who would not be able to attend otherwise
- Some have tried to change government policies, to ensure that there are more schools, and that no one is prevented from going to school because of their gender, religion, race, or class.



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## Activity 3: Education and Growth

**Requires:** Worksheet Activity 'Education and Growth'

**Preparation:** Print out enough copies of the worksheet activity for your students

- Ask students to split into pairs, and to have a look at 'Activity: Education and Growth' on the front of the worksheet.
- Once they have picked a country and discussed why they would choose it, ask the group as a whole to share their answers.
- Ask the following question to the entire class. What can this tell us about the importance of education for a society/country?
- Try to draw out the importance of education in (i) developing important skillsets amongst the general population, (ii) enabling communication and exchange between societies and (iii) attracting investment and enabling growth



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## Activity: 'Education and Growth'

You run a company which makes, designs, and programs smartphones. You have decided that you should expand your business to another country and have asked your team to do some research about where would be best.

They have come back to you with the following information about **Country A** and **Country B**.

Which country would you pick?

Why do you think this country would be better suited to your business?

	Country A	Country B
School is compulsory for:	5-14 year olds	5-18 year olds
Compulsory subjects:	English, Maths, Science	English, Maths, Science, 1 Foreign Language, Computing
Percentage of young people attending university:	30%	40%
Young people receive financial help to attend university?	No	Yes

## Partner School Activities:

If you are working with a partner school

- You could share ideas and thoughts from your discussions or have a shared debate on an online platform.





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