

# MALALA AND WOMEN'S LEADERSHIP\*



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**DEEP IN MY HEART I HOPED TO REACH EVERY CHILD**  
*who could take courage from my words and stand up for his or her rights.*

—MALALA YOUSAFZAI

## BACKGROUND

Leadership is a complex process that involves the engagement of a community working toward a shared goal, vision, or interest. The concept of leadership is conditioned by cultural, religious, economic, political, and social conditions, and it is informed by historical and contemporary stories. Successful leadership traits include: vision, self-knowledge, critical thinking, problem-solving capacity, communication skills, personal integrity, and responsibility.

Malala is a living embodiment of these leadership qualities. Her work engaging her community—both in Swat Valley and on a global scale—to fight for girls' education is a demonstration of her power to lead and influence. Malala's message has become an important catalyst for inspiring global recognition of the importance of educating women.

## ACTIVITY

The purpose of this activity is to demonstrate the power of other female leaders like Malala. What makes a good leader effective is not her ability to stand before large groups of people and order them around. It is her ability to speak up for the rights of others and inspire them to use their own voice to create change, even in the face of those who would rather they not speak at all. Because Malala has stood up for girls' education, many others around the world have begun to use their own voice to fight for the same right.

First, watch the following video. Take note of the people who speak in front of the camera. Are they all women? Are they old or young?

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**PAKISTANI GIRLS ARE JUST LIKE OTHER GIRLS FROM AROUND THE WORLD**  
*—we like singing, skipping, and beautiful flowers.*

—HUMAIRA, “THE OTHER MALALAS”

\*Adapted from resource guide material written by Mary Buckley

 **WATCH:**

**“THE OTHER MALALAS: MEET GIRLS WHO ARE FIGHTING FOR THEIR RIGHT TO AN EDUCATION”**

[https://youtu.be/GluooOH\\_EnE](https://youtu.be/GluooOH_EnE)

Next, discuss: Get in a circle or break off into pairs to talk about what you saw in the video. You don't have to go through each question, but try to pick one or two that stand out to you and do a deeper dive. If you split off into pairs, meet back together as a group at the end and report back on what you and your partner discussed.

1. Discuss the situations of the other girls portrayed in this video. Compare and contrast their experiences with Malala's.
2. What leadership qualities do the different girls exemplify?
3. Why do you think this video was made? Who was the target audience and how does that affect its message?
4. What was your reaction to what Mohammed Irfan said about his wife, Rehana, going to school after being married? Was this message inspiring? Why or why not?
5. How do you feel about your own education? Are your feelings similar or different than those of the girls in the video? Do you feel differently about your education after watching the video?

**TAKE IT FURTHER!**

Part of becoming a good leader is understanding the qualities that both good and bad leaders possess. With this activity, divide up into pairs and together brainstorm the top three qualities of a good leader and the top three qualities of a bad leader. Write each of them down on post-it notes and have the club stick these post-its on opposite sides of the wall. Once every pair has completed the task, nominate a volunteer to read each quality. As a full group, you must try to rank the qualities from best to worst to create one long line. At the same time, come up with examples or case studies that justify your final rank and order.

**ADDITIONAL RESOURCES**

 **WATCH:**

**“ZIAUDDIN YOUSAFZAI: MY DAUGHTER, MALALA”**

[http://www.ted.com/talks/ziauddin\\_yousafzai\\_my\\_daughter\\_malala](http://www.ted.com/talks/ziauddin_yousafzai_my_daughter_malala)

Pakistani educator Ziauddin Yousafzai (and father of Malala) reminds the world of a simple truth that many don't want to hear: Women and men deserve equal opportunities for education, autonomy, and independent identity. He tells stories from his own life and the life of his daughter, Malala. “Why is my daughter so strong?” Yousafzai asks. “Because I didn't clip her wings.”

**Discuss:**

1. Think about the importance of involving men in the fight for gender equality. What are some challenges you perceive in engaging men and boys? What do you see as effective ways to include them in discussions of gender equality?
2. How has Malala's father inspired her to fight for education and played the part of a role model in her life?