**Article of the Week #5**

**Directions:**

1. **Show evidence of a close reading (highlighting key points and making notes in the margins – can be questions, thoughts, confusion, etc.)**
2. **Answer the question at the bottom of the article in paragraph form.**

# Taliban Gun Down Girl Who Spoke Up for Rights (excerpt)

###### By [DECLAN WALSH](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/w/declan_walsh/index.html) Published: October 9, 2012

KARACHI, Pakistan — At the age of 11, Malala Yousafzai took on the [Taliban](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/organizations/t/taliban/index.html?inline=nyt-org) by giving voice to her dreams. As turbaned fighters swept through her town in northwestern Pakistan in 2009, the tiny schoolgirl spoke out about her passion for education — she wanted to become a doctor, she said — and became a symbol of defiance against Taliban subjugation.

On Tuesday, masked Taliban gunmen answered Ms. Yousafzai’s courage with bullets, singling out the 14-year-old on a bus filled with terrified schoolchildren, then shooting her in the head and neck. Two other girls were also wounded in the attack. All three survived, but late on Tuesday doctors said that Ms. Yousafzai was in critical condition at a hospital in Peshawar, with a bullet possibly lodged close to her brain.

A Taliban spokesman, Ehsanullah Ehsan, confirmed by phone that Ms. Yousafzai had been the target, calling her crusade for education rights an “obscenity.”

“She has become a symbol of Western culture in the area; she was openly propagating it,” Mr. Ehsan said, adding that if she survived, the militants would certainly try to kill her again. “Let this be a lesson.”

The Taliban’s ability to attack Pakistan’s major cities has waned in the past year. But in rural areas along the Afghan border, the militants have intensified their campaign to silence critics and impose their will.

That Ms. Yousafzai’s voice could be deemed a threat to the Taliban — that they could see a schoolgirl’s death as desirable and justifiable — was seen as evidence of both the militants’ brutality and her courage.

“She symbolizes the brave girls of [Swat](http://topics.nytimes.com/top/news/international/countriesandterritories/pakistan/northwest-pakistan/swat_valley/index.html?inline=nyt-geo),” said Samar Minallah, a documentary filmmaker who has worked among Pashtun women. “She knew her voice was important, so she spoke up for the rights of children. Even adults didn’t have a vision like hers.”

Ms. Yousafzai came to public attention in 2009 as the Pakistani Taliban swept through Swat, a picturesque valley once famed for its music and tolerance and as a honeymoon destination.

Her father ran one of the last schools to defy Taliban orders to end female education. As an 11-year-old, Malala — named after a mythic female figure in Pashtun culture — wrote an anonymous blog documenting her experiences for the BBC. Later, she was the focus of [documentaries by The New York Times](http://video.nytimes.com/video/2012/10/09/world/asia/100000001835296/class-dismissed.html) and other media outlets.

“I had a terrible dream yesterday with military helicopters and the Taliban,” she wrote in one post titled “I Am Afraid.”

The school was eventually forced to close, and Ms. Yousafzai was forced to flee to Abbottabad, the town where Osama bin Laden was killed last year. Months later, in summer 2009, the Pakistani Army launched a sweeping operation against the Taliban that uprooted an estimated 1.2 million Swat residents.

The Taliban were sent packing, or so it seemed, as fighters and their commanders fled into neighboring districts of Afghanistan. An uneasy peace, enforced by a large military presence, settled over the valley.

Ms. Yousafzai grew in prominence, becoming a powerful voice for the rights of children. In 2011, she was nominated for the International Children’s Peace Prize. Later, Yousaf Raza Gilani, the prime minister at the time, awarded her Pakistan’s first National Youth Peace Prize.

Mature beyond her years, she recently changed her career aspiration to politics, friends said. In recent months, she led a delegation of children’s rights activists, sponsored by Unicef, that made presentations to provincial politicians in Peshawar.

“We found her to be very bold, and it inspired every one of us,” said another student in the group, Fatima Aziz, 15.

Ms. Minallah, the documentary maker, said, “She had this vision, big dreams, that she was going to come into politics and bring about change.”

That such a figure of wide-eyed optimism and courage could be silenced by Taliban violence was a fresh blow for Pakistan’s beleaguered progressives, who seethed with frustration and anger on Tuesday. “Come on, brothers, be REAL MEN. Kill a school girl,” one media commentator, Nadeem F. Paracha, said in an acerbic Twitter post.

In Parliament, Prime Minister Raja Pervez Ashraf urged his countrymen to battle the mind-set behind such attacks. “She is our daughter,” he said.

# 5 things to know about Malala Yousafzai, youngest Nobel Peace Prize winner ever

By Matthew T. Hall Oct. 10, 2014 – Excerpt from the *San Diego Union-Tribune*

Seventeen-year-old Pakistani Malala Yousafzai became the youngest person ever to win the Nobel Peace Prize Friday.

A teenage advocate for education with a brave and buoyant story to tell, Yousafzai shares [this year's honor](http://www.utsandiego.com/news/2014/oct/10/peace-prize-for-childrens-rights-met-with-praise/) with Kailash Satyarthi, who has campaigned against child trafficking and child labor in India.

Here are five things you should know about Malala Yousafzai.

1. Malala [blogged for the BBC](http://news.bbc.co.uk/2/hi/south_asia/7834402.stm) in 2009 as she defied a Taliban edict that banned girls from going to school. She was 11.

*“I had a terrible dream yesterday with military helicopters and the Taleban. I have had such dreams since the launch of the military operation in Swat. My mother made me breakfast and I went off to school. I was afraid going to school because the Taleban had issued an edict banning all girls from attending schools.Only 11 students attended the class out of 27. The number decreased because of Taleban's edict. My three friends have shifted to Peshawar, Lahore and Rawalpindi with their families after this edict. On my way from school to home I heard a man saying 'I will kill you'. I hastened my pace and after a while I looked back if the man was still coming behind me. But to my utter relief he was talking on his mobile and must have been threatening someone else over the phone.”*

1. She was targeted and shot in the head and neck almost exactly two years ago following [all the publicity](http://www.nytimes.com/2013/10/08/world/asia/the-making-of-Malala.html?smid=tw-nytimes) she received for opposing that Taliban campaign to close schools.

[Per a CNN report from the time](http://www.cnn.com/2012/10/15/world/malala-profile/index.html):

*She was coming home from school in a van with other schoolchildren when Taliban assassins stopped the vehicle, climbed on and demanded that the children identify her. Terrified, the children did it and the men fired, also wounding two other girls.*

*"We do not tolerate people like Malala speaking against us," a Taliban spokesman later said, as Malala, in a Pakistani hospital, breathed with the help of a ventilator.*

*The Taliban would come for her again if she managed to survive, the spokesman threatened.*

1. She was [the runner-up](http://poy.time.com/2012/12/19/times-person-of-the-year-issue-cover-gallery/slide/runner-up-malala-yousafzai/) for Time magazine’s 2012 Person of the Year. She lost to President Barack Obama, who also has the 2009 Nobel Peace Prize to his credit.
2. She is by far the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. That distinction used to belong to [Tawakkol Karman](http://www.nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/2011/karman-facts.html), an activist in Yemen who was 32 when she shared the award with two other women in 2011. The average age of winners the year they won? 62.
3. She so impressed Jon Stewart last year, hours before [she won the Sakharov Prize, Europe's top human-rights award](http://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-24475305), that The Daily Show host actually asked the girl if her father would be mad if he adopted her.

**Answer ONE of the following response questions (answer in paragraph form and staple to this sheet):**

1. **Discuss the importance of standing up for those who are oppressed. Comment on a time when you or someone you know stood up for the underdog.**
2. **As a fellow teen, discuss how Malala’s actions can inspire other teenagers. How can you stand up for those who are oppressed (in your community, in your school, or in other parts of the world)?**

*Videos to use for springboard:*

*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vrWttENgWNE*

<http://www.bbc.com/news/magazine-24379018>