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## Who Is Malala?

### **I. Identify two VIVID DETAILS Malala includes in her memoir. How do these details enrich Yousafzai's story?**

Just before the shooting, Malala saw a man cutting the heads off of chickens in order to cook them, but the detail that sticks with her most is the 'Chop, Chop Chop, Drip, Drip, Drip' of the remains of the chickens (Malala, p. 1734). Even after the shooting occurs and Malala is shot, she recounts the actual bullets being shot, but more so the chickens being cut up for consumption. If we look closer at the shooting, Malala further describes the scene around and in front of the army checkpoint where the shooting occurred, saying 'the air smelled of diesel, bread, and kebab mixed with the stink from the stream where people still dumped their rubbish' (Malala, p. 1735) giving us the idea that the area of Pakistan Malala resided was somewhat dirty, or impoverished, maybe as a result of Pakistan's struggle against the Taliban.

### **II. What purpose does the TITLE serve? How is it appropriate for this memoir?**

The title serves a couple of different purposes; the more obvious one, once you've read the memoir, is one of the terrorists asking 'Who is Malala?' (Malala, p. 1735) before promptly firing

upon the van. This would give the title a sense of foreshadowing to a traumatic event, I don't know about you, but I wouldn't want to get shot either. However, the title's name also serves a secondary purpose; also asking the question of who Malala is? Who does she want to be, or where does she see her place in the world?

### **III. What is Yousafzai's STANCE in this essay? Does her stance align with her PURPOSE? Why or why not?**

While Malala doesn't take a stance that would be considered controversial in the United States, in most Muslim countries, women going to school is considered extremely controversial. Of course, Malala attending school flies in the face of what traditional Muslims would prefer women to do; just cook and clean. So, Malala would be rebellious without a doubt, but deciphering her purpose from the text alone can be difficult without the added context of regional affairs. With that context though, Malala's purpose was to attempt to grant other Muslim women an education, campaigning for it. I would say that her stance does align with her purpose, rebelling against the preexisting order established in the region for a better future for Muslim women.

**IV. Malala spends a lot of time building up to the main event of her story - the moment she is shot by the Taliban. Why do you think she does this? Is this approach effective? Why or why not?**

Adding background and depth to any story, even a memoir, is important in order to establish the set piece a story takes place in, the dangers, consequences, and potential opportunities in this area. Malala herself established one of these dangers, specifically for women, in Pakistan, by saying; 'Sometimes I thought I heard footsteps behind me or imagined figures slipping into the shadows' (Malala, p. 1732), giving the notion that the area Malala lives in isn't exactly the safest. This is also supported by the mention of the constant threat of the Taliban in the area, '...I was afraid that Taliban with guns would leap out at me...' (Malala, p. 1732). This is something that was particularly important to establish, as the Taliban do end up playing a key role in Malala's story down the line, being responsible for shooting her.

### **Works Cited:**

Yousafzai, Malala. "Who is Malala?" *The Norton Field Guide to Writing with Readings and Handbook*, 6th ed., pp. 1732-1735