Abridged

Malala Yousafzai: The Bravest Girl in the World October 5, 2013

In this exclusive excerpt from her autobiography, I Am Malala, young activist Malala Yousafzai recounts the day she was shot by the Taliban.

In a country that's seen more than its share of violence, the fate of one teenager might not seem to count for much. But somehow Malala Yousafzai of Pakistan has managed to become an international inspiration. She was only 11 when she took on the Taliban, demanding that girls be given full access to school. Her campaign led to a blog for the BBC, a New York Times documentary (watch it below), and a Pakistani peace prize. But all that was only a prelude to even more extraordinary events. Last October, Taliban assassins attacked Malala, then 15, on her way home from school, shooting her in the head. Here, Malala describes that day and offers her hopes for the future.

Tuesday, Oct. 9, 2012, wasn't the best of days to start with, as it was the middle of exams—though as a bookish girl I didn't mind them as much as some of my classmates did. That morning we arrived in the narrow mud lane off Haji Baba Road in our usual procession of brightly painted rickshaws sputtering diesel fumes, each one crammed with five or six girls. Since the time of the Taliban, our school has had no sign and the ornamented brass door in a white wall gives no hint of what lies beyond.

For us girls, that doorway was like a magical entrance to our own special world. As we skipped through, we cast off our head scarves and ran helter-skelter up the steps. At the top of the steps was an open courtyard with doors to all the classrooms. We dumped our backpacks in our rooms, then gathered for assembly under the sky, our backs to the mountains.

When our bus was called, we ran down the school steps. The bus was actually a white Toyota truck with three parallel benches. It was cramped with 20 girls and three teachers. I was sitting on the left between Moniba and a girl named Shazia Ramzan, all of us holding our exam folders to our chests.

Inside the bus it was hot and sticky. In the back, where we sat, there were no windows, just plastic sheeting, which was too yellowed to see through. All we could see out the back was a little stamp of open sky and glimpses of the sun, a yellow orb floating in the dust that streamed over everything.

Then we suddenly stopped. A young bearded man had stepped into the road. "Is this the Khushal School bus?" he asked our driver. Usman Bhai Jan thought this was a stupid question, as the name was painted on the side. "Yes," he said.

"I need information about some children," said the man. "You should go to the office," said Usman Bhai Jan. As he was speaking, another young man approached the back of the van.

The man was wearing a peaked cap and had a handkerchief over his nose and mouth. Then he swung himself onto the tailboard and leaned in over us. "Who is Malala?" he demanded.

No one said anything, but several of the girls looked at me. I was the only girl with my face uncovered. That's when he lifted up a black pistol. Some of the girls screamed. Moniba tells me I squeezed her hand.

My friends say he fired three shots. The first went through my left eye socket and out under my left shoulder. I slumped forward onto Moniba, blood coming from my left ear, so the other two bullets hit the girls next to me. One bullet went into Shazia's left hand. The third went through her left shoulder and into the upper right arm of Kainat Riaz.

My friends later told me the gunman's hand was shaking as he fired.

In the year since that fateful day, Malala has undergone a recovery that is nothing short of miraculous. The bullet narrowly missed her brain, and doctors at Queen Elizabeth Hospital in Birmingham, England, where she was brought in a medically induced coma six days after the attack, marveled that she was able to stand within a week of her arrival. Malala underwent multiple surgeries and spent nearly three months in the hospital (which specializes in treating wounded soldiers), though mercifully it was found she had suffered no major permanent neurological damage. The ordeal did, however, solidify her will: "It feels like this life is not my life. It's a second life. People have prayed to God to spare me and I was spared for a reason—to use my life for helping people."

1. Write an example of when each of the three appeals is used:
    a. ethos (what about the author's background and evidence builds your trust?)

    b. pathos (what words, support, evidence make appeal to your emotions and how?)

    c. logos (what evidence, logical explanations, facts, statistics and reasoning are used?)

2. Who is the audience? (Name particular groups this is directed towards)

3. What is the tone of the speaker? Give evidence. From _____ to _____ to _____See tone lists

4. What is the purpose of the speech? Why? To inform, educate, persuade, entertain, etc. What does the author want the audience to think and do with this information?

5. What is the main claim / argument of the speaker?

6. What are the main supports for the speaker's claim? (List her points)

7. What type of evidence does Malalar use? (What does she use to support her point?)

8. Explain Mala's persona (character) based on what you have seen and read. What real or fictional person could you compare to Malala? Explain how they are similar.