

'The Malala of Syria'

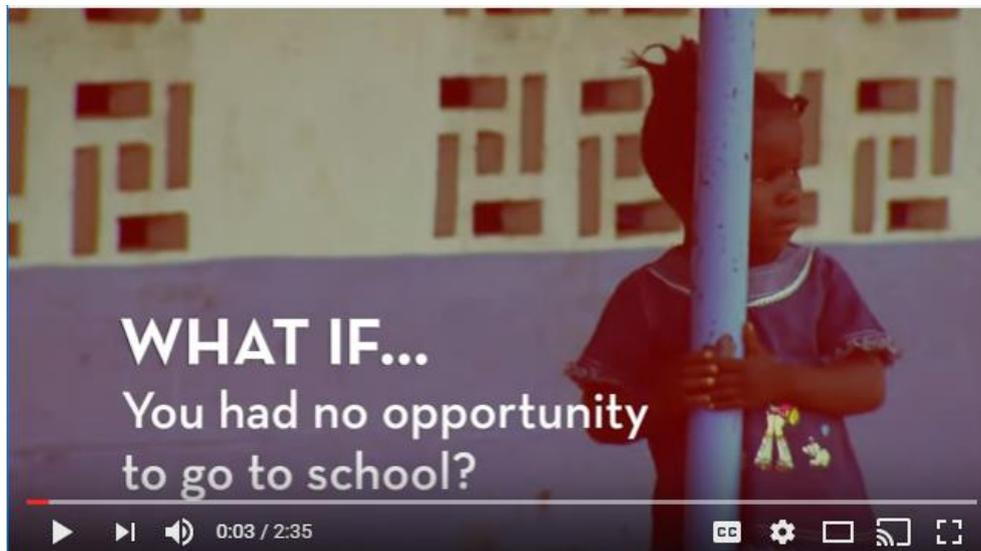
1 LEAD IN Read the following statistics. Do any of them surprise or shock you? Discuss.

More than 62 million girls of primary and lower secondary age around the world are not in school.

Recent estimates show that one-third of girls in the developing world are married before age 18

Evidence shows that the return to a year of secondary education for girls correlates to a 25 per cent increase in wages later in life.

2 VIDEO Watch the video and make notes in the table.



Reasons why girls don't go to school	Benefits of girls staying in school

3 DISCUSSION In your opinion, what can be done to make sure that more (or all) girls go to school? What would be the impact on the world if they did?



4 READING Read the article. Why is Muzoon Almellehan sometimes called ‘the Malala of Syria’?**We are the future**

‘We are the future’ says 18 year old Muzoon Allmellehan, who is passionate about education for young people. According to the charity Save the Children, at least 3.5 million refugee children around the world are currently excluded from the education system, and Muzoon recognises that without an education their future does not look very positive.

In 2014 Muzoon was living in her home town of D’araa, Syria, but her life became more and more difficult and dangerous, as conflict broke out in the country. Eventually Muzoon and her family were forced to flee Syria because of the war. Muzoon was miserable because, she says, ‘I thought I may not be able to continue my education, that I might lose my future forever.’

When they left Syria the family were told to bring only the most essential things, such as shoes, clothes and blankets. When they unpacked in the refugee camp, in Jordan, Muzoon’s father, Rakan, realised why his daughter’s bag was so heavy- it was full of books.

Every day Muzoon would go round the refugee camp and talk to children and parents, persuading them to go to school. She explained that, no matter how hopeless their situation seemed, they would need education to build a better future. Early marriages are number 1 reason girls stop going to school, but without education, those girls are completely reliant on their, often much older, husbands.

Her work came to the attention of the news TV channel, CNN, and she was called ‘the Syrian Malala’, after the famous young Pakistani activist who stood up for girls’ education and was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

Eventually the Almellehans were re-located to Newcastle, in the North of England. Muzoon could not believe how cold it was! Within a few weeks she and her siblings had been given places at a local comprehensive school. Malala, who now also lives in the U.K., came to Newcastle to welcome her. Now these two resourceful girls plan to work together on a global campaign to encourage girls’ education, called ‘Yes all girls’. Education is a basic human right, but there are currently over 130 million girls who are not enrolled in school.

Muzoon plans to get a degree and train as a journalist. She is hopeful that if doctors, engineers, lawyers and journalists return in the future that Syria can be rebuilt.

5 Read the article again. Choose the best answer according to the text. Only ONE answer is possible.

- 1 More than three million children are
- A currently refugees or migrants
 - B not in education at the moment
 - C passionate about their education
 - D being forced to return to their own countries

- 2 For Muzoon, the most important things to bring with her when she left her homeland were
- A food and drink
 - B shoes and clothes
 - C blankets
 - D books

3 Muzoon was called the Syrian Malala because she
A had also been awarded the Nobel Peace Prize
B was also campaigning for girls' education
C also wanted to return to her homeland one day
D was also relocated to a city in the UK

4 Malala and Muzoon both believe that
A being a journalist is an extremely important job
B it is vital that educated people return to Syria
C all girls should have the right to education
D the world is becoming a more dangerous place

6 VOCABULARY Find three words or phrases in the text with the following meanings.

- 1 leave a place very quickly because you are afraid of danger
- 2 to support or defend somebody or something
- 3 brothers or sisters

7 WRITING Use what you have learnt to write a short essay on the following topic.

Female education is important for the development of a nation. Discuss



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Key

2

Reasons why girls don't go to school	Benefits of girls staying in school
Having to pay school fees Having to buy a uniform Distance from school and lack of safe transportation Attitudes and beliefs	Delay marriage Their children will be born later and be healthier Their wages will increase.

4

Malala is also an activist on behalf of girls' education.

5

1 B

2 D

3 B

4 C

6

1 flee 2 stand up for 3 siblings