

Malala Yousafzai

Who is Malala?

Malala is a young Pakistani Human Rights Activist who fights for the rights of girls and women to receive an education. She risked her life for the cause and has changed history.

Malala's Home and Family

Malala was born on 12 July 1997, in Mingora, Khyber Pakhtunkhwa, Pakistan. She grew up with her two younger brothers and her mother and father, and she practises the religion of Islam.

Losing the Right to Go to School

Many Pakistani girls did not attend school. However, Malala's father was a teacher who ran a school for girls, which Malala attended. She loved school and had big dreams of becoming a teacher, a doctor or a politician. When the Taliban (a fundamentalist religious movement from Pashtun) began to take control of the area where Malala lived, they demanded that all girls' schools be shut down. Women were no longer allowed to vote or to have jobs. All women and girls were to stay home, and if they went out, they had to wear a burqa (a garment that covers the head, face and body) and be accompanied by a man.

Diary of a Pakistani Schoolgirl

In 2009, Malala began to write a blog about the destruction and closure of more than 100 girls' schools in Pakistan. She became famous for writing her blog, and she began speaking publicly against the Taliban. Despite the Taliban threatening to kill her, she bravely continued fighting for the rights of girls and women to receive an education in Pakistan.



The Most Courageous Voice

In 2012, Malala was on her school bus when a masked gunman got onto the bus and asked, "Who is Malala?" He said he would shoot everyone on the bus if they did not tell. When Malala's scared friends looked her way, the gunman shot Malala.

The bullet passed through her head, missing her left eye and her brain.

While Malala was in hospital in intensive care, people worldwide began supporting her cause. Malala survived. She continues to fight for peace and equality. Malala Yousafzai is the youngest ever Nobel Peace Prize winner.

Malala says:

"I tell my story not because it is unique, but because it is not. It is the story of many girls."

Brooke Boney

Who is Brooke Boney?

Brooke Boney is a Gamilaroi woman who works in print, television and radio as a journalist. Brooke grew up in the Hunter Valley, New South Wales, Australia, on Woonaruah country, with her mother and five younger brothers and sisters.

Leaving School

Brooke left school before finishing Year 12, the final year of schooling in Australia. She was unsure, at first, of what she wanted to do. Brooke later worked at the Australian newspaper *The Financial Review*, before deciding to study journalism at university.

Diversity in the Media

Growing up, it was obvious to Brooke that images of and stories about Australia's First Nations people on the television and in other media were limited and stereotypical. Brooke says she became a journalist to help tell positive stories about Indigenous Australians. She is committed to providing more positive role models for young Indigenous kids by increasing the visibility of Aboriginal and Torres Strait Islander peoples in the media.



Rising Up

Supported by Jumbunna, her Sydney university's Indigenous Learning Centre, Brooke finished her studies. Upon graduating, she volunteered at Koori Radio, Sydney's only First Nations radio station. Since then, Brooke has worked in commercial television news and for public broadcasters. She has been a political reporter in Canberra for NITV, Australia's National Indigenous Television network.

Brooke has also worked as a mentor for AIME, a now global organisation that helps empower Indigenous high school-aged kids by 'building bridges' between their schools and local universities.

Brooke's work in the Australian media shows young Indigenous girls that their voices are of value.

Dr. Mae Jemison



Mae the Soldier

From 1983 to 1985, Mae volunteered in the United States Peace Corps. As a medical officer, she was in charge of everyone's health. She also worked in the Centre for Disease Control, focusing on curing illness.

Mae the Activist

While at university, Mae noticed inequality between herself and the white male students. She joined the Black Students Union and ended up leading them. She campaigned for women and minorities to be treated as equally capable students.

Mae the TV Star

Star Trek was Mae's favourite show about space, so she was amazed to be asked to appear on the show! She also hosted *World of Wonder* on the Discovery Channel and has made guest appearances on various documentaries.

Mae the Dancer

At eleven years of age, Mae fell in love with dancing. Her interest continued through university. She even choreographed a musical and dance production.

Mae the Doctor

Mae studied to be a doctor at Cornell Medical College. While studying, she travelled to Thailand, Cuba and Kenya to help people there. She graduated and became a medical doctor in 1981.

Mae the Astronaut

Mae was inspired to join the astronaut program by Lieutenant Uhura on *Star Trek* (played by Nichelle Nichols) and the first female astronaut, Sally Ride. She was accepted in 1987. Five years later, she flew on the 50th shuttle flight as a mission specialist and spent eight days and nights in space.

Mae the Scientist

Science education is very important to Mae. During her life, she has been a professor at various universities. She is also a member of many science foundations and has even started her own research companies in many scientific fields.

Jessica Watson

Meet Jessica

Could you imagine living on a bus? How about a boat? Well, Australian Jessica Watson has lived on both! It was while she was living on the boat that Jessica decided she wanted to become the youngest person to sail, solo and unassisted, around the world. With an infectious smile and a fiery passion for life, Jessica Watson has inspired thousands of young people across the globe. Australia's ex-Prime Minister Kevin Rudd called her an extraordinary young Australian and the country's "newest hero".



What a Winner!

Jessica has won the following awards:

- Spirit of Sport
- Young Performer of the Year
- Adventurer of the Year
- Young Australian of the Year
- Jane Tate trophy
- Order of Australia Medal

Ella's Pink Lady

Jessica gave her boat, a 10.23 m Sparkman & Stevens, the name Ella's Pink Lady. Before she had even begun her circumnavigation, disaster struck in the form of a collision with a 63 000-tonne bulk carrier ship. Luckily, Jessica was unhurt and her boat received only a broken mast.

Around the World in 210 Days

The following is a timeline of Jessica's circumnavigation of Earth.

- 18 October 2009 – Departed Sydney Harbour
- 19 November 2009 – Crossed the equator
- Christmas 2009 – Furthest point from land
- 13 January 2010 – Cape Horn, Chile
- 25 January 2010 – Halfway point
- 15 February 2010 – Crossed Prime Meridian
- 24 February 2010 – Cape Agulhas, S. Africa
- 10 April 2010 – Entered Australian waters
- 12 April 2010 – Cape Leeuwin, W. Australia
- 3 May 2010 – South East Cape, Tasmania
- 15 May 2010 – Arrived Sydney Harbour

Jessica says:

"You don't have to be someone special to achieve something amazing. You've just got to have a dream, believe in it and work hard."

Yuna Kim



All About Yuna

Yuna was born on 5 September 1990, in Bucheon, Gyeonggi, South Korea. She was a professional figure skater and one of the most famous female athletes in South Korea.

Top of the Competition

Yuna is the first female figure skater to win all four of these prestigious competitions:

- The Winter Olympic Games
- The World Championships
- The Four Continents Championships
- The ISU Grand Prix

Learning to Skate

Yuna began skating when she was six years old. At the age of eleven, she became the youngest Korean skater to complete the five different triple jumps.

Yuna Kim is exceptional because she combines creativity, style, musical sense, graceful skating, technical skills and incredible speed. She continues to inspire young skaters to believe that anything is possible.

Yuna in the Media

Yuna Kim is considered one of the best female skaters of all time. She was the highest paid athlete at the 2010 Winter Olympic Games.

She has been named a 'Korean Power Celebrity' by American magazine *Forbes*, as well as being listed in *Time* magazine's 100 World's Most Influential People.

Making a Difference

Yuna Kim donated prize money, as well as profits from her ice shows, to others in need. She donated her prize money from the 2010 Winter Olympic Games to help relief efforts in Haiti, after the nation suffered a catastrophic earthquake.

Yuna is a Goodwill Ambassador for the United Nations Children's Fund.

Yuna says:

"I am not trying my best because it is the Olympics. I try my best always."

J.K. Rowling



How Did Jo Become a Writer?

Jo began writing at the age of six. She wrote her first novel at age eleven. It was about seven cursed diamonds and those who owned them.

Before becoming a published author, Jo worked as a researcher at Amnesty International. During the seven years it took to write *Harry Potter and the Philosopher's Stone*, Jo was faced with many ups and downs. She gave birth to her first daughter and, shortly after, divorced her first husband. As a single mother, she worked as a teacher in Edinburgh, finishing the manuscript for the first *Harry Potter* book in any spare time she could find.

Who is J.K. Rowling?

J.K. Rowling is most famously known as the author of the *Harry Potter* series. Her creative genius not only made her the most highly paid author in 2017, but also made her an advocate of women and girls in need.

Joanne, or Jo (as she calls herself), uses a great deal of her money to fund charities in Scotland and to support aid work all around the world.

Why a "Pen Name"?

The publishers of her book doubted that young boys would want to buy and read the first *Harry Potter* book if they knew it was written by a woman. They asked for the book to be published with two initials, rather than her first name. The 'K' in her pen name, J.K. Rowling, is taken from her grandmother's name – Kathleen.

The Volant Charitable Trust

The Volant Trust is Jo's passion project. It is named after her mother, who passed away after suffering from the debilitating disease Multiple Sclerosis. Charities can apply for grants and funding through the Trust.

Jo is passionate about helping women and children out of poverty, assisting single-parent families, and contributing to Multiple Sclerosis research.

Jo says:

"We do not need magic to transform our world. We carry all of the power we need inside ourselves already."

Obiageli Ezekwesili



Who is Obiageli Ezekwesili?

Obiageli (Oby) Ezekwesili is a Nigerian accountant and social pioneer whose work has influenced multiple global arenas. Born 28 April 1963, she holds master's degrees in international law and public policy and has even stood for the Nigerian presidency.

A Force for Education

Ezekwesili was a former Minister of Education in Nigeria and has long fought for education to be recognised as vitally important for African youth, especially girls. Most Nigerians are younger than 30 (60%), yet oil, rather than education, drives the government. Ezekwesili believes that poor education leads to unemployment, which is the cause of much crime in her nation.

#BringBackOurGirls

On a dark night in April 2014, 276 female students were kidnapped from their homes in Chibok, Nigeria, by Boko Haram – a violent religious sect that believes women should not be educated. In an effort to save the girls, Obiageli Ezekwesili took to social media and urged people to take action. Obiageli's viral hashtag campaign #BringBackOurGirls brought the horrific crimes of Boko Haram to light. In 2019, Ezekwesili was awarded the Forbes Woman Africa Social Influencer award for her important work.

Living Her Values

As well as being an education activist and former Vice-President of the World Bank Africa Division, Obiageli fights government corruption globally, cofounding Transparency International, an anti-corruption body.

The values she lives by are those she would like to see in others. "I set very high standards for myself," she explained in a recent interview. "Your character is ultimately the deal breaker in the pursuit of a career. I do not see career as a job; I see career as an assignment."

Greta Thunberg

Who is Greta Thunberg?

Greta Thunberg is an avid and vocal environmentalist. She leads a global community of like-minded youth in combating climate change. Born in Sweden in 2003, she is one of the youngest people to speak on a global stage about the need for climate action.

From Little Things, Big Things Grow

In August 2018, a lone figure sat in protest on the steps of the Swedish parliament. At 15, Greta had decided enough was enough; it was time for someone to make a stand. She carried a hand-painted sign that read '*skolstrejk för klimatet*' (school strike for climate), which has since been translated into dozens of languages. Thunberg could not have imagined how loud her voice would become nor how prolifically her message would spread. Her one-person stand has kicked off a global movement.

Teenage Trailblazer

Speaking quietly and seldom smiling, Greta is earnest in her activism. She calls for her peers to help create a 'social tipping point' on a global scale. To achieve this goal, she travels world-wide to address heads of state – notably crossing the Atlantic in a solar-powered racing yacht in 2019 in an effort to neutralise her carbon footprint.



A Call to Action

Ms Thunberg describes the balance between her environmental work and her schoolwork as presenting 'strange contrasts'. She also claims that dealing with immature world leaders is more difficult than dealing with most of her peers at school. Addressing the US Congress in 2019, Greta presented a report from the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change and bluntly stated, "I don't want you to listen to me, I want you to listen to the scientists." This clearly defined statement was punctuated with a final comment, "And then I want you to take real action."

Greta's work in the global climate change movement will inspire generations to come.