

**Actuele lesbrief Engels – As If We Had Landed on the Moon**

**Voor de docent**

De jonge Nobelprijswinnares Malala Yousafzai heeft een nieuw boek geschreven over jonge vluchtelingen.

**ERK-niveau**

Lezen A2 - *Lezen om informatie op te doen – Kan korte, beschrijvende teksten over vertrouwde onderwerpen begrijpen. (LEA2-3c)*

Leesstrategieën - *Kan zijn of haar begrip van de algemene betekenis van korte teksten over alledaagse onderwerpen van concrete aard gebruiken om de vermoedelijke betekenis van onbekende woorden af te leiden uit de context.*

*Kan gebruikmaken van tweetalige (online) woordenboeken om woordbegrip te controleren, indien toegestaan.*

**Intro**

Malala Yousafzai is a Nobel Peace Prize winner. She got shot and nearly killed by the Taliban when she was 15 years old. Her new book is just out: *We Are Displaced*. In this book she tells her own story and the stories of other young refugees who’ve been forced from their homes. The newspaper *The Guardian* published an extract.

Assignment 1

For this assignment you may use a dictionary or English-language Internet sources to help you.

a Make a list of words related to refugees. Start with the English words you already know. Next, look up any words you know in Dutch but not in English. Copy them too.

b In which countries of the world have you been already? For each country, also tell or write down why you were there or what you did there.

**As If We Had Landed on the Moon**

When my family flew to Birmingham from Pakistan, they arrived with only the clothes they were wearing. There was no time to go home, plus it was not safe. That meant they had to start from scratch in a world that was utterly foreign. Starting with our flat. My parents had to buy plates, pots, and cutlery so we could eat meals at home. In Pakistan, this would have made my mother so happy! She loved getting nice things for her kitchen in Mingora, but here she said that they did not feel as if they were hers. There was no sense of belonging – she felt like a stranger in a strange land.

It did feel as if we had landed on the moon – everything looked, smelled, and felt different. Just getting to our flat meant using an elevator. I had been in one the summer before with my father, so at least I had experienced being transported in a small metal box. But for my mother, it was like boarding a spaceship. She would literally close her eyes as soon as we entered and say prayers beneath her breath. And then once safely in the apartment, I would hear her speaking to herself. “We’re on top of this building! What if there is a fire? Or an earthquake? Where would we go?” In Pakistan, we would just run out of the house. My mother liked being on the ground.

Those early days in Birmingham reminded me of being internally displaced in Pakistan – except the faces, the food, and the language here were foreign.

We were comfortable, we were being well taken care of – but it had not been our choice to come here and we missed home.

At first, I thought our stay in Birmingham was temporary. Surely, I would go home in time to take my exams in March. I didn’t know threats were still being made against my life. My parents didn’t want to scare me.

March came and went, and I missed my exams. But still, I would go back. Soon. And I would catch up with the other girls in my class. Then I enrolled in a local girls’ school in April.

There was so much to get used. The school building was enormous – three stories made of stone – with three sets of stairs, red, blue, and green. They all led to different parts of various buildings that were connected with hallways and even bridges. It was a maze. It took me weeks to figure out my way around.

At least in the classroom, no one could tell how out of place I felt. It was impossible to fake it between classes and during study periods and at lunch. That was when I felt the most alone: I didn’t know what to say to the other girls, who would sit together in clusters, giggling or rolling their eyes. I would pretend to read whatever book I had with me. These girls in Birmingham seemed so different from my friends back in Mingora. Their mannerisms, the way they spoke, so quickly that all the words ran together. I did not know whether I should introduce myself and talk to them. Or should I wait to be invited? Should I laugh at their jokes? Should I tell a joke? They often used words I wouldn’t use. Should I join in? Start swearing? Laugh when they laugh?

Based on: Malala Yousafzai on www.theguardian.com

Assignment 2

Read the text. Connect the words and expressions that have the same meaning in the text.

|  |  |
| --- | --- |
| 1. (to) start from scratch
 | 1. *to behave as if you are doing something*
 |
| 1. foreign
 | 1. *to begin all over again without anything*
 |
| 1. cutlery
 | 1. *a box that moves up and down to carry people to different floors in a building*
 |
| 1. an elevator
 | 1. *coming from or belonging to a country that is not your own*
 |
| 1. internally displaced
 | 1. *a complicated and confusing system of connected passages*
 |
| 1. temporary
 | 1. *to enter as a member or student in something*
 |
| 1. (to) enrol
 | 1. *forced to leave the area where you live and living somewhere else in your country*
 |
| 1. hallways
 | 1. *knives, forks, and spoons for eating*
 |
| 1. a maze
 | 1. *long passages or corridors inside a building*
 |
| 1. (to) pretend to
 | 1. *not permanent, just for a while*
 |

Assignment 3

a 1 Explain the title in your own words: “As If We Had Landed on the Moon.”

2 Copy at least two phrases from the text that express similar feelings as the title.

b Which of the following statements are true?

1 In Birmingham, Malala’s family had to see a doctor because they had many scratches.

2 Malala’s family didn’t have time to pack any things before they left Pakistan.

3 Malala’s mother prefers to live on the ground floor.

4 Except for the food and the language, Malala immediately felt at home in Birmingham.

5 Malala thought she would not be staying in Birmingham for very long.

6 In the first weeks, Malala had trouble finding her way around her new school.

c How did Malala feel at school?

1 She felt funny, so she giggled and rolled her eyes a lot.

2 She felt strange because all the other girls were telling jokes all the time.

3 She felt that she was a better student than the other girls.

4 She felt unsure, not knowing how to behave with the other girls.

d Malala writes: “It was impossible to fake it between classes and during study periods and at lunch.” What other word/words in the last paragraph has the same meaning as “fake it”?

1 join in

2 laugh

3 pretend

4 talk