

**MARYAM**

**The Girl with a Book**

# GROWN-UP'S GUIDE



**WONDERBOOKS**

  
Save the  
Children

## Some helpful things to know

### What stops girls from going to school? Is it always early marriage?

Girls around the world face lots of different barriers to education – including poverty, culture, and violence.

Where Maryam grew up, in north-eastern Nigeria, child marriage is a very common tradition, with more than half of girls marrying by the time they're 15. Once there are plans in place for a girl to be married, she will no longer attend school.

### How can things change?

Maryam Ahmed is a Save the Children Youth Ambassador. We give child activists like her a platform to speak to people about the issues they care about most and persuade them to make things better.

Activists like Maryam play a very important role in making sure that the importance of girls' rights is not forgotten by governments and decision makers around the world. This can lead to governments doing more to try and keep girls in school in their countries.

People like Maryam don't just talk to governments, they also help families and community leaders to understand a problem. This can help change attitudes and eventually the decisions

families make about girls' education and marriage.

### What is activism?

Activism is doing something to try to make a change, or stop a change, in our world. It can be trying to make a government change its laws or trying to make people or companies change what they do.

Craftivism is a type of activism where people use their creativity to make something that expresses their views. Popular types of craft include knitting, crochet, and embroidery.

Protesting is another common form of activism. This means joining other people in a public place to express your views. When activism is linked to art, this is called 'artivism'. Chinese artist and activist Ai Weiwei is a good example.

There are lots of ways to try and change people's minds: writing letters to governments or companies, signing a petition, or raising money for a cause, are all good ways you can make your voice heard on important issues.

A photograph of Maryam Ahmed, a young woman with dark hair, wearing a red headband with black and white stripes and a red shirt. She is looking down at a laptop screen in front of her, with a microphone visible. The background is slightly blurred, showing other people in a room.

Maryam is now a Youth Ambassador for Save the Children

## Get LOUD

**Note:** Make sure you have a grown-up with you!

In this book Maryam uses poetry to express her views. Use these mega-phones to practice speaking up about what you care about most.

### You will need:

Card or cardboard cut into a large square (for your megaphone) and a small rectangle (for the handle)

Tape or glue

Scissors

Pencil

### Step one

Cut your card or cardboard into a large square. Lightly draw a fan shape (like this picture) on your square, then cut it out.

### Step two

Lightly mark where you'd like your message to go on your megaphone. Then draw and decorate your message!

### Step three

Roll your megaphone into a cone shape. Use hot glue, sturdy tape, or a stapler to secure the overlapping side of your megaphone.

### Step four

Take a small strip of card and fold the ends in about an inch. Glue or tape the folded ends down to create a handle for your megaphone.

### Step five

Speak up! Tell the world what you care most about through your megaphone.



To find out more about children who inspire stories like Wonderbooks, visit [savethechildren.org.uk](https://savethechildren.org.uk)

Photo credit: Arie Kievit / Save the Children

Activity/Information credit: Children's Museum of the Arts, <https://cmany.org> / Kiddle, [kids.kiddle.co](https://kids.kiddle.co)

Illustrations courtesy of: Shirley Hottier

## Tips for reading this book with your child

### Before you read

Have a look at the cover together, and ask 'What do you think this book might be about?'

### While you read

Start each page by asking 'What can you see?' to give the reader space to respond freely.

### After reading

Reflect on the book together. Here are some questions to help start a conversation with your little reader:

*If you think something is unfair, like Maryam did, who would you tell?*

*How do you change something you think is unfair?*

*Whose voices do you think it is important to listen to?*

*What issues do you care most about?*

## Make a handprint poem

**Writing is a great way to share your thoughts. Let's write a 'Handprint Poem' together.**

On a piece of paper big enough to fit your hand, trace around your fingers and thumb. Choose a topic and write it in the middle of the outline (on the palm). It could be 'my dog' or 'trees' or 'my family' – you pick the topic. On each finger write a word that comes to mind of when you think of your topic. When you have a word on all five fingers, your poem is ready!

### Ready to read it, loud and proud?

Share your poem with us on social media, or email us at the address below.

If you have any questions about Wonderbooks, email us at [wonderbooks@savethechildren.org.uk](mailto:wonderbooks@savethechildren.org.uk)

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