

APPLYING
WRITING
STRATEGIES

Reading Like a Writer

► Developing Ideas

Talk About It

What global issues are worth dying for?

CHILD SLAVERY PROTESTER

Nonfiction Article by Shirlee P. Newman

Ten-year-old Iqbal Masih lived in Pakistan. When he was four years old, Iqbal went to work in a hot, dusty carpet factory to pay back money his father had borrowed from the factory's owner. Iqbal could never pay it back. The owner charged him for his daily bowl of rice and fined him whenever he fell asleep as he worked. He'd have to work at the factory for the rest of his life, he thought.

Iqbal went to the police and told them how badly he was treated. The police listened to what he said, and then took him back to the factory. The owner beat him and chained him to the loom, the frame used to weave carpets.

After being freed from a carpet factory, Iqbal Masih dedicated the rest of his short life to helping other children.



MURDERED

Iqbal went to see a human rights group who thought it was wrong to make children work. With their help, he was freed from the factory and enrolled in their school. He learned to read, write, and speak so well that he was able to lead other children in public protests against child labour. Newspapers in several countries wrote stories about him, and in 1994 he was invited to speak in Sweden and the United States.

For his efforts to end child slavery, Iqbal won the Reebok Youth in Action Award in December 1994. He planned to use the prize money for law school. He wanted to become a lawyer, so he could help to free other children, but he never got the chance. In 1995, Iqbal was shot and killed in Pakistan while he was riding his bicycle. Most people blame the carpet manufacturers for his murder because they lost business as a result of Iqbal's protest work. In 2000, the Sweden-based organization, Children's World, named Iqbal the winner of the first Children's Prize for Outstanding Children.

Like Iqbal, this girl works long hours at a loom in a carpet factory in Pakistan.



Reflecting

Reading Like a Writer: What is the main idea of this selection?

Metacognition: What connections did you make while reading? How did your connections help you understand Iqbal's struggle?

Critical Literacy: How might this article be different if it were told by the people who owned the carpet factory?