The Book that can stop Child Labour

"Hey Karmen, have you read the novel Iqbal?" Kara asked.

"No. What is it about?" Karmen replied.

"Well, it is a novel based on true events about a courageous and determined boy named Iqbal and his journey to free children from child labour."

"What's child labour and who's Iqbal," asked Karmen.

Some people like Karmen are not aware of the issue of child labour. They are not aware about the fact that many children around the world are forced to work in unsafe factories with little food and no play. They are not aware that many children around the world are denied health care, education, love, freedom, and speech. They have to aware of the issue of child labour and we have to make them aware of it. We have to make them aware of Iqbal’s story to get them inspired to help stop child labour and make a difference in our world. Therefore, to get people aware of the issue of child labour, we should recommend the novel Iqbal and tell people about Iqbal's story. We need to spread awareness of Iqbal's story so that people may be inspired by Iqbal's courage and would want to help free the children from child labour as well.

Today, more than 200 million children are working as child labourers and almost 60 million children are working in conditions of forced and bonded labour (D'Adamo, v). Millions of children around the world work long hours under harsh, dangerous and exploitative conditions (Free the Children, 1). There are many reasons why children could be force into child labour; one reason could be because they have inherited the debt from their parents. Another reason could be because they have to work to pay off a loan. The last reason could be because they have requested an advance on future wages they expect to earn (Free the Children - Child Labour). However, the truth is that debt never gets paid off. In the novel “Iqbal”, Fatima suspected that the carpet factory master, Hussain Khan kept adding lines to her slate so that she can never be freed. “….the lines on the slate couldn’t be like the weeds in my father’s garden that grew overnight and crowded the crops” (D’Adamo, 7-8). These children are being enslaved for their labour, and it is wrong! Iqbal believe that they shouldn't be treated like slaves; that they should be free from child labour. "It means that this kind of life isn't right. We should return to our families. We shouldn't be chained to our looms and forced to work like slaves" (D'Adamo, 50).

The children are taken away from their families to pay off their family's debts, but in the novel, their debt is never paid off: "The debt is never erased...It doesn't matter how good you are" (D'Adamo, 20). Iqbal Masih was a child labourer that was only 4 years old when he was sold to a carpet weaver for $16 (D'Adamo). Just like many other child labourers, Iqbal worked long hours under harsh and dangerous conditions but he knew it was wrong, he had hope for a better future. Iqbal had something many child labourers do not which is courage. Iqbal had the courage to speak up and against child labour. He stood up for what was right. Iqbal's story will show people that it is not impossible to stop child labour; all you need is courage and hope.

"...It's not my business. That's not true. It is your business, too. And it's not true that there's no hope. You ladies and gentlemen, you must have courage..." (D'Adamo, 111). We can raise awareness about the issues of child labour by retelling Iqbal's story. Some people in the world may not know about child labour and what is really is. Iqbal is a story that can teach people that the first step to stopping child labour is to speak out and against child labour. What we can do is to recommend the novel Iqbal to everyone. Telling everybody about Iqbal's story may inspire people to start and make a difference. This will help educate people more about the issues of child labour and learn what child labour is through the eyes of a child.

Some people around the world are not aware of the issues of child labour and we can educate them about the issue through the novel Iqbal. Many children around the world are working long in dangerous conditions. But they should be going to school to receive the education they need. They should be with their families that would love them and take care of them. They should also receive the proper nutrition and health care that every child need. Iqbal stood up for what he believed in, which was every child should have human rights. After reading the novel 'Iqbal', people may be inspired by his courage and would want to help stop child labour.