

Little People, BIG DREAMS

TEACHERS' GUIDE



Greta Thunberg

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LEARNING OBJECTIVE:

From a very young age, Greta Thunberg was taught the importance of respecting the environment. When she realized that not everyone—especially adults—felt the same way, she was determined to make them listen. Although she started all by herself, Greta's protest galvanized people around the world to join together and convince those in power to take action against global warming. Proof that anyone can make a difference, Greta continues to inspire even the youngest activists to be brave, follow their convictions, and let their voices be heard.

ESSENTIAL QUESTIONS IN THIS UNIT

1. Why is Greta Thunberg famous?
2. What three main lessons about respecting the Earth did Greta's parents teach her?
3. What discovery did Greta's great-grand-uncle Svante make?
4. What were Greta's medical conditions that caused her to stop speaking?
5. How did Greta begin protesting against global warming?
6. Why is it important to protect the environment?

CLASSROOM DISCUSSION TOPICS

1. When Greta learned about climate change in a film at school, it stayed with her longer than with her classmates. Ask the class why it was so important to her. Why do they think it did not seem as important to the other students?

2. As a child, Greta stopped speaking, and she was diagnosed with two medical conditions. Rather than being sad at the news, Greta chose to think of her conditions as special powers. Why do your students think Greta chose to think this way? In what ways did that help her? Can the class think of other situations where they could consider something negative or bad in a different, positive way?
3. To make her voice heard, Greta decided to skip school and sit in front of Swedish Parliament. Ask the students what they think about skipping school to protest. What do they think is worth skipping school for in favor of protesting?
4. The biography at the end of the book notes that "Some powerful people have said [Greta] is too young to be worth listening to." Ask the class if they agree or disagree with this idea, and why. What characteristics do they think make someone worth listening to?

STUDENT ACTIVITIES

1. **Walk the Walk:** In the book Greta thinks of many ways that she and her family can help protect the environment. Have the class list three things they can do to protect the environment while they're at school. Post the ideas in the classroom, under the heading "We Walk the Walk." Also have them come up with three things they can do at home to help the earth. Instruct them to bring their lists home and post them in a prominent place, like on the refrigerator.
2. **Traits of Conviction:** Ask the students if they know a person who was as devoted to a cause as Greta. Have the class make a list of Greta's personality traits, and the traits of anyone else listed. Add to it as more ideas occur.



3. **Superheroes:** Greta decided to think about her medical issues as her greatest powers, and one of the illustrations depicts her flying through the air like a superhero. Ask the class to consider what their own great powers might be. Have them draw a portrait of themselves illustrating these powers.
4. **Spread the Word:** When Greta first sat in front of the Swedish parliament, she had a sign with her. Have your students consider what issues or problems they think are important in their school or community. Ask them to create their own signs addressing those issues, thinking carefully about what their messages should be. Post the signs in the classroom or, if possible, the school hallway, to inspire others!