

Teens that have changed the world



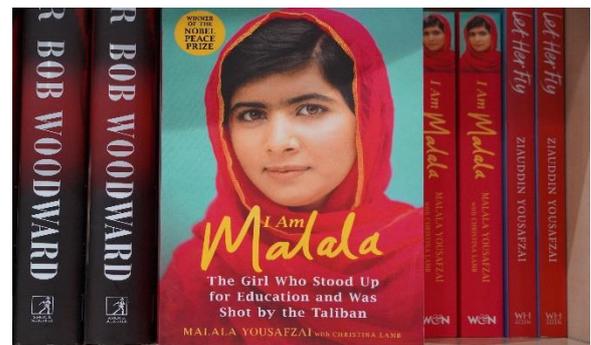
Anne Frank (1929-1945) was a young Jewish girl during World War II, who lived in the Netherlands. When Nazis began sending Jews to concentration camps, her family spent two years in hiding. During this time, Anne was writing her diary until they were arrested. She died in the Bergen-Belsen camp when she was only 16. However, her diary was kept safe, and her father published it after the war. It has been translated to 70 languages and is a literary and anti-war masterpiece.



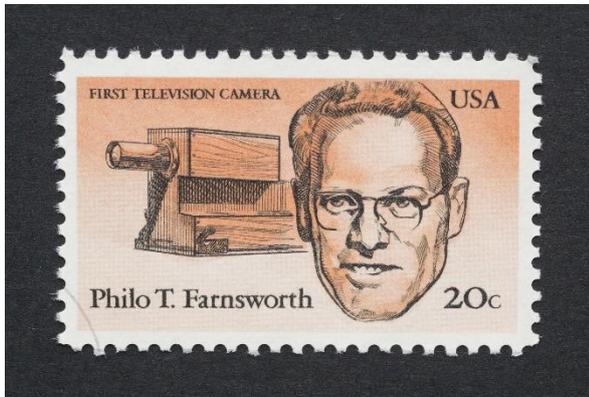
Greta Thunberg (2003) is a Swedish climate change activist. In 2018 she began striking on the steps of the Swedish parliament in Stockholm. She wanted the politicians to take meaningful, immediate action against global pollution. Since then, more than a million teens have joined her by walking out of their classrooms around the world. She has been open about her autism, which has shaped her outspoken, straightforward actions. She has also joined the Extinction Rebellion protests in London.



Louis Braille (1809-1852) was a French inventor. Due to an accident, he went blind when he was three years old. He was still an excellent student and joined the Royal Institute for Blind Youth. There, he started to work on a tactile system that would help blind and visually impaired people to write and read quickly. He was only 15 when he completed it. To this day, the system is practically unchanged, and is known as braille, in his honour.



Malala Yousafzai (1997) is a Pakistani activist for girls' education. Because she lived under Taliban rule, she could only speak at home about the right of all children to education. Her words spread nevertheless, and she started writing blogs and giving interviews. Three years later, a Taliban shot her in the head on a school bus. Malala was taken to an English hospital and survived. Unfortunately, she has been unable to return home, and must work from abroad. In 2014, she became the youngest person ever to win the Nobel Peace Prize.



Philo Farnsworth (1906-1971) was an American inventor and a TV pioneer from Utah. Although his family lived on a farm, he excelled in chemistry and physics. He taught himself how to repair generators and powered his mother's washing machine. When he was only 14, he thought of an idea so complicated that it took an entire blackboard to explain it to his teacher. Seven years later, he developed it further and patented the world's first fully electronic television.



Kelvin Doe (1996) is an engineer from Sierra Leone. He taught himself engineering when he was only 11. Two years later, he managed to power his entire neighbourhood with batteries made from acid, soda and metal in a tin cup. He also built a community radio station and a generator to power it. Due to his expertise, he became the youngest person in the Visiting Practitioner's Program at MIT. In 2016, he joined an organization which provides free medical care to people suffering from war and poverty.

Questions and tasks:

- 1) On a timeline, draw the lives of the people mentioned. Who is the oldest, and who the youngest? Who could have met, or can meet at the present time?
- 2) How are these six people similar, and how are they different? Whose life is the most alike to yours? How? Whose is the most different?
- 3) How did their childhoods influence their actions? Why did they choose their fields of interest?
- 4) If you could pick just one thing to do in order to change today's world, what would it be? How does your life influence your choice?