

Lesson 2

The Greta Effect

A. Warm-up activity

- Ask one of your friends whether your friend has ever thought about the pollution in our environment. Does it bother your friend?
- Create groups of five of your classmates and make a list of environmental hazards that are happening in your area. Now think of the possible solutions to the problems and make a group presentation.

B. Now read the short biography of Greta Thunberg, a young environmental activist and answer the questions that follow.



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Greta Thunberg is an environmental activist. She was born in Stockholm, Sweden, in 2003. When she was eight, she started learning about climate change. The more she learned, the more baffled she became as to why so little was being done about it. At the age of 11, Greta became so sad about climate change that she temporarily stopped speaking!

Greta has Asperger syndrome, a condition that affects how people socialise. But Greta views her condition as a positive, calling it her “superpower”! She says it helps her see the world in black and white, and that there are “no grey areas when it comes to climate change.”

In August 2018, Greta decided to take action. Instead of going to school, she made a large sign that read ‘Skolstrejk för Klimatet’: SCHOOL STRIKE FOR CLIMATE’, and calmly sat down outside the Swedish parliament. Her aim? To make politicians take notice and act to stop global warming.

Greta’s strike was picked up by the Swedish media, and the word started to spread. Soon enough, tens of thousands of students from around the world joined her #FridaysforFuture strikes – skipping school on Fridays to protest against climate change.

In March 2019, climate campaigners across the world, and inspired by Greta, came together to co-ordinate the first Global Strike for Climate. Over 1.6 million people from 125 countries took part!

Since her strike began, Greta’s life has become a whirlwind! She’s given rousing speeches to politicians, to the EU parliament, the UK parliament, to protesters and more. She’s appeared in documentaries and had loads of books and articles written about her. She’s even been nominated for a Nobel Peace Prize!

In August 2019, Greta travelled on a wind and solar-powered boat from Plymouth, UK, to New York, USA – the journey took 15 days. Her passionate speech “You have stolen my dreams and my childhood with your empty words... We are in the beginning of a mass extinction, and all you can talk about is money, and fairy tales of eternal economic growth. How dare you!” has drawn much attention from all over the world. Thunberg was known for changing how some people think and act about climate change. Her impact is called “the Greta effect.”

Greta has named Rosa Parks, the civil rights activist, as one of her greatest inspirations. In the 1950s, Rosa sparked a civil rights movement that improved the lives and treatment of millions of African Americans.

C. Write answers to the following questions.

- How has Greta Thunberg dealt with her Asperger syndrome?
- Why did Greta stop attending her school?
- What did Greta’s travelling on a solar-powered boat symbolize?
- Has Greta’s activism created any impact on the society?



- D. Listen to the speech by Greta Thunberg delivered at the UN Climate Action Summit in New York, in 2019, and work in pairs to discuss the reasons for her despair and anger in the speech.**

Speech QR code:



- E. Did you ever feel angry and like Greta seeing environmental degradation in your locality? Have you ever felt the necessity to do something to change the situation? Write your thoughts down and share it with your class.**

Reference:

Greta Thunberg Facts! National Geographic Kids . The link is <https://www.natgeokids.com/uk/kids-club/cool-kids/general-kids-club/greta-thunberg-facts/> , <https://www.britannica.com/biography/Greta-Thunberg>