



Leaders in Our World

**Read Aloud and Lesson
based on the book**

Shaking Things Up by Susan Hood

Young people – girls and boys alike – are being called on to help solve the challenges facing our world today. *Shaking Things Up* by Susan Hood is a perfect book for inspiring our young people to become active citizens and change agents. The book begins with the following quote by Malala Yousafzai:

There's a moment when you have to choose whether to be silent or to stand up.

With this quote in mind, *Shaking Things Up* introduces the young reader to 14 young women who **changed the world**. After you read or *listen to the book (*check YOUTUBE for a read aloud), think about and discuss the following questions as you begin your journey to becoming a civic-minded thinker and leader.

1. There are so many ways a young person can become a change agent. Think about young Mary Anning. After her father's death, 11-year-old Mary Anning found her family penniless. To help her family, she began to collect and sell fossils to tourists. This work led Mary, at the age of 13, to begin her journey as a paleontologist, someone who studies fossils. Her findings contributed to important changes in scientific thinking about the Earth and pre-historic life. Science is an important subject in our schools. Think about a scientific discovery (or discoveries) that you would like to make. Create a list of those ideas. Then choose one to share with someone. Be prepared to explain what you would like to discover and why.

2. Angela Zhang is also a young person who *shook things up* with her scientific discovery. According to our read-aloud, Angela began her journey with questions about the things around her that she did not understand. For example, she would ask her father why we see rainbows after it rains. At only seventeen years old, Angela's curiosity and love of science led her to invent a very small particle (a nanoparticle) that can detect cancer cells and deliver medicine without hurting healthy cells. Think about the things in your world for which you would like to know why they are the way they are. Make a list of those things and decide who you might ask for the answers.

You might also research the answers on your own and then ask someone to further explain what you have found. Your curiosity is the start of your becoming a change agent.

3. When the Taliban took control of a town in Pakistan, they said girls could no longer go to school. At that time, Malala Yousafzai was an 11-year-old who lived in that town. She spoke out on behalf of girls and their right to learn. Because of what she said, Malala was injured. When she recovered from her injury, she found the strength and courage to stand up to the Taliban. She spoke out in support of girl's education in countries that include Afghanistan, Lebanon, Nigeria, Pakistan and Turkey. Malala was recognized for her leadership by being awarded the 2014 Nobel Peace Prize.

In today's challenging world, there are many things that are happening that we feel are wrong. It could be something in our school or community. It could be something throughout our country. Think of a current issue that you would like to do something about. Then consider Malala's words about standing up for what you believe.

What is the issue for which you would like to help make a change? What change would you like to see happen? What ideas do you have for making that change?

4. Can a six-year-old be a change agent? The answer is yes! Just remember Ruby Bridges, a six-years-old who became a symbol for the civil rights movement. Ruby was going to a new school. She was treated very poorly at this school. Adults pulled their children out of school rather than let them be in a class with Ruby. In addition, Ruby was banned from recess and the lunchroom, and was the only one in her class besides the teacher. Ruby was not happy about what was happening, but **she never missed a day of school.** Little Ruby led the way in the fight to end segregation.

Imagine that you lived at the same time as Ruby Bridges and went to the same school. What do you think you could **say** to the children at the school that would help them accept Ruby into their classroom? What might you **do** to make Ruby feel more welcome at the school? Do you think some of your ideas would be helpful in your classroom today? Why or why not?