



KID TRAILBLAZERS

TRUE TALES OF CHILDHOOD FROM

CHANGEMAKERS AND LEADERS

STORIES BY *ROBIN STEVENSON* ILLUSTRATIONS BY *ALLISON STEINFELD*

CURRICULUM GUIDE

Promotes STEAM-based learning concepts and curriculums!



COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

Kid Trailblazers: True Tales of Childhood from Changemakers and Leaders contains kid-friendly and relatable childhood stories of sixteen of the world's most important and groundbreaking changemakers. This curriculum guide, with connections to the Common Core, includes an array of language arts activities, book discussions, vocabulary instruction, and more to accommodate the learning needs of most students in grades 4–7. Students are asked to be careful readers without jeopardizing the fun of reading. Throughout the guide, correlations are noted between the discussion questions and activities and specific Common Core Language Arts Standards. For more information on specific standards, visit the Common Core website at www.corestandards.org.

★ PROACTIVE PRE-READING ACTIVITIES ★

Previewing the text helps students understand the informational purpose of the book. Key characteristics of the text include the title, table of contents, use of illustrations, chapter headings, bibliography, and index. Ask students to compare and contrast the format of *Kid Trailblazers* with a narrative book.

Have students choose a leader featured in *Kid Trailblazers*. Then ask them to use the internet to research their leader and find five interesting facts about them. Invite students to present their findings to the class. To extend this activity to a post-reading activity, have students go back and check to see how many of their fun facts were mentioned in the book.

Ask your class the following questions. Have students brainstorm, and then call on individual students to write their answers on the board.

- ★ List three words that you think of when you hear the word “trailblazer.”
- ★ How do you think someone becomes known for being a trailblazer?
- ★ How do trailblazers contribute to the world?
- ★ List as many trailblazers as you can think of.
- ★ What makes someone an effective leader?
- ★ What type of background do you think someone needs to become a trailblazer?
- ★ What is a changemaker? Do changemakers always make positive changes?
- ★ Do trailblazers have to be good leaders? Why or why not?
- ★ What characteristics do you think good trailblazers need to possess? Why?
- ★ Why would someone want to be a trailblazer? Can you think of any possible drawbacks to being one?
- ★ Which changemaker featured in *Kid Trailblazers* are you most interested in learning about? Why?
- ★ Who is the trailblazer you’d most like to meet? Why?
- ★ Make a list of problems, issues, and causes that would benefit from a changemaker tackling them.
- ★ If you could do something to make a positive and lasting impact on the world, what would it be?
- ★ Write an explanatory essay on why you think it’s important to learn about trailblazers’ early lives.

PRE-READING COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

The Proactive Pre-Reading Activities address the following Common Core State Standards:

WRITING:

Text Types and Purposes

Grade 4 – W.4.1-3e

Grade 5 – W.5.1-3e

Grade 6 – W.6.1-3.e

Grade 7 – W.7.1-1c, 2-2d, 3-3e

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Grade 4 – W.4.7-9b

Grade 5 – W.5.7-9b

Grade 6 – W.6.7-9

Grade 7 – W.7.7-9a

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Comprehension and Collaboration

Grade 4 – SL.4.1-2

Grade 5 – SL.5.1-1d

Grade 6 – SL.6.1-2

Grade 7 – SL.7.1

SPEAKING AND LISTENING

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

Grade 4 – SL.4.4-6

Grade 5 – SL.5.4-5

Grade 6 – SL.6.4-5

Grade 7 – SL.7.4-5

★ DISCUSSION QUESTIONS FOR INQUISITIVE KIDS ★

- ★ How did Benazir Bhutto’s father inspire her life and further her career?
- ★ In what ways did Angela Merkel use living in East Germany to her advantage?
- ★ What makes Kamala Harris a powerful role model to all people, especially young girls?
- ★ What good advice did Stacy Abrams’s father give her? How did she follow his advice?
- ★ List three ways that Dorothy Pittman Hughes’s stubbornness helped her succeed.
- ★ How did a library card change John Lewis’s life?
- ★ What did Patrisse Cullors mean when she said: “being Black and poor defined me more than being bright and hopeful and ready?”
- ★ Why didn’t Marley Dias like the books she had to read in school? What did she do to change it and how did it help other kids?
- ★ How did being Japanese impact David Suzuki’s life as a young boy in Canada?
- ★ In what ways did Al Gore use his privileged upbringing to help others and our planet?
- ★ In what ways has Greta Thunberg’s autism changed her life?
- ★ How did Mari Copeny discover that speaking up for change is powerful, and what did it lead to?
- ★ How did poetry help Audre Lorde speak her truth?
- ★ How did living in exile prepare Ai Weiwei for his future?
- ★ Why are the shows that Shonda Rhimes creates important?
- ★ In what ways is Elliot Page an inspiration to kids of all genders?
- ★ Choose two changemakers from *Kid Trailblazers*. Compare and contrast their childhoods and explain how each one’s upbringing contributed to their successes.
- ★ What do the people in each of the four parts of the book—Part One: Standing Up for Democracy, Part Two: Fighting for Black Lives, Part Three: Protecting Our Planet, and Part Four: Harnessing the Power of Art—all have in common? Why do you think the author set the book up this way?
- ★ List all sixteen people featured in *Kid Trailblazers*. Then, write down the two best adjectives that describe each one next to their names.
- ★ Which leader featured in *Kid Trailblazers* do you think had the most interesting childhood? Why?
- ★ Using examples from the book, explain how you relate to one of the people featured in *Kid Trailblazers*.
- ★ Choose three changemakers highlighted in *Kid Trailblazers* and explain how their hard work and determination still helps people today.

PRE-READING COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

The Discussion Questions for Inquisitive Kids address the following Common Core State Standards for Reading Informational Text:

Key Ideas and Details

Grade 4 – RI.4.1–3

Grade 5 – RI.5.1–3

Grade 6 – RI.6.1–3

Grade 7 – RI.7.1–3

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Grade 4 – RI.4.4–6

Grade 5 – RI.5.4–6

Grade 6 – RI.6.4–6

Grade 7 – RI.7.6

Comprehension and Collaboration

Grade 4 – RI.4.7, 9

Grade 5 – RI.5.9

Grade 6 – RI.6.9

Grade 7 – RI.7.9

Range of Reading Level of Text

Grade 4 – RI.4.10

Grade 5 – RI.5.10

★ VISIONARY VOCABULARY ★

Review this list of vocabulary words and phrases found throughout *Kid Trailblazers*. First ask students if they can guess the words' meanings by rereading each word in the context of the story. Then have them use dictionaries to check their answers and/or define the word. Also, have them use each word in a sentence of their own. Since there are so many vocabulary words, you may choose to review these words over a few class periods and assign some for homework. You can also use them for your weekly list, daily word study, or spelling exercises.

Introduction

trailblazer
evolving
politicians
activists
justice
established
awareness
protests
influence
courageous
tackle
preach
sermons
carefree
lacked
internment camp
imprisoned
exile
dugout
confidence
opposition
climate
persevered
obstacles

Benazir Bhutto: My Place

prime minister
emigrating
province
ancestors
ruins
civilization
rarely
negotiating
siblings
deeds
abroad
admired
status
corridors
primarily
neglecting
complicated
preferred
affairs
invade
air raid
political party
military rule
receiving

riots
coped
distracting
accomplishments
adjustment
democratically
accompanied
debating society
executed
determined
assassinated
controversial

Angela Merkel: Behind the Iron Curtain

chancellor
advocating
democracy
equality
communist
dictatorship
zones
boundary
fleeing
economic
seminary
clergy
developmental
pleasant
clumsy
paternal
encouraged
systematically
barbed wire
uneasy
erected
concrete
horrified
preached
sobbed
separated
divided
political
accepted
discussions
debate
election
transistor radio
discuss
opinions
survival

strategies
extraordinary
excelled
competed
sponsored
technically
voluntary
commended
engagement
impact
backpacked
resort
performance
cultural
fundraiser
resistance
recession
refugee
pandemic
analytical
ethics
censored
promote
legalize
contact tracing
minimize
frequently
undertaking

Kamala Harris: Capable of Anything

groundbreaking
immigrated
economics
researcher
lotus flower
duplex
responsible
fierce
generous
expectations
enveloped
skilled
outsmart
opponent
occasionally
recalled
desegregate
diverse
devour
despite

capable
lectures
valued
shocking
foreign
pursuing
criticized
anti-immigrant
inaugurated
countless

Stacey Abrams: Never Tell Yourself No

organization
ballot
voting booth
poverty
fuzzy
weaving
commentary
enraptured
otherwise
retelling
moral
exaggerated
shipyard
participate
well-funded
trinity
juvenile detention center
attendance
surgical
possessions
city-wide
grim-faced
refused
lobby
demanded
shaken
racist
incidents
doubts
regain
minister
geometry
concepts
entranced
segregation
restricting
decade
racially

gymnasium
in tow
typist
speechwriter
valedictorian
solutions
commemorating
pen name
appointed
deputy
legislature
nominated
founded
penning
integral

**Dorothy Pitman Hughes:
Be There for Each Other**

feminist
civil rights activist
gender
community
segregated
timber
settlement
close-knit
rented
stubbornness
hauling
converted
flatbed
deliver
distractedly
variety
mechanic
electricity
alongside
peeked
furious
disrespectfully
typical
composer
served
limited access
constant
white supremacist group
segregationist
local
dedicate
gala
afford
discouraged
resources
diploma
academic
frustrating
desire
bail
cooperative
hub

advocacy
cofounded
focused
historically
combat
provide
empowerment

**John Lewis: Good Trouble,
Necessary Trouble**

necessary
course
tirelessly
wavering
applying
sharecropper
earning
midwife
sheltered
surrounded
bitter
tin
gather
festive
scramble
fetch
seriously
hushing
subside
shed
sanctuary
funeral
lard
eulogy
procession
baptize
backbreaking
landowners
profits
flannel
attended
gathered
overcame
laboratory
washrooms
whereas
rundown
destined
frantic
beholding
modern
scolded
unconstitutional
defy
stirred up
boycott
response
requested
petition
formal

chairman
sit-ins
terminals
ruling
attempted
designated
brutality
international
fractured
outraged
turning point
commemorate
redeem
surge
targeting
vulnerable

**Patrisse Cullors: Our
History in the Nation**

harassed
mistreated
devout
estranged
affectionate
multiracial
transient
handful
telemarketer
receptionist
ginormous
constantly
raided
bursting
riot gear
alley
wailing
related
connection
prepared
landscaped
battered
biological
confusing
gumbo
struggling
mental health
medical condition
bisexual
homophobia
cluster
queer
encouragement
evicted
notice
social justice
reacting
hashtag
impacts
transformational
devastating

harnessing
social media
generation
executive
abolition
documentary film
amplify

Marley Dias: Black Girl Books

activist
launched
legendary
conforming
traditional
gender roles
pride
repeat
afterward
self-esteem
sexist
stereotypes
banning
critically
verse
prose
narrower
required
included
frustration
depicted
represented
implication
inheritance
donate
orphans
gratitude
whitewashed
fortress
transatlantic
slave trade
enslaved
infamous
ancestors
momentum
viral
surpassed
practical
fiction

**David Suzuki: Solace
in the Wilderness**

solace
respected
detained
emigrated
imported
dry cleaning
trout
inland
upstream
intense

descent
suspicion
remote
interior
crudely
anticipated
occur
marvel
shielded
turmoil
ghost town
foul-smelling
derelict
hazardous
floorboards
encircled
wilderness
propaganda
portrayed
stereotyped
fueling
bigotry
construction
cellar
relief
conversation
swamp
salamander
convinced
shame
landslide
empower

Al Gore: Great Expectations

climate change
budding
elderly
senator
particularly
demanding
requiring
strategically
pesticides
privileged
various
rearranging
standards
prestigious
emphasized
discipline
structure
harvesting
dense
cautious
compete
lineup
creases
weakness
carbon dioxide
posed

initiatives
inconvenient
advocates

Greta Thunberg: School Strike for Climate

remarkable
coincidence
appointment
psychologist
malnourished
depressed
withdrawn
photographic memory
periodic table
autistic
anxiety disorder
recover
persuaded
asylum
hopeless
advocating
persuading
carbon footprint
brainstorming
journalists
treaty
greenhouse gas
emissions
opportunity
numerous
tolerate
hypocrisy
refusal
intimidated
critics
worldwide
crisis
norm
circumstances

Mari Copeny: Fighting for the Flint Kids

toddler
headlines
rash
bacteria
leaching
ointment
congressional hearings
affected
amazement
citizen
optimistic
pranked
epic
nationwide
declared
authorized
fundraising
ambassador

rally
extending
organized
encouraging
distribute
water filters
anime
starvation
transition
solar energy
marginalized
indigenous

Audre Lorde: The Power of Words

lesbian
warrior
creativity
injustice
immigrants
prejudice
rigid
obey
shelter
excluded
stubborn
tantrums
struggled
stutter
orthopedic shoes
spectacles
produce
obedient
disobedience
working-class
emotions
recite
memorized
complex
exist
literary
séances
summon
rotten
disappointed
outsider
announced
guild
antiwar
source

Ai Weiwei: Something Else Is Possible

architect
accused
rightism
suspected
leftist
labor camps
re-education
transferred

previously
leaky
harsh
non-existent
nearly
precisely
insulted
endured
insults
hooves
butchers
reprimanded
sensitive
gunpowder
mischievous
statesman
cunning
paramilitary
denounced
revolution
interfere
chaotic
intellectuals
authoritarian
good-hearted
selfless
begging
visibly
incident
enrolled
animation
expanded
sculpture
contemporary
installations
provoked
controversy
precious
collapsed
abuses
bulldozed
outspokenness
imprisonment
rubble
dehumanization
dismantle
uncertainty
compassion

Shonda Rhimes: From Tomato Paste Land to Shondaland

prominent
increasing
dramatic
administrator
cornrowed
adored
pantry
canned goods
quirkiness

resignations
tape recorder
outgrew
merchandise
salesclerk
rosary
accepting
unexpectedly
instructor
freeway
pale
influential
production company

**Elliot Page: Like the
Boys in the Movies**

transgender
assigned
divorced
aptitude
game console
clutching
script
miners

conscious
valuing
flexible
comfortable
supportive
principles
mindfulness
grounded
absurd
relentless
compromises
toll
omission
lawmakers
advocate
frontier
misinformation
perspectives
nonbinary
inauguration
speech impediment
intends

After your class is familiar with the vocabulary list, invite them to choose fifteen to twenty words to use to write their own short adventure stories featuring the changemakers highlighted in *Kid Trailblazers*.

VOCABULARY COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

The Visionary Vocabulary activities address the following Common Core State Standards for Language:

Conventions of Standard English

Grade 4 – L.4.1-2
Grade 5 – L.5.1-2
Grade 6 – L.6.1-2
Grade 7 – L.7.1-2

Knowledge of Language

Grade 4 – L.4.3
Grade 5 – L.5.3
Grade 6 – L.6.3
Grade 7 – L.7.3

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

Grade 4 – L.4.4-6
Grade 5 – L.5.4-6
Grade 6 – L.6.4-6
Grade 7 – L.7.4-6

★ TRAILBLAZING LANGUAGE ARTS AND STEAM-BASED ACTIVITIES ★

An easy way to add a little STEAM to your classroom!

#ChangeForGood

Social media is a great way for kid changemakers to get their message out to a worldwide audience. Have kids choose a cause that resonates with them and create a social media campaign that raises awareness for it. Ask them to pick one social media platform and create a campaign with posts that contain information about their cause, why change is needed, facts and figures, hashtags, images with captions, videos, quotes, links to relevant articles, and anything else they think will help spread their words.

Kids for Change

As a class, brainstorm to come up with a social issue in your community or the world at large that needs change. Then, using *Kid Trailblazers* as inspiration, ask students to come up with a plan of action that highlights why it needs to be changed for the better, raises awareness about it, and presents concrete ways kids can help to make the change a reality.

Creative Causes

Many of the people featured in *Kid Trailblazers* found creative ways to help make changes in the world. Have students choose an issue or social injustice that resonates with them and ask them to make a creative work about it. The creative work can be anything they want to make, such as a poem, short story, work of art, diorama, video, picture collage, or even a TikTok. Invite students to share their causes and creations with the class.

Leadership Business Cards

Instruct your class to make business cards for the changemakers and leaders featured in *Kid Trailblazers*. Traditional business cards measure 3.5 inches by 2 inches. Have students conduct further research on the trailblazers' lives and work. Then have them create cards featuring facts about the changemaker on one side and their greatest achievements, their triumphs, things they have overcome, and their contributions to humanity on the other. Have students present their cards to the class.

Protest Signs

Protest signs have been around for decades. They give a unique voice to each person holding one at a protest or rally. Have your students choose a cause one of the changemakers in *Kid Trailblazers* fought for. Then have them create a protest sign that could be used at a rally for that cause. Encourage students to create signs with concise, clever messages and colorful, eye-catching designs. Hang the signs outside of your classroom to educate and inspire everyone who walks by.

Clever Comparisons

There are now eight books in the Kid Legends series: *Kid Trailblazers*, *Kid Activists*, *Kid Scientists*, *Kid Authors*, *Kid Innovators*, *Kid Presidents*, *Kid Athletes*, and *Kid Artists*. Have students choose one trailblazer and one person featured in another Kid Legends book. Then have the students compare and contrast the two figures by listing things they have in common and things about them that are different. Spark interest by suggesting they look at: why each person is famous, their careers, their family life, things that inspired them, childhood experiences, how they overcame obstacles, and what they are remembered for today. Instruct students to use their lists to help them write a compare-and-contrast essay.

Leadership Journals

Ask students to pick a figure featured in *Kid Trailblazers*. Then have them write journal entries in the voice of the changemaker they selected detailing more about their childhood. Have students write one entry per day for ten days. To help spark ideas, tell kids to write about topics such as the figure's daily life, causes, after school activities, favorite foods, home life, celebrations, friendships, as well as any trouble or negativity from others.

LANGUAGE ARTS ACTIVITIES COMMON CORE CONNECTIONS

The Trailblazing Language Arts STEAM-Based Activities address the following Common Core State Standards:

WRITING:

Text Types and Purposes:

Grade 4 – W.4.1-3e

Grade 5 – W.5.1-3e

Grade 6 – W.6.1-3e

Grade 7 – W.7.1-1c, 2-2d, 3-3e

Production and Distribution of Writing

Grade 4 – W.4.4-6

Grade 5 – W.5.4-6

Grade 6 – W.6.4-5

Grade 7 – W.7.4-6

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

Grade 4 – W.4.7-9b

Grade 5 – W.5.7-9b

Grade 6 – W.6.7-9

Grade 7 – W.7.7-9a

Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

Grade 4 – SL.4.1-2

Grade 5 – SL.5.1-1d

Grade 6 – SL.6.1-2

Grade 7 – SL.7.1

Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas

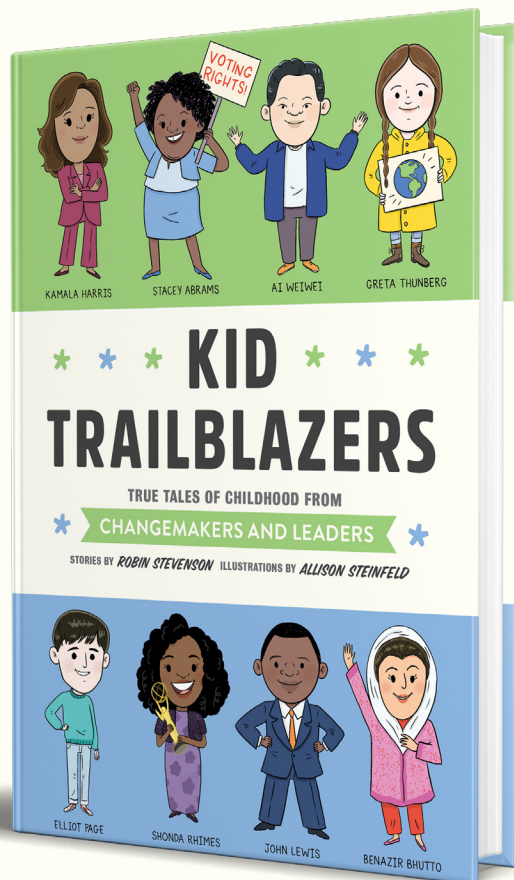
Grade 4 – SL.4.4-6

Grade 5 – SL.5.4-5

Grade 6 – SL.6.4-5

Grade 7 – SL.7.4-5

* ABOUT THE BOOK *



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Ages 8 to 12 * Grades 4 to 7

From the author who brought young readers *Kid Activists* and *Kid Innovators* comes *Kid Trailblazers*, a powerful look into the childhoods of the world's most inspiring leaders and changemakers.

Featuring kid-friendly text and full-color illustrations, *Kid Trailblazers* highlights contemporary figures who have led the way in their fields—government, social activism, environmental justice, and the arts. Middle-grade readers will learn how these trailblazers got their start as kids just like them, with relatable stories and fun facts such as:

- * Angela Merkel once won a trip to Moscow, where she bought a Beatles album.
- * Stacey Abrams and her siblings used to pretend to be librarians while playing together.
- * Al Gore lived in a hotel as a kid and liked to drop water balloons off the roof!
- * Elliot Page named himself after the main character in *E.T.* when he came out as transgender.

Kid Trailblazers explores the childhood stories of leaders who have taken on the most pressing issues of our time by expressing themselves and challenging the world.

* ABOUT THE AUTHOR & ILLUSTRATOR *

Robin Stevenson is an award-winning author of books for kids and teens, including *Kid Activists* and *Kid Innovators*.

Her writing has been translated into several languages and published in more than ten countries. She lives with her family on the west coast of Canada.

Allison Steinfeld obtained a BFA from the School of Visual Arts in New York City.

For more information, please visit quirkbooks.com and kidlegends.com

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