

## Teen Activists: Making a Difference

Have you ever heard of **social justice**? What about **activism**? These words often conjure up images of great leaders from history. Activists such as Martin Luther King Jr. or Mother Teresa made such amazing contributions to society and are so highly regarded that they hardly even seem like real people anymore. Sometimes we feel like we'll never be able to live up to them, no matter how much we want to!

What if I told you that there are everyday kids and teens just like you that are doing **BIG** things to make a difference in the world around them? When Marley Dias was in sixth grade she loved to read. The problem was that in her school, she kept being given books that were all about White boys and their dogs—she couldn't relate to these characters! So, she set out to collect and donate 1,000 books that feature Black girls as the main character by launching the campaign called #1000BlackGirlBooks. Marley went from being a girl who loved reading, to a social media superstar and author! Young activists like Marley are giving speeches, sharing out on Twitter, starting non-profits, and writing books about many different issues of social justice. What do they all have in common?



What if I told you that **YOU** can also become an activist? All it takes is an idea and the right combination of determination and willpower to effect change in your community. Anybody can start with one thing they're passionate about, and find small, local ways to organize and find solutions to the problem.

You are going to do just that! In groups you will collaborate to create a list of social justice issues. What are you passionate about? How can you make a difference? Who can help you advocate for change?

Your task is to use your new knowledge to publish an authentic product that describes the issue, a teen activist of your choice, and an action plan to either do something brand new to bring about change or follow in the footsteps of what an activist has already started!

No matter the obstacle, no matter your age, you can work hard to make the world a little bit better than when you started!