Be the Change

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Roger Stevens visits schools, libraries and festivals, performing his work and running workshops for young people and teachers. He is a National Poetry Day Ambassador, a founding member of the Able Writers scheme with Brian Moses and runs the award-winning poetry website www.poetryzone.co.uk for children and teachers.

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Reaching the Stars



by

Liz Brownlee,
Matt Goodfellow
Roger Stevens

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For Emmelie and Jem and all our children's children – L. B.

For the bees. Good luck! – R. S.



First published 2019 by Macmillan Children's Books
an imprint of Pan Macmillan
20 New Wharf Road, London N1 9RR
Associated companies throughout the world
www.panmacmillan.com

ISBN 978-1-5290-1894-3

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1 3 5 7 9 8 6 4 2

A CIP catalogue record for this book is available from the British Library.

Printed and bound by CPI Group (UK) Ltd, Croydon CR0 4YY

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Ways to Change the World

Start Now

be the change
you want to see
walk the walk
stand with me

take the challenge
spread the word
we can make
our voices heard

every single
action helps
with a friend
or by yourself

be the change
you want to see
walk the walk
stand with me

Matt Goodfellow

Captain Save-the-Planet

I am Captain Save-the-Planet
I am GREEN
Not green like The Green Lantern
Not green like The Incredible Hulk
No, I am green like the forests
like grass, like ferns
and the green, clean air
that blew across the planet
long ago
I am Captain Save-the-Planet
I am strong
Not strong like my arch enemy Radioactive Man
who burns the sky
with invisible rays
Not like Coal Power Man
who spews out deadly fumes
No, I am strong like the wind
turning a million wind turbines
I am strong like the sun
heating a million homes

I am Captain Save-the-Planet
and I am looking for an assistant
Would you care to apply?

Roger Stevens

What would your planet-saving superpower be?

Munch, Crunch, Packed Lunch . . .

Your packed lunch can
if you plan it
help to save our
ailing planet,
you'll be saving
just by scrapping
straws and packets,
plastic wrapping,
get an eco
box or two
made of wheat straw
or bamboo,
put in your lunch
and with no oil
the shut-tight lid
won't let it spoil,
banish crisps
and juice in boxes,
fill with wraps

and nuts and coxes,
sliced ham rolled up
(roast or parma),
blueberries, grapes
or a banana,
carrot slices
eggs and cheese,
pizza pieces
pickled peas,
naan bread sarnies,
carrot crunch,
sustainable
sustaining lunch!

Liz Brownlee

Packed lunches contribute to a lot of unrecyclable waste products. **You can help!** See how creative you can become making lunches with no plastic packing whatsoever. Have a competition each week to see who has brought the greenest lunch to school! Use a reusable water bottle for drinks. Sometimes a reusable plastic box is the only solution; but these can last a long time.

Couch Superstar

If changing the world seems far-fetched and
crazy
because, frankly, my dear, you're incredibly
lazy

more likely to yawn and stretch on the sofa
than strap yourself in to the change
rollercoaster

here's an idea you mustn't forget:
there are ways you can help without breaking
a sweat

put on a jumper, keep thermostats low
get a blanket and rug – feel that warm, cosy
glow

switch electrical equipment off at the wall
now you're part of the change with no effort at
all

just two tiny things, but look what you are:
a champion of change - a couch superstar

Matt Goodfellow

You can help! Check out the United Nations Sustainable Development Goals website for more tiny things you can do which make a big difference.

Promise

You see them in doorways
you see them in parks
there are so many of them
that after a while
you don't even notice them
We were in Nottingham
and one of them
played a tune on a toy xylophone
and Mum put a five pound note
in his cup
Mum says
as you grow up
you'll find that life doesn't always turn out
as planned
You have to help people
if you can

Roger Stevens

Crisis, a charity for the homeless, says the latest figures showed that 4,751 people slept rough across England on any given night in 2017.

Are You Flushed?

Flushing loos will use a quarter
Of your day's amount of water
'If it's yellow, let it mellow'
Science says just let it be
Save the planet, save your wee!

Liz Brownlee

You can help! Yes, it's true – scientists say that it is fine to leave your wee in the loo, and saving water saves energy as well as water, because it has to be pumped through pipes every time you turn on a tap or flush the toilet. You can also save water by turning off the tap in between rinsing your toothbrush.

Richest Boy in the World

Miss Moss divided the class
proportionally
by the wealth in the world
John was one of the hundred multi-billionaires
who owned half
of all the world's money
Six of the class were reasonably well off
The rest of us were the millions
of really poor people
and some of us couldn't even afford a place to live
After the lesson, at playtime, I asked John for a crisp
and he gave me the whole packet
and he said,
If I do get rich, when I'm grown up, do you know what?
I won't forget you.

Roger Stevens

The richest 1% of the population in the UK own as much as the poorest 55% of the population.

Funny Fruit and Wonky Veg

make a change
with a simple pledge:
pick funny fruit
and wonky veg

different looks
same great taste
now none of it
need go to waste

Matt Goodfellow

1.3 billion tonnes of food is wasted in the world each year. In a pile it would be roughly the same size as the mountain Ben Nevis. Wonky fruit and veg tastes the same! Does it matter? Food production takes a massive amount of the planet's resources such as oil and water. Disposing of waste also uses energy. **You can help!** Embrace ugly fruit and veg!

Ways I Have Raised Money for Charity This Year

(or attempted to)

Shaved Dad's eyebrows and half his moustache off

(in hindsight it would have been better to ask him first and not do it while he was asleep the night before an important business meeting with his new boss)

Dyed my hair pink and wore pyjamas to school

(again, possibly should have checked with the Headteacher, Mrs Jones, that this was OK – she nearly fainted when she saw me)

Did a sponsored run around the school field with Stephen

(who had to stop after one lap because the cut grass was playing havoc with his hay fever and he got stung by a wasp)

Made 12 iced fairy cakes to sell at playtime
(left them on the kitchen worktop where they were gobbled up by Frankie, the French Bulldog, who was then violently sick on Mum's fluffy slippers)

Matt Goodfellow

Please protect your mum's slippers before raising money for charity.