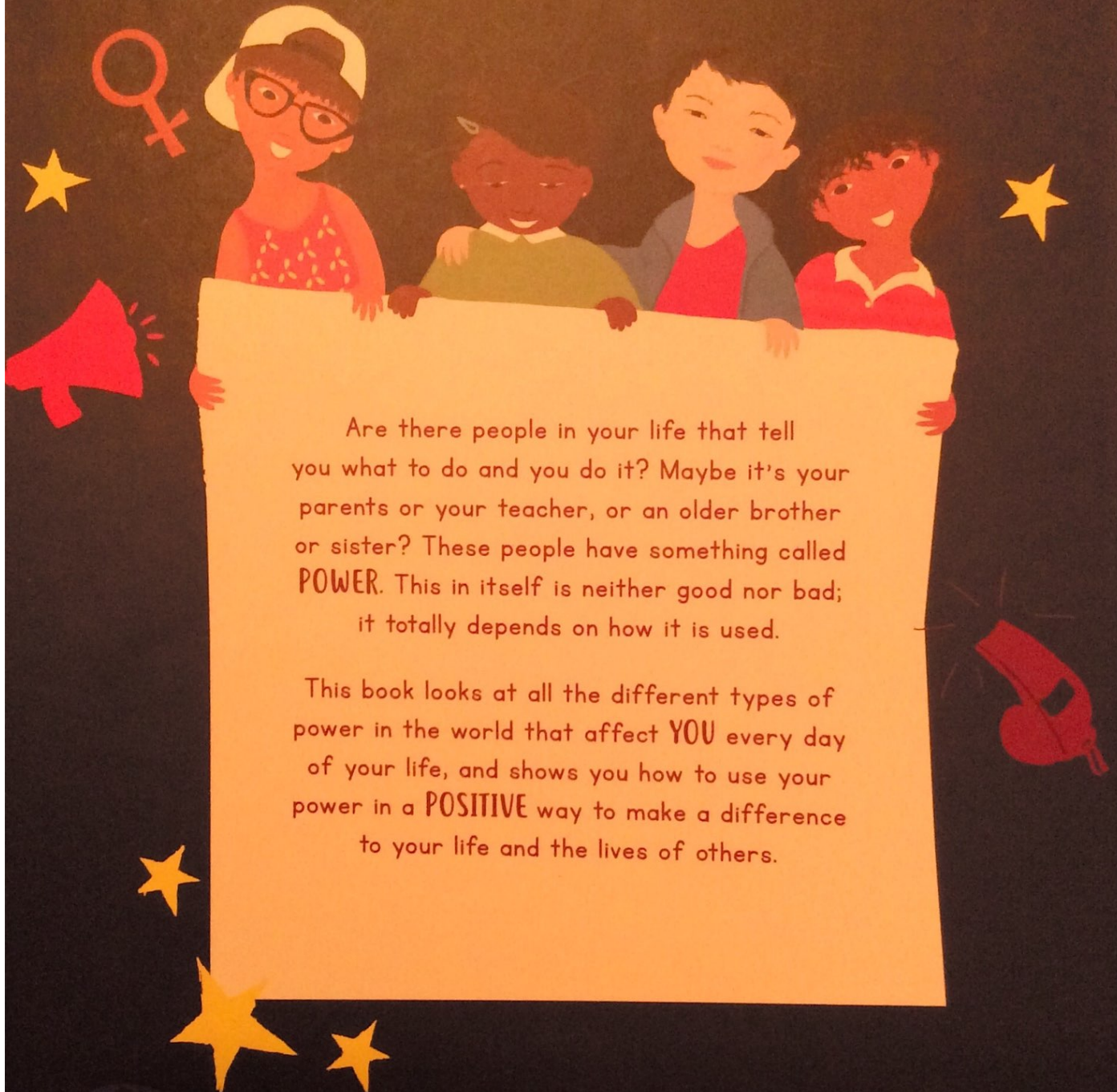


# What is it, WHO has it, and Why?



Are there people in your life that tell you what to do and you do it? Maybe it's your parents or your teacher, or an older brother or sister? These people have something called **POWER**. This in itself is neither good nor bad; it totally depends on how it is used.

This book looks at all the different types of power in the world that affect **YOU** every day of your life, and shows you how to use your power in a **POSITIVE** way to make a difference to your life and the lives of others.

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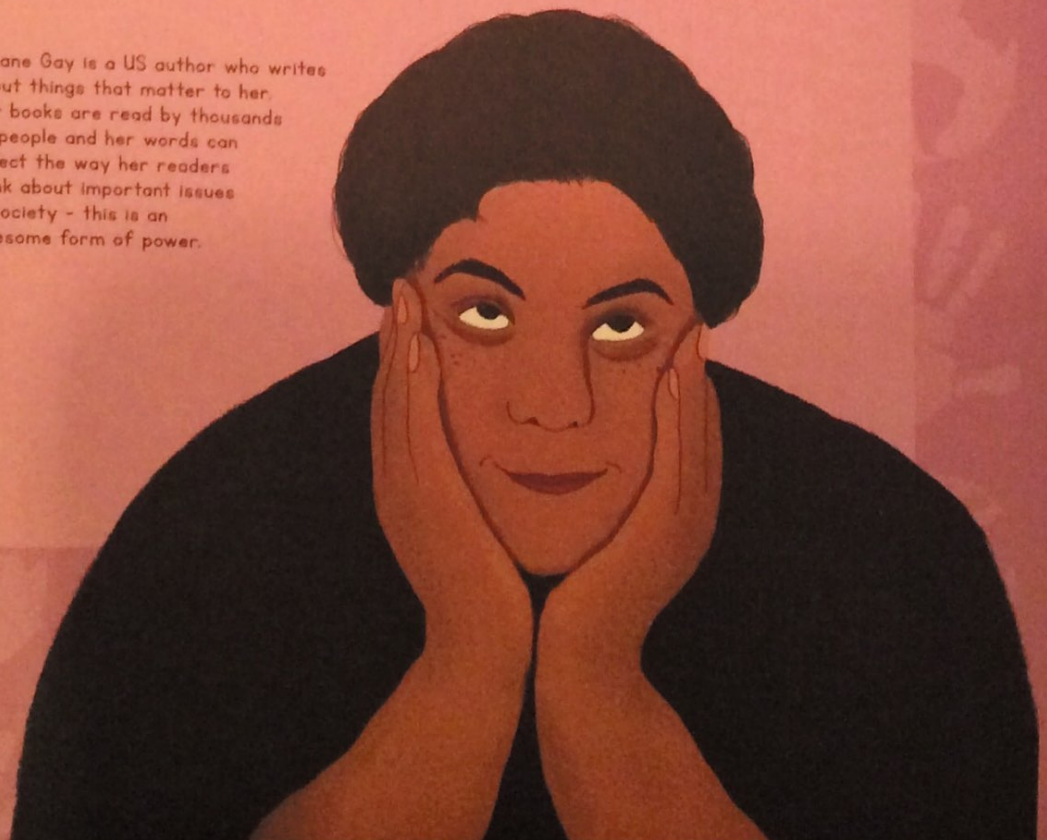
## FOREWORD BY ROXANE GAY

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When I was a kid, I hated being told what to do. I had to wake up and go to bed when my parents told me to. I had to do my chores and go to school and do my homework and keep my room clean. I had to stop teasing my brothers and come home before dark when I was playing outside. At school, my teachers were also telling me what to do, and when. I had little control over my world and it felt very unfair.

The older I got, the more I came to understand that in hating being told what to do, I was really hating how little power I had and how much power so many people had over me. I came to understand that power, in part, was about being able to have control – of my time, my body, how I lived.

Roxane Gay is a US author who writes about things that matter to her. Her books are read by thousands of people and her words can affect the way her readers think about important issues in society - this is an awesome form of power.





We deal with all kinds of power in this world. There is personal power – the power we have (or don't) in our day-to-day lives and the choices we make for ourselves. There is economic power – the power that comes with money and what we do with it. And, of course, there is political power – the power we have when we vote, when we speak up about what we care about, when we protest things we think are wrong. This is the power our government representatives have as they make laws and govern the countries we live in.

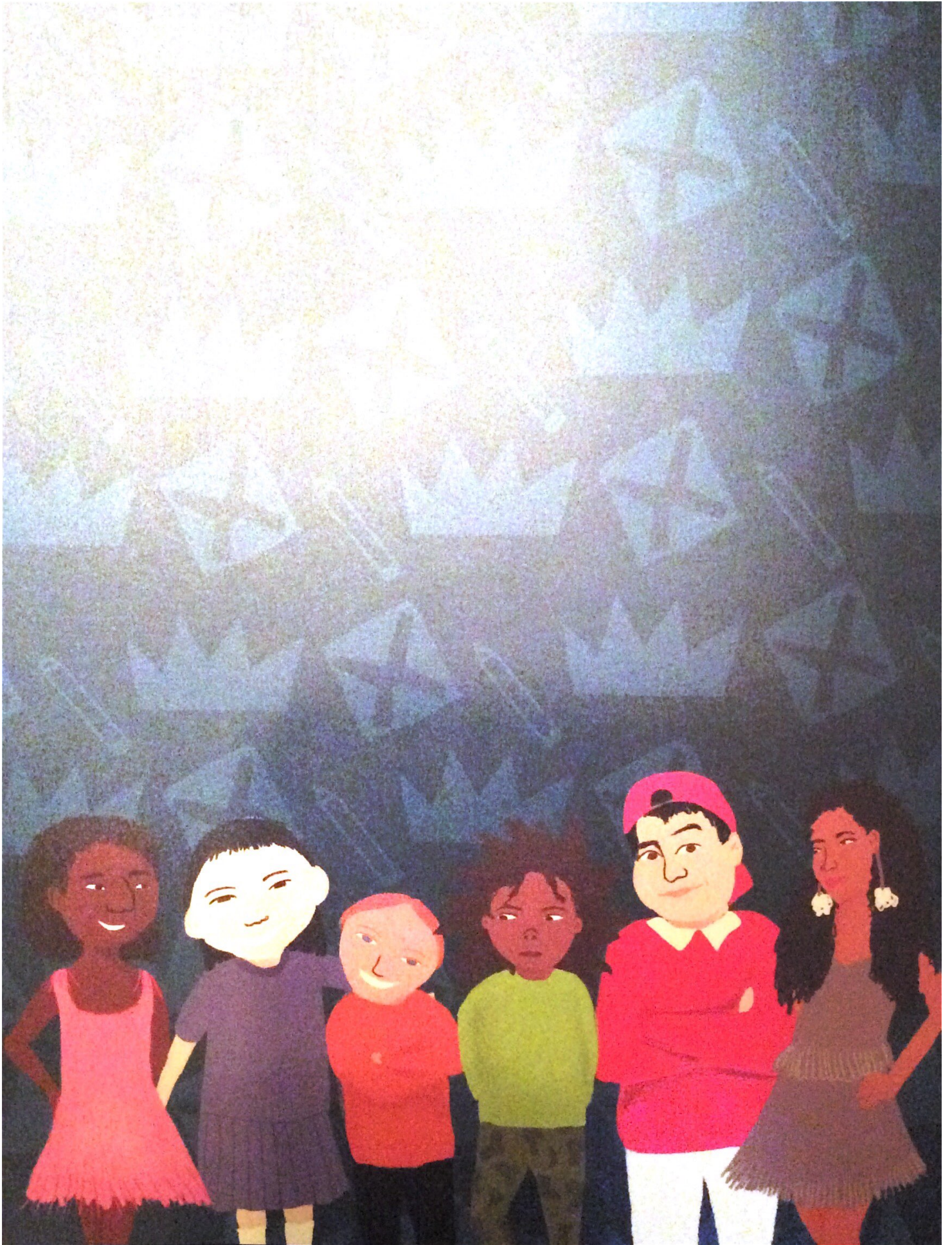
It is important to understand power and the different ways in which power can shape our lives. It is important to understand what it means to have power and what it means to not have power. Sometimes power is used for good and sometimes it is used in terrible ways – but power, in and of itself, is neither good nor bad.

There is a saying that is more than two hundred years old – 'power tends to corrupt and absolute power corrupts absolutely'. What that means is all too often, when people have power, they can sometimes do bad things with it.

And when someone has too much power, and there is no one who challenges that power, they can do a lot of harm.

But maybe, if more people understand power, they will be better able to handle the responsibility. In this book, you will learn about power, what it means to have power, and what you can do with your power to create change for yourself and the people you care about. No matter who or how old you are, you can create change in this world we live in.







# INTRODUCTION

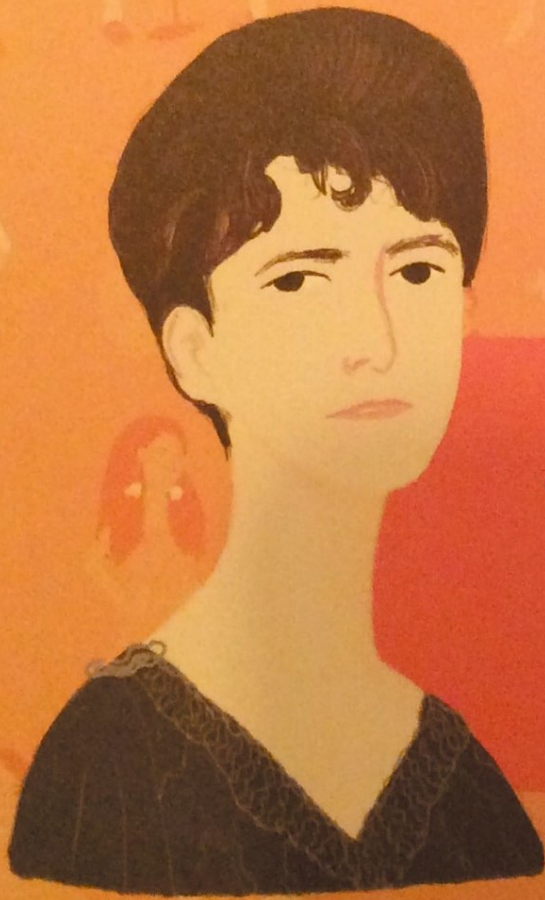
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If a person has power, it means that they can make things happen in the way that they want. Power is neither good nor bad; it totally depends on how it is used. It can be used well (like when your parents who love you ask you to stop eating all the marshmallows in the house and go to bed before 2 a. m.). It can be used badly (like when your so-called friend threatens to tell everyone your secret, unless you steal something from the shop).

Many different people, from leaders to teachers to parents to you, have power. In this book, you can find out about all the different types of power people have, and why some people don't have the power that others have. You'll learn about some amazing people who tried to change their lives and the lives of others for the better by changing the rules of power.

By the end of this book, you'll have built up a power-spotting visor that will allow you to see this invisible force. Maybe, you too can become a force for good when you learn about and use your own personal power!

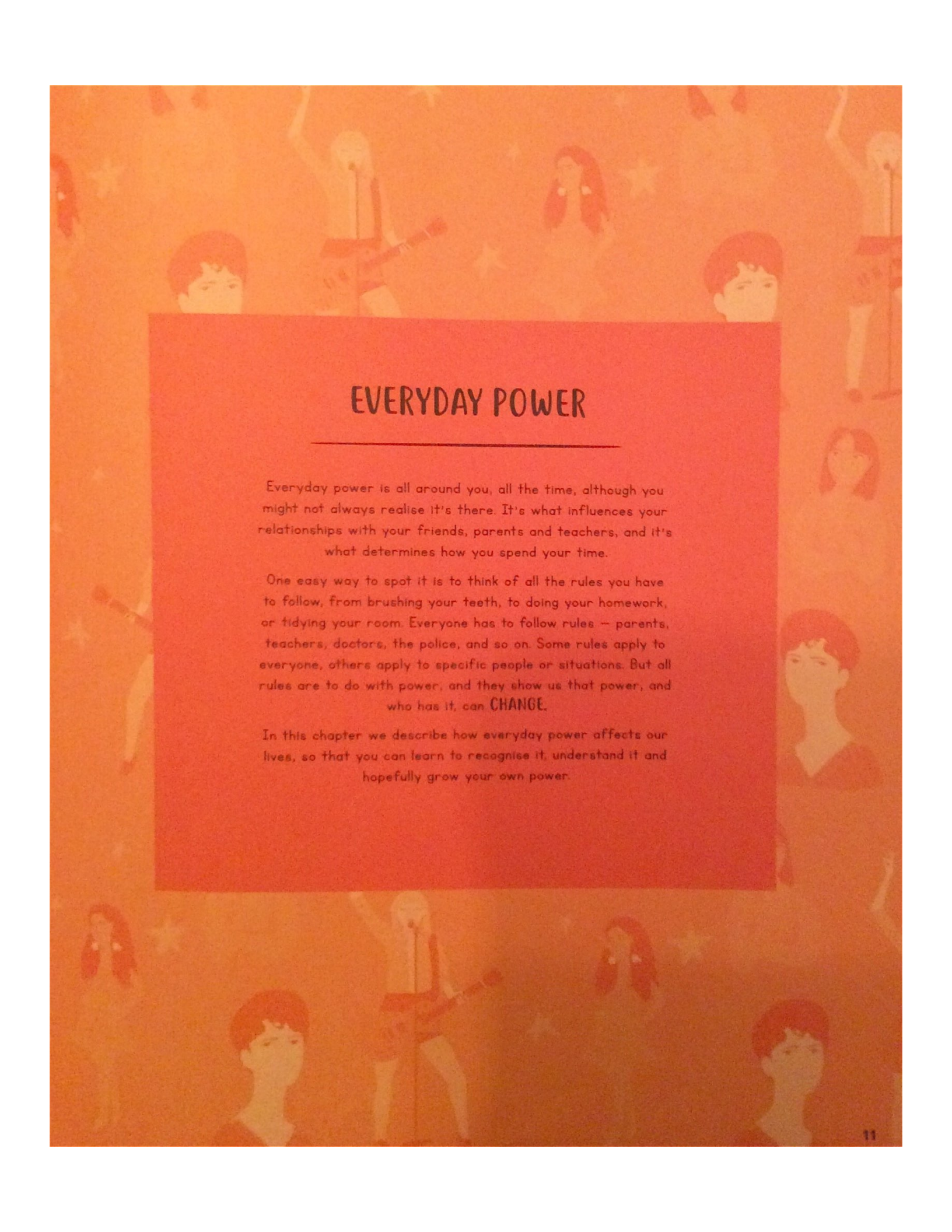




**'Humanity owes the child  
the best it has to give.'**

Eglantyne Jobb (1876-1928)





## EVERYDAY POWER

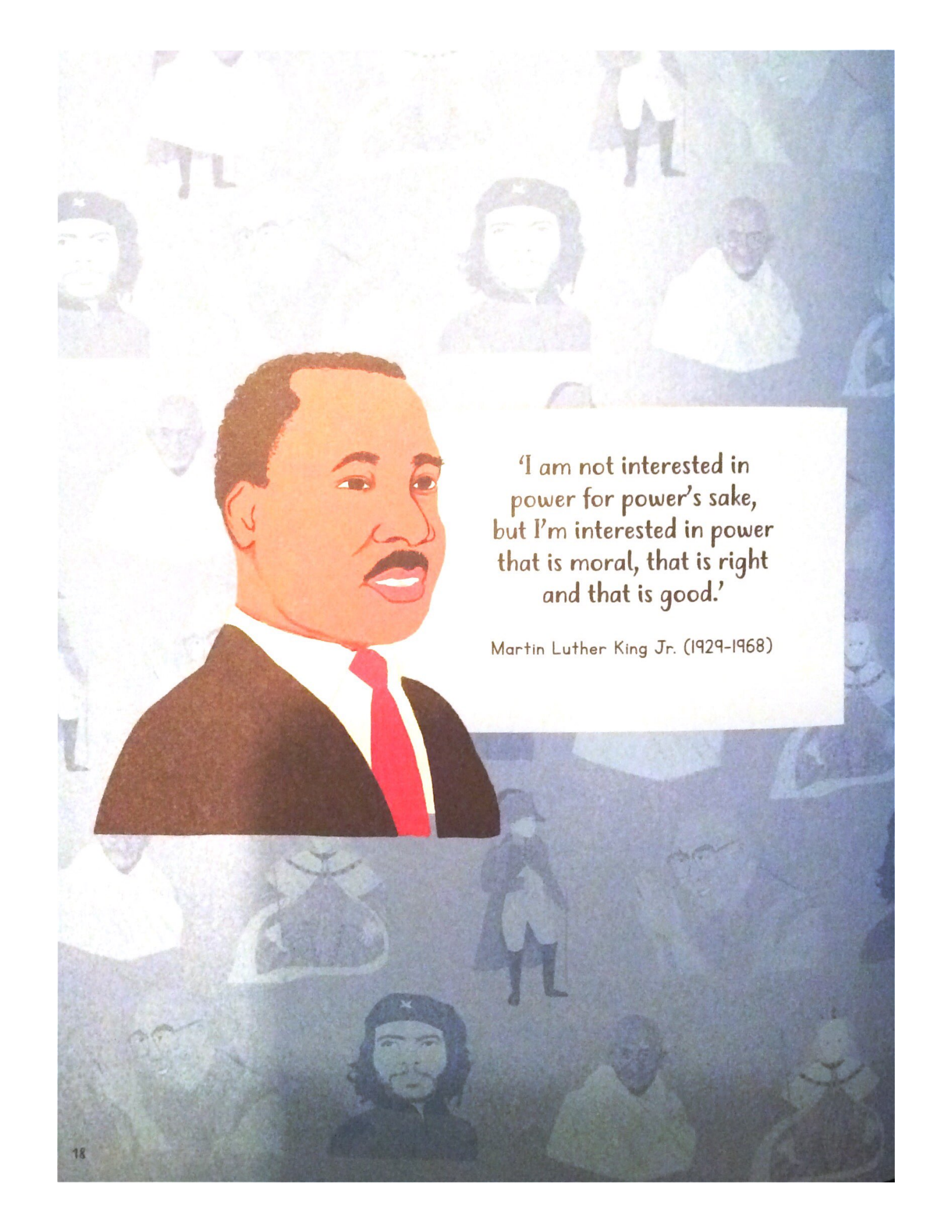
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Everyday power is all around you, all the time, although you might not always realise it's there. It's what influences your relationships with your friends, parents and teachers, and it's what determines how you spend your time.

One easy way to spot it is to think of all the rules you have to follow, from brushing your teeth, to doing your homework, or tidying your room. Everyone has to follow rules – parents, teachers, doctors, the police, and so on. Some rules apply to everyone, others apply to specific people or situations. But all rules are to do with power, and they show us that power, and who has it, can **CHANGE**.

In this chapter we describe how everyday power affects our lives, so that you can learn to recognise it, understand it and hopefully grow your own power.





'I am not interested in power for power's sake, but I'm interested in power that is moral, that is right and that is good.'

Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968)





## WORLD-CHANGING POWER

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World-changing power is the power that governs countries, starts wars and revolutions, spreads big ideas, and changes things from the top.

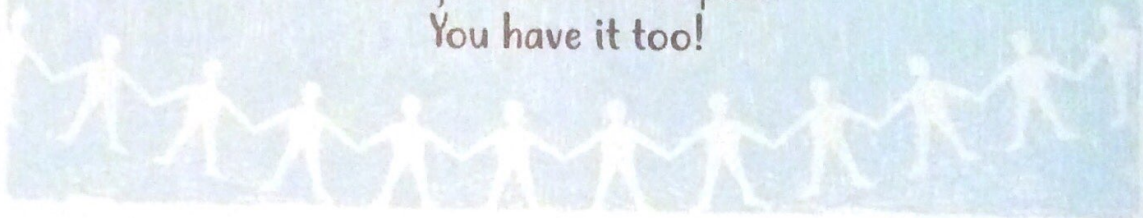
This power can do great good or terrible evil in the world. It can turn people's lives upside down, separate families and lead to children living in poverty. Or, it can end suffering, unite nations and defeat injustice.

In this chapter, we look at different examples of this awesome power, from royal rulers to radical rebels. By the end of it, you will be armed with some impressive knowledge to help you understand the world a bit better. Once you know more about how it works, you'll discover ways to **CHALLENGE** power if you want to, and stand up for what you believe in.



# PEOPLE POWER

It isn't just leaders that have power.  
You have it too!



Voting is one way people can influence how their country is run. But it's not the only way. If people are unhappy about something, they can join together to protest against it and try to change things. This could be a protest against the actions of a government – for example, people might disagree with their country's decision to go to war. Or it could be a protest about the unfair way a particular group of people is treated by society.

People can protest in many different ways. These include:

## Peaceful marches and demonstrations.

Some of the biggest protest marches around the world have involved many hundreds of thousands of people marching through the streets or countryside.

Raising awareness of issues through **social media**. This is a powerful way to spread a message to millions of people.

'Civil disobedience'. This is when a group of citizens peacefully refuses to obey the laws or demands of a government, to try to persuade the government to change the way it does things.

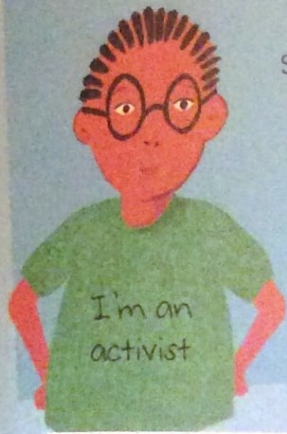
## 'Boycotting'.

This means not buying certain products because you disagree with the company that makes them or the way they are made. This could be, for example, not buying clothes that have been made using child labour.





## ARE YOU A CHANGEMAKER?



Someone who campaigns for change is known as an **activist**. All through history, ordinary people have challenged unfair systems and campaigned to change society. Activists have fought for the ideas they believed would make the world a better place for themselves and others. Their actions made them famous and we remember them today.



## THE WOMAN WHO REFUSED TO GIVE UP HER SEAT ON A BUS



'You must never be fearful about what you are doing when it is right.'

In 1955, in Alabama, USA, African-American Rosa Parks refused to give up her bus seat to a white man. It was a brave act – she was arrested for breaking the city's racial segregation laws, which kept black and white people separate. Parks belonged to a movement that supported racial equality, and a group of civil rights activists, led by church minister Martin Luther King Jr., boycotted the bus company in protest. A year later, the Supreme Court decided that segregated seating on buses was unjust. This victory inspired the US civil rights movement, which eventually ended segregation across America.

THINKING  
POINT

'You must be the change you want to see in the world.'

Mohandas Gandhi

What do you think of this statement?