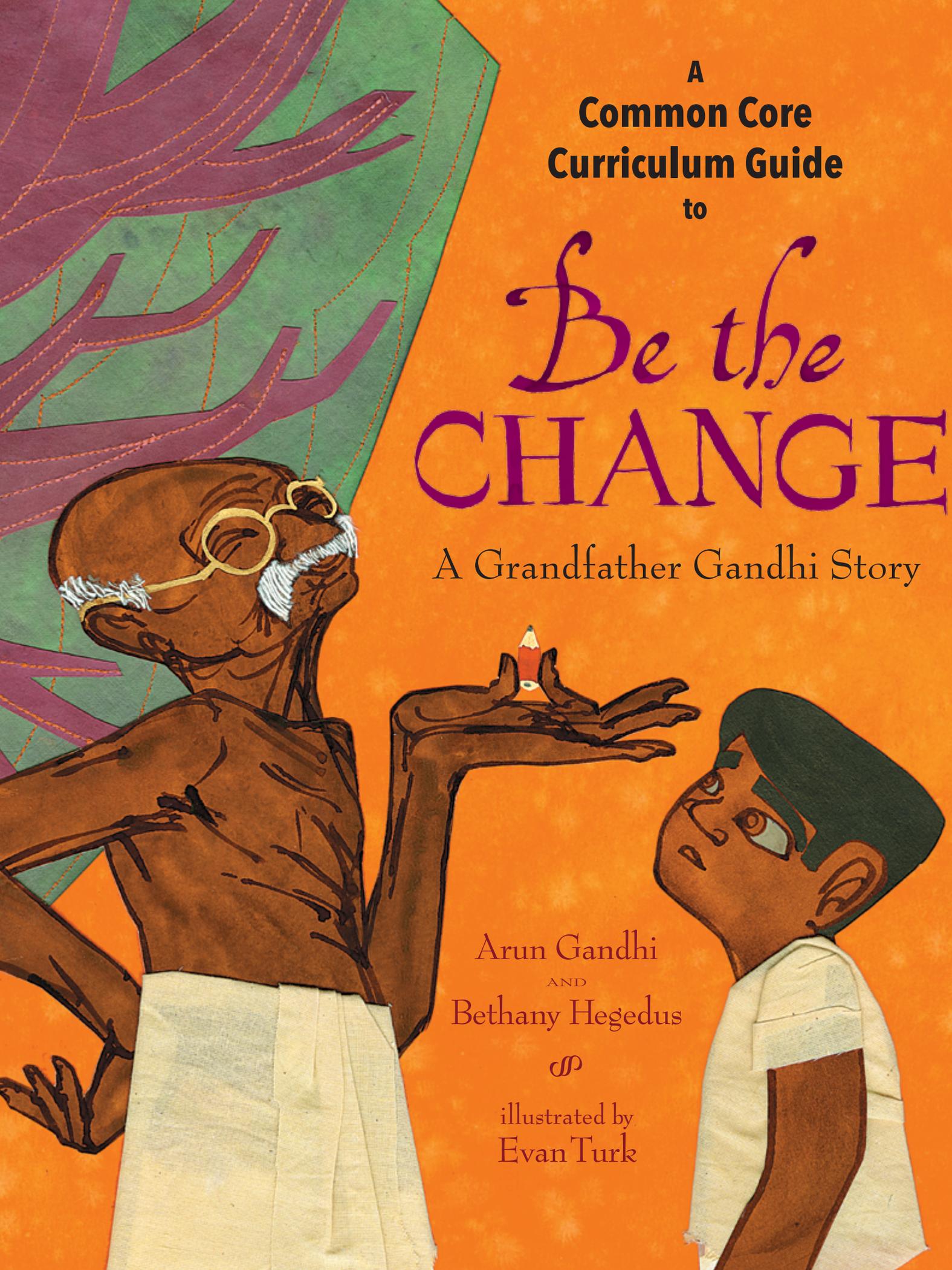


A
Common Core
Curriculum Guide
to

Be the CHANGE

A Grandfather Gandhi Story



Arun Gandhi
AND
Bethany Hegedus



illustrated by
Evan Turk

ABOUT THE BOOK

In this thought-provoking book, young Arun Gandhi learns some important lessons from his grandfather, Mahatma Gandhi. He learns that acts of passive violence—actions like wasting supplies, taking more than his fair share, or not recycling—may look like they don't hurt people or harm the earth but they do. Arun learns that in order to promote nonviolence he needs to *be the change* he wants to see in the world. He learns how important it is not to waste precious resources. As Grandfather shows him, even a pencil nub should not be thrown away.

In this companion to *Grandfather Gandhi*, readers learn more about how Gandhi helps Arun live a life of caring and nonviolence. Bold, dramatic illustrations by Evan Turk capture the way of life in Grandfather's service village, where everyone works for the good of all. It is here that Arun learns to wrestle with his thoughts and realizes that waste is a violent action. Arun realizes that he must change his own life in order to help change the world.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS/ACTIVITIES

MAIN IDEA AND KEY DETAILS

The Common Core State Standards (CCSS) suggest that students should be able to identify the main idea of a text and explain the key details that support it (RI.1–5.2), ask and answer questions about key ideas in a text (RI.1–3.1), and describe the connection between two events (RI.1.3). The activities below incorporate these skills by focusing attention on key ideas and supporting evidence.

1. What was life like in Grandfather's service village? How did people live simply and nonviolently?
2. What ideas does Arun hear that he finds confusing?
3. When Arun threw away his pencil, how did that hurt anyone?
4. Grandfather shows Arun how to draw a tree of violence. What is it? What does Arun learn by creating it?
5. What is the difference between *passive violence* and *physical violence*—the two branches of the tree of violence?
6. Draw your own tree of violence. Label the trunk of the tree *violence* and the two main branches *passive violence* (an action that looks like it hurts no one, but it hurts people and the earth) and *physical violence* (an act of violence like kicking or shoving). During the next few days, add examples of your actions that are either passive or physical violence.

Share what you have learned from making this tree. What changes can you make in your life? How are the changes you can make in your life similar to the changes you would like to see in the world?



7. Grandfather tells Arun, “Waste is a violent action.” What is the connection between *waste* and *violence*? How can waste lead to violence?
8. Explain what Grandfather meant when he said the following words to Arun: “Be the change you wish to see in the world, Arun.”
9. With a partner, write three or four questions you would like to ask Arun Gandhi. Then write down the answers you think he would give to these questions. Practice reading these questions and answers before sharing them with the class. Here are some topics you can ask about:
 - Life in Grandfather’s service village
 - How to avoid wasting resources
 - Making a tree of violence
 - Learning to *be the change*

CRAFT AND STRUCTURE

To learn about craft and structure, the CCSS asks us to help students learn and understand vocabulary words and phrases (RI.1–3.4), think about the features of nonfiction text (RI.1–3.5), and assess the author’s point of view (RI.2–3.6). The questions and activities below emphasize these understandings.

10. In the sentences below, the bold words are used in interesting ways. Discuss how these words help you understand the story.
 - Life at Sevagram ashram, Grandfather’s service village, **revolved around** the sun.
 - Peace descended on us **like the rays of the sun**.
 - Like the soaking rains that turned the musty earth lush and green, **new growth finally sprouted** in me.

11. From Confusion to Understanding: Arun Learns about Waste

In the beginning of the book, Arun is **confused** about why he should vow not to waste. Over time, Grandfather helps him **understand**. What evidence can you find in the beginning of the story that Arun was confused about the vow to not waste? What evidence can you find of Arun’s growing understanding? List this evidence in the chart on page 4. Two examples are done for you.

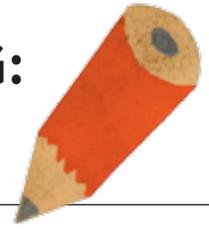
After completing the chart, discuss how Arun’s understanding of the vow not to waste changed over time.

12. A Note from the Authors and the “Be the Change” Pledge

In the Authors’ Note, the authors give us additional information that adds to our understanding of the book. Share what you learned from the Authors’ Note by discussing the following topics:

- The Authors:
 - ◊ Who are the authors?
 - ◊ How did they meet?
 - ◊ Why did they decide to work together?
 - Passive Violence and Physical Violence
 - ◊ What is passive violence?
 - ◊ How can we shut down passive violence?
 - “Be the Change” Pledge
 - ◊ What does each of the four sentences of the pledge mean? Explain each one in your own words.
 - ◊ What goals do you have for yourself? What can you do to *be the change*?
13. The illustrations in this book were made using a variety of materials that include watercolor, paper collage, cotton fabric, cotton, gouache, white china marker, colored drawing pencils, and embroidery thread. Using your own mix of materials, make an illustration showing what it means to *be the change*. What are your goals?

FROM CONFUSION TO UNDERSTANDING: ARUN LEARNS ABOUT WASTE



ARUN IS CONFUSED

- Arun says, “I wasn’t sure how not wasting food or other items made life nonviolent...”
- “Yet when Grandfather spoke, something in me stilled, even if afterward my thoughts grew cloudy.”

ARUN’S UNDERSTANDING GROWS

- “Grandfather suggested I make a tree of violence...Together we created a tree and pasted it on the wall. Each day I added my thoughts and actions to it.”
- “Soon I could see how throwing away my pencil could hurt others.”

INTEGRATION OF INFORMATION

The Common Core State Standards ask students to use both the illustrations and details to describe key ideas and to show how images contribute to and clarify a text (RI.1–4.7).

14. Words and Illustrations that Focus on Arun's Feelings of Confusion.

In the beginning of the book, the words and the illustrations show how Arun is confused about the vow not to waste. You can see this in the two-page spread that begins with this sentence: "I stood with them and listened."



Discuss how the words and illustration work together on this two-page spread to show Arun's confusion:

- What information is only given in the written text?
- What information is only given in the illustration?
- How do the written text and the illustration work together?



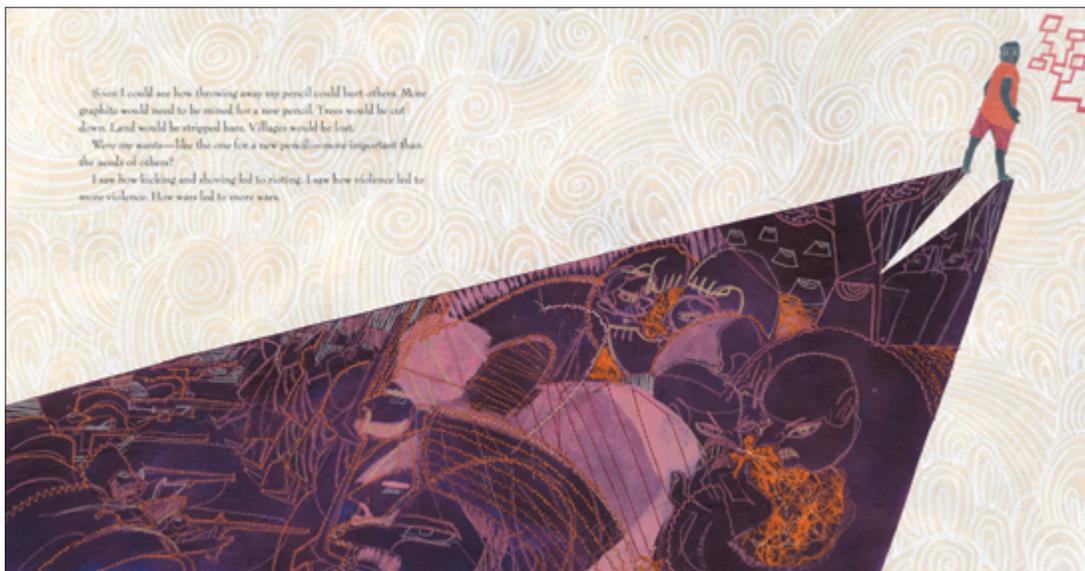
Discuss how the words and illustration work together on this two-page spread to show Arun's confusion:

- What information is only given in the written text?
- What information is only given in the illustration?
- How do the written text and the illustration work together?

15. **Words and Illustrations that Focus on Arun's Growing Understanding.**

Toward the end of the book, we see how Arun begins to understand why the vow not to waste is important. Examine the two spreads below and discuss how the words and the illustrations work together to show Arun's growing understanding. For each two-page spread discuss the following questions:

- What information is only given in the written text?
- What information is only given in the illustration?
- How do the written text and the illustration work together?



WRITING

The Common Core State Standards emphasize writing to express an opinion (W.1.1, 3), writing to inform or explain (W.1 – 3.2), and writing to recount sequenced events (W.1–3.3). The writing activities below reflect these standards.

16. The authors suggest that change is needed in the world and that we can make a difference. We can be the change we want to see in this world by using our talents and abilities. Explain why you agree or disagree with them.
17. How did Grandfather teach Arun the deeper meaning of the rule not to waste? Explain three things Grandfather did and how they helped Arun.
18. **Writing a List Poem about “Being the Change.”**
How will you be the change you wish to see in the world? How will you change yourself? What can you do?

Think about the possible changes you can make in your life: avoiding waste, recycling, being kind and thoughtful, respecting others, donating to others, inventing something useful. How will you begin?

Write a poem about how you plan to be the change. Here is a guide to follow.

- Line 1:** Explain what “be the change” means to you.
Lines 2–5: On each of these lines list a different change you will make in your life.
Line 6: Tell how you think the changes you listed will make a difference.

Here is one example of a “be the change” list poem:

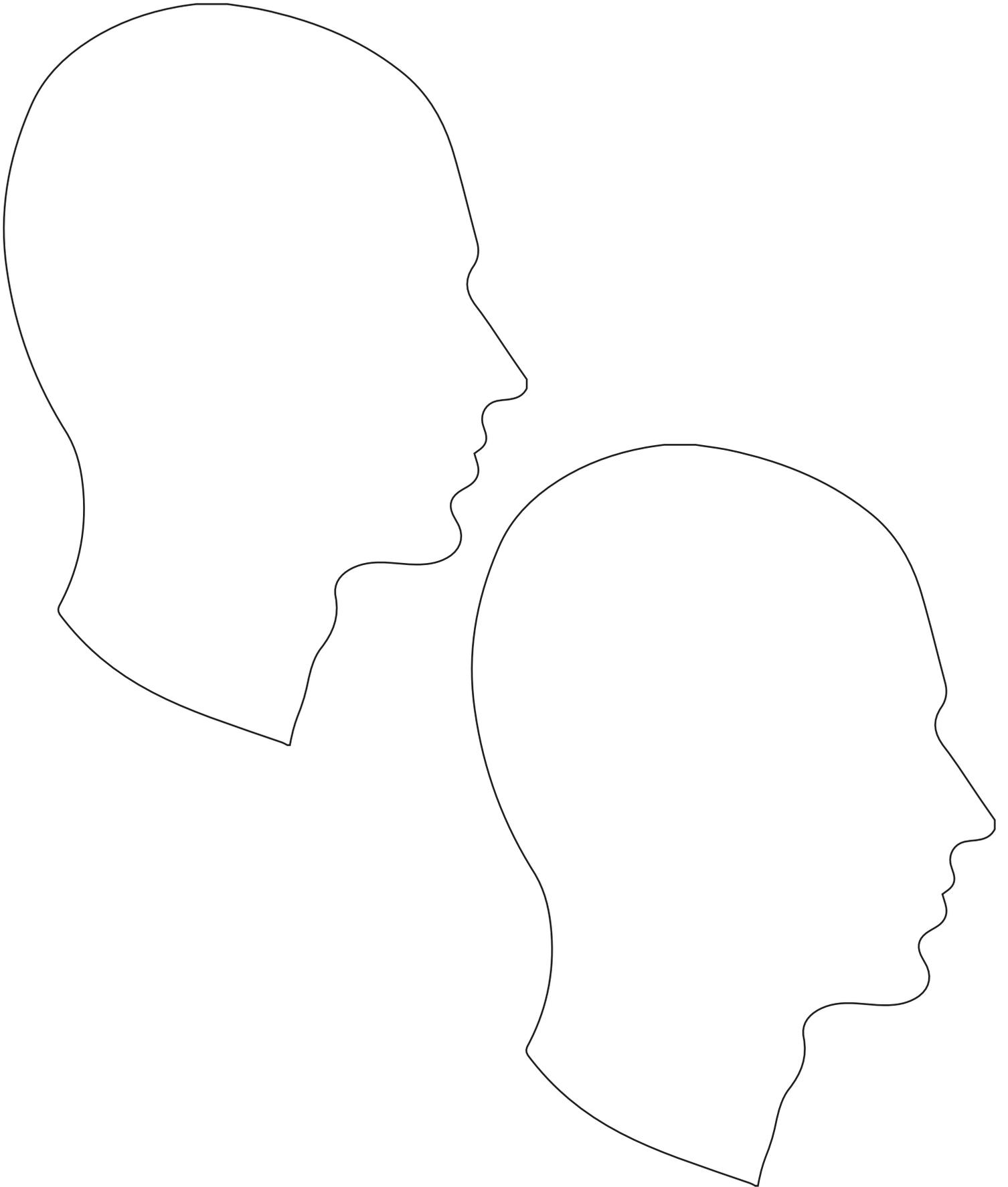
Being the Change

I am going to be the change because I want to change the world:
I will save water by taking shorter showers.
I will recycle as much as possible instead of throwing things away.
I will be kinder to my friends and family and not call people hurtful names.
I will donate to others who need things more than I do.
These changes to my life come first. Changing the world begins with me.

19. How did Arun change from the beginning of the book to the end? Start by drawing two open-mind portraits on the following page. In the first, show Arun’s thoughts about waste in the beginning of the book. In the second, show what he thought about waste by the end of the book. Then, using the information in your open-mind portraits, write about how Arun’s ideas about waste changed.



OPEN MIND PORTRAITS



BACKGROUND MATERIAL FOR TEACHERS AND LIBRARIANS

Before, during, and after reading the book, you can offer students additional background information that will provide a foundation for understanding the book. The resources below help explain Gandhi's life and mission and provide additional information about the authors and illustrator of the book:

- [Find out more about the Be the Change Movement](#)
- [Listen to Arun Gandhi discuss Grandfather Gandhi](#)
- [Learn more about illustrator Evan Turk by reading author Bethany Hegedus interview with him](#)
- [Find out more about author Bethany Hegedus by visiting her website](#)
- [Learn additional information about illustrator Evan Turk by watching a video](#)
- [Read a biography of Mahatma Gandhi](#)
- [Find and share selected Mahatma Gandhi quotes](#)
- [Watch videos of Mahatma Gandhi](#)



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