



Greta Thunberg

Climate change and global warming have been hot political topics for a while now: tens of thousands of people regularly gather around the world to make their voices heard on the subject. One person has done more than most to raise awareness of what she sees as the main issues.

Greta Thunberg was born in Sweden in 2003. She has a condition called Asperger's syndrome, which can affect how she sees the world and communicates with other people. Rather than seeing it as something that she "suffers from", Greta refers to this as her superpower. One of the effects of Asperger's can be a tendency to see situations as black and white; something that Greta says is critical when it comes to climate change as there are "no grey areas".

Like most children, Greta learned about the Earth and the world around her when she was a young girl. By the time she was 11-years-old, she was so sad and angry about climate change that she stopped speaking and eating for a while and lost ten kilograms in weight in two months. She was very nearly admitted to hospital.

Perhaps the most defining moment in Greta's life came in August 2018, at the age of 15. She had watched the teenage activists across the United States of America who were protesting to end gun violence and decided to do something similar for climate change. She grabbed a large piece of cardboard and wrote out "School Strike For Climate". She skipped school and sat outside the Swedish parliament until they began to take notice.

In a very short space of time, the Swedish and then international media picked up the story, and tens of thousands of children began taking up her call and striking. The hashtag #FridaysforFuture took off, and children began using Friday as a day to skip school to protest.

By March 2019, over 1.5million people from around the world were communicating and coordinating the first Global Strike for Climate. People in 125 different countries took part. Since then, Greta has spoken in front of parliaments around the world, been the subject of numerous books and articles and nominated for the Nobel Peace Prize.



Later on, in 2019, Greta travelled on a solar and wind-powered boat across the Atlantic to give testimony at the US House Select Committee on the Climate Crisis. The journey from the UK to New York took her 15 days but was powered by entirely renewable energy.

As a result of her actions, Greta Thunberg has been a direct inspiration for millions of people of all ages from around the world. She has received support from leading politicians and top scientists.

RETRIEVAL FOCUS

1. When was Greta born?
2. What does Greta call her “superpower”?
3. How old was Greta when she first skipped school to strike?
4. Which hashtag was Greta responsible for helping popularise?
5. Which important prize has Greta been nominated for?

VIPERS QUESTIONS

S

What happened when Greta turned 11?

I

What was important about Greta’s journey from the UK to New York in 2019?

V

Find and copy a work with a definition closest to “often does something this way”.

S

What did Greta do after seeing American children protesting?

V

Which word tells you that Greta has been the person written about in lots of books?