

I How can we make a difference?

Key Words

1 Preview the Key Words.



gather



abandoned



lot



weeds



scatter



raise money



overhear



flyer



brainstorm



ideal

2 Read the definitions and write the Key Words.

- a to collect together _____
- b left alone and not taken care of _____
- c the best possible thing or situation _____
- d to collect money for a cause _____
- e to think of ideas in a group _____
- f to drop or spread randomly _____

Pre-reading

3 Read the title and look at the pictures on pages 5–9. Write two questions you have about the text.

- a _____
- b _____

4 Listen and read.

Everybody's Park

By Steph Kilen · Illustrated by Sheila Cabeza de Vaca

It was the big day: the day work was to begin on the new community park. Paola and James were getting work gloves while their parents gathered tools. The abandoned lot had been there for years, but it had gotten worse and worse. The weeds and grass had grown to their knees, and garbage was scattered all around. The nearby walls and fences had been spray-painted with graffiti. There was even an old tire and a ripped-up couch missing a cushion. Kids tried to play in the area, but their parents warned them against it because of all the broken glass on the ground. “But where else can we play?” James and Paola had asked.

One day, a few months ago, James and Paola were talking about where they could meet some friends. James's cousin had a small park in her neighborhood. “There's equipment for climbing and trees and benches. There's a wall that's like the chalkboard in our classroom for drawing on with chalk. We played there all afternoon. I wish we had a space like that,” said James.

“Too bad all we have is that terrible lot,” Paola said.

“Wouldn't it be great if that was a park?”

James and Paola told James's mom their idea.

“Cleaning it up would take some work, and we could do that,” she said. “But the equipment would cost money.”





The next day, James and Paola were hanging out at the playground, talking about how they might **raise money** to buy the equipment. Ben and Ahmed **overheard** them and were curious. “We want to build a park, but can’t figure out how to raise the money,” Paola said.

Ben suggested a lemonade stand. Ahmed said, “What about a car wash?”

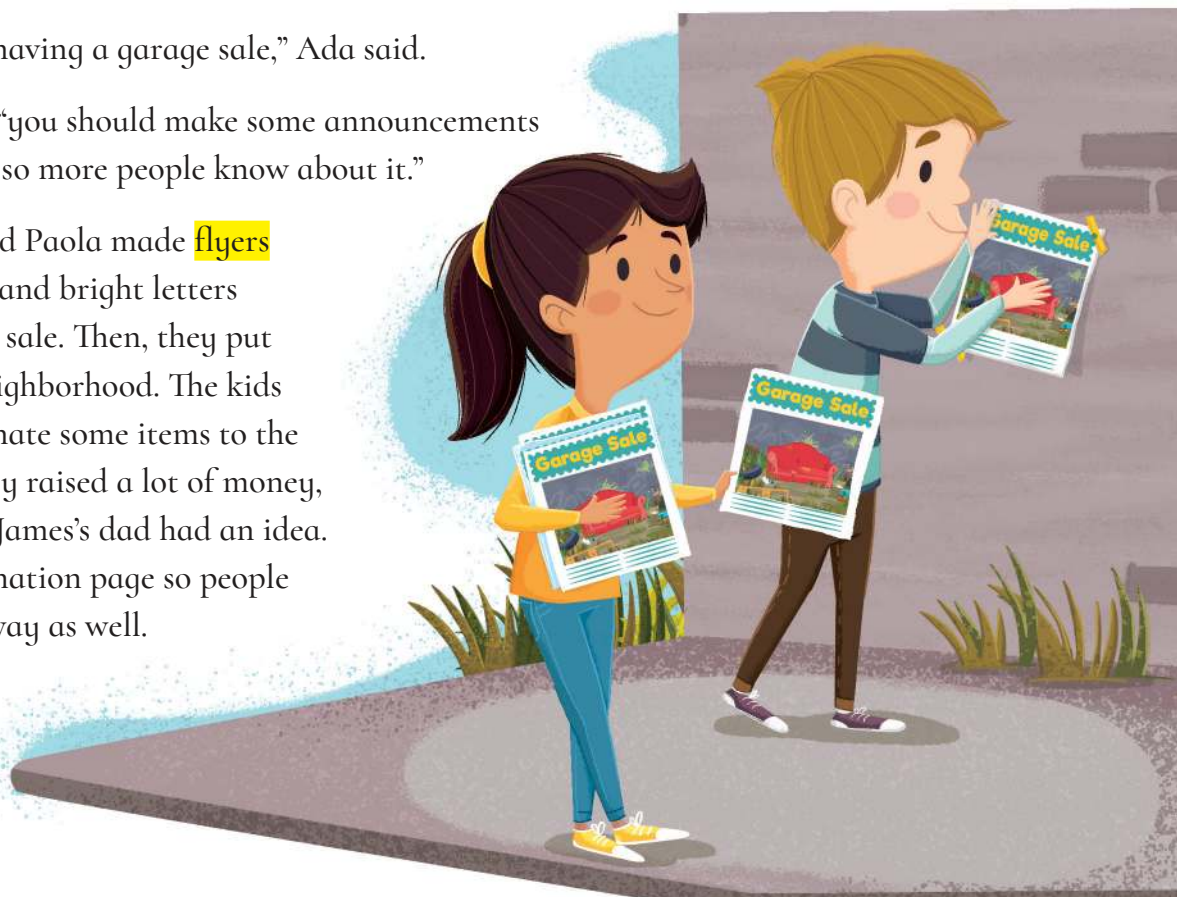
Ada, who had been listening, interrupted. “We could gather all the toys and clothes we’ve grown out of and have a garage sale!”

Every weekend they tried one of the ideas. The first weekend the lemonade stand raised a little money, but not even enough to buy the wood for one bench. The next weekend they tried a bake sale and made a sign that said, “Help Build Our Park!” Ada and Ahmed were sure to tell everyone what the money from the sale was for. “Are you going to do another sale?” Mr. Barns asked.

“Next weekend we are having a garage sale,” Ada said.

“Well,” Mr. Barns said, “you should make some announcements to put up around town so more people know about it.”

The next day, James and Paola made **flyers** with a photo of the lot and bright letters announcing the garage sale. Then, they put them up around the neighborhood. The kids got their parents to donate some items to the garage sale as well. They raised a lot of money, but they needed more. James’s dad had an idea. He set up an online donation page so people could contribute that way as well.



As word spread about what they were doing, they raised more and more money, and more and more people wanted to get involved. Some gave extra money. Some donated materials for the project. In a few months, their fundraising efforts had been successful, and they had enough money to begin their project. They knew they had to clean up the space, but then what would they do?

They organized a meeting to **brainstorm** ideas for making the park an **ideal** environment. They all agreed there should be some playground equipment, but there were some other great ideas, too! Ben liked to read more than climb. So, he suggested a weatherproof box where people could leave and take books. He also suggested a hammock for reading in. Ada thought it would be fun to put up some bird feeders and birdhouses. Ahmed thought the park would look nicer with some flowers. “And how about a vegetable garden?” Paola said. “Our parents are always telling us how important vegetables are,” she said, and they all laughed but agreed it was a good idea. James suggested a chalkboard wall like the one at his cousin’s park. “Maybe then there wouldn’t be so much graffiti,” he said.

They had the money and all the plans, so it was time to get started. At first it wasn’t much fun. The kids helped pick up the trash and pull weeds and vines, while their parents moved the larger trash and cut down a rusted piece of fence. It was hard work, but by the end of the day, the lot looked much better. “There’s still so much to do!” James said. The ground was hard, and grass grew in patches in some places, while other spots were full of stones.



The next workday, the kids moved stones and raked up the lot. Ahmed's mom came by with some snacks and juice and a big roll of paper. She spread it out on the ground and invited the kids to gather around it. They looked at the squares and circles with some confusion until Ahmed said, "It's the plan for the park!" His mom, who was a designer, had made plans for the space so they knew what went where and what they had to do. She pointed out where the equipment, trees, birdhouses, and chalkboard would go. She showed them where they needed to do some digging to plant grass and plants. Paola, James, and their parents handed out shovels, and everyone got to work. "Now, I can see it!" Ada said, and they all agreed.

For weeks they worked laying out the park. They built the benches, birdhouses, and boxes for plants. Then, they dug holes and shoveled dirt. Green Thumb Greenhouse donated grass, plants, and a few small trees. "How are we going to hang a hammock on those tiny trees?" Ben asked. "Just wait," Paola's mom said with a wink. And they all got to work planting. It seemed like all the work was done, but Ben's dad said they had one more week of work ahead of them. When they arrived at the site the next week, there were no tools or gloves, just some snacks. That's when the best part happened: the swings and climbing equipment arrived! The kids helped unload the trucks, and the parents set up the equipment.

When they were done, there was one more box in the truck, and Paola's mom asked Ben to get it. Ben and Ahmed opened it and found several colorful hammocks. "Where did these come from?" asked Ben. "Mrs. Parson donated these. She brought them from Mexico!" Paola's mom replied. "But where can we hang these?" Ahmed asked. "Look!" James's dad said, and pointed to several hooks on the equipment, fence, and nearby wall. Ahmed's mom had designed it so the hammocks could be moved around. The kids grabbed the hammocks and raced to hang them in different spots.





Throughout all the work, Ada's dad had been digging a shallow path through the space. While the kids swung in their hammocks, admiring all they had done, Paola's dad pulled up in his company's cement truck, and Ada's mom pulled up in their van. "What's that for?" James asked, pointing to the cement truck. "Ada!" Paola said. "We're making a path so Ada can use the park, too!" The door on the van opened, and Ada came out on a special ramp for her wheelchair. All the friends rushed to greet her.

"This is so cool!" she exclaimed. "I wish I could have helped."

"You can!" said Paola. "Next weekend we are going to paint the benches and birdhouses."

The next week, the neighbors had a big party in the park. Everyone clapped when they raised the sign that said "Everybody's Park." The kids, with splotches of paint on their arms and cheeks, read the names of everyone who contributed and revealed a sign with their names. It seemed like everything was done, but the kids had one more idea! They invited everyone to join them there the following weekend for an art project. James said, "We're going to paint garbage cans to look like animals and monsters to help keep the park clean!"



Key Words

1 Use the Key Words to solve the riddles.

a Wild plants growing free.
They're everywhere to see.

d Sisters are talking to one another.
You catch a few words about
their brother.

b Hand it out or send by mail
So they'll fly to your sale.

e You can lend us a hand!
Clean this empty piece of land.

c More ideas we can form
When we all try to
_____.

f Many peanuts we

so the squirrels and birds will
get fatter.

Comprehension

2 Answer the questions.

- a Why did the children need to raise money? _____
- b Who designed the plan for the park? _____
- c When did the children have the bake sale? _____
- d Where did the small trees come from? _____
- e How did the children hang up the hammocks? _____
- f What did they paint on the garbage cans? _____

3  Look at the questions you wrote in Activity 3 on page 4. Which ones were answered in the story? Write the answers.

4 Write two new questions that are answered in the text. Use *who*, *what*, *when*, *where*, *why*, or *how*.

a _____?

b _____?

Digging Deeper

5 Complete the graphic organizer by matching the people to their contributions.

Mr. Barns	Paola's dad Ben and Paola	Mrs. Parson Ahmed's mom	Green Thumb Ada's dad	Greenhouse
Donated Items		Donated Expertise		Donated Work
_____		_____		_____
_____		_____		_____
_____		_____		_____

6 Write four other ways different people contributed to the park.

- a _____
- b _____
- c _____
- d _____

7 Do you think "Everybody's Park" is a good name? Why or why not?

Personalization

8 Circle problems in your local community.

abandoned animals

no green spaces

no places for kids to play

litter

graffiti

9 Decide which problem you want to solve or propose a different problem in your local community. Answer the questions.

- a Who would you involve to help you?

- b What would you do?

- c How would you raise money for the project?

- d What would you call your project?

I How can we make a difference?

Key Words

1 Preview the Key Words.



activist



protest



reduce



emissions



avoid



crisis



refugee



carbon footprint



severe



impact

2 Match.

activist

crisis

carbon footprint

reduce

severe

avoid

noun

verb

adjective

to try to not do something

very bad or harmful

to make smaller

a dangerous situation

a person who calls for strong action or change

the amount of greenhouse gas a person puts into the environment

Pre-reading

3 Look at pages 13–15 and read the captions. Answer the questions and complete the sentences.

- a Who is the text about? _____
- b Her goal is _____
- c The text wants to **inform** / **entertain**.
- d Two problems the text tells us about are _____

4 Listen and read.



The Power to Change the World

By S.B. Harris

Can just one person make a difference?

Greta Thunberg

Born: 2003, Sweden

Occupation: Student, Climate **Activist**

In many ways, Greta Thunberg is like any other teenager. She has two pet dogs, and she likes to eat noodles. In other ways, she is less typical. Greta is an activist, and she is famous. She also has attention deficit hyperactivity disorder (ADHD) and autism. Greta has a unique way of seeing things, and that helps her focus on making a difference in the world.

Greta began a **protest** in August 2018. That summer, Sweden experienced the country's hottest temperatures in hundreds of years. Greta became so worried that she went on strike. She didn't attend school for three weeks. Instead, she sat alone outside Sweden's parliament building and held up a large sign that said, "School Strike for Climate" in Swedish. She wanted the Swedish government to **reduce** carbon **emissions**, a type of air pollution that causes global warming. (In case you're wondering, Greta wasn't just lazy or trying to **avoid** school. She did all her schoolwork on the street!)

Then, people shared Greta's message on the Internet. Soon, many more people joined her protest. Greta's strike was so successful that it turned into an international movement called Fridays for Future. By September 20, 2019, more than four million people in 170 countries joined Greta in the Global Climate Strike!

