

The Story of Change

Challenges to Change

1. When people talk about changing the world, the focus is often on giving individuals the opportunity to make different choices for themselves. Why is it a problem to try to make change solely by focusing on individual action or personal choice?

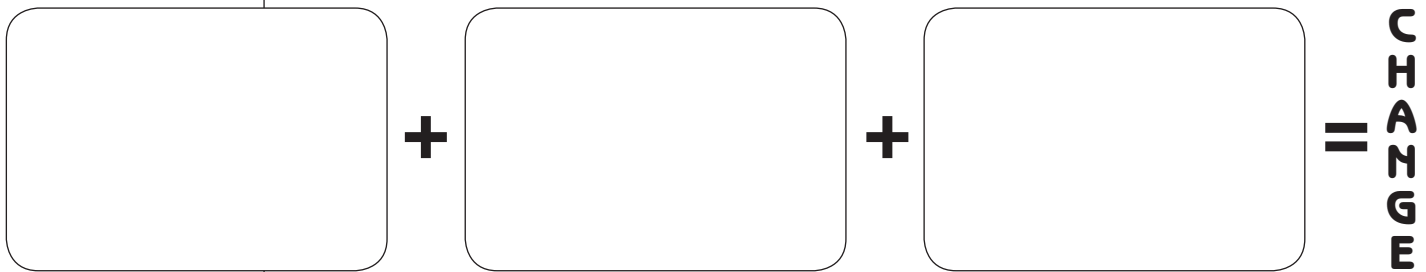
2. We often hear that we can help save the planet by changing how we shop. Yet “green” products, such as organic food or energy efficient home appliances, are usually more expensive than other options. Is this method of change equally accessible to everyone? Does it distribute the benefits and burdens of adapting to climate change fairly? Why or why not?

3. If we wanted to create a new kind of economy that focused on the wellbeing of people and the planet, would the presence of the old economy help or hinder the change? Why?

Moving Forward

4. What can people do beyond buying green products or making personal choices to help make successful change?

5. Complete the elements for change diagram below, as proposed in *The Story of Change*. Use your own words in the boxes, not their pictures.



6. Complete the sentences:

A **big idea** doesn't just make things a little better for a few people, it makes things a lot better for _____. When Martin Luther King Jr. organized his march on Washington he only had 23% popular support, yet was successful in the end. Although not everyone supported the civil rights movement, the people who did worked _____ and took collective _____.

7. What do you like to do and what are you good at? What kinds of skills could you bring to a change movement?

Youth4Tap

1. What was Youth4Tap's **big idea** for their school?

2. What different actions did they take? How did these actions involve or engage different groups of people?

3. How are the students going beyond the personal choice model to changing the systems at their school?

4. The two principles of climate justice are that actions need to 1) rise to tackle the challenges of climate change, and 2) be fair, and make life better for everyone, including the people who are most poor or vulnerable. Does Youth4Tap's initiative achieve this? In what ways?

Answer key

The Story of Change

1. When people talk about changing the world, the focus is often on giving individuals the opportunity to make different choices for themselves. Why is it a problem to try to make change solely by focusing on individual action or personal choice?

The systems and environments we live in have a much greater impact on what happens in the world than what we choose to do individually; systems greatly influence our personal choices; we can have a greater impact collectively than individually.

2. We often hear that we can help save the planet by changing how we shop. Yet “green” products, such as organic food or energy efficient home appliances, are usually more expensive than other options. Is this method of change equally accessible to everyone? Does it distribute the benefits and burdens of adapting to climate change fairly? Why or why not?

No—people with less money would have to take on more of a financial burden to “go green.” This extra burden might be a barrier that prevents some from living a healthier, more sustainable lifestyle and excludes them from being part of making change.

3. If we wanted to create a new kind of economy that focused on the wellbeing of people and the planet, would the presence of the old economy help or hinder the change? Why?

The presence of the old economy would hinder the change—old systems tend to try to perpetuate themselves and resist the new.

4. What can people do beyond buying green products or making personal choices to help make successful change?

People can work together to try to change systems or policies.

5. Complete the elements for change diagram below, as proposed in The Story of Change. Use your own words in the boxes, not their pictures.

A big idea that helps everyone a lot + a group of people who work together as a collective + people who take action together to change systems = CHANGE.

6. Complete the sentences: A **big idea** doesn't just make things a little better for a few people, it makes things a lot better for **EVERYONE**. When Martin Luther King Jr. organized his march on Washington he only had 23% popular support, yet was successful in the end. Although not everyone supported the civil rights movement, the people who did worked **TOGETHER** and took collective **ACTION**.

7. What do you like to do and what are you good at? What kinds of skills could you bring to a change movement?

Answers will vary.

Youth4Tap

1. What was Youth4Tap's big idea for their school?

Eliminate plastic water bottles at their school.

2. What different actions did they take? How did these actions involve or engage different groups of people?

They organized a water information week to engage students (both through coordinating and attending events); they lobbied administration and the school board to make changes to the school facilities.

3. How are the students going beyond the personal choice model to changing the systems at their school?

The students worked to change the physical environment of their school by installing new water fountains. Not just leaving it to individuals, they remade a system where it is now easier for everyone to engage in reducing waste and consumption.

4. The two principles of climate justice are that actions need to 1) rise to tackle the challenges of climate change, and 2) be fair, and make life better for everyone, including the people who are most poor or vulnerable. Does Youth4Tap's initiative achieve this? In what ways?

Yes. By eliminating plastic water bottles from their schools they are reducing waste and the amount of carbon used to create plastic water bottles. They are also educating others in their community on waste and consumption. Their initiative makes life better for everyone in the community, as everyone can benefit from the new water fountains.