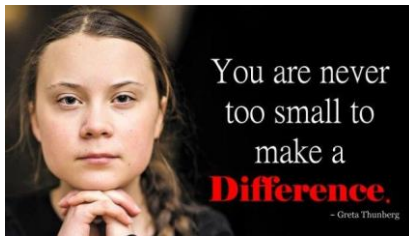




# GRETA THUNBERG



Greta Thunberg is a Swedish activist who is known for her work against climate change. Thunberg is known for her youth and her straightforward speaking manner, both in public and to political leaders and assemblies, in which she criticises world leaders for their failure to take sufficient action to address the climate change crisis.

## EARLY LIFE

Greta was born in Stockholm, Sweden to Malena Ernman and Svante Thunberg on 3<sup>rd</sup> January 2003. When Greta was born, her mother was an opera singer who travelled around the world to perform. Greta's father worked as an actor – just as his father had before him. Greta also has a younger sister named Beata. Greta has Asperger's syndrome, a developmental disorder, and has described it as a gift and said being different is a "superpower".

As a child, Greta was taught to save electricity, not to waste water and not to throw away food. When she asked why, Greta first heard the words 'climate change'. At first, Greta did not understand why nobody seemed to be doing anything about it.



## CLIMATE CHANGE

Climate change is the term used for the change in the temperature of the planet (global warming) and its effects, such as melting ice caps and heavier rainfall. It is caused by high levels of carbon dioxide being released into the atmosphere.

Greta began to research climate change during her teenage years. She began to make small changes in her own life to help the planet. She cut out all animal products from her diet and stopped buying things unless she really needed them. In 2015, Greta also decided to stop flying in aeroplanes because of the impact it has on the environment.

Greta shared what she had found out with her family and they agreed to do the same. Greta's mother gave up all air travel and stopped travelling around the world to work. When Greta saw that her family had all made small changes too, this gave her hope that she could spread the word further and have a greater impact on the planet.

## PROTESTS

In 2018, Sweden experienced heatwaves and wildfires. At just 15 years old, Greta knew that she needed to act. When the new school year started, Greta decided to strike. She said that she would not go to school for three weeks. Instead, she began to protest by sitting outside the Swedish government building. She gave out leaflets about what she called 'the climate crisis'. Greta was furious that governments around the world were not doing everything that they could to stop climate change.

News of Greta's protest quickly spread. Children around the world agreed with Greta and joined in with her protest. On 8th September 2018, Greta said that she would strike every Friday until her government began to act. She started a movement known as Fridays For Future. There have now been over 5,200 strikes by young people around the world. They all share Greta's worries about the future of their planet.





## SPEECHES

In February 2019, 224 scientists and academics from around the world agreed that Greta was noble in her actions and that her protests had their full support. As Greta's popularity and influence grew, she was invited to speak at prestigious events around the world to share her concerns about climate change. Greta's speeches cover four main themes:



- global warming is so serious that it will lead to the end of the world as we know it;
- the current generation of adults are stealing the future of young people by not acting;
- we must act now if we want to change the future;
- politicians and decision makers must listen to scientists if the world is to undo its mistakes before it is too late.

## FIND OUT MORE...

<https://www.bbc.co.uk/news/world-europe-49918719>

## EXAMPLE QUESTIONS:

1. Which country is Greta Thunberg from?
2. How did her mum's life and job change?
3. List two consequences of climate change.
4. Where did Greta first protest?
5. How many strikes have there been across the world by young people thanks to Greta's movement?