

BE THE CHANGE

Grade: 6, 7, 8		Topic: Active citizenship, Participation	
Curriculum Area: Social Studies: Conflict and Change		Title: The Power of Choice	
U.N. Rights of the Child Article(s): <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Children have the right to say what they think should happen when adults are making decisions that affect them, and to have their opinions taken into account. (Article 12) 		Teaching Strategies	
Information Studies: Overall Expectations <ul style="list-style-type: none"> explore information using a variety of group activities collaborate with others to share findings and ideas analyze and evaluate information using a variety of strategies analyze and evaluate the nature and importance of information in personal life and society transfer information skills and knowledge to enrich personal life and contribute to society 		Session 1 As a class, discuss the meaning of allegory. Read <i>Riding The Tiger</i> . What is this allegory about? What is it trying to say? Discuss the story's concept of 'choice,' how there are always choices / options in every moment, how if a choice is made, and in its execution found to be problematic, a new / different choice can be made. Ask the students to identify the major decisions Danny made in the story. Together, complete a decision train for each of these. Why did Danny choose to ride the tiger? What information did Danny gather along the way about riding the tiger? How did this inform his new choice? Should he have known better, or gotten off sooner? Was one choice more difficult? Why?	
For specific grade-level expectations, refer to <i>Information Studies: Kindergarten to Grade 12</i> (OSLA 1999).		Session 2 Read <i>The Carpet Boy's Gift</i> . Apply the allegory <i>Riding The Tiger</i> to <i>The Carpet Boy's Gift</i> : who was Danny? Who was the tiger? What characteristics did Nadeem and Master have in common with Danny and the tiger? As a class make a list of the characters in the story. Break into small groups, each group choosing a character they will focus on. Have group members identify the major decisions their character made in the course of the story. Using the decision train explore one or more of the major decisions made, the influencing factors, and the consequences.	
Resources: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Riding The Tiger</i> <i>The Carpet Boy's Gift</i> <i>Gandhi</i> Optional: <i>Aani and the Tree Huggers</i> 		Session 3 To further explore the concept of choice, read all or part of <i>Gandhi</i> , focusing on the difference between his early / young adult life, and the path he chose later in life. Ask the class what this book illustrates about choice. Discuss the process of choice: how in life, options and pathways can be explored for a time, information gathered, and new choices made. Reflecting on all three books, what powerful consequences do being aware of and making choices have? What role does choice play in active citizenship / building community / "being the change"? Compare the sphere of influence of Danny, Iqbal, Nadeem, and Gandhi's decisions. Is Danny's decision less important because it influenced fewer lives? How can we have a positive influence, at any level?	
Black Line Masters: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Decision Train 		Optional resources that illustrate the power of choice: <i>Aani and the Tree Huggers</i>	
BE THE CHANGE... Suggestions for Action <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Are there issues affecting you that you feel you don't have options about? Talk to someone or brainstorm what choices you have that could make a positive difference. Just because things are one way in the world, doesn't mean they have to be that way—decisions and choice can be powerful in changing our own and other's lives. Read <i>Take Action: A Guide To Active Citizenship</i> or <i>Take More Action</i>. Identify something that you would like to be different, and 'take action'! Learn more about the issue of child labor and what you can do by becoming a responsible shopper, and learning about Rugmark International—refer to the resource list at the back of <i>The Carpet Boy's Gift</i>. How can some of our everyday choices have an impact? Read all or part of <i>The Better World Handbook: From Good Intentions to Everyday Actions</i>, and choose three things you can do. 			