

Rise Up: Ordinary Kids with Extraordinary Stories

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Rise Up is full of inspiring stories about young people who overcame the odds and realized their impossible dreams.

With confidence that young people can change their lives and impact the world, this book introduces more than two dozen young people who achieved extraordinary feats and survived unthinkable peril. It encourages following in the footsteps of these ordinary heroes and suggests accessible first steps toward the future.

Malala Yousafzai and Louis Braille are among the book's familiar names, but it also includes lesser known overcomers from a mix of cultures, balanced between boys and girls—young people like William Kamkwamba of Malawi, who learned to make windmills to give his village light and food, and Laura Dekker of New Zealand, who completed a solo sail around the Cape of Good Hope when she was only sixteen. The book highlights commonalities in its subjects' strengths and vulnerability. The variety of subjects guarantees that every reader will find someone to relate to and be inspired by.

The book's colorful and exuberant illustrations of key scenes and subjects are just as vital to the book as its text. They brim with personality and positivity, bolster the storytelling, and help to connect to the subjects. Lively, inviting writing uses alliteration and plays with language, but stays focused on the extraordinary stories and what can be learned from them. Beyond the central narratives are sidebars with bonus inspirational stories, how-to tips, and information about what happened to the subjects as they grew up. This multilayered approach is engaging and equips the audience for action.

Deepening knowledge on subjects like climate change, survival skills, and activism, *Rise Up* is full of motivating life stories to encourage young readers to pursue more than they previously thought possible.

MELISSA WUSKE (January / February 2020)

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