



Be Inspired!

Sarah Webb, Illustrated by Graham Corcoran

Teaching Guide

By Nicola Heaney

SUMMARY

Filled with beautiful illustrations, this stunning collection profiles 28 Irish children and young people who have achieved interesting and impressive things in a variety of fields. From sports to science, adventure to activism, arts to entrepreneurship, these young people represent a new Ireland that strives to support and celebrate children and young people of all colours, genders, heritages and abilities. The book is intended to inspire every young reader to follow their own dreams.

This teaching guide is designed to stimulate young readers and inspire them to explore the book through a range of activities, including debate, design, research skills, extended writing and other elements of the curriculum. There is also a range of activities and discussion based on the stories of the individuals.

APPROACH

This book will excite and inspire with its stories of amazing Irish children and young people and their achievements across a whole range of different disciplines. This guide has used the divisions within the book to shape a range of discussion points and activities that aim to develop learning and inspire young people to pursue their own dreams and passions.

Section One: Science, Innovation and Business

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Read p.10.** 'STEM [Science, technology, engineering, and mathematics] is for everyone,' says Joy. Do you agree? Why do you think this? How do you think more people could be encouraged to take part in maths and sciences? Why do you think this could work?

- **Read p.13.** Fionn Ferreira says 'I believe a child-like, playful mindset is exactly what we need to solve some of the problems in the world.' Do you agree with this statement? Why do you think this?
- **Read p.14.** Why do you think the Science Fair was such a success? Do you think there should be similar competitions in other fields for young people?
- **Read pp.14-15.** Which of the inventions is the most impressive? Why do you think this?
- **Read p. 18.** Sisters Ailbhe and Izzy set up their own business together. What do you think makes a good business partner? Why do you think this? Is there someone you'd like to set up a business with? Why do you think you'd work well together?

ACTIVITIES

1. Bee Journal

On pages 8 and 9, we're introduced to beekeepers Rían Somers and Elizabeth Byrne. What do you know about bees? In pairs or small groups, research the ways that bees are important for the environment. Prepare a leaflet about the role bees play and how we can help them in our gardens.

2. App Building

Read page 10. Margaret and Rachael Akano and Joy Njekwe invented an app to help people with dementia. If you could build an app, what would it do? Create a presentation about your app. Think about its name, its different features, what it does and who might find it useful. Imagine someone in your class will be given a grant to develop an app. Pitch your invention to your group to persuade your peers that you and your app should win the grant.

3. Story of His Life

Re-read page 13. Fionn Ferreira has lived an interesting life, starting with blowing the

electricity in his home village. In groups, create a short film of his life. Include interviews with people who knew him as a young boy when he was starting out with his inventions.

4. Science Fair

On pages 14 and 15, we learn about the first Science Fair. Create a series of social media posts advertising the next fair. You should try and encourage young people to take part by outlining what it entails, its history and previous winners.

5. Debate

Read p. 17. In small groups, research all of Jordan Casey's inventions. As a group, choose your favourite. Think about how imaginative the invention is, its usefulness and how many people it could potentially help. Be prepared to debate your choice with the rest of the class.

6. Design a Cover

Read page 18. Izzy and Ailbhe went viral with their interesting and innovative wheelchair designs. They even have a partnership with Barbie! Research their ideas and design one of your own. Is there a message you'd like to make in your design?

7. New Biographies

Read the six short biographies on pages 20 and 21. Choose two of these inventive people and create a full biography for them in the same style as the others you've read so far. Try and include some inspirational quotes just like in the other biographies. Be prepared to explain your choices.

Section Two Sports People

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Read p. 22.** Róisín Ní Ríain has a whole range of hobbies and interests away from her swimming. Why do you think she has so many? Do you think it is good for her to have a distraction from swimming? Why do you think this? What hobbies or interests do you have? Do they distract you? How?
- **Read p.24.** They say that biking is in his blood – what is meant by this? Do you think it's possible? Is there anything in your blood? What is it? Why do you think this?
- **Read p.24.** What do you think of Oisín's advice to have fun and don't get caught up trying to have the best social media or the best race results? What do you think he means by this? Do you think it is good advice?
- **Read p.27** Young footballer Gavin Bazunu says that it's important to learn from mistakes and move on quickly. He also says it's important to stay level-headed but also to have passion and energy for each game. How do you think this can be achieved? Do you agree with Gavin?
- **Read p.31.** What do you think of Nhat's advice, 'I used to dwell more on losing. But now I learn from it and move on.' How could this be applied to everyday life? Why do you think this?
- **Read p.32.** Katie's advice is to 'not miss training.' Why is it important to keep going even if you don't feel like it? Why do you think this? Have you ever done this? What happened?
- **Read p.32.** Katie McCabe played for boys and girls teams – do you think sports should allow both to train/play together? Why do you think men's sport gets more money? Do you think this is fair? Why do you think this?

ACTIVITIES

1. A Day In The Life

On page 22, we hear about Róisín Ní Ríain, the paralympic swimmer. Her day is particularly long, getting up at 4.45am to swim. Imagine you are Róisín and you're training while still at school. Write a diary for the day you've just had. Think about all the different demands on your time and why you're doing it. How will you motivate yourself to get up the next morning?

2. Musical Favourites

As well as being a paralympic swimmer, Róisín is also an accomplished pianist. Her favourite favourite musician is Ludovico Einaudi. Have you heard his music? If not, have a listen. What stands out about his music for you? Who is your favourite musician that you think more people should have heard? What do you like about their music? Create a presentation for your class outlining who your favourite obscure musician is and why you think they should be better known. In your presentation, think about the importance of music to our lives and why it has such an impact on peoples' lives.

Extension: If you've got the skills with video editing software, why not create a video of your favourite musician and use their music as a soundtrack?

3. First Memory

Oisín O'Callaghan says that he can remember being on a bicycle when he was three 'he remembers speeding down a grassy slope and into a flowerbed.' What's your earliest memory? Can you create a description of it? This can either be through a piece of descriptive writing, a poem or a piece of video with a voiceover attached.

4. First Touch Interview

Irish goalkeeper Gavin Bazunu made his senior debut in 2021. How do you think the young player felt when he stepped out onto the pitch in the full Irish kit for the first time? In small groups, devise a series of questions to ask Gavin just before the match. Take it in turns to hotdesk Gavin and give your best responses to the questions.

5. Poster People

The illustrations in the book are created to complement the life stories of the young stars. Take a look at the sports section illustrations in particular. What do they have in common? Create your own version for a different young Irish sports star (if you're stuck, you could choose one of the sports stars on pages 34 and 35).

6. Thank You For Being There

Rhasidat Adeleke names her mum has one of her biggest influences. Who has been a big influence on your life so far? Write them a letter, thanking them for their love and support and letting them know how much they mean to you.

7. Girls in Sport

One of Rhasidat's aims is to motivate more Irish girls to take part in sports. In small groups, debate how this could be done and come up with a strategy. Think about reasons why sport is so important, but also why some girls might not be interested in participating. How could they be encouraged? Have you seen any good examples in real life?

8. Motivational Quotes

Nhat has inspirational quotes on the end of his bed to keep him motivated. In small groups, research similar motivational quotes. Choose five or six and be prepared to explain your choices. As a class make a wall display where one quote per day is discussed/on show.

Section Three The Arts, Culture and Fashion

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Read p.37.** According to James, 'Fashion is all about being different and expressing yourself.' What do you think? How far do you agree with James' belief? Why do you think this?
- **Read p.38.** Eva says 'It's important to see the losses as an opportunity to learn.' How far do you agree? Why do you think this?
- **Read p.38.** In addition to her art, Eva plays sports and enjoys sea swimming. What do you think she means when she says, 'I'm really in the present?' Is there anything you do that helps you feel like this? Why do you think this?
- **Read p.41.** How do you think Michael must have felt when Dermot Kennedy rocked up next to him? Why do you think this? Who is your idol? What would you do if you ever met them? Why do you think this?
- **Read p.42.** Sarah Fitzgerald is very passionate about the benefits of reading. Why do you think reading is so important? Why do you think it's so important that children and young people read regularly?
- **Read p.45.** Dara says that although he finds public speaking stressful, he still pushes himself to do it. Why do you think this is? What does it tell us about Dara? Have you ever pushed yourself to do something you found difficult? What happened?
- **Read p.46.** Amybeth McNulty was thrilled to win the part of Anne in the

Netflix TV show. If you could play the part of any character from a book, who would it be and why?

- **Read p.48.** Zainab Boladale became a journalist because she's always loved talking to people and hearing their journalists. But what do you think makes a good news story? Why do you think this? Are there any news stories you think have been particularly important or that you specifically remember? Why do you think this is?
- **Read pp.50-51.** Read through the six short biographies on these pages. Do you recognise any of these names? Which do you think are the most impressive? Why do you think this? Are there any names you think are missing?

ACTIVITIES

1. Fashion

One of the things that sets James apart is the fact that he has made clothes from all kinds of things. Can you design your own outfit? Work in pairs to design your own item of clothing. Think about what makes it special – is it made from recycled materials? Is there something else about it that's particularly unique? Create an advert for your new clothing item – this can be a short video advert if you like.

2. Blogging

Amelia O'Mahony Brady set up a fashion blog when she was only 13 and it's given her the career she has today. Is there anything you'd like to write a blog about? Work in small groups and create a short e-zine (an online magazine) and create a few blog posts you'd like to publish online. Think about your audience and what sorts of things they might be interested in – eg, if you're writing for your classmates, you don't want it to be too formal...

3. Art Gallery

Take a virtual tour of the National Gallery: nationalgallery.ie/virtual-tour.

What's your favourite piece of art? In small groups, create your own art gallery. Write a description of why you love each piece.

4. Songwriting

Michael wrote a song for his dad which became a number 1 single. Can you write a song about someone close to you? Why not choose one of your favourite songs and change the lyrics?

5. Bookswap

Sarah Fitzgerald started by setting up a website full of book reviews and news. Can you channel her energy on a smaller scale? As a class, set up your own bookswap for other pupils to use. Write short recommendations for some of the books – these can go on the shelves with the books to help people choose which book they might like to read. Think about how you'll let the rest of the school know about your books – will you do an assembly? Make some posters?

6. Book Review

Book reviews are a great way to help people choose a book they might like. Decide on one or two of your favourite books and create a video review. In your review, you should talk about who the book is suitable for, give a brief synopsis of story (don't give away the ending!), what genre it is and why you think it's so good. Remember – if it's part of a series, you'll need to say that too.

7. Writing Advice

Dara gives advice that young writers should always 'write from your heart, your knowledge and your imagination.' Choose something you're passionate about and write something. Use your imagination – but remember, you're not writing a story, you're writing about something real.

8. Adventure Land

Amybeth was home schooled and used to create a whole different world with her friends. If you could create a whole world with your friends, what would it be? Create a series of five or six freeze frames from your imaginary world.

9. School Newspaper

In small groups, think about how you could establish a school newspaper. What sorts of stories do you think people would like to hear about? What sorts of stories do you think they *need* to hear? In your groups, decide on a series of stories – some could be national, some international, some local and others specific to your school. Delegate the stories and other articles amongst your group. Think about what a good article looks like – it needs a catchy headline and it also needs to give the most important information in the subheading. Remember that you are writing for your peers so think about what sort of language will appeal to your audience. If you're feeling adventurous, you could also think about including some vlogs for a digital edition.

Section Four Kindness in People

DISCUSSION POINTS

- **Read p.53.** Why do you think the story of Adam King's virtual hug went viral around the world? Why do you think hugging those you love is so important?
- **Read p.54.** What do you think of Flossie that she didn't let people not turning up put her off? Why do you think this? What do you know about climate protests?
- **Read p. 54.** What sorts of things are being done in your local area to help the environment? Why do you think the climate crisis is in the news so much? How could you and your classmates help? Why do you think this?
- **Read p.56.** What do you think of Saoi O'Connor and their commitment to activism? Have you ever taken part in activism? If so, what were you protesting? If not, what would it be for?
- **Read p.59.** Ian McDonagh describes education as 'a weapon for life.' What do you think he means by this statement? Do you agree with him? Why do you think this? Why do you think education is important?
- **Read p. 60.** Eleanor Walsh has appeared in critically acclaimed plays and says she feels at home in the theatre. Have you ever been to the theatre? What was it like? How would you describe it to people who had never been?

ACTIVITIES

1. Acts Of Kindness

Adam King's hug travelled across the world – showing the power of a simple act of kindness. Watch this youtube video: [youtube.com/c/LifeVestInside](https://www.youtube.com/c/LifeVestInside) How many acts of kindness can you find? What is the message of the video? In pairs, create a similar chain of events – try and think about the simplest acts and the effects they can have.

2. Investigating The Beach Cleaners

Is there a Flossie and the Beach Cleaners near you? Find the nearest one and try and visit. If you can't visit, try and get in contact with the organisers. What sorts of things do they do? How regularly do they meet? How can people join in? Write a short report on them and what they do.

3. Class Anthology

Saoi O'Connor contributed a piece to an anthology about the climate crisis. As a class, create your own anthology of pieces of writing in response to the climate crisis. Pieces can range from non-fiction to poems to short stories. They can include personal essays about your own experiences or persuasive pieces about the importance of taking action.

4. Embracing Diversity

The Yellow Flag programme is 'a practical programme that supports primary and secondary schools to become more inclusive of all cultures and ethnicities, celebrate diversity and challenge racism and discrimination.' Is your school on the yellow flag programme? In small groups, look at their website and create a list of ten ways your school could improve equality. yellowflag.ie/

5. Challenging Bigotry

Ian McDonagh has helped try to educate people about the Traveller community and culture. In small groups, create a video challenging the bigoted views held about members of the Travelling community in Ireland. Use what you've learned about Ian and visit the Irish Traveller Movement website: itmtrav.ie

6. Myth Performance

Eleanor says her favourite myth is 'How the Gaels Came to Ireland'. What is yours? In a small group, create a short 3-5 minute script of your favourite Irish myth and perform for the rest of the class. What message is hidden in the myth?

7. Monologue

Eleanor Walsh was invited to perform a piece for the Abbey Theatre – a monologue about life in modern Ireland.

abbeytheatre.ie/dear-ireland/

Take a look at the Abbey Theatre YouTube channel for inspiration on how to write your own monologue. Your monologue should be a dramatic piece as if you are speaking directly to the audience. You should take them with you on a journey through detailed descriptions.

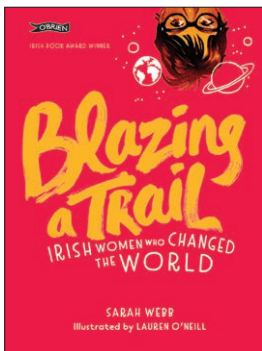
Full Book Activities

The people in the book are grouped in four different categories. Do you think the whole of society is covered here? Would you have another category? What would it be? Who would you put in it?

Create a profile for two young Irish people who you feel deserve to be in this new category. Think about the style in which the other profiles have been created – produce some background on their lives, what they've achieved and what they've overcome in pursuit of their passion. Try and find some inspirational quotes they've been quoted as giving. You should also include a suitable image.

At the beginning of this book, we're introduced to the notion of dreams and ambitions. Everyone in this book has pursued their dreams – often despite many obstacles. What are your dreams? How do you want to achieve them? What's getting in the way? Imagine there's another edition of this book being printed in ten years' time and you are included. What would your profile look like? Write it – and pay attention to how you overcame those obstacles.

Also by Sarah Webb



Blazing a Trail *Irish Women Who Changed the World*

Illustrated by Lauren O'Neill

Salute the remarkable Irish women who changed history in this beautifully illustrated book. From Irish women who made changes in Ireland to those who made changes abroad. From adventurers to inventors; explorers to warriors; from designers to writers; rebel leaders to presidents, this book is a true celebration of Irish Women



Dare to Dream *Irish People Who Took on the World (and Won!)*

Illustrated by Graham Corcoran

Adventurers, explorers, inventors, dreamers: for a small country Irish people have had a huge impact internationally, from helping street children in India, to saving Jewish children during World War II and exploring new worlds. From Michael Collins to Rosie Hackett, Lady Gregory to Tom Crean.



The Little Bee Charmer of Henrietta Street

Dublin 1911. When Eliza Kane and her brother Jonty move from leafy Rathmines to a tenement on Henrietta Street they are in for a shock. Pigs and ponies in the yard, rats in the hallways and cockroaches underfoot!

A travelling circus comes to town, offering them both jobs, and things start to look up. When a tragedy happens in the tenements, Eliza, Jonty and their new friends spring into action.

A tale of family, friendship and finding a new home, with touch of magical bees!