Ellen Johnson Sirleaf ...became Africa’s first woman president

As a young girl, Ellen learned a speech to make at church. But when she got there, she forgot what to say! She decided she would never fail at public speaking again.

When she grew up, she became President of Liberia and made many inspiring speeches. After fourteen years of war, she helped rebuild the country and made it a safer place.

Ellen proved that women can lead and inspire change. In 2011 she won the Nobel Peace Prize – a special award given to people who work hard for world peace.

Have you ever slipped up like Ellen? That’s OK! Keep practicing!

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Nelson Mandela

Nelson was the first person in his family to go to school. He had to borrow his father’s trousers because he had no suitable clothes! As he grew up, he saw how unfair things were for black people.

As an adult, he went to prison for standing up for his belief that black people deserved the same rights as white people. When he was finally released after 27 years, he was given a hero’s welcome!

Nelson went on to become the first black President of South Africa. He had been through difficult times, but his courage helped give other black South Africans the same rights as white South Africans.

It’s not fair to be treated differently because of the colour of your skin. If something is unfair, you can say something.

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Martin Luther King Jr. ...wanted people to be treated fairly

When Martin was a young boy, he and his father were told to go to the back of a shoe shop because they were black. Martin’s father thought this was unfair and they left the shop.

Unlike white people, black people weren’t allowed to sit at the front of buses. So when Martin grew up, he organised a protest in Montgomery, USA, where lots of people stopped using the buses until the rule was changed.

Martin made a famous speech called “I Have a Dream”. It was about white and black people living together in peace, as equals. His leadership led to fairer treatment of black people.

Stand up for what you believe in and what you care about. What are some of the things you care about? Who are the people you care about?