

Video Series: The New Heroes, "[The Power of Knowledge](#)"

The Big Idea

How Can Education Be an Opportunity for Life?

"Learning is a treasure that follows the owner everywhere." -- Robert Redford

What does this quote mean to you? How do you connect to it personally?

Essential Questions

What is it that makes a person a hero? Is it the risk they take? The lives they change? What role does school play? What do students expect out of school? Why do schools matter?

In this lesson we are going to examine, Train Platform Schools in India featuring activist, "Guardian Angel", Inderjit Khurana

As a schoolteacher who took the train to work, Inderjit could not help noticing how many children from the slums of India spent their days begging from train passengers instead of learning in school. She learned that far from a rare or isolated problem, twenty million children in India live on the streets. Convinced that the endless cycle of homelessness and poverty could not be broken without education, she decided to create a model program for, in her words, "taking the school to the children." We will see Inderjit's program in action on the train platform in Bhubaneswar, India, where, between the stops of the train, highly dedicated teachers gather the children together to teach them reading, writing, arithmetic, geography and history using creative teaching approaches such as songs, puppetry and even the train schedules.

Previewing Exploration

Where is India?

Vocabulary

emigration

slum

taboo

"netherworld"

vice

tragedy

vocational

leprosy: Hansen's disease (www.who.int/lep/)

tuberculosis

India: Its location

Viewing Questions

1. What brings families to the big cities?
2. What is a “slum?”
3. In the video Inderjit says, “No child in India who is poor goes to school.” Why do you think that is?
4. Why was it essential for Inderjit to care and do kind gestures like allowing the children to be bathed? Why was this gesture important?
5. Why was it difficult for Inderjit to gain the trust of the children on the train platforms? What obstacles did she have to overcome? Are they the same obstacles adults would have in Canada?
6. How is education going to make a difference for the kids?
7. Why does the Indian government not try to fund the education for these kids?
8. How much do the teachers make per day?
9. At what age are the poorest girls in India “lost?”
10. What is the “netherlands” mentioned in the video?
11. Why do the girls join the gangs?
12. What is the “narrow window” Inderjit has in reaching the children?
13. How much money funds all twelve of the train platform schools?

14. In the video the narrator says, “the gangs work the trains.” What do you think this means? How is it different from gangs who “work the streets” in any city?
15. How do the teachers grab the attention of the kids?
16. What is the taboo Inderjit has broken by creating her schools?
17. What is different about the schools here and on the train platforms?
18. How do the goals of the train platform schools in India differ from the goals of the schools in Canada? Name 5 ways.
19. How does vocational training help students in finding good jobs?
20. What satisfaction does Inderjit get from doing this work? Why would she continue her work inspite of the challenges?

After Viewing Questions

Explain one thing you found surprising after watching the video.

Explain one thing you found inspiring from watching the video.

Explain one question you have that is left unanswered after watching this video.

Explain one connection you can make between this video and your child labour project.

Extension

[Biography of Inderjit Khurana](#)

[Slideshow featuring Inderjit Khurana](#)

Reference: PBS Teacher Resources, [“Learning Matters and Making a Difference”](#)

http://www.pbs.org/opb/thenewheroes/teachers/unit_4.html