

# Positive Impact (Grades 6-12)

## Overview:

A critical component of citizenship is doing what you can to engage with your community. Everyone has the power to use their interests and passions to make a positive impact on their community, the country, and the world. In this lesson, participants will reflect on how their interests and passions can be used to make their community a better place to live, work, and go to school.

## Character education objectives:

- Study how Amanda Gorman's passion for poetry allowed her to positively impact her country.
- Students will explore how their own interests and passions can make a difference in their community.
- Put the citizenship Pillar into action by crafting a plan to use their interests and passions to positively impact their school or community.

## Materials:

- Amanda Gorman's 2021 Presidential Inauguration speech
- Written text of Amanda's poem
- Goal Map tool

## Lesson Plan:

*Discussion Prompt:* With a partner, share your interests and passions. Examples could include: music, animals, sports, video games, reading, and so on.

*Activity:* At the conclusion of the partner discussion, introduce students to Amanda Gorman, the young woman who wrote and delivered the poem "The Hill We Climb" at the 2021 Presidential Inauguration Ceremony.

Watch Amanda Gorman's speech at the 2021 Presidential

## Inauguration (5:47)

*Optional* – have students read the written text of her poem.

At the conclusion of the video, ask students to discuss the following questions in pairs, small groups, or as a full group.

### *Discussion Questions:*

- Which of the Six Pillars of Character does this poem/speech align with? Explain your answer.
- Why do you think Amanda wrote this poem?
- How did Amanda use her passion for poetry to positively impact her community and country?
- How could you use your passions and interests to make a positive difference in your community?

Ask students to write down how they could use one of their passions or interests to make a positive impact in their community. Then, direct them to use the Goal Map tool to create a plan to put their passion to work.

For example, if a student is passionate about caring for animals, they could use that passion to volunteer at the Animal Rescue League. Action steps to put that plan into action could be:

1. Locate an animal shelter in need of volunteers
2. Fulfill any requirements necessary for being a volunteer at their facility
  - Fill out application
  - Ensure my availability and skill set matches their needs
3. Schedule time to volunteer
  - Make sure I have transportation to and from the facility

*Follow-Up:* Several weeks after the completion of this lesson,

ask students to share whether they have put their plan into action. If so, how much progress have they made on their plan? How are they positively impacting their community? If not, why?