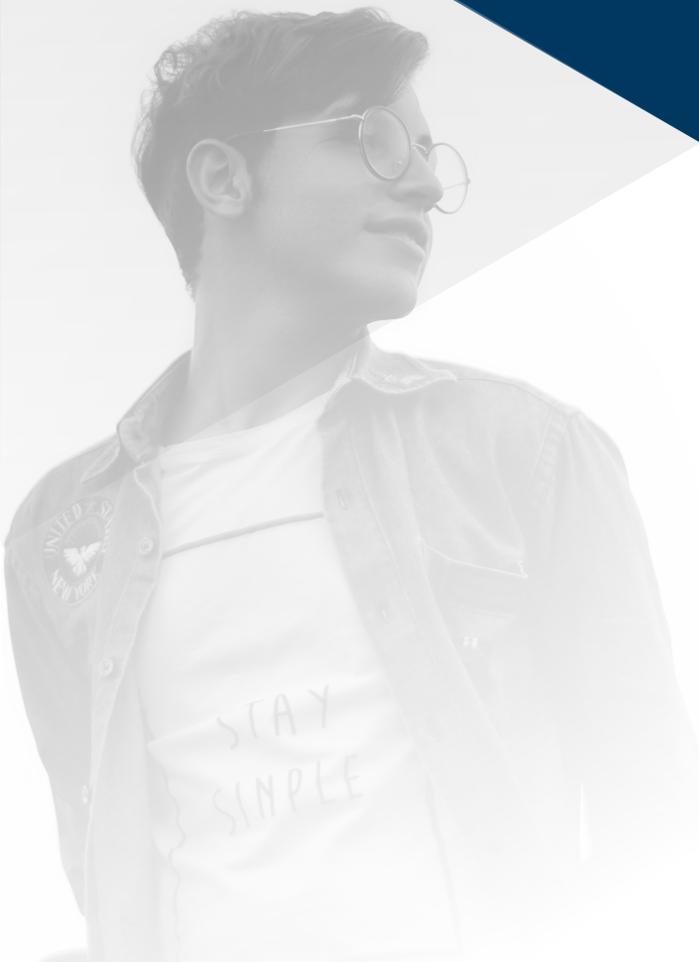




# Changemaker Storytelling Guide

This guide is for storytellers (writers, journalists, filmmakers, creatives) interested in creating a story about inspiring changemakers who are leading change young.

**At Ashoka, we call it changemaker story.**



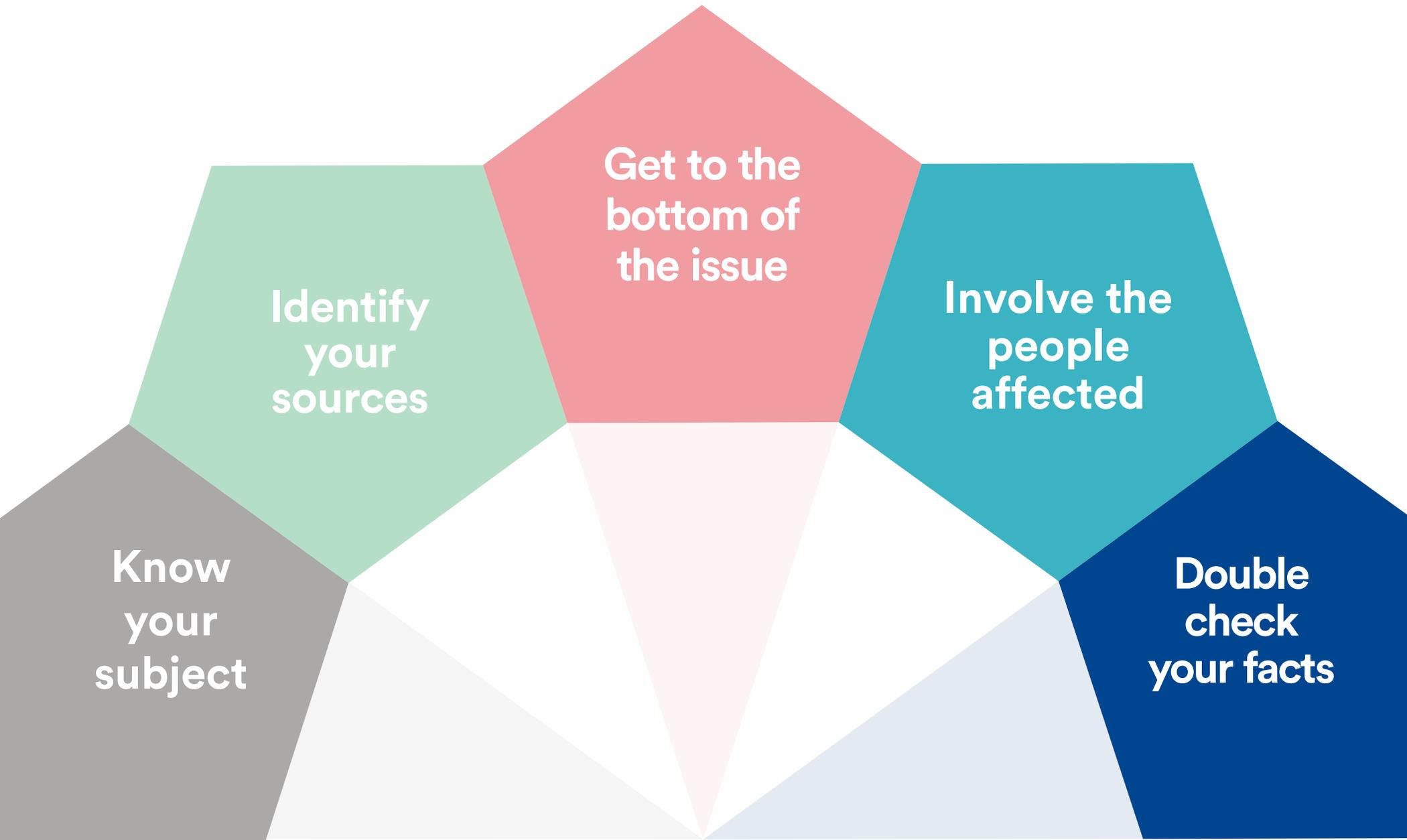
**Have you seen a young person in your school take charge when it comes to solving a problem their community is facing? It could be anything. They may have seen how kids on their block don't have a clean playground space or the way water was being wasted in their town. What did they do about it?**

**It's time to help others see what changemaking looks and feels like from your perspective. Storytelling is a powerful way to shift mindsets. Since the beginning of history, human beings have told each others stories for a variety of purposes, but mainly to effect change. And here, you play a very important role. Writing and sharing stories about how a young person started changemaking early is a powerful tool to inspire other young people to do the same, and therefore inspire new changemakers. That is why we created this changemaker storytelling guide. This is an invitation for you to join the Everyone a Changemaker movement by highlighting the changemakers that you see making a difference for the good of everyone.**

**Let's get started!**



# What should a great writer keep in mind?



# WHAT ARE THE 6 ELEMENTS OF CHANGEMAKER STORY?

## 6. Why changemaking matters at an early age in today's world?

How do they see/experience rapid change in the world?  
Why is it important to be able to adapt to and guide change through working in teams, practicing empathy, empowering others and solving problems. What would happen if they did not feel empowered as changemakers?

## 5. What have been the setbacks and failures?

Changemaking is about trying and failing and trying again.  
Are there examples of this in the story?  
What did the protagonist(s) learn from setbacks or failures.

## 1. The problem and the spark: What is the problem that a young person is addressing and why is it important to them?

You can either start looking at key issues or problems in your school/community or look for a young person who has started their own initiative and look more deeply at the problem they are addressing. You should explain how the protagonist(s) experienced the problem or empathized with others who were experiencing it.



## 4. What change resulted from that changemaking experience?

Who has benefited from their action, and how?  
What are plans for the future. How has the idea empowered others to be changemakers?

## 2. The protagonist(s) and idea to address the problem: A young changemaker (12-20 years old)

This could be you, a young person today, or an adult you know who started an initiative that has changed things for the better in their teens. If multiple young people are involved, be sure to identify which one(s) had the deepest connection to the problem they are solving and how they developed the idea.

## 3. How the protagonist built a team around his/her idea and/or allies?

Show that this is not just a solo actor. Who did they involve in the work? What role does each person play? If possible, interview and get direct quotes from team members about how they see the initiative and how the protagonist has built it. Highlight any important peer allies or adult allies (classmates, siblings, teachers, parents, others).



## Problem & Spark

[When immigrant students come into schools and communities, there is a lack of mechanisms for creating connections and support from other students. Immigrant students can feel isolated and excluded. At the same time, American students don't always have access to understanding of global issues outside of the country from first-hand sources. ] [Peyton's grand-parents were Jewish immigrants and she connected that part of her personal history to the current reality of her classmate who is an immigrant. Her spark was when she realized she knew all of her classmates name except one and had assumed she did not speak English because she wore a hijab).



## Big Picture

[Change is happening all around us, all the time. How do we face it? Are we afraid or do we see new possibilities? When new immigrant and refugee students started coming to her school, Peyton Klein saw the possibility for mutual learning and support.]



## Protagonist(s) & Idea

[Peyton was 15 when she created Global Minds Initiative, a for-youth, by-youth organization dedicated to bringing together native-English-speaking students and English-as-a-second-language (ESL) students in a relationship of mutual learning and support.]

# Example of the 6 elements from Peyton's story



## Setbacks & Failures

[Peyton has herself experienced the kind of stereotyping and close-mindedness her program aims to fight. In her case it is for being young. Many adults have doubted her ability and intentions.]



## Team & Allies

[Peyton has created a small team to run Global Minds initiative. She says "no one is volunteering" it is a two-way stream where team members learn from one another."]

[Peyton grew up hearing about her grandmother's experience as a refugee. Her grandmother taught her "your mind is like a parachute. It only works when open." Peyton also has benefitted from many adults who have believed in her and supported her.]



## Benefits of Changemaking

[English as a Second Language students and Native English-Speaking students have benefitted from learning from each other. The ESL students gain practice with English and support in navigating the school system and native English students gain new global perspectives. Both become globally minded young leaders.][Peyton has helped other young people in other schools create Global Minds chapters. There are currently 19 Global Minds chapters.]



# Peyton's Story

**When young people from different worlds are empowered and engaged, it's a win-win for everyone.**

**Change is happening all around us, all the time. How do we face it? Are we afraid or do we see new possibilities? When new immigrant and refugee students started coming to her school, Peyton Klein saw the possibility for mutual learning and support.**

Peyton is the descendant of Jewish refugees who faced cultural intolerance and discrimination when they immigrated to the United States. Given her family history, Peyton has always considered herself sensitive to the struggles immigrants face in America today. She believes that “we can all, in some way, identify with the immigrant refugee experience, whether you’ve been excluded in the lunchroom, or bullied. We have all been in that position.”

Peyton brought these values of inclusivity and tolerance to her work in her community. But one day, she realized that she knew the names of all the students in her homeroom except one. “I made the incorrect assumption,” Peyton explains, “that simply because she wore a hijab and always sat quietly, she didn't speak English.” As Peyton came to know this student (named Khawla) she realized that she wasn't living the inclusive values she believed in her daily life. Khawla shared the struggles she faced in high school as a Syrian refugee, and through this friendship, Peyton became inspired to connect with and learn from other immigrant students in her school. Peyton began the Global Minds Initiative that year at the age of 15 as a for-youth, by-youth organization dedicated to bringing together native-English-speaking students and English-as-a-second-language (ESL) students in a relationship of mutual learning and support.

Through after-school programming, Global Minds Initiative enables students to confront stereotypes and discrimination, creating what Peyton describes as “more globally and culturally competent young leaders.” ESL students gain valuable conversational English instruction -

- and practice with their native English speaking peers while contributing important global insights and perspectives on subjects such as human rights, diversity, sustainable development, and cultural identity. “In Global Minds”, says Peyton, “we say there is no volunteering. It's a two- way stream. I can learn from you about your culture, your experience, and your knowledge, and in return, I can support you in navigating the school system.”

Peyton believes that even small successes made because of participation in Global Minds Initiative such as waving in the hallway and sitting together in the lunchroom can make a world of a difference for a student and can make a new school “feel like home.”

Peyton has herself experienced the kind of stereotyping and close mindedness her program aims to fight. In her case it is for being young. Many adults have doubted her ability and intentions. But she is grateful for having found some adults who have proven to be key allies and supporters for the Global Minds Initiative and believes that all young people should be supported as changemakers. “We need a whole new set of skills,” explains Peyton, “We need changemaking literacy. The education systems needs to speak more to that. When youth are empowered and engaged it's not just a win for the students involved, it's a win for our communities, and it's a win for everyone.”

**Read Peyton's story online and watch the video at**

<https://bit.ly/2Be4zzk>

# Quick Storytelling Checklist



## Identify a subject

- What are some issues in your community that young people feel are important and are stepping up to address?
- Who are young people in your school who have started clubs, organizations or other initiatives to solve problems in and out of the school?



## Prepare your questions

for the person(s) you have identified. Here are some questions to help get you started.

### The changemaking experience:

- What is the problem or issue you are addressing? Why do you care about it? How has it affected you?
- What did you do about it? Describe a solution you created and what action you have taken.
- What is the initiative/project called?
- Where does your work happen?
- When did you first start this work?
- Who have you involved? What does your team look like and who does what? Who has provided you with guidance or support?
- What is different today because of your initiative? (Please describe the impact on the lives of others. Specific stories with names and actions are most helpful.)
- What impact do you hope to see in the next 3 years and how do you want to measure it?

## Inspiring other young people:

- What has your young changemaking experience taught you?
- Do you feel you can change other problems you are experiencing? Please explain.
- Do you have ideas for helping others have similar experiences of tackling problems they care about? If so, how?
- Our world today is one of rapid change. Please describe how you are experiencing that change?  
How is your world different from the world your parents grew up in?
- Do you feel you are prepared for this reality? If so/if not, what are the skills and experiences you feel are most important? What does one need to thrive?
- In your own words, what is an Everyone a Changemaker world?
- Why is it important for everyone to be a changemaker?
- What would you tell another young person who wanted to solve a problem they care about in their community? What would you tell an adult about the best way to support young changemakers?



## Develop the story

- Identify the problem a young person is addressing and how it is important to them
- Introduce the protagonist(s) with the idea to address the problem
- Share how the protagonist built a team around his/her idea and/or allies
- What changes resulted and/or how did others benefit from these actions
- Show the change that has result
- Incorporate the big picture of why today practicing changemaking is essential

# Please share your stories with us!

Spread your story using  
**#EveryoneAChangemaker**



**Additional Resources:**  
Ashoka Fellow David Bornstein's Solutions Journalism Toolkit (<https://bit.ly/2LefGNx>)  
for help with subject matter and investigative reporting.