

# Changing the World

If you could think of something in the world you'd like to change, what would it be? Think big! Think of something that would help others, not just something you'd like to change for yourself.

Would you look at the environment? Maybe you'd like to see cleaner rivers or more national parks. Perhaps you'd like to do something to help endangered animals. What about helping people who are sick or poor, and who don't get enough to eat every day? What about helping children who are not able to go to school to get an education?



***Vincent Lingiari and Nelson Mandela objected to people being treated differently because of the colour of their skin.***



***Gemma Rice Sisia promised to help a young girl go to school.***

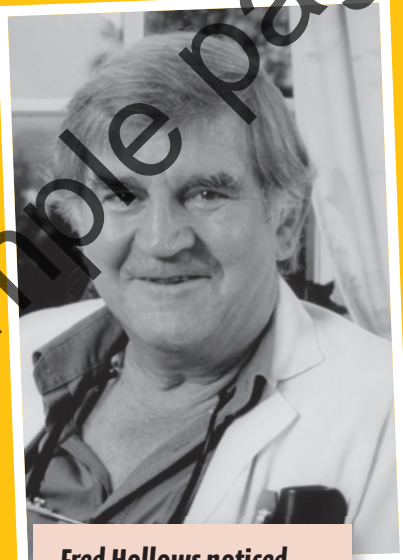


These are all very big, important issues. It might seem as though they're too big for one person to make a difference. But in this book you'll read stories about people who each started with one small, but really great, idea—an idea that grew and grew until many other people became involved. These people saw a problem that needed fixing and they did something about it. And each one has helped to change the world.

A song by Australian songwriters Paul Kelly and Kev Carmody says, "From little things, big things grow." Sometimes one person **CAN** change the world.



**Rachel Carson wondered what was causing many birds and insects to die.**



**Fred Hollows noticed that people in remote areas suffered from high levels of eye disease.**



**Edmund Hillary thought about ways he could help the Sherpa people help themselves.**

# Vincent Lingiari

*Suppose you worked alongside someone who did exactly the same work as you, but was paid much less. Would you want to do something about it?*



In the 1960s, Vincent Lingiari worked on a large cattle station called Wave Hill in the Northern Territory. Wave Hill was on the **traditional** lands of the Gurindji people, and Vincent was a tribal elder, but the station was **leased** and run by a British company called Vestey's.

At that time, Indigenous Australians who were employed as workers on cattle stations did not receive the same wages as non-Indigenous Australians. Indigenous workers were paid only a few dollars in cash. The rest of their wages was given in **rations**—meat, tobacco, sugar, tea, flour—and they lived in small corrugated iron houses with no electricity or running water.

Cattle station owners said that the small wages paid to Indigenous workers were fair. They argued that the company supplied food for far more people than actually worked for them, because they gave food to the families of the workers.

In 1966, Indigenous workers on cattle stations in the Northern Territory were granted equal pay and conditions. It looked as if things were getting better. The bad news was that it would be three years before this decision would come into effect.

Vincent was in hospital in Darwin with an injured ankle when he heard that his people would have to wait another three years. He was very disappointed, and when he returned to Wave Hill, he asked the station manager for an immediate pay rise for all Indigenous stockmen. They wanted \$25 a week. This was still less than a non-Indigenous stockman's pay, but the manager refused.



**Vincent Lingiari believed in equal pay and conditions for all workers.**



*Gather round people let me tell you a story  
An eight year long story of power and pride  
British Lord Vestey and Vincent Lingiari  
Were opposite men on opposite sides  
From little things big things grow  
From little things big things grow*

**Kev Carmody and Paul Kelly sing "From Little Things Big Things Grow", a song inspired by Vincent Lingiari's fight for the rights of Indigenous people.**