



Rise up to reboot the future

COMPANION GUIDE

This guide is designed to support groups reading *Rise Up to Reboot the Future*, a novella by Jonathon Porritt. It can also be a useful companion for solo readers who want to dive deeper into the topics and themes that emerge.

Rise Up to Reboot the Future tells the story of the next five years, with a particular focus on the Climate Emergency, and how young people can play a role in transforming the world into a fairer and more sustainable place.

Jonathon Porritt describes it as: “A just about plausible imagining of how the world finally gets to grips with the Climate Emergency by 2025 – largely thanks to the courage and creativity of young people”.

The book sits within a wider campaign called ‘How Will You Reboot the Future?’. Visit bit.ly/rebootthefuture to find out more.

We would love to hear your thoughts and opinions about *Rise Up to Reboot the Future*.

Tag us on Facebook, Instagram and Twitter at [@futurereboot](https://www.facebook.com/futurereboot) or use the hashtags [#rebootthefuture](https://twitter.com/rebootthefuture) and [#riseup](https://twitter.com/riseup) to share your experiences of reading and discussing the book.

Introduction & Personal Profiles

The five impossible years

- The introduction immediately takes us forward in time to 2026, where the new President of the United States, Kamala Harris, describes 2021-2025 as “the five impossible years”. The narrators also refer to a survey about perceptions of the future:

“THE WORLD IN 2030 WILL BE A GREAT DEAL WORSE THAN IT IS TODAY.”	2020	73% agree
	2025	29% agree

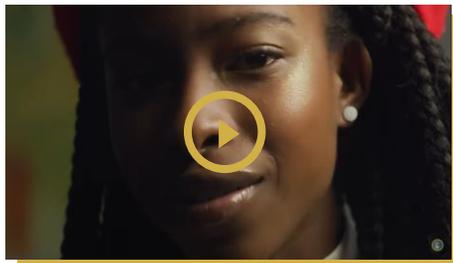
Take a moment now to consider if you agree or disagree with that statement. What makes you feel that way?

Before reading the rest of the book, what do you predict will happen between 2021-2025 to make people so much more optimistic about the future?

Earthrise

- As part of the introduction, Jonathon Porritt quotes from a poem called ‘Earthrise’ by Amanda Gorman.

Watch this video of Gorman performing her poem:



youtu.be/xwOvBv8RLmo

Why do you think Jonathon Porritt chose this poem to introduce this book?

What are the key themes or messages?

The narrators

- Why do you think Jonathon Porritt chose to start the book with a short biography of each of the narrators?

Who are you most curious to know more about? Who do you most closely identify with at this stage? Why?



Chapter 1

2020

A quick check-in for readers

- How would you personally rate 2020, from 1-10? Why? Was your experience of 2020 similar to what Erin, Lahari and Jesse are describing?

Connecting with nature

- In this chapter, Erin describes her experience of lockdown in 2020:

“For a lot of people, there was also a sense of reconnecting with the natural world.”

Take some time now to reflect on your own experience of nature during lockdown – were you able to spend time in green spaces? How did you feel during times when you were unable to spend time outside?

Generational divides

- Erin describes how her mum and grandad found lockdown much more difficult than her, because young people *“were already totally comfortable with our online lives.”* Did you notice a difference in your own family? Do you think the pandemic brought you closer together or created more divides?

Renewable energy

- Did you know that 42% of all the electricity we used in 2020 was generated from solar, wind, hydro and biomass. Is that more or less than you expected?

Climate justice and social justice

- This chapter features a tweet from Dr Ayana Elizabeth Johnson about the connection between racism and the climate crisis.

[Listen to her podcast](#) to hear more, or [read her article](#) in the Washington Post.



www.gimletmedia.com/shows/howtosaveaplanet

Lahari's poster

- Re-read the quote from Arundhati Roy that Lahari's family have on their wall. Take a moment to consider what you would like to take through with you to the new future, and what you would like to leave behind. Why not create this vision of yourself in a piece of art.

Chapter 2

2021

2021: a new year

- What are your hopes for 2021? Are there any things that you're proud of having achieved in the year so far?

A health care revolution

- In this chapter, Lahari explains:
"Back in 2020, we were spending just 2% of our total health budget on public and preventative healthcare – i.e. stopping people getting sick in the first place."



<https://youtu.be/V5qphYjJL4>

Find out more about preventative medicine from Dr. Kirsten Bibbins-Domingo, Chair of the U.S. Preventive Services Task Force.

Silver linings of COVID-19

- In this chapter, Lahari says:
"COVID-19 shone a very bright light on a lot of the cruel and crazy things going on in the UK at that time"
What do you think are some of the positive changes that have already come out of COVID-19?

Owning a car

- Do you want to own a car when you're older? Why/why not? What would change your mind?

Automated shopping

- How does the idea of 'Just Walk Out' shopping make you feel, both as a consumer and as a potential supermarket employee? Do you see it as a positive or negative for society?



<https://youtu.be/NrmMk1Myrxc>

Climate action for COP-26

- Although this book is a work of fiction, you have the power to make it a reality. What can you do to get involved with COP-26? What could write to your MP about? Can you and your friends organise to join a climate strike?

Chapter 3

2022

Climate justice and the economy

- Jesse opens this chapter with a discussion of climate justice. He says:

“climate change was never really an environmental issue at all. It was always much more about the economy than about anything else.”

What do you think of this statement? Does it change the way that you would approach climate activism?

Our health and the health of the Amazon

- Earlier, in Chapter 1, Erin discussed how “messing with the natural world can be bad for our health!” This theme is continued by Jesse in this chapter, when he explains about how the Nipah-BX virus emerges in 2022.

Who do you think should be to blame when zoonotic spillover occurs?

Who should be taking responsibility to prevent it from happening?

Reinsurance and climate

- Looking further into the economic impact of climate change, Jesse explains the impact that unprecedented climate events had on reinsurance businesses in 2022.



<https://youtu.be/rboohXy4QcU>

This video explains a bit more about the connection between insurance and the climate.

The burden of activism

- Why do you think young people are more willing/more likely to carry the emotional burden of climate activism?

Peak meat

- How do you see your meat consumption changing if at all over the next five years?

What societal or technological changes would have to take place for you to change your behaviour?

Chapter 4

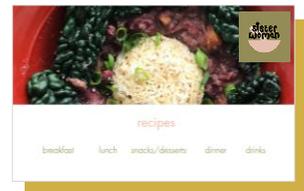
2023

Food, society,
climate

- Healthy eating is another example of the interconnection between climate justice and social justice. In this chapter, we see a tweet from Safiya Robinson – a real life food activist. Her fictional tweet reads:

“Too many young lives [are] screwed up by eating the wrong stuff. Too many kids not able to learn because their brains and bodies are scrambled by ultra-processed crap.”

Safiya Robinson’s organisation *sisterwoman vegan* explores wellness through food. Why not cook one of their recipes next time you meet to discuss *Rise Up to Reboot the Future*?



www.sisterwomanvegan.com/recipes

Healthy
nature,
healthy mind

- **750,000 young people ‘profoundly affected’ by COVID-19**

How did the pandemic make you feel? Take the time now to think about one person that you could talk to about it.

Are you able to spend much time in nature? What do you think about the idea of the National Nature Service? Is it something you think you would find beneficial?

A climate
bombshell

- “were we to carry on... with emissions of greenhouse gases staying more or less the same, or only very slowly declining... Life as we knew it would be finished.”

How does this statement make you feel? Are you as angry as Erin about the fact that governments around the world are responding so slowly to this fact? What could you do about it?

Rise Up

- Have you ever been involved in climate protests? Can you imagine your parents, carers, or grandparents getting involved? Why not speak to them about the idea.

You could show them the short film about Erin and her grandfather, based on this book. How do they react?

Chapter 5

2024

Good ancestors

- “Do for future generations what you would have had past generations do for you”

Have you heard this saying before? Do you wish your ancestors had lived by this rule? If you lived your life following this rule, what do you think you would have to do differently?

Voting age

- Do you think 16 year-olds should be given the right to vote in the UK? If so, why not write a letter to your local MP to let them know.

Local communities

- How involved are you in your local community right now? Why not do some research about community groups where you live and consider joining one now. Think about how much difference you could make by 2024.

Air travel

- Do you think paying more for air travel is a sacrifice worth making to address the climate crisis?

Do you think looking for new alternatives to jet fuel should be a priority? You can find out more about the potential future of air travel in this video from The Economist.



<https://youtu.be/ldhilgVML0>

#LetMe Breathe

- **AIR POLLUTION KILLING ROUGHLY SEVEN TIMES AS MANY PEOPLE AS COVID-19 – EVERY YEAR!**



www.instagram.com/chokedup_uk/

Friends of Ella Kissi-Debrah, who Lahari mentions in this chapter, have begun a campaign called Choked Up. You can follow them on social media.

If you're in the UK, you can check the daily levels of air pollution in your area here: <https://uk-air.defra.gov.uk/>

Chapter 6

2025

The Government & the People

- “The Government isn’t some foreign force in a distant capital, it’s us, all of us. We are the People”.

Does this quote from Joe Biden resonate with your experience of government? Do you think our current voting system allows for this experience of government?

First past the post

- In this chapter, the UK government proposes a referendum on changing the voting system.



<https://youtu.be/cTMXaXc7dNc>

How much do you know about our current system? Watch this video to find out about how it compares to proportional representation. Which do you prefer and why?

Universal Basic Income

- Jesse says he’s not sure that a Citizen’s Income “**actually solves anything**”, but that Erin is a big fan. Where do you stand?

If you’re not sure about what it is still, you can listen to this podcast to find out more.



www.iheart.com/podcast/brainstuff-20922291/

The pressures of activism

- After the success of #StillRisingUp, Jesse says:

“We were all pretty energised by being part of such an incredible happening – but, in a rather odd kind of way, a bit down.”

Sometimes it can be physically and emotionally draining to be an activist, because it can feel that you will let people (or the planet) down if you stop and give yourself a rest. Have you ever experienced something similar?

Read through this blog post from Eleanor, an 18 year-old activist, about ways in which you can look after your mental health when involved in activism work.



www.youngminds.org.uk/blog/how-to-look-after-your-mental-health-when-involved-in-activism-work/

Chapter 7

2021-2025

The High Street

- Read Erin's description of the High Street in 2025. Compare it in your mind now to your current High Street. How does it make you feel to picture this transformation?

Running for the council

- In 2025, Erin stood as a candidate for the Green Party in her local council elections.

Take a look at this case study of Councillor Alexandra Phillips who was elected when she was 24. Would you consider standing as a councillor? What, if anything, puts you off?



<https://www.local.gov.uk/be-councillor/case-studies/councillor-alexandra-phillips>

Climate justice and social justice

- “Around the world, there are still more than 270 million women who... can't get access to affordable contraception or to proper family planning and reproductive healthcare services”

Women's reproductive rights are another example of how social justice is intertwined with climate justice.

Some people disagree with campaigns to slow population growth, because they believe they place the blame for the climate crisis on women living in poverty. Others argue that measures to slow population growth, rather than *blaming* women, actually empower women in poverty and advance women's rights.

What do you think?

To my great great grandchild

- In Drew Dellinger's poem '[Hieroglyphic Stairway](#)', quoted in this chapter, he says he can't sleep because his great great grandchildren ask him in his dreams: “*what did you do when the earth was unravelling?*”. If you eventually have great great grandchildren of your own, they will be alive in approximately 130 years' time.

Write them a letter telling them what you are doing now, and hope to do in the future, to make the world a better place for them.

Chapter 8

2021-2025

Tracking the Big Shifts

- In this chapter, Jay outlines the 10 Big Shifts in society which take place over the course of the next five years in order to put us on track for a more sustainable future.

Can you trace these themes throughout the course of the chapters?

Making Big Shifts in your own life

- Thinking about your own life, write down one action you could take to reboot the future in each of these focal areas. Perhaps you could join a local community group, or spend time outside, growing your own food?

Why not choose one action a month to focus on over the next year?



Rise Up: Adapting the book

Watch the films

- *Rise Up to Reboot the Future* has been adapted into 5 short films, each following one character as they navigate the years between 2021-2025. You can watch the 5 *Rise Up* films on Reboot the Future's [youtube channel](#).

Themes & messages

- Which key themes and events from the book are emphasised in the films?

Would you say the central messages of the book and the films are the same or different? What are they?

Characters

- Were the characters in the films similar to the characters you imagined when reading the book?

Why do you think the film makers decided to add additional characters in and change some of the characters? What effect did that have?



Location

- In the book, all four of the characters are from the same town, whereas in the films there is a wider spread of locations – including London, Norfolk and Mumbai. Why do you think this is?

Favourite changes

- What were some of your favourite differences between the book and the films? What were some of your least favourite? Why?

Creating your own adaptation

- How would you adapt *Rise Up to Reboot the Future*? Would you like to see it as a TV series? A theatre performance? A mural? Why not have a go at creating your own artistic adaptation of the book or films. Tag us on social media @futurereboot or use the hashtag #rebootthefuture.

About Jonathon Porritt

Jonathon Porritt is the Founder Director of Forum for the Future, a 'veteran campaigner' and eminent writer, broadcaster & commentator on sustainable development. The focus for much of his work over the last couple of years has been supporting young people in their campaigns around climate change.



He says: "In one way or another, my whole working life has focused on positive solutions for a better world. But joining forces with everyone involved in this project has opened up all sorts of different ways of doing exactly that – especially with young people in mind."

About Reboot the Future

Reboot the Future is a small foundation with the Golden Rule, *to treat others and the planet as you would wish to be treated*, at our core. We have a vision of a compassionate and sustainable world powered by connection with ourselves, each other, and the world around us.

Reboot the Future host the Global Dimension teaching platform, which brings together a calendar of global events and a vast library of resources exploring issues from climate breakdown, to migration and democracy, empowering educators to introduce Global Learning and the Sustainable Development Goals to their classrooms. It is also a space for teachers to connect and discuss the issues that matter the most.

About the campaign

Born out of a collaboration between Reboot the Future, Jonathon Porritt, and a team of creatives, the 'How Will You Reboot the Future?' campaign aims to ignite young people's sense of optimism, tap into their imagination and creativity, and inspire them with positive and personal ways of engaging in climate action.

This companion guide is designed to sit alongside Jonathon Porritt's book 'Rise Up to Reboot the Future', as well as the five 'Rise Up' short films, and our 2021/22 classroom Wall Planner with monthly activities relating to the 10 Big Shifts underpinning Jonathon Porritt's book.

For more information about the campaign, visit bit.ly/rebootthefuture

Don't forget - we would love to hear your thoughts and opinions about *Rise Up to Reboot the Future*.

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Reboot
the Future