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Review of *Better Than We Found It*
Written by Frederick Joseph & Porsche Joseph

Adult/Educator Reviewer: Jennifer Garner
Student Reviewers: Emma Morrow



Joseph, F., & Joseph, P. (2022). *Better than we found it: Conversations to help save the world*. Candlewick Press.

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Adult Review:

Better Than We Found It: Conversations to Help Save the World by Frederick and Porsche Joseph is a book written in the right time for the right audience. The issues facing our young people today are varied and complex as well as difficult for many to fully understand. The Josephs' personal narrative and interview format is engaging for students, giving them opportunities to read and process information with supporting data to learn about issues with which many have little personal experience. For example, if a reader has not had the experience of a sibling being incarcerated, reading about Porsche Joseph's experience with her brother in Chapter 14 American's Modern Slavery, the reader can begin to have empathy for Porsche, her brother and her family. Having empathy is the first step in taking action. The true events related throughout the book will speak to students and prompt them to question the status quo, as well as look for solutions to help solve their generation's inherited problems.

The inclusion of voices beyond those of the authors, from actors to entrepreneurs to political figures, further illustrates the importance of these issues at a national and global scale. In the introduction, the authors acknowledge they are writing about "communities we don't belong to and experiences we don't share – but at the center of progress is the ability to make space to learn from and be better for

those unlike ourselves". This is the beauty of the students sitting in our classrooms now. They are open to learning about climate change, gun violence, respecting gender identities, health care reform and doing something to better their generation. They are willing to ask the questions and solve the problems and sharing with them this book is a first step to activism that really does have a chance to help save the world.

Student Review:

Better Than We Found It by Fredrick Joseph and Porsche Joseph is a beautiful book with robust and distinguished writing. If I were to describe this book in one word it would be empowering. *Better Than We Found it* talks about global warming, LGBTQ+ rights, POC rights, poverty, misogyny, and other concerning topics. The authors share their own stories that give insight into their life as part of a minority. It helped me to walk the world in their shoes. As a cis white female, I don't understand many struggles, so the least I can do is listen to their stories so I can better understand them. If you are interested in making a change, educating yourself is the first step, and this book does just that. It not only educates you but also gives you tips to be a proactive citizen. If you want to learn more, read *Better Than We Found It*, and you won't regret it!

Also, see illustration below:

