

## Unelected Leaders

### You Can Lead Without Realizing It

If you're voted into office—a club, as team captain or, when you're old enough, government—it's pretty clear you're a leader. So, too are the expectations. But even if you're not elected, you're a leader in many ways. Sometimes without even realizing it!

#### ▶ ROLE MODELS

Underclassmen and your siblings copy you. For example, look up to you. They watch what you do and copy your behavior. Kids you hate look for you as a role model and a teacher, too.

If you've got a part-time job, new employees see you as someone with experience who can show them the ropes.

#### ▶ ACTIVISTS

If you're passionate about a cause, such as the environment, citizenship or animal care, the advocacy work you do is leadership. So, too, is committee work and even membership in groups where you take an active role.

You may not see yourself as a leader, thinking you don't have what it takes. Maybe you don't like public speaking, but participating in a play shows leadership. Maybe you don't want to be in charge of an event, but if you head the decoration committee, that's leadership.

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## Some Unelected Leaders

Votes didn't get these people their positions, but they sure are recognized as leaders:

- ▶ **BILL AND MELINDA GATES**
- ▶ **CORETTA SCOTT KING**
- ▶ **BABE RUTH**
- ▶ **OPRAH WINFREY**

#### ▶ CROWD INTO IT

Most leaders step into their roles slowly, gaining experience as they go. You're likely already doing in that many areas. Give yourself credit, and your self-confidence as a leader will grow, too!

"A COMMUNITY IS LIKE A SHIP;  
EVERYONE OUGHT TO BE PREPARED  
TO TAKE THE HELM."

—Henrik Ibsen

"IF YOUR ACTIONS INSPIRE OTHERS  
TO DREAM MORE, LEARN MORE, DO  
MORE AND BECOME MORE, YOU ARE  
A LEADER."

—John Quincy Adams