

A rising voice for the future

Meet the young poet who wants to be president.

On 20 January, Joe Biden and Kamala Harris were officially inaugurated (sworn in) as the next president and vice president of the US. However, they weren't the only ones being written into the history books that day. During the ceremony, 22-year-old Amanda Gorman became the youngest poet to perform at a US inauguration.

Her poem *The Hill We Climb* was written specially for the occasion. The words reflected on recent events, as well as the country's history. The poem inspired many people and was soon shared around the world. Gorman and President Biden share something else in common beyond that day, as Gorman pointed out that they are both

in the "speech difficulty club". The new president has struggled with a stutter, and Gorman has a speech impediment that makes it hard for her to say certain sounds. Specifically, she has difficulty with the letter R, which meant that until the age of 20 she wasn't able to say the word "poetry" or her own last name.

"Why did I put 'rise' in my poem about five times?," Gorman joked in an interview on TV show *Good Morning*

America. "If I'd written this poem three years ago, I wouldn't have been able to say it. It was me rising, as well as the country, at that time."

Gorman plans to run for president herself in 2036. Based on the reaction to her poetry, there are already plenty of people who would vote for her.

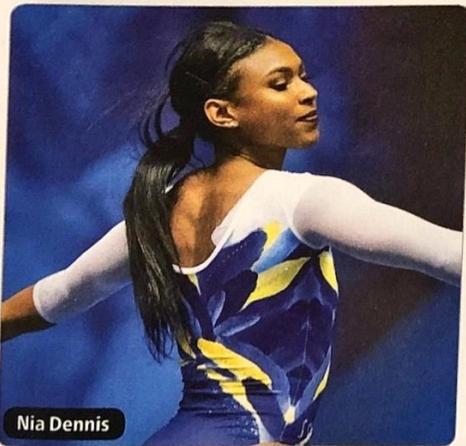


Amanda Gorman at the inauguration.



Amanda Gorman

DID YOU KNOW?
In 2017, at the age of 19, Gorman became the first Youth Poet Laureate for the US.



Nia Dennis

Dance party gymnastics

Gymnast Nia Dennis has stunned the sport with an almost perfect routine. The 21-year-old from the US used music by stars including Beyoncé during her performance on 24 January. She was representing the University of California, Los Angeles (UCLA), whose video of her routine has been watched more than eight million times on Twitter. "This routine definitely reflects everything that I am today as a woman," Dennis said afterwards. "I had to incorporate a lot of parts of my culture. I wanted to have a dance party because that's my personality." You can watch the video at tinyurl.com/TWJ-niadennis

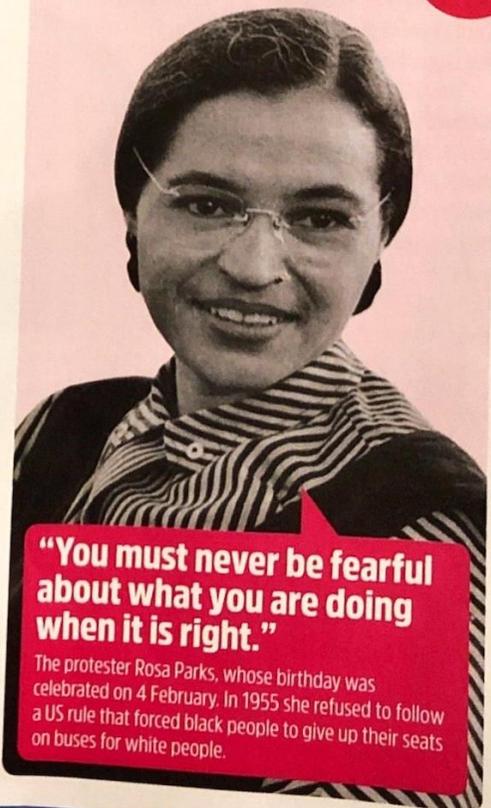
Burnell breaks barriers

Former CBeebies presenter Cerrie Burnell has made a documentary about some of the problems and prejudices (unfair and incorrect opinions) that people with disabilities can face in the UK. Burnell was born without the lower part of her right arm. When she started at CBeebies in 2009 she faced complaints from some parents. One said the sight of Burnell's arm would give young viewers nightmares. Burnell says this criticism was because people weren't used to seeing bodies like hers, but it's less of an issue now that people with disabilities feature more on TV. However, she says, "There are still barriers."



Cerrie Burnell

THEY SAID IT!



"You must never be fearful about what you are doing when it is right."

The protester Rosa Parks, whose birthday was celebrated on 4 February. In 1955 she refused to follow a US rule that forced black people to give up their seats on buses for white people.