

# THE NEW HEROES

## STUDENT VIDEO HANDOUT

### Train Platform Schools in India featuring Inderjit Khurana

“Learning is a treasure that follows the owner everywhere.”

-- Robert Redford

As a schoolteacher who took the train to work, Inderjit could not help noticing how many children from the slums of India spent their days begging from train passengers instead of learning in school. She learned that far from a rare or isolated problem, twenty million children in India live on the streets. Convinced that the endless cycle of homelessness and poverty could not be broken without education, she decided to create a model program for, in her words, “taking the school to the children.” We will see Inderjit’s program in action on the train platform in Bhubaneswar, India, where, between the stops of the train, highly dedicated teachers gather the children together to teach them reading, writing, arithmetic, geography and history using creative teaching approaches such as songs, puppetry and even the train schedules.

1. What brings families to the big cities?
2. What is a “slum?”
3. In the video Inderjit says, “No child in India who is poor goes to school.” Why do you think that is?
4. Why was it difficult for Inderjit to gain the trust of the children on the train platforms? What obstacles did she have to overcome? Are they the same obstacles adults would have in the U.S?
5. At what age are the poorest girls in India “lost?”
6. How much money funds all twelve of the train platform schools?
7. In the video the narrator says, “the gangs work the trains.” What do you think this means? How is it different from gangs who “work the streets” in any city?
8. What is the taboo Inderjit has broken by creating her schools?