



# The Pandemic is a Portal: Time for a Reset?



## NOTE TO EDUCATORS

These activities have been designed for use either distance or classroom learning. Students can work individually or in groups to discuss their responses.

### STEP 1

Ask students to quietly spend some time thinking about the past few months. If they had to pick one word to describe it what would it be? Share your own response. Ask if any other students would be comfortable sharing with others and explaining their choices.

### STEP 2

Share this link with students to watch a short extract animation from a poem by Arundhati Roy, [www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALN3UkxXA8g](http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ALN3UkxXA8g)

### STEP 3

Allow time for student discussion or provide a series of prompt questions to generate initial discussions (see below). Do students agree with Arundhati Roy's words? Do they disagree? If so, why?

### STEP 4

Bring in the Global Goals to the conversation, how might the Global Goals help to us to imagine our world anew after COVID19?

### STEP 5

Ask students to spend some time thinking about how they would reimagine the world anew after COVID19. What does this look like for them? Next, ask them to think about what they want to differently in the future. It could be how they act or behave. Then expand this question out further - What do they want businesses to do differently? What do they want governments to do differently?

Share your student ideas with us [@TheWorldsLesson](https://twitter.com/TheWorldsLesson) and let's all imagine another world together!

### Discussion questions:

- What do you think Arundhati means when she says, "It offers us a chance to rethink the doomsday machine we have built for ourselves?" What do you think the "doomsday machine" might mean?
- Do you agree or disagree with the statement that the "Pandemic is a portal", do you think it is a chance to reset?

### Other ideas:

- Ask students to think about what they would take with them in the suitcase as they walk through the portal. Encourage students to think of emotions and skills e.g. hope, creativity as well as material items.



Whatever it is coronavirus has made the mighty kneel  
And brought the world to a halt  
Like nothing else could  
Our minds are still racing back and forth  
Longing for a return to normality  
Trying to stitch our future to our past  
And refusing to acknowledge the rupture  
But the rupture exists  
And in the midst of this terrible despair  
It offers us a chance to rethink the doomsday machine we have built for ourselves  
Nothing could be worse than a return to normality  
Historically pandemics have forced humans to break with the past and  
Imagine their world anew  
This one is no different  
It is a portal  
A gateway between one world and the next  
We can choose to walk through it  
Dragging the carcasses of our prejudice and hatred  
Our avarice, our data banks, our dead ideas,  
Our dead rivers and smokey skies behind us  
Or  
We can walk through lightly  
With little luggage  
Ready to imagine another world  
And ready to fight for it.

By Arundhati Roy