

- As a journal exercise, ask students to imagine they are writing letters to students in another country to tell them why they have a holiday every third Monday in January to celebrate the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. Ask students to list several of King's accomplishments in their journal entries.
- Each year, on Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, many people across the country volunteer to work on a variety of community service projects. In the spirit of this day, ask small groups of students to develop several ideas to help make their classroom, school or community a better place. Ask each group to develop posters to promote their projects. As a follow-up, ask students to vote on the best projects and take steps to implement the most popular plans.
- Provide and review with your class portions of the "I Have a Dream Speech," and relate the concept of King's dream that one day America should be a place where everyone is treated equally. Ask students to discuss why it is important for all people to have equal rights in the United States. As a follow-up, ask students to write journal entries that reflect their own personal "dreams" or goals for themselves or their country.
- In 1964, Martin Luther King, Jr. won the *Nobel Peace Prize*, an annual award given to the person or organization that has done the most to further peace in the world. Ask students to research others who have won this prestigious award and to write short biographies that reflect an understanding of the winners' accomplishments. Students may learn more about the *Nobel Peace Prize* here: www.nobel.se/peace/laureates/index.html.

Suggested Internet Resources

Periodically, Internet Resources are updated on our web site at www.LibraryVideo.com

- www.stanford.edu/group/King/
Stanford University's compilation of the papers of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. provides teachers with a variety of primary source materials, including audio links to many of his speeches and sermons.
- www.lib.lsu.edu/hum/mlk/srs218.html
Louisiana State University offers young people "Martin Luther King, Jr., a Biographical Sketch."
- www.pps.k12.or.us/schools-c/pages/buckman/timeline/kingframe.html
The Buckman Elementary School in Portland, Oregon provides a pictorial "Dr. King Timeline" page that features pictures drawn by students that reflect the life of Martin Luther King, Jr.

Suggested Print Resources

- Adler, David A. *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* Holiday House, New York, NY; 2001.
- Farris, Christine King. *My Brother Martin: A Sister Remembers Growing Up with the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* Simon & Schuster Books for Young Readers, New York, NY; 2003.
- Myers, Walter Dean. *I've Seen the Promised Land: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* HarperCollins Publishers, New York, NY; 2004.
- Rappaport, Doreen. *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* Hyperion Books for Children, New York, NY; 2001.

TEACHER'S GUIDE

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MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

Grades K-4

This guide is a supplement designed for teachers to use when presenting this program. The guide provides you with a brief historical overview, pre-viewing and follow-up discussion questions, vocabulary, focus questions for assessing comprehension, extension activities and print and Internet resources.

Before Viewing: Give students an introduction to the topic by relaying aspects of the program overview to them. Select pre-viewing discussion questions and vocabulary to provide a focus for students when they view the program.

After Viewing: Review the program and vocabulary, and use the follow-up questions and activities to inspire continued discussion. Encourage students to research the topic further with the Internet and print resources provided.



Historical Overview

Martin Luther King, Jr. inspired a generation of Americans from all walks of life to push for an end to discrimination against African Americans in the United States. King was the acknowledged leader of the Civil Rights Movement, whose stirring speeches and commitment to nonviolent means of protest resulted in new laws to help protect the civil rights of all Americans.

King became aware of the history of slavery, racism and segregation in the United States at a young age and was angered by what he learned. While preparing to become a Baptist minister, King became aware of Mohandas Gandhi and his strategy of using nonviolent civil disobedience in India's struggle for independence from Great Britain. King was inspired by Gandhi and later decided to use nonviolent protest in fighting for the civil rights of African Americans.

As leader of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, King helped organize the Montgomery bus boycott and numerous protest marches, inspiring others from across the country such as the Freedom Riders to participate in their own protest movements. King is probably best known for the moving speeches he delivered, including the famous "I Have A Dream" speech at the March on Washington in 1963, which later resulted in the landmark Civil Rights Act of 1964. In the same year, King was awarded the prestigious Nobel Peace Prize.

Americans were shocked and outraged when an assassin's bullet killed King when he was only thirty-nine years old. Today, King's birthday is a national holiday, and people across the country honor him by performing community service and helping others, continuing King's legacy of fighting for equal opportunity for all Americans.

Vocabulary

civil rights — Freedoms or privileges that belong to you and are guaranteed by law.

enslaved — The state or nature of being owned by another person.

slavery — The practice or system of people owning other people and forcing them to work.

racism — A belief by people of one race that they are better than people from another race.

inequality — A situation in which a group or race of people is treated differently or unfairly.

Jim Crow laws — Laws that segregated African Americans and whites in the South after the Civil War.

civil disobedience — A way of protesting in which only nonviolent methods are used to disobey unfair laws. *(Continued)*

Brown vs. the Board of Education — An important case in which the Supreme Court ruled that the practice of separate but equal schools was against the law.

segregation — Separation of a group from others. In many places in America, from the late 1800s to the mid-1900s, certain laws kept blacks segregated from whites.

National Association for the Advancement of Colored People (NAACP) — An organization created in 1909 to end segregation and discrimination against African Americans in the United States.

boycott — A way of protesting in which people refuse to do something to show they disagree.

Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) — A group formed in 1957 and led by Martin Luther King, Jr. whose goal was to fight discrimination and work for equality for African Americans.

Freedom Riders — People who traveled to the South in 1961 to protest segregation on buses and other public places.

The March on Washington (1963) — A famous march of over 200,000 people who demanded that all people should have equal justice under the law. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered his "I Have a Dream" speech at this event.

Civil Rights Act of 1964 — An important law that made it illegal to discriminate against people based on their race, color or religion.

Nobel Peace Prize — A famous award given annually to the person who has done the most to promote peace in the world.

Voting Rights Act of 1965 — A law developed to end laws and practices that prevented people from voting.

Pre-viewing Discussion

- Ask students to discuss what they know about Martin Luther King, Jr. Who was he? Why do we remember him?
- Ask students to define the word "hero." Who are some people students think of as their heroes and why?
- Ask students if they know about the history of African Americans in the United States. What problems have African Americans faced while living in America?
- Martin Luther King, Jr. worked hard to help ensure that African Americans could vote in the United States. Ask students to discuss why it is important for all people to have the right to vote in America.

Focus Questions

1. What are civil rights? What are the civil rights that all Americans have?
2. How did Martin Luther King, Jr. learn about racism at a young age?
3. What does it mean to be enslaved? *(Continued)*

4. How did Jim Crow Laws prevent African Americans from being truly free?

5. Why was it so difficult to change Jim Crow laws?

6. What did Gandhi think was the best way to make social change? Why?

7. Why did Martin Luther King, Jr. move to Montgomery, Alabama in 1954?

8. What did the Supreme Court decide in *Brown vs. the Board of Education*?

9. Why was Rosa Parks arrested in 1955?

10. How did the people of Montgomery stop segregation on city buses?

11. What is a sit-in?

12. Who were the Freedom Riders?

13. How did the March on Washington help the Civil Rights Movement?

14. Why did Martin Luther King, Jr. move to Selma, Alabama in 1965?

Discussion Questions

- Help students develop definitions for the terms "discrimination" and "prejudice." Ask students to describe some examples from history when people were discriminated against, and ask students to explain how they would feel if they faced discrimination themselves.
- Martin Luther King, Jr. stressed that African Americans use nonviolence in their struggle for civil rights. Ask students to offer their own thoughts about King's strategy. Is nonviolence a good way to protest? Was nonviolent protest a good way for African Americans to try to obtain their civil rights? Why or why not?
- Many of the people who participated in the Civil Rights Movement faced hostility and intimidation from people who were angry about the changes the protestors wanted. Ask students to describe the personal qualities and characteristics of civil rights protestors who, despite threats and violence, continued to fight for what they believed in.
- For over a year during the Montgomery Bus Boycott, thousands of African Americans refused to ride the city buses, often walking for miles in protest of the Montgomery transportation system's unfair rules. Ask students to discuss the concept of unity, and why they think it was important for all African Americans in Montgomery to participate in this boycott in order for it to work. Do students think they would have walked for miles every day to gain their civil rights? Why, or why not?

Follow-up Activities

- Break students into small groups and ask each group to construct a pictorial time-line based on a period from the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. Some groups could cover his early life in their time-lines, others his work in Montgomery and Selma, Alabama and others the period from the "I Have a Dream" speech to his death in 1968. Assemble the pictures for display on a classroom bulletin board. *(Continued)*