

DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 298 063

SO 019 299

TITLE Martin Luther King, Jr. Teacher's Resource Manual.  
 INSTITUTION Connecticut State Dept. of Education, Hartford.  
 PUB DATE 88  
 NOTE 67p.  
 PUB TYPE Guides - Classroom Use - Guides (For Teachers) (052)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.  
 DESCRIPTORS \*Black Leadership; \*Civil Liberties; \*Civil Rights; Elementary Secondary Education; Instructional Materials; Resource Materials; Resource Units; Social Studies; Speeches; State Curriculum Guides; Units of Study

IDENTIFIERS \*King (Martin Luther Jr)

ABSTRACT

This Connecticut teachers' manual on Martin Luther King, Jr. includes: (1) teacher background information; (2) five excerpts from King's speeches; (3) four themes for lesson plans; and (4) sample lesson plans. The teacher's background information provides biographical sketches of King and his precursors. The five speeches reproduced here are "I've Been to the Mountaintop" (1968), "I Have a Dream" (1963), "Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech" (1964), "The Drum Major Instinct" (1968), and "Letter from Birmingham Jail" (1963). There are four lesson plan themes on equality, freedom and justice, peace, and civic participation. Each lesson plan is presented at the elementary, intermediate, and secondary level and includes an introduction, objectives, materials needed, procedure for presentation, and suggested additional activities. This manual also contains a timeline on King and the modern civil rights movement, a play entitled "The Decision: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr." by Cynthia Mathews, and a 19-item resource list. (DJC)

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TEACHER'S RESOURCE MANUAL ON

# MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

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**TEACHER'S RESOURCE MANUAL ON**

**MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

## Contents

Foreword	v
Acknowledgments	vi
Timeline	viii
<b>Teacher Background</b>	<b>1</b>
Martin Luther King, Jr. - Within the Context of United States History	1
Martin Luther King, Jr. - Upon Broad Shoulders	4
Martin Luther King, Jr. - Toward a Better Society	9
<b>Resources</b>	<b>16</b>
<b>Speeches</b>	<b>18</b>
<b>Introduction to Lesson Plan Themes</b>	<b>23</b>
<b>Sample Lessons</b>	<b>25</b>
Equality	25
Freedom and Justice	32
Peace	40
Civic Participation	51

## Acknowledgments

This *Teacher's Resource Manual on Martin Luther King, Jr.* was written to address the need for Connecticut Schools to adequately incorporate the life and work of Dr. King into the curriculum. It is a direct response to a survey of towns and schools conducted by the Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities in conjunction with the State Department of Education on behalf of the Connecticut Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday Commission.

This guide was developed by an advisory committee under the leadership of Daniel W. Gregg, social studies consultant for the Connecticut State Department of Education. Advisory committee members included:

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Lamont D. Thomas, author of a biography of Paul Cuffe, wrote the teacher background section of this manual; Shirley Norman, social studies teacher at Wilby High School, Waterbury, CT, wrote the section on sample lessons. Special thanks are due to George A. Coleman, primary/kindergarten consultant for the Connecticut State Department of Education, and Lynn Washington, Social Studies Department head, Western Junior High School, Greenwich, CT, for their reviews and comments. In addition, special thanks to Samuel R. Hyman, special projects director, Connecticut Commission on Human Rights and Opportunities, for his assistance with this project.

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# Timeline

## Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Modern Civil Rights Movement

- 1929 Born to Alberta Williams King and the Rev. Martin Luther King, Sr. on January 15 in Atlanta, GA
- 1941 James Farmer of the Congress on Racial Equality (CORE) began sit-ins in Chicago
- 1944 Passed entrance exams to Morehouse College in Atlanta at age 15
- 1948 Entered Baptist ministry  
Earned bachelor of arts degree in sociology at Morehouse College
- 1951 Earned bachelor of divinity degree at Crozer Seminary in Philadelphia, PA
- 1953 Married Coretta Scott in Marion, AL
- 1954 *Brown vs. Board of Education of Topeka*  
Became pastor at Dexter Avenue Church, Montgomery, AL
- 1955 Earned Ph.D. at Boston University in systematic theology  
Rosa Parks was arrested for challenging segregation  
Became president of Montgomery Improvement Association that began bus boycott
- 1956 Survived a bomb attack on his home, along with his wife and child  
Filed successful federal suit banning segregated public transportation in Montgomery
- 1957 Formed Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC); elected president  
President Dwight D. Eisenhower federalized National Guard in Little Rock, AR  
Congress created Civil Rights Commission and Civil Rights Division in Department of Justice
- 1958 Joined Roy Wilkins and other black leaders to present civil rights agenda to President Eisenhower  
Completed *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*
- 1959 Traveled with wife to study Mahatma Gandhi in India
- 1960 Became co-pastor at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta  
Lunchroom sit-ins occurred in Greensboro, NC  
Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) formed  
Conferred with presidential candidate John F. Kennedy  
Was jailed for Atlanta sit-in, retried for traffic violation, then sent to Reidsville Penitentiary

- 1961 Supreme Court banned segregated interstate bus terminals  
CORE organized Freedom Riders  
Lead movement to desegregate Albany, GA
- 1962 Supreme Court ordered University of Mississippi to open enrollment for James Meredith, who became the first black to attend the university  
Presented civil rights agenda to President Kennedy
- 1963 Marched in Birmingham protest; wrote "Letter from Birmingham Jail"  
Courts desegregated Birmingham; federalized National Guard ushered blacks into University of Alabama  
Medgar Evers was assassinated in Jackson, MS  
Told marchers at Washington rally, "I Have a Dream"  
President Kennedy was assassinated  
Completed *Why We Can't Wait*
- 1964 Called for national clergy to protest after Selma's Bloody Sunday  
Three CORE workers were killed in Philadelphia, MS  
Congress passed Civil Rights Act  
Traveled to Oslo, Norway, to receive Nobel Peace Prize
- 1965 Malcolm X was assassinated in New York City  
Led 25,000 marchers from Selma to Montgomery  
President Lyndon Johnson signed Voting Rights Act  
Riots in Watts (Los Angeles)
- 1966 Rented ghetto apartment in Chicago for open housing  
Supreme Court banned poll taxes  
Presented first anti-Vietnam speech in Washington  
SNCC's Stokely Carmichael called for "Black Power"  
James Meredith was killed on "March Against Fear"
- 1967 Courts ordered Alabama school desegregation  
Presented more anti-Vietnam speeches  
United with Philip Randolph and other black leaders in appeal for calm in Newark and Detroit riots  
Announced SCLC's Poor People's Campaign  
Completed *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?*
- 1968 Marched in Memphis sanitation workers' strike  
Presented "The Drum Major Instinct" speech  
Presented "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech  
Died from assassin's bullet, April 4

materialism. This nation's military violence in Vietnam, he declared, was but an extension of the physical violence at home, violence aimed against citizens who practiced nonviolent direct action in order to attain their civil rights. In late 1967, he announced the Poor People's March to Washington to alert the nation of deteriorating circumstances. The crusade to restore civil rights for blacks, those most grievously suffering from the nation's moral default, was to collectively dramatize the plight of poor Americans. Four months later Dr. King was assassinated.

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. fully understood what many white Americans refused to accept. He knew that the well-being of white Americans was inseparable from that of their black brothers. As he said at the 1963 March on Washington, "Our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny and have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone."

***Harriet Beecher Stowe, from Litchfield, CT, felt slavery would doom the entire nation.***

That declaration of *interdependence* is one of Dr. King's lasting legacies to this nation. Rarely can such a statement be found in United States history textbooks, just as unlikely as a statement about this nation's traditional dependence upon black labor. The forced importation of Africans before the arrival of Pilgrims until the mid-19th century raises countless issues about black economic contributions and the lack of reciprocal political rights. Related issues involve the role of blacks in business, inventions, music, painting, sports, entertainment, the military, literature, teaching, religion, etc. Countless examples reinforce Martin Luther King, Jr.'s reminder that black and white Americans "cannot walk alone."

***The slaves who mutinied aboard the Amistad were held in New Haven until the U.S. Supreme Court freed them. Some were removed to Farmington before being returned to West Africa.***

Dr. King becomes a role model as well as a central figure in American history. Both points pertain to teachers and students. Justly attributed superlatives produce naturally lofty reverence for Martin Luther King, Jr., but one must be cautious. "By idolizing those whom we honor," writes one of King's Morehouse College classmates, "we do a disservice both to them and to ourselves." Legendary tales annually told about King "fail to recognize his humanity -- his personal and public struggles that are similar to yours and mine."

Just as important, Dr. King's activities prove that he was part of a greater civil rights movement rather than the only force upon which the movement depended. People should know how the movement started and what the movement accomplished, rather than lapsing into

nostalgia and saying how we wish we had Martin Luther King, Jr. with us today. When knowing that Dr. King became part of the movement, and was not *the* movement, a person can then ask, "What can I do?" To commemorate Martin Luther King, Jr. within the curriculum is to activate a response to that question.

***Suitable topics for study might also examine the current status of liberty in our country.***

#### SOURCES

The following sources supplied material for this introduction: Christine King Farris, *Martin Luther King, Jr.: His Life and Dream* (1986); David J. Garrow, *Bearing the Cross* (1986); Stephen B. Oates, *Let the Trumpet Sound* (1982); and David Bollier's *Crusade & Criminals, Victims & Visionaries* (1986). See pages 16 and 17 for complete bibliographical citations.

## **Martin Luther King, Jr. - Upon Broad Shoulders**

### **Precursors to Martin Luther King, Jr.**

John Hope Franklin has stated that Martin Luther King, Jr. and his followers revered their black American forefathers for what they were: "broad shoulders on which they could stand and foundations on which they could build a better society." A brief overview of some of their views will provide a context for teachers and students to better appreciate the contributions of Martin Luther King, Jr., and the United States civil rights movement in general.

***In what ways do our traditions and heroes contribute to what we are and how we respond?***

Prior to the Declaration of Independence, colonists in North America dramatically demanded freedom from British "slavery". Such popular cries for freedom from oppressive bondage become frequent. Black petitioners asked, why should slavery of the colonies only be condemned; why shouldn't slavery be condemned *within* the colonies, as well? Surely slavery was unjust wherever it existed. Black Americans have cited this and other critical flaws in our evolving democracy ever since.

***Who benefits from the subjugation of others? What prompted colonists to maintain slavery? What portions of the U.S. Constitution legalized slavery?***

The modern civil rights movement, which Dr. King came to personify, arose from deep roots within the American tradition. Colonial protests were characteristically nonviolent, and like the movement during Dr. King's day, made effective use of the media. Colonists filed political grievances, published complaints in newspapers and books, boycotted goods and merchants, mounted street demonstrations, and disobeyed public laws considered unjust. A street protest turned into The Boston Massacre. Three years later the Boston Tea Party went beyond a simple boycott of British tea in a calculated scheme to prompt provocative acts of reprisal.

***Describe the American tradition: rebellion, liberty, equality, etc. Did the media play an important role prior to the American Revolution?***

Founders of this nation, who demanded radical change, engaged in acts of nonviolence and civil disobedience in order to create a revolution and the United States Constitution. United States Senator Robert Dole (R-KS) reminds us that Dr. King, who led a social and legal revolution, personified the tradition "that America was founded by dissenters ... [and] that her greatest weapons have never been military but spiritual...."

***"The reasonable man adapts himself to the world. The unreasonable one persists in trying to adapt the world to himself. Therefore, all progress depends on unreasonable men."***

***George Bernard Shaw***

***"If there is no struggle, there is no progress. Those who profess to favor freedom, and yet deprecate agitation, are men who want ... rain without thunder and lightning."***

***Frederick Douglass***

Before the Revolution, black protester Crispus Attucks -- a victim of the Boston Massacre -- may have been the first to die in an anti-British street demonstration. About the same time a group of blacks in the Boston area filed several grievance petitions. One petition cited the inconsistency of slavery "within the bowels of a free and christian Country." In 1777 Prince Hall joined others from that city to plead that they had "a Natural and Unalienable right to that freedom which the Grat [sic] parent of the Unavers [sic] hath Bestowed." The petitioners resented the bondage imposed upon them and warned Massachusetts legislators about "the inconsistency of acting themselves the part which they condemn and oppose in others." The petition impressed John Adams, but he considered its antislavery issue too explosive to raise at the Continental Congress in Philadelphia.

***What would have occurred had the antislavery petition been raised at the Continental Congress?***

John and Paul Cuffe, brothers whose father was African-born, petitioned the Massachusetts legislature on grounds that they were being unjustly taxed without the right to vote. Neither could they inherit land "as our Neighbors, the white people do" nor equally engage in business on land or sea. Taxation without representation, they boldly reminded legislators, was a familiar exception of power "too well known to need a Recital at this place." After a short stay in jail they returned home to pursue their case locally. At one point they petitioned the board of selectmen to call for a town vote on whether blacks could conduct businesses and vote as

did whites. Years later the prosperous merchant Paul Cuffe embodied the nonviolent approach. He declined to give way to a white passenger aboard a Baltimore stage and maintained that because he rode with whites he could dine with them.

***Paul Cuffe's Bible was discovered recently in the Old Lebanon War Office, Lebanon, CT.***

Conditions for black Americans subsequently worsened, but themes and strategies rarely changed. In 1830 the nation's first convention of free Negroes gathered in Philadelphia to demand why life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness were denied them. That city's prominent citizen, Bishop Richard Allen of the African Methodist Episcopal Church, presided. He welcomed delegates from seven states, three of them slaveholding, to reaffirm the "incontrovertible facts" that freedom and equality belonged to all people. They deplored their "forlorn and deplorable situation" despite the fact that some had fought and bled for the liberty which whites, not blacks, then enjoyed. Immigration to Canada -- where "no invidious distinction of colour is recognized" -- was one possibility, just as moving to West Africa had been for others before them. A fifth annual convention openly endorsed civil disobedience of unjust laws. It recommended that "our people ... peaceably bear the punishment those [laws] inflict, rather than aid in returning their brethren again to slavery ...."

***Connecticut sent delegates like James Pennington to America's first convention of free Negroes.***

***"The fact is, there are few here who would not return to the South, in the event of emancipation."***

***Frederick Douglass***

The slavery question agonized and angered black activists. Proponents of violence like Nat Turner were more the exception than the rule. Frederick Douglass, the nationally acclaimed ex-slave, abolitionist and publisher, seemed to equivocate on using violence. He disapproved of John Brown's advocacy of slave rebellions and killing owners. Sojourner Truth, equally adamant about the evils of slavery, believed in the power of divine deliverance over slavery until shortly before the Civil War. Others, the Presbyterian minister and newspaper editor Henry Highland Garnet, lashed into the evils of slavery in terms of self-sacrifice. His fiery denunciation threatened advocacy of armed rebellion: "You had better die -- die *immediately* -- than live slaves and entail your wretchedness upon your posterity."

***John Brown was born in Torrington, CT.***

***What role did liberation theology play in the evolution of the black church in this country?***

The intrepid Harriet Tubman ranks perhaps as one of the best proponents of nonviolent civil disobedience. She had no qualms about breaking immoral laws safeguarding legalized slavery. Her 19 trips into the South freed an estimated 300 slaves on what came to be called the Underground Railroad.

***Many Connecticut citizens harbored slaves who escaped through the Underground Railroad.***

The nation's reluctance to end slavery even after the Civil War signaled hard times ahead. Petitioners complained about the oppressive "black codes", those local laws enacted in many southern states after the Civil War to insure that blacks remained the laboring force. Local ordinances limited rights of ownership, employment, testimony in court and free speech. Black codes led to Jim Crow laws which legalized separation of the races. Intermarriage was banned, and the races were separated on trains, in depots, on wharves, and in hotels and barber shops. The voting rights issue prompted convention delegates from Raleigh, NC, to protest "men who are willing on the field of danger to carry the muskets of Republics, in the days of Peace ought to be permitted to carry its ballots." And on the issue of education, the Supreme Court ruling in *Plessy vs. Ferguson* (1896) legalized racially separate education for black and white children.

***Some 1500 members of the Summer League met at Saven Rock in New Haven in 1896 to consolidate their voice.***

The blatant racial discrimination caused other forms of response. When Ida Wells Barnett, a Memphis school teacher, refused to be seated in a Jim Crow car, she bravely challenged the law all the way to the Tennessee Supreme Court. She lost that fight and was fired from her job, but began publishing her own newspaper, *Free Speech*, until a mob destroyed the printing press. She moved on to Chicago to resume publishing. From there she pleaded for world opinion to help curb the mounting racist violence in the United States.

Booker T. Washington was an educator with a mission. He advocated that brethren uplift themselves through learning industrial skills rather than confrontation with whites. His accomplishments through Tuskegee University channeled pent-up frustrations into constructive economic gains. Such nonthreatening approaches drew strong praise from the white press and the public.

W.E.B. Du Bois rejected Washington's willingness to accommodate white society: he said civil rights demands should not be softened. Born and educated in very different surroundings in northwestern Massachusetts, he preferred direct action. He chose to challenge white Americans in education, not in trade skills. After becoming the first black recipient of a Ph.D. from Harvard University, he commenced a distinguished career of publishing. In 1905, he convened a meeting of followers at Niagara Falls, Canada, which consolidated a new movement to effectively demand the right to vote, freedom of speech, and abolition of all racial barriers based upon the premise of human brotherhood. As the result of a race riot in Springfield, IL,

coupled with the Supreme Court's acceptance of the separate-but-equal doctrine, members of the Niagara movement formed the interracial National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. The NAACP focused upon legal injustices such as racial voting restrictions. A few years later, the National Urban League organized to attack urban issues primarily by working in the private sector.

The burden of this century's nonviolent civil rights movement has been borne, as it was in the past, upon the shoulders of all levels of black Americans. But two final illustrations are an historical reminder that the destinies of white and black Americans have been interdependent. Nonviolent protests continued, as illustrated by a memorable 1917 New York City parade that demonstrated against the outbreak of yet another race riot, this one in East St. Louis, IL. Americans -- black and white, young and old, rich and poor -- marched peacefully and quietly down Fifth Avenue. The marchers carried banners in silent dignity to communicate outrage and pain over the nation's hypocrisy. "Mr. President, why not make America safe for Democracy?" read one placard. Two others appealed to the viewers' spiritual sensitivity: "Mother, do lynchers go to Heaven?" and "Pray for the Lady Macbeths of East St. Louis."

**Connecticut formed the first state interracial commission within this nation. The 1943 state agency elected Frank Simpson president.**

And if public actions have been a prelude to the future, so have legal actions. *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka* (Kansas), a suit brought by the NAACP Legal Defense Fund to the Supreme Court, ended the constitutionality of Jim Crow segregation in education. More will be said about this case in the next section.

Dr. King and fellow workers would seek to build a better society based upon the "broad shoulders" of nonviolent predecessors. Those diverse protesters had chipped away unrelentingly at an American problem -- not a Negro problem. Boston free blacks had attacked inconsistent prewar colonial propaganda. The Cuffe brothers and Raleigh convention delegates had petitioned for the right to vote. Frederick Douglass and W.E.B. DuBois had demanded full rights to citizenship from the white power structure. Black convention delegates and Harriet Tubman had demonstrated the justification for civil disobedience against immoral laws. Angry black and white Fifth Avenue marchers had peacefully protested against violence and racism. And NAACP lawyers had set the precedent to reject future segregation laws. The stage was set for one individual to effectively consolidate and empower the civil rights movement.

#### SOURCES

John Hope Franklin's essay "The Forerunners" (*American Visions*, Smithsonian Institution, Jan. 1986, pp 26-35) provided the majority of information for this section. Robert Warner's *New Haven Negroes* (pp 179-80) contributed a note. Individual research by David B. White and Lamont D. Thomas contributed as well, as did information from Randolph L. Simpson.

## **Martin Luther King, Jr. - Toward A Better Society**

### **A Biographical Sketch**

Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929-1968) became the leader of the modern civil rights movement that helped the United States fulfill promises of equality, justice and freedom to all its citizens. From the bus boycott in Montgomery, AL, to the march for sanitation workers in Memphis, TN, Dr. King led a nonviolent direct action crusade against injustices to blacks and other racial minorities. Inequities included segregated schools, biased voting registration, unfair hiring practices, poor housing and inaccessible public accommodations. He so moved the conscience of the nation that the federal government enacted far-reaching civil rights laws.

***What leadership qualities are necessary to foster a peaceful crusade?***

On January 15, 1929, Martin Luther King, Jr. was born to Alberta Williams King and the Rev. Martin Luther King. Alberta was an Atlanta school teacher and Martin Sr. a second generation Baptist minister. Martin Jr. thrived as a student, so much so that he skipped two years of high school and passed entrance examinations to his father's alma mater, Morehouse College, at age 15. At Morehouse he excelled. College president Dr. Benjamin Mays, whose chapel talks preached stewardship, responsibility and engagement, considered the young King exceptional.

***Morehouse, a black landgrant college, fostered self-esteem and commitment to a social gospel among its students.***

After receiving a BA in sociology, Martin proceeded to Crozier Theological Seminary near Philadelphia. During the next three years he gravitated toward the study of philosophy, theology and Mahatma Gandhi's theories of "Soul Force," which the young student knew had become a mighty vehicle for social change in India. Graduating first in his class at Crozier, he proceeded to Boston University's prestigious School of Theology. Four more years of rigorous study earned him a Ph.D. in systematic theology. While in Boston he met Coretta Scott, an Alabama music student at the New England Conservatory. They married in Marion, AL. Two years later they settled at Dr. King's first pastorate, the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery. Across the street stood the Alabama State Capitol, the imposing edifice that marked Montgomery as the Cradle of the Confederacy.

***W.E.B. Du Bois and Martin Luther King, Jr. both received Ph.D.s while studying in Boston.***

That month, May 1954, the United States Supreme Court handed down its epoch-making decision that rocked the old South. The case, *Brown vs. the Board of Education of Topeka*, reversed the 1896 high court ruling which had declared the constitutionality of "separate but equal" schools. In contrast, the high court now declared that "Separate educational facilities are inherently unequal." Such facilities created a feeling of inferiority in Negro students "that may affect their hearts and minds in a way unlikely ever to be undone." Montgomery's new pastor was elated. The *Brown* decision promised a new day, one that would end the hated Jim Crow system which relegated blacks to the back of society.

***Use oral history to learn about segregated schools. What were the consequences of segregated education?***

Montgomery's black community was tired of segregation in public life and had made numerous efforts to break the system. So, when tired Rosa Parks, secretary of Montgomery's NAACP, was arrested for refusing to relinquish her bus seat to a white man, the news spread quickly throughout the city. No newcomer to controversy, Rosa Parks had even asked Dr. King to preside over the city's NAACP chapter some months earlier. In the wake of the seating incident, the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) formed to organize a boycott of Montgomery buses and asked the eloquent pastor to be president. Dr. King reluctantly accepted.

***Local ordinance required Rosa Parks to move behind white passengers as they entered the bus.***

For 381 days the MIA conducted a series of nonviolent actions calculated to bring the current injustices to public attention. Journalists converged from across the country and around the world to witness arrests, jail sentences, death threats and court cases costing \$250,000. Finally, the United States Supreme Court upheld a lower court's ruling that declared the unconstitutionality of Alabama's state and local laws requiring segregation on buses.

Victory for the unrelenting nonviolent tactics was tribute to Montgomery's black community as well as to the spiritual leader of the boycott. But, Dr. King cautioned jubilant followers, consider this a success "for" justice, not a defeat of the white community. Obviously, many in the white community disagreed. Death threats continued as they had during the boycott. Early in 1956 a bomb that exploded in front of the King residence had narrowly missed Coretta and their first child. Soon after the high court's decision, the Ku Klux Klan stormed through Montgomery in full regalia and with lit crosses. They struck the home of Dr. King's closest aid, the Rev. Ralph Abernathy. Similar white violence would continue.

***"Through nonviolence we avoid the temptation of taking on the psychology of victors."***

**Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Dr. King's nonviolent philosophy for social change was adopted in early 1957 by the newly formed Southern Christian Leadership Conference. SCLC elected Dr. King as its president. Almost overnight, the pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church found himself being idolized throughout the country and abroad. His picture appeared on the cover of Time magazine, which declared him "Man of the Year." He and Coretta were invited to attend Ghana's independence day ceremonies. Ghana was the first West African nation to become free from British colonial rule. During the visit, Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah and Dr. King developed a close bond as they compared similarities in their struggle to achieve freedom for their people.

***Several years after celebrating Ghana's independence, Dr. King spoke of the detrimental effects of United States "colonialism" upon its ghetto dwellers.***

Two years later, the Kings visited Prime Minister Jawaharlal Nehru of India in order to study the teachings and achievements of Mahatma Gandhi. Dr. King learned how nonviolent direct action had enabled India to gain independence from England. Back in the United States, he worked to consolidate the nation's black leadership. SCLC joined forces with A. Philip Randolph and Roy Wilkins of the NAACP, plus members of the National Urban League and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE). They met with President Dwight D. Eisenhower in order to urge more concerted federal commitment to civil rights, but came away empty handed.

***"Civil disobedience is the inherent right of a citizen to be civil, implies discipline, thought, care, attention."***  
***Mahatma Gandhi***

Student commitment to nonviolent techniques was becoming more widespread throughout the South. The local NAACP chapter taught nonviolent tactics to students who finally gained admission into Little Rock High School in Arkansas. Elsewhere, students united to demand constitutional guarantees. In 1960, they began well organized sit-ins at lunchroom counters in Greensboro, NC. Classes taught hundreds of participants how to passively resist arrest. Dr. King praised the student actions but took no credit. The Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) was born.

***President Eisenhower sent federal troops to protect black students at Little Rock High School.***

In 1960, the King family moved to Atlanta, where Martin Jr. joined his father as co-pastor at the Ebenezer Baptist Church. Students begged him to join their sit-in. Dr. King consented but feared the risks involved because he symbolized the burgeoning movement. A bizarre sequence of events followed, beginning with charges that he and other protesters

violated local ordinances. He remained in jail because of an alleged charge of income tax evasion and a trumped-up old traffic violation, was transferred across county lines, and faced smoldering hostility from police, the Ku Klux Klan, and prison inmates. The Atlanta pastor finally ended up at Reidsville Penitentiary. Outside influence from Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy turned the frightening tide of events. The Massachusetts senator and Dr. King had met some months earlier. King's release produced an overwhelming black vote that helped Kennedy become the next president.

***Note the role played by students in the modern civil rights movement.***

Freedom Riders organized by CORE also asked for Dr. King's assistance. They intended to test the Supreme Court's desegregation rulings affecting interstate commerce. Dr. King consented to join the Freedom Riders in Montgomery. There, a hostile crowd nearly destroyed a church where the protesters met until intervention by federal marshals. Four churches were dynamited shortly afterwards during SCLC's campaign in Albany, GA. The battle for freedom was a bloody one.

Failures in the Albany campaign were avoided in Birmingham, AL. Again, nonviolent marches were scheduled, but this time with more determination to dramatize the second-class citizenship of segregated blacks. The Birmingham Police were judged to be more likely to respond violently. At first, scores of protesters were jailed. From his cell, Dr. King penned the famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail" in answer to white clergy and rabbis who denounced the present protest as unwise and untimely. No, the epistle declared, United States citizens like himself are not "outsiders" within their own nation. "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere.... Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly." Calmly and reasonably, the letter produced an articulate defense of the nonviolent movement.

***"There have been more unsolved bombings of Negro homes and churches in Birmingham than in any other city in the nation. These are the hard, brutal facts of the case."***

***Martin Luther King, Jr.***

Subsequent events verified Dr. King's conviction that privilege is rarely relinquished voluntarily. Later, when the numbers of protesters dwindled outside, waves of grade school and high school students enthusiastically stepped forward. The world watched as Police Chief Eugene "Bull" Conner ordered dogs to attack and fire hoses to crush the children. The events in Birmingham awakened the conscience of the nation and left the president of the United States no alternative but to act. On June 11, 1963, John F. Kennedy spoke to the American people. He called for federal legislation to desegregate public accommodations, and did so in more affirmative terms than any president before him. The nation, he declared in sentiments that echoed Martin Luther King, Jr., was founded on the principle that "all men are created equal, and that the rights of every man are diminished when the rights of one man are

threatened." Dr. King was jubilant. Later that evening this mood changed: Medgar Evers, NAACP field secretary, had just been killed by a white man in Jackson, MS.

***"I shall ask the Congress ... to make a commitment it has not fully made in this century to the proposition that race has no place in American life or law."***

***President Kennedy, 1963***

Martin Luther King, Jr. went to the steps of the Lincoln Memorial that summer to articulate a dream, a dream that one day Americans will "not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character." With this faith, he prayed, "we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope ... [and] transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood." Many of the 250,000 people who attended the March on Washington that August day returned home realistically optimistic. Years of "jangling discord" lay ahead.

***"From every mountainside, let freedom ring."***

***From "America (My Country 'Tis of Thee)"  
quoted by Martin Luther King, Jr., 1963***

The assassination of John F. Kennedy in November brought to the presidency a Texan who earnestly pushed through the strongest Civil Rights Act yet passed by Congress. But the bloody aftermath of a voting rights march in Selma, AL, and the deaths of three CORE workers in Philadelphia, MS, showed the unmitigated animosity by whites who felt threatened by successes of the civil rights movement. Dr. King appealed for help, and the response was overwhelming. As many as 25,000 resumed the march from Selma to Montgomery a year later. Events profoundly moved King on the Alabama crusade, where rural folk lauded him as a savior, Ku Klux Klansmen murdered white Detroit housewife Viola Liuzzo, and SNCC marchers increasingly demanded Black Power in response to white violence. Upon arrival at the state capitol, Dr. King declared: "They told us we wouldn't get here. And there were those who said that we would get here only over their dead bodies." One of those, Governor George Wallace, observed the proceedings from his office. Black and white Americans heard the confidence, faith and determination of this drum major for justice who had recently received the Nobel Peace Prize.

***"We have a new song to sing tomorrow,"  
Dr. King said as marchers approached  
Montgomery. "We have overcome."***

Threats upon his own life deeply troubled Dr. King, but he had other well-founded fears, as well. He knew that without more legislative and judicial progress, demands for black retaliation to white violence would mount. President Lyndon Johnson's Voting Rights Act advanced the cause, as did the United States Supreme Court's ban on poll taxes. Moreover, discrimination, violence and injustice were equally troubling in the North. SCLC decided to target Chicago, where James Farmer had begun sit-ins in 1941. They would focus upon racial discrimination in housing. But Chicago's Mayor Richard Daley evaded almost every move to improve ghetto housing and open accommodations. One march through Chicago suburbs produced even greater venom than Dr. King could recall in either Birmingham or Selma. Already, ghetto dwellers in Watts, Detroit and Newark were rebelling against northern racism.

***"There is no down South and up North. Everything below the Canadian border is South -- there is only down South and up South."***

***Malcolm X***

***Nationwide riots were reflected in Connecticut cities during the summer of 1967.***

The United States' priorities were wrong because of its involvement in Vietnam, Dr. King concluded in 1966. Thereafter, he spoke often of the cancer which drained the nation's human, economic and spiritual resources. Twice as many blacks as whites were fighting and dying in Vietnam, Dr. King argued in a new book, and the United States government was spending \$35 per person on its antipoverty programs while expending almost \$322,000 for each enemy killed. Dr. King's antiwar stand horrified the vast majority of citizens, including black leaders, the national press, and Lyndon Johnson. He was described as being misguided, disloyal, a racist even a Communist sympathizer. And his position on Vietnam simply confirmed what the FBI's years of electronic surveillance had failed to prove -- that, indeed, this revolutionary was a Communist.

***"When machines .. and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered."***

***Martin Luther King, Jr.***

The issues demanded a fundamental change for the nation, Dr. King concluded during the latter part of 1967. The country needed an "Economic Bill of Rights." SCLC would launch the Poor People's Campaign, and the nation's poor would converge upon Washington, D.C.

Plans were barely under way when Dr. King received a call from organizers of a sanitation workers strike in Memphis, TN. They needed support. This modern-day Gandhi concluded he must go: economic empowerment involved the plight of workers seeking a boost in hourly wages. In Memphis he walked the picket lines where placards announced the bearer's self-esteem. Each sign read, "I AM A MAN." Dr. King's years of marching had contributed toward restoring that sense of self-respect.

He praised their stand to claim what was rightfully theirs, but he spoke more about another preoccupation. What would someone say if asked to give a eulogy at his funeral? Please tell that person "to say that I was a drum major for justice: say that I was a drum major for peace: i was a drum major for righteousness." On the evening of April 3, 1968, he confided that he had "been to the mountaintop ... and seen the Promised Land." Martin Luther King, Jr. was killed the following evening by a single rifle shot.

#### SOURCES

Autobiographies, biographies, and three teachers' guides supplied material for this biographical sketch and the timeline. Autobiographies were *Stride Toward Freedom* (1958), *Why We Can't Wait* (1964), *Where Do We Go From Here* (1967), and *The Trumpet of Conscience* (1968) by Martin Luther King, Jr. The biographies were *Bearing the Cross* (1986) by David B. Garrow and *Let the Trumpet Sound* (1982) by Stephen B. Dantes. The teacher guides were published by the National Education Association, *Martin Luther King, Jr. A Guide to Help NEA Affiliates*, 1985; New York State Department of Education, *Martin Luther King, Jr., Resource Guide*, 1986; and Ginn and Company, which published *Martin Luther King, Jr.: His Life and Dream*, written by Christine King Farris, Dr. King's sister. See pages 16 and 17 for complete bibliographical citations.

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## Speeches

### **I've Been To The Mountaintop**

(Excerpt from speech delivered in Memphis, TN, on April 3, 1968)

We aren't going to let any mace stop us. We are masters in our nonviolent movement in disarming police forces, they don't know what to do. I've seen them so often. I remember in Birmingham, Alabama, when we were that majestic struggle there we would move out of the 16th Street Baptist Church day after day, by the hundreds we would move out. And Bull Connor would tell them to send the dogs forth and they did come; but we just went before the dogs singing, "Ain't gonna let nobody turn me 'round". Bull Connor next would say, "Turn the fire hoses on." And as I said to you the other night, Bull Connor didn't know history. He knew a kind of physics that somehow didn't relate to the transphysics that we knew about. And that was the fact that there was a certain kind of fire that no water could put out. And we went before the fire hoses; we had known water. If we were Baptist or some other denomination, we had been immersed. If we were Methodist, and some others we had been sprinkled, but we knew water.

That couldn't stop us. And we just went on before the dogs and we would look at them; and we'd go on before the water hoses and we'd look at it, and we'd go on singing, "Over My Head I see Freedom in the Air." And then we would be thrown in the paddy wagons, and sometimes we were stacked in there like sardines in a can. And they would throw us in, and old bull would say, "Take them off," and they did; and we would just go in the paddy wagon singing, "We Shall Overcome." And every now and then we'd get in the jail, and we'd see jailers looking through the windows being moved by our words and our songs. And there was a power there which Bull Connor couldn't adjust to; and so we ended up transforming Bull into a steer, and we won our struggle in Birmingham.

Well I don't know what will happen now. We've got some difficult days ahead. But it doesn't matter with me now. Because I've been to the mountaintop. And I don't mind. Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now, I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go to the mountain.

And I've looked over. And I've seen the promised land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight that we, as a people, will get to the promised land. And I'm happy tonight. I'm not worried about anything. I'm not fearing any man. Mine eyes have seen the glory of the coming of the Lord.

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## **I Have A Dream**

(Excerpt from speech delivered at Lincoln Memorial, Washington, D.C., on August 28, 1963)

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low. The rough places will be plain and the crooked places will be made straight, "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together."

This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair, a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day. And this will be the day. This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning, "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing: Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims' pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring." And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true.

So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire; let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York; let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania; let freedom ring from the snow-capped Rockies of Colorado; let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that. Let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia; let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee; let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. "From every mountainside, let freedom ring."

And when this happens, and when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: "Free at last. Free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last."

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## **Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech**

(Excerpt from speech delivered in Oslo, Norway, on December 10, 1964)

I accept this award today with an abiding faith in America and an audacious faith in the future of mankind. I refuse to accept the idea that the "isness" of man's present nature makes him morally incapable of reaching up for the eternal "oughtness" that forever confronts him.

I refuse to accept the idea that man is mere flotsam and jetsam in the river of life which surrounds him. I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.

I refuse to accept the cynical notion that nation after nation must spiral down a militaristic stairway into the hell of thermonuclear destruction. I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant.

I believe that even amid today's mortar bursts and whining bullets, there is still hope for a brighter tomorrow. I believe that wounded justice, lying prostrate on the blood-flowing streets of our nations, can be lifted from this dust of shame to reign supreme among the children of men.

I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits. I believe that what self-centered men have torn down, other-centered can build up. I still believe that one day mankind will bow before the altars of God and be crowned triumphant over war and bloodshed, and nonviolent redemptive goodwill will proclaim the rule of the land. "And the lion and the lamb shall lie down together and every man shall sit under his own vine and fig tree and none shall be afraid." I still believe that we shall overcome.

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### **The Drum Major Instinct**

(Excerpt from sermon delivered at Ebenezer Baptist Church, Atlanta, GA, on February 4, 1968)

Every now and then I guess we all think realistically about that day when we will be victimized with what is life's final common denominator - that something we call death. We all think about it. And every now and then I think about my own death, and I think about my own funeral. And I don't think of it in a morbid sense. Every now and then I ask myself, "What is it that I would want said?" And I leave the word to you this morning.

If any of you are around when I have to meet my day, I don't want a long funeral. And if you get somebody to deliver the eulogy, tell them not to talk too long. Every now and then I wonder what I want them to say. Tell them not to mention that I have a Nobel Peace Prize, that isn't important. Tell them not to mention that I have three or four hundred other awards, that's not important. Tell them not to mention where I went to school.

I'd like somebody to mention that day, that Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to give his life serving others. I'd like for somebody to say that day, that Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to love somebody. I want you to say that day, that I tried to be right on the war question. I want you to be able to say that day that I did try to feed the hungry. And I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try, in my life, to clothe those who were naked. I want you to say, on that day, that I did try, in my life, to visit those who were in prison. I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity.

Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice; say that I was a drum major for peace; I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the other shallow things will not matter. I won't have any money to leave behind. I won't have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind.

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## **Letter From Birmingham Jail**

(Excerpt from letter written in Birmingham, AL, on April 16, 1963)

I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. Just as the prophets of the eighth century B.C. left the villages and carried their "thus sayeth the Lord" far beyond the boundaries of their home towns, and just as the Apostle Paul left his village of Tarsus and carried the gospel of Jesus Christ to the far corners of the Greco-Roman world, so am I compelled to carry the gospel of freedom beyond my own home town. Like Paul, I must constantly respond to the Macedonian call for aid.

Moreover, I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly.

You may well ask, "Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches, and so forth? Isn't negotiation a better path?" You are quite right in calling for negotiations. Indeed, this is the very purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis foster such tension that a community which has contantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks to so dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. My citing the creation to tension as part of the work of the nonviolent resister may seem shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word "tension". I have earnestly opposed violent tension, but there is a constructive, nonviolent tension which is necessary for growth.

But though I was initially disappointed in being characterized as an extremist, as I continued to think about the matter, I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the label. Was not Jesus an extremist for love: "Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you." Was not Amos an extremist for justice: "Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream." Was not Paul an extremist for the Christian gospel: "I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus." Was not Martin Luther an extremist: "Here I stand, I cannot do otherwise, so help me God" and John Bunyan: "I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my own conscience." And Abraham Lincoln: "This nation cannot survive half slave and half free." And Thomas Jefferson: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal..." So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremist we will be.

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## Introduction to Lesson Plan Themes

The National Council for the Social Studies (NCSS) states that any exemplary social studies program should contain four essentials: knowledge, democratic beliefs, thinking skills and civic participation. The lesson plans for this guide are based upon one of those essentials -- civic participation -- and three of the NCSS democratic beliefs: justice, equality and freedom. In addition, the lesson plans focus upon peace in order to study Dr. King's commitment to nonviolent direct action. The four organizing themes are combined as follows: Equality, Freedom and Justice, Peace, and Civic Participation.

### Equality

Equality is best summed up in the American creed that "all men are created equal" and which Martin Luther King, Jr. cited at the 1963 March on Washington. Our country's history plainly illustrates that black Americans, as well as other minorities, have been denied that equality. Racism, sexism, bigotry, stereotyping and blind stubbornness have all deterred equality. The "Letter from Birmingham Jail" reminds us why equality for all citizens must be safeguarded: "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere."

### Freedom and Justice

The issues of freedom and justice in our democracy are inseparable. They are related to the five basic guarantees of the First Amendment: freedom of speech, freedom of the press, freedom to assemble, freedom of religion and the freedom to petition against grievances. These freedoms come neither cheaply nor without hardship. They require fairness and justice -- that is, "equal justice under the law." While justice too often has been denied in the history of the civil rights movement, monumental legal successes have advanced the movement. Under the guidance of Martin Luther King, Jr., the philosophy of nonviolence applied consistent pressure for equal justice.

### Peace

The theme of peace, as contrasted with violence, is considered in the lesson plans as a practical means for achieving justice. Martin Luther King, Jr. sought peace in Vietnam for numerous reasons, not the least of which was to redirect the nation's priorities toward justice at home. Violence is impractical, he wrote, because it always produces a descending spiral. The old law of "an eye for an eye" blinds everyone. Violence is immoral because it thrives on hate, not love: it leaves society in monologue rather than dialogue. In contrast, peace is built upon love, and, when necessary, resistance to unjust, immoral laws. Peace is not to be confused with acquiescence.

## Civic Participation

Civic participation determines the course of a nation and is essential for democracy to function effectively. Martin Luther King, Jr. paved the way for greater civic participation by all United States citizens. He chose to accept a pastorate in the most segregated city of the Old South, and at a church that literally confronted the Alabama State Capitol, rather than circumvent civic responsibility. The lessons of social engagement, taught by Dr. Benjamin Mays at Morehouse College, paved the way for this lifelong commitment. He literally walked the line despite repeated threats, the final march being with sanitation workers in Memphis.

The gap between ideal and real democracy reminds us of the distance still to be traveled before equality, freedom and justice, peace, and civic participation are accessible to all United States citizens. Martin Luther King, Jr. personified this movement, but neither began nor ended it. Connecticut's teachers and students, along with all its citizens, are part of that movement, and so each one of us can rightfully ask, *What can I do?*

# Sample Lessons

## Equality

## Elementary

### INTRODUCTION

The United States is committed to the idea of freedom for all. Our Constitution says all people will be treated equally under the law. A person's color, religion or ethnic background should not deprive him or her of any rights. In this lesson we will discuss a minority group whose members are deprived of their rights. In order to study this group, we will examine the words and contents of the poem, "I, Too, Sing America," by Langston Hughes.

### OBJECTIVES

At the end of this activity students will be better able to do the following:

1. Understand the poem, "I, Too, Sing America";
2. Decide who and what the poem is about;
3. Discuss what it is saying about the situation of black Americans during the early part of the century; and
4. Discuss whether "tomorrow" has come for black people in America.

### MATERIALS

Poem, "I, Too, Sing America," by Langston Hughes, a 20th century black poet.  
(Poem can be obtained from *Selected Poems* by Langston Hughes)  
Worksheet  
Lined paper

### PROCEDURE

A poem will be used to examine a minority group deprived of its rights.

The poem, written by a member of a minority group, speaks of injustices.

- Distribute copies of the poem. Read the poem aloud to the class while the students follow along.
- Separate the class into groups and use the following questions to construct a worksheet for each group:
  1. When the poem says "I", who does it mean?
  2. Who is the "darker brother"?
  3. Who is the poem talking about when it says "they" ?
  4. What does "the darker brother" do when he is sent to the kitchen to eat?
  5. Why is "the darker brother" sent to the kitchen when company comes?
  6. When company comes tomorrow, what will happen to "the darker brother"?

## Equality

### Elementary

#### PROCEDURE (continued)

7. Why does "the darker brother" think he will be treated differently tomorrow?
8. When the poet says, "I, Too, am America," what does he mean?
9. What does the poet think "they'll" see one day?
10. In your own words write what you think is the message of the poem.
  - Each group should choose a secretary to record the group's answers on the worksheet. Have groups discuss and agree on answers for the worksheet.
  - When the worksheets are completed, collect and use them for class discussion. Some questions that could be used during discussion include the following:
    - Has "tomorrow" come yet for black people?
    - Did all groups agree on what the poem was saying?
  - Ask students in the class to think about the following:
    - Has any student ever judged a person on something other than his or her character?
    - Has any student ever avoided being friendly to someone because of his or her color or religion?
  - Distribute lined paper and have students write a letter of apology if they can answer "yes" to either of these questions.
  - The letters of apology can be
    - Read aloud in class by those who volunteer to share their letter; and/or
    - Collected and graded on proper grammar, sentence structure, penmanship, etc.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Read about the incident that started the civil rights movement in Alabama.
2. List areas where standards of equality were ignored for minority persons, e.g., restaurants, housing, schools, public transportation, etc.
3. Read and discuss Martin Luther King, Jr.'s message of mutual understanding and respect.
4. Have students compare Dr. King's ideas to their own beliefs and behavior.
5. Read about the Montgomery Bus Boycott and discuss why it happened.
6. Read about and discuss the "March on Washington".
7. View some films and videos about Dr. King's efforts during the civil rights marches.

## Equality

## Intermediate

### INTRODUCTION

Some individuals and groups in the United States feel superior to other Americans. They want to be treated differently and given special privileges. Can a democratic society afford to set some groups apart? Will opposing groups resist unequal treatment? After examining the basic views of these groups, students should be able to formulate answers to these questions. Dr. King and his "I Have A Dream" speech will be used to examine one of the views.

### OBJECTIVES

At the end of this activity students will be better able to do the following:

1. Compare and contrast the Ku Klux Klan's vision of the United States with that of Martin Luther King, Jr. and some of this country's basic principles and creeds;
2. Give reasons why people should act against the Ku Klux Klan; and
3. Identify some appropriate and feasible activities they might undertake.

### MATERIALS

Copies of Dr. King's "I Have A Dream" speech. (See p. 19)  
Recording of the "I Have A Dream" speech.

### PROCEDURE

- In this activity the students will examine two opposing views. One view represents equal treatment, a basic democratic principle, while the other requests separate and special treatment. The class will use Dr. King's speech "I Have A Dream" speech in order to better understand the democratic view.
- Separate the class into smaller groups. While in groups, the teacher can review with students some information about the Ku Klux Klan. Major points could include the following:
  - A white supremacy organization;
  - Uses power to protect special privileges;
  - Opposes blacks and Jews;
  - Opposes blacks and whites intermarrying;
  - Uses violence, intimidation and terror against opposing groups;
  - Wants all blacks sent to Africa;
  - Believes Jews are inferior to Christians.
- Review with the class the major points of the civil rights movement as they relate to the basic principles of this country.

## Equality

### Intermediate

#### PROCEDURE (continued)

- Distribute copies of Dr. King's "I Have A Dream" speech. Give students a few minutes to read it and/or play a recording of the actual speech.
- After groups have read and analyzed the two different concepts, ask each group to report to the class. The spokesperson for each group should be prepared to answer the following questions:
  - What are some elements of Dr. King's dream?
  - What is the Klan's vision for America?
  - What are some ways in which the Klan can be opposed and the ideals of freedom, justice and equality promoted?
  - What are some of the conflicts your group had in deciding on some recommendations?
  - What are some things that individuals in the group are willing to do to promote the American ideals?
  - List some organizations that oppose the Klan and explain why they do so.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. List in chronological order the major events of the civil rights movement.
2. Research and write proposed solutions to the equality problems as seen by certain prominent personalities, including the following:
  - W. E. B. DuBois;
  - Marcus Garvey;
  - Paul Cuffe; and
  - Booker T. Washington.
3. Write a definition of equality in your own words and give examples based on your definition.
4. Contrast the concept of equality with those of slavery and discrimination in the United States.
5. List ways in which the Bill of Rights was ignored in an effort to maintain segregation.
6. Write an explanation to show how voter registration and voter education efforts led to the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
7. Explore resistance to voting rights efforts and the relationships among the following:
  - Poll taxes;
  - Racial gerrymandering;
  - Voter literacy; and
  - At-large elections.

## Equality

### Secondary

#### INTRODUCTION:

People of this nation have been seeking equality since its very beginning. The United States was founded on the desire for equality and basic human rights. Since its origin, a constitution, ordinances and other documents have been written in an effort to preserve the rights of the people. The struggle continues to create a society free of any traces of prejudice, racism, sexism, bigotry and hate. After playing the roles of slave and slave master, students will better understand the importance of the struggle for human rights.

#### OBJECTIVES

At the end of the activity students will be better able to do the following:

1. List some examples of basic human rights;
2. Contrast the concept of equality with the reality of slavery and discrimination in the United States; and
3. Discuss their feelings about human rights as they relate to their own lives.

#### MATERIALS

Address by Frederick Douglass, July 4, 1852

Address by John F. Kennedy, June 11, 1963

(For copy of the above documents, consult a standard United States history text or the local library.)

#### PROCEDURE

The students will engage in a role play to better understand the feelings of a slave. The teacher may want to leave time at the end of this activity for students to discuss and write their reactions to the role of slave.

- Use hair color to divide the class into two groups. Those with light colored hair will be slaves first, while those with dark hair become slave masters. During the first half of this unit, those with light hair must take orders from those with dark hair, *while in the classroom*. During the second half of the unit, students will reverse roles.
- Duties of the slave include:
  - Making sure the master has paper and a sharp pencil;
  - Being prepared to answer orally any questions asked by the teacher; and
  - Doing all the writing for written assignments.
- Distribute copies of the two speeches and allow time for them to be read. Tell students that both speeches use "man" and similar terms to indicate both men and women.
- Write the following quotation on the chalkboard: "All human beings are born free and equal in dignity and rights. They are endowed with reason and

## Equality

### Secondary

#### PROCEDURE (continued)

- conscience and should act towards one another in a spirit of brotherhood." Tell students that this statement is part of the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, adopted by the General Assembly of the United Nations in 1948.
- Include the following in a discussion of human equality:
    - What is meant by being "free and equal in dignity and rights"?
    - How does this concept contrast with the concept of **white supremacy**?
    - List groups that have not been "free and equal" during various periods of American history, e.g., indentured servants, Japanese Americans, Native Americans.
  - Discuss the purpose of the Thirteenth Amendment to the Constitution.
  - List the principles of political freedom and justice embodied in the Declaration of Independence.
    - How did the principles apply to whites and blacks when the Declaration was written?
    - In the past, how did the principles apply to women?
    - Why did Frederick Douglass state that the Fourth of July celebration was a sham for the American slave?
  - Analyze the speech given by John F. Kennedy.
    - List the rights of every citizen as stated by President Kennedy.
    - List the five areas where blacks face discrimination.
    - Has this nation fulfilled its promise? Why or why not?
  - At the end of this lesson have each student write his or her reaction to the role play.
    - As the master, did the student feel superior?
    - As the slave, did the student feel he or she had any **rights**?
    - These reaction papers can be used for future discussion or collected and graded for content, grammar, etc.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Explore reasons why certain ethnic groups have been subject to various forms of oppression during selected periods of United States history. Discuss whether or not there are contemporary forms of ethnic oppression.
2. List some of the discriminatory laws that were passed during selected periods of United States history.
3. Research and write about the psychological effects of discriminatory laws on various ethnic groups.
4. Examine human rights and equality as they pertain to other countries or the United States. Some topics to include in the research are:
  - The political rights of the citizens;
  - The economic rights of the citizens;

## **Equality**

### **Secondary**

#### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES (continued)**

- How minorities are treated;
- Whether or not the wealthy are treated differently from the poor; and
- How democratic is the government?

5. Research and write a report on any of the following:

- Paul Cuffe;
- Nat Turner;
- Harriet Tubman;
- Frederick Douglass;
- William Lloyd Garrison;
- W. E. B. Dubois; and
- Malcolm X.

## Freedom and Justice

### Elementary

#### INTRODUCTION

The major issue explored in this lesson is the significance of the civil rights movement. Issues and events related to the movement and basic human rights will be examined. Student will analyze songs and photos to draw conclusions about the civil rights movement.

#### OBJECTIVES

At the end of this activity students will be better able to do the following:

1. Explain the basic human rights issues involved in the civil rights movement;
2. Identify the major events of the civil rights movement; and
3. Understand that certain rights are guaranteed in a democratic society.

#### MATERIALS

Appropriate civil rights songs could include the following:

- "We shall Overcome" by Zilphia Horton and others.  
("We shall overcome, We shall overcome,  
"We shall overcome someday.")
- "Lift Every Voice and Sing" by James Weldon Johnson and J. Rosamund Johnson.  
("Lift every voice and sing 'til earth and heaven ring.")
- "Kum ba Yah" -- anonymous.  
("Come by here, My Lord, come by here.")

Other songs reflecting the civil rights movement could include:

- "The Battle Hymn of the Republic";
- "Nobody Knows the Trouble I've Seen";
- "If I Had a Hammer"; and
- "If I can Help Somebody".

Pictures of some of the protest marches.

#### PROCEDURE

At the beginning of this activity ask students to define the word "injustice" in their own words, then refer to a dictionary. Ask students to give examples of injustices and relate these examples to the civil rights movement.

- Injustices minority protesters opposed included the following:
  - Being forced to ride in the back of the bus;
  - Not being allowed to eat in certain restaurants;
  - Being forced to take a difficult test before being allowed to vote;
  - Attending segregated and often inferior schools; and
  - Not being allowed to rent housing or buy homes in certain communities.
- View pictures of the protest marches, distribute copies of the songs and listen to recordings of them.

## Freedom and Justice

### Elementary

#### PROCEDURE (continued)

- Analyze the song titles. Discuss why those particular songs were sung by protesters.
- As students listen to the recordings, have them identify similarities and differences in songs.
- Ask them to specify which songs speak to a particular social problem.
- Discuss how the words of the songs relate to the purpose of the protest.
- As a culminating activity, ask students to write a protest song as a class, directing it to a specific social concern.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Identify the major events in the life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
2. Write short skits illustrating major events in the life of Dr. King.
3. Locate and list some of Dr. King's famous quotations.
4. Assume the role of a child of a famous leader who was killed, -- for example, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., President John F. Kennedy. Write a letter to the American people stating how you feel about why your father was killed.

## Freedom and Justice

### Intermediate

#### INTRODUCTION

Ensuring social equality is one of the basic functions of a democracy. Freedom and justice are two important rights reserved for all citizens. Whenever these rights are threatened, citizens often protest. In this activity students will examine data which will enable them to draw conclusions about the civil rights movement by examining restrictions on democratic rights. In addition, they will construct a timeline in order to recognize the sequence of events in the civil rights movement.

#### OBJECTIVES

At the end of this activity students will be better able to the following:

1. Identify the important dates in the civil rights movement and the events that led up to them;
2. Examine the significance of the marches on Washington, D.C., in 1963 and 1983; and
3. List the changes that took place as a result of the civil rights movement.

#### MATERIALS

Library reference materials  
List of important events in the civil rights movement  
Excerpts from Dr. King's "I Have A Dream" speech  
Clothesline and clothespins  
Construction paper and lined paper

#### PROCEDURE

The students will construct a master timeline tracing major events in the civil rights movement. This will help to organize important events for discussion at the end of the lesson.

- Hang a clothesline across an area of the classroom to represent the timeline.
- Separate the class into five groups.
- Have each group choose one of five possible events to research.
- Students should use library materials to do the research and consider the significance of each event, including the following:
  - Discuss whether the injustice being protested was corrected as a result of the event.
  - Decide if changes that occurred have lasted to the present.
- At the end of this lesson:
  - Have each group write a summary of its research findings with the date written in large numbers across the top.

## Freedom and Justice

### Intermediate

#### PROCEDURE (continued)

- Attach the summary to colorful sheets of construction paper and hang on the timeline (clothesline). The timeline can be used for further study at a later date.
- Have groups share with the entire class events in sequential order. Have each group go to the front of the room, hang their event summary on the timeline and discuss their findings.
- Homework assignment:
  - Have students decide if all the injustices protested in the civil rights movement have been corrected.
  - If not, have them write a list of the injustices that have not been corrected as of this year.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Develop an awareness of the effects of powerlessness and unjust treatment on individuals and groups.
2. Research and list the civil rights efforts of the following presidents:
  - Ronald Reagan;
  - James Earl Carter;
  - Richard M. Nixon;
  - Lyndon B. Johnson;
  - John F. Kennedy; and
  - Dwight D. Eisenhower.
3. List ways black Americans and other minority groups (for example, Hispanic Americans, Asian Americans) have been treated unjustly .
4. Read and discuss the 13th, 14th and 15th Amendments to the Constitution and what each basically stated.
5. Develop a questionnaire to research attitudes and feelings of women today about unjust treatment. Use the same questionnaire for men in America today, to make comparisons.
6. Research and write a report on some individuals involved in the civil rights movement. Possibilities include the following:
  - Adam Clayton Powell;
  - Eldridge Cleaver;
  - Angela Davis;
  - Coretta Scott King;

## **Freedom and Justice**

### **Intermediate**

#### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES (continued)**

- Jesse Jackson;
- Medgar Evers;
- A. Philip Randolph;
- Roy Wilkins;
- Rosa Parks;
- Stokely Carmichael; and
- James Meredith.

## Freedom and Justice

### Secondary

#### INTRODUCTION

Written documents that serve to safeguard the rights of Americans and people of other countries are important to our future. In addition to securing the rights of guarantee fair and equal treatment. If at any time those rights are threatened, groups and individuals are moved to action. By examining several documents, students will be exposed to the protection provided to citizens of the United States and the world. After interviewing some individuals who have been forced to live outside the protection of these documents, students should understand that if the rights of one person are not protected, the rights of all persons are threatened.

#### OBJECTIVES

At the end of this activity students will be better able to do the following:

1. Compare and contrast several civil rights documents, past and present;
2. Identify major categories of civil rights;
3. Understand the relationship between people's needs and civil rights; and
4. Understand how discriminatory laws were passed in America.

#### MATERIALS

Suggested documents include:

United States Bill of Rights

Voting Rights Act of 1965

United States Constitutional Amendments 13, 14, 15, 19 and 24

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

#### PROCEDURE

Explain that students will learn what rights are protected in our society and/or other societies. A worksheet designed for examining the Bill of Rights can be used as a model to examine other. In addition, the students will interview a person from a minority group whose rights have not been protected by those documents.

- As a class discuss the historical basis of each document. Consider the following:
  - The value system which formed the basis for each document.
  - Why various societies at different times have felt certain rights were necessary.
  - Define and explain the major categories of rights found in the documents.
- Separate the class into groups. The number of groups should correspond to the number of documents being examined.
  - Ask each group to use the worksheet to examine the Bill of Rights as a model to examine other documents.
- Have groups write and report orally their findings to the class. As part of the discussion ask students to do the following:

## Freedom and Justice

### Secondary

#### PROCEDURE (continued)

- Discuss how the lives of affected groups changed during a specified time period;
- List areas of change and how opportunities for groups have changed over time;  
and
- Identify groups that continue to experience restrictions to their rights.
- As a culminating activity or homework assignment, have students interview a person who has experienced legally sanctioned discrimination in various areas, e.g., housing, employment, transportation and schools.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Research the 1963 desegregation struggle in Birmingham, AL.
2. Write an essay on the following question: Does one's economic level have an effect on the way justice is applied in our society?
3. List methods to change injustices done to individuals and groups. Also suggest ways to implement those changes.
4. Compare the role the Ku Klux Klan played in fighting Reconstruction and in fighting recent desegregation actions.
5. Research and list areas of the United States where segregation by state and local Jim Crow laws existed.
6. Research and report on the efforts of Martin Luther King, Jr. to achieve racial equality.
7. Write a report on the major gains of the civil rights era.
8. Show and discuss the film about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., "Legacy of a Dream".
9. Read some of the writings of Dr. King, including the following:
  - *Stride Toward Freedom*. Harper and Row Publishers, 1958.
  - *Why We Can't Wait*. Harper and Row Publishers, 1964.
  - *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?* Harper and Row Publishers, 1967.
  - *The Trumpet of Conscience*. Harper and Row Publishers, 1968.

## Freedom and Justice

### Secondary

#### Bill of Rights Worksheet

Directions: Use good sentence structure to answer the following questions:

1. What are the main concerns of the First Amendment?
2. The Second Amendment speaks of a militia. Define the term.
3. Explain why the Third Amendment was considered necessary.
4. What does the Fourth Amendment protect for all Americans?
5. What are the major components of the Fifth Amendment?
6. The Sixth Amendment deals with our court system. What does it say about the following:
  - Trials;
  - Witnesses; and
  - Lawyers.
7. Define these terms in the Seventh Amendment:
  - Common law;
  - Controversy; and
  - Trial by jury.
8. Explain how bail, as mentioned in the Eighth Amendment, is used in our courts today.
9. Define the following terms and write a statement explaining the Ninth Amendment:
  - Enumeration;
  - Construed; and
  - Disparage.
10. What is meant by the phrase, "are reserved to the states respectively or to the people" in the Tenth Amendment?

**Peace**

**Elementary**

## INTRODUCTION

Groups have sometimes found it necessary to protest in order to improve their way of life. Protests against society can be either violent, aggressive protests or peaceful, nonviolent protests. Each offers a measure of success, with the latter being more desirable. The students will role-play an actual incident in order to examine the nonviolent form of protest.

## OBJECTIVES

At the end of this activity students will be better able to do the following:

1. Examine the form of protest used to remedy the injustice involved;
2. List the methods Dr. King used to protest peaceably; and
3. List some of the injustices suffered by blacks living in America.

## MATERIALS

Map of the United States  
Pictures of the Montgomery Bus Boycott  
Background information on the Montgomery Bus Boycott  
Background information on Rosa Parks

## PROCEDURE

The purpose of this activity is to help students experience more fully the feeling of discrimination. Time should be allowed at the end of this lesson for discussion and/or a written activity about the feelings they experienced while in their role.

- Arrange the seats in the classroom to resemble seats on a bus. Have about twenty-five to fifty percent of the students with a preselected color of sit in the back of the classroom. These students will remain in this setting throughout this lesson. During the following discussion the teacher should ignore those in the back of the room.
- Before beginning this lesson review the concept of nonviolence with the class.
- Review some terms to be used in this lesson: boycott, segregation, discrimination, ethnic group.
- Find Montgomery, AL, on the map, so students know where it is in relationship to where they are.
- View and discuss the pictures of the Montgomery Bus Boycott.
- Along with the class, read the background information on Rosa Parks and briefly discuss.
- Read and discuss the background information on the Montgomery Bus Boycott.

## Peace

### Elementary

#### PROCEDURE (continued)

- Students should be able to answer the following questions:
  - Why was Rosa Parks arrested?
  - Why did black citizens refuse to ride the bus?
  - What role did Dr. King play in the boycott?
  - How long did the boycott last?
  - What brought the boycott to an end?
- As a culminating activity, have students discuss how they felt being forced to sit in the back of the room and how they felt being ignored.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Demonstrate an understanding of the concepts Dr. King learned from Dr. Benjamin E. Mays.
2. Understand the philosophy Dr. King learned from Mahatma Gandhi.
3. Examine the history of three ethnic groups, e.g., black Americans, Jewish Americans, Mexican Americans. Examine and list the injustices experienced by each group. Assess the present status of each group.
4. Listen to a recording of Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Write a paragraph stating the main idea.
5. Examine the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and its importance to black Americans.
6. List some of the things Dr. King accomplished using nonviolent methods.
7. Define important terms used in this lesson, and write sentences using the words in context.

## **Peace**

### **Intermediate**

#### **INTRODUCTION**

Throughout the history of the United States, individuals and groups have felt it necessary to rebel against existing social conditions. Different ethnic groups have used social protests as a vehicle to influence political, social and economic programs and institutions to bring about a desired change. Whether violent or nonviolent, vocal protests have served as useful tools to counteract existing laws and institute changes in the social order. In this activity students will examine the effectiveness of peaceful protests. An "Information Wheel" will be used to draw conclusions about the philosophy of nonviolence.

#### **OBJECTIVES**

At the end of this activity students will be better able to do the following:

1. Understand the ways in which Dr. Benjamin Mays influenced Dr. King;
2. Understand how Mahatma Gandhi influenced Dr. King's nonviolent campaign; and
3. List the six principles of nonviolent resistance used by Dr. King.

#### **MATERIALS**

Card stock  
Roundhead fasteners  
Scissors  
Pattern of a large circle  
Library reference material  
Background information on Mahatma Gandhi  
Background information on Dr. Benjamin Mays

#### **PROCEDURE**

The class will use an information wheel to examine the philosophy of nonviolence. The wheel will organize the material and help students to focus on topics one at a time. A class discussion will follow this activity.

- As a class, construct the "Information Wheel". Distribute the card stock, then trace and cut two large circles. One circle will be the back and will have the topic written on it. It will be divided into as many sections as needed for the lesson. The number of sections should coincide with the number of objectives.
- Write the topics to be discussed on the back of the wheel.
- The front circle will have one slice cut out.
- Complete construction by putting the roundhead fastener through the center of both circles. The top section should turn so that the topic being discussed shows through the slice. The "Information Wheel" should be displayed in the front of the room.

## Peace

### Intermediate

#### PROCEDURE (continued)

- Divide the class into groups, one group for each topic.
- Review with the class the influence Dr. Benjamin Mays had on Dr. King. Discuss how his spiritual values influenced Dr. King's use of religious values in his protests.
- Review the following with the students:
  - The nonviolent philosophy of Mahatma Gandhi;
  - The conditions Gandhi was trying to change in his country; and
  - How Dr. King learned about Gandhi's concept of peaceful protest.
- Have groups examine Dr. King's six principles of nonviolent resistance. A nonviolent resister:
  - Does resist, is not aggressive, but he is not a coward. The resister is continually trying to persuade his opponent that he is wrong;
  - Is always seeking to win friendship and understanding with his opponent;
  - Does not attack people, but instead he attacks the forces and institutions of evil;
  - Will allow his opponent to hit him without striking back;
  - Refuses to hate his opponent; and
  - Has a lot of faith in the future and believes that people want to do the right thing.
- Have the students give examples of each of the above principles being used in the protest marches.
- At the end of this lesson, have groups share their completed assignments with the class. They will use the "Information Wheel" to display the topic their group is discussing.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. List the actions black citizens took to end segregated buses in Montgomery.
2. List reasons why Dr. King opposed the war in Vietnam.
3. List the focus of the Poor People's Campaign in Washington, D.C.
4. List the basic components of Dr. King's "I Have A Dream" speech.
5. Make a list of changes brought about by Dr. King's nonviolent campaign.
6. List three characteristics Dr. King revealed about himself in his speech accepting the Nobel Peace Prize in Norway.
7. List the reasons Dr. King was given the Nobel Peace Prize.
8. List some of the characteristics of a great leader.
9. Make a list of inequalities still to be overcome for various minority groups in America.
10. Suggest alternative methods of protest that would work best in a given situation.
11. View films or videos of major civil rights protests in the United States.
12. Interview at least one person who has been involved in an organized protest, e.g. family member, neighbor.
13. Discuss which forms of protest seem the most successful and why.

## Peace

### Secondary

#### INTRODUCTION

Certain groups in America have felt the need to protest existing social conditions. In order to do so, campaigns of nonviolent direct action were started. In this lesson a play will be used to examine and compare aggressive and non-aggressive approaches to social change.

#### OBJECTIVES

At the end of this activity students will be better able to do the following:

1. Compare the effectiveness of aggressive versus non-aggressive protests;
2. Understand and list some reasons why people protest; and
3. Discuss peaceful methods they have personally used to change an unpleasant situation.

#### MATERIALS

Copies of the play *The Decision: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* by Cynthia Matthews.  
Dictionary

#### PROCEDURE

A play will be used to emphasize the concept of peaceful resistance. The opposite philosophy of aggressive resistance also will be discussed.

- Have the students give their own definitions of violence and nonviolence. Write the responses on the board and build on the responses to develop a clear definition. Once the students have given their definitions, refer to the dictionary, make comparisons and corrections.
- Review the nonviolent philosophy of Mahatma Ghandi.
- Have the students perform the play entitled: *The Decision; Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* If students prefer, they can write a play of their own about Dr. King and the civil rights movement.
- After the performance, discuss some points in the play. Questions could include the following:
  - Why were some who opposed the protest marchers were not committed to nonviolence?
  - Do the students in the class support aggressive or non-aggressive approaches to social change?
  - Which students like Dr. King's methods, which like the philosophy of Malcolm X, and why?
  - Compare and contrast the philosophies and methods of Dr. King and Malcolm X.

Peace

Secondary

Procedure (continued)

- Have individuals think of instances in their own lives when they witnessed or participated in some action in order to solve a problem.
  - Did they use a violent or nonviolent approach
  - Have them defend their approach.
  - How would they handle the same situation now?

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. List some reasons why people protest.
2. List major advantages and disadvantages of the Equal Rights Amendment and to whom it pertained.
3. Write at least two good reasons for supporting the Equal Rights Amendment.
4. List ways in which the Bill of Rights was ignored in an effort to maintain segregation.
5. Write a paragraph explaining how education and voter registration led to the Voting Rights Act of 1965.
6. View a film or video of peaceful civil rights marches and write a reaction to it.
7. Examine methods of promoting peace in your own community.
8. Compare Dr. King's goals for America to those upon which America was built.
9. Describe how and why Malcolm X changed his philosophy of social protest.

The Decision: Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

by Cynthia Mathews  
Teacher  
Buffalo City Schools  
Buffalo, NY

Characters:

Teacher  
Michael  
Michelle  
Maia  
Manh  
Stokely Carmichael  
Malcolm X  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

As the audience enters the theatre, the lights should be just low enough for ushers to escort the audience to their seats.

Setting: Stage should actually reflect two independent settings.  
First and primary should be a "classroom" and secondly a "jail cell," illusionary but essential.

Visual: Filmstrip (15-20 min.): Rev. Dr. Martin L. King, Jr. 1929-1968, Singer SVE, Society for Visual Education, Inc., 1972. Available from Afro-Am.

Sound: Cassette

Teacher: Michael, will you please shut off the projector. Before we looked at this film, Michael asked me who Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was and what he had done to become so important. Now I ask you, Michael, can you tell me who Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was and why he became famous?

Michael: He was a black man who helped his people.

Michelle: Yes. When he was assassinated on April 4, 1968, in Memphis, he was there in support of a strike by sanitation workers.  
(LIGHTS SHOULD FADE DOWN ON TEACHER AND PICK UP ON STRIKERS, BUT TEACHER'S VOICE STILL HEARD.)

Teacher: Yes, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s popularity had grown by leaps and bounds, and he was constantly being called upon for advice. Dr. King was in the process of organizing his Poor People's March on Washington when he was consulted as "the Philosopher of Nonviolence" about the plight of striking garbage collectors in Memphis, Tennessee. These garbage collectors were working under poor conditions and for very low wages. They had been on strike for two months and the mayor had refused even to consider the workers' request for a modest wage increase.  
(SPOT SHOULD COME UP ON CLASSROOM.)

Michael: Why did he go around helping people?

Teacher: Dr. King had proved himself to be a person of great dedication with serious concerns about the various discriminations suffered by Americans. His reputation for being fair and just on such issues had spread, and his popularity made him a man in demand to settle potentially violent matters with a very peaceful approach.

Maia: How was he able to remain peaceful while people treated him so badly?

Teacher: Dr. King became internationally known as an advocate for Mohandas Gandhi's theories of passive resistance.  
(WHILE TEACHER EXPLAINS "PASSIVE RESISTANCE" TO THE CLASS, THE LIGHTS DIM OFF THE CLASSROOM SCENE AND A SPOT COMES UP ON DR. KING, SITTING IN A JAIL CELL. THE TEACHER'S VOICE IS STILL HEARD.)

Teacher: "Passive" means not opposing. So when you engage in passive resistance, you receive or suffer the offenses of your opponent without resistance, thus exposing the opposition's wrongdoings.  
(LIGHTS SHOULD FADE OFF CLASSROOM.)

Dr. King: (Excerpts from a "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", April 16, 1965)

"Let us consider a more concrete example of just and unjust laws. An unjust law is a code by which a numerical or power majority group compels a minority group to obey, but does not make it binding on itself. This is difference made legal. By the same token, a just law is a code by which a majority compels a minority to follow and that it is willing to follow itself. This is sameness made legal."  
(LIGHTS FADE DOWN ON DR. KING AND SPOT PICKS UP CLASSROOM.)

Maia: Were there other black leaders who helped Dr. King in his fight for peace?

Teacher: Yes, there were several other leaders and organizations addressing these issues about racism and discrimination.

The NAACP had a history of fighting racism, but often it took a long drawn-out court procedure which wasn't always apparent to the masses of the people. Change was slow and in many instances painful. Roy Wilkins was the national president of this organization.

Then there was Malcolm X, a young minister in a Muslim organization called Nation of Islam. He subscribed to the philosophy of his religious beliefs that the white man was the "devil" and was to be avoided by blacks. Because of this belief and this philosophy of separatism for black people, he was labeled militant.  
(LIGHTS GO DOWN ON CLASSROOM AND UP ON MALCOLM X AND MARTIN SIMULTANEOUSLY)

Malcolm X: (Excerpt taken from the *Autobiography of Malcolm X*)  
"How can the white American government figure on selling 'democracy' and 'brotherhood' to nonwhite peoples if they read and hear every day what's going on right here in America, and see the better-than-a-thousand-words photographs of the American white man denying 'democracy' and 'brotherhood' even to America's native-born nonwhites?...Such a faithful, loyal nonwhite as this and jails him by the thousands, and beats him bloody, and inflicts upon him all manner of other crimes."

Martin: All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority...  
(LIGHTS DIE DOWN, STAGE SHOULD BE IN TOTAL DARKNESS.)

Manh: Were any young people involved?

Teacher: Yes, SNCC (pronounced "snick" and standing for Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee) was founded in April 1960. These students were very instrumental in the success of the sit-ins and voting rights drive staged throughout the South; and in 1966 when Stokely Carmichael took command of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, he coined the slogan "Black Power".  
(LIGHTS DOWN ON CLASSROOM AND UP ON STOKELY CARMICHAEL)

Stokely: (Yelling with intense, outraged fury)

People: Black Power! Black Power! Black Power!

Stokely: Black Power! Black Power! Black Power! Blacks will never be free in America until we cut ourselves off from white leadership, form our own organizations, banks, businesses and political parties, and write our own history. Black Power! Black Power!

People: Black Power!  
(LIGHTS FADE DOWN ON CROWD AND PICK UP MALCOLM X.)

Malcolm: Is it clear why I have said that the American white man's malignant superiority complex has done him more harm than an invading army?  
(LIGHTS FADE DOWN ON MALCOLM AND PICK UP ON CLASSROOM)

Teacher: After the success of the 1955 bus boycott in Montgomery, AL, in 1957 Dr. King formed the Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) to encourage blacks to break down the nation's racial barriers by peaceful means.

As you can see, there was great division among black leaders as to what action should be taken to fight this veil of racism, shadowing over America's people.

Beginning in 1965 and extending through 1967, over 100 riots broke across America. Urban violence signaled that the civil rights revolution was shifting from the South to the North. In the words of Charles Dickens from his most popular novel, *A Tale of Two Cities*, "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times" (Marchers carrying letters, "March on Washington - 1968".)

Mar.h: It appears to me that the American people's decision to accept Dr. Martin Luther King's philosophy of passive resistance for civil rights was accented during the 1963 historic march on Washington, which was an unprecedented gathering of black and white leaders and more than 250,000 marchers all demonstrating for civil rights. Did Dr. King ever march in the North to help combat the unrest found in the cities there?

Teacher: Yes. The rebellions were at first entirely spontaneous and unorganized eruptions, but they had an underlying drive, a basic logic: most of the attacks and looting were directed against white merchants who had exploited the black community.

More and more, the people began to organize in their opposition to such issues as voter registration and union representation.

Now, Michael, we have had quite a lengthy discussion about Dr. King. Can you profile his life in a summary for the class?

(MICHAEL STANDS UP AND MOVES TO CENTER STAGE. WHILE THE LIGHTS FADE ON CLASSROOM, THE NATIONAL ANTHEM IS HEARD PLAYING SOFTLY IN THE BACKGROUND.)

Michael: (Excerpt taken from *Ebony-Pictorial History*)  
"Before his death at the age of thirty-nine, Martin Luther King, Jr., had won the world's respect and admiration as a leader of the civil rights protests that began with the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1955 and ended with his assassination in Memphis on April 4, 1968. In one confrontation after another he urged nonviolence, and masses of people responded by restraining themselves despite the most flagrant provocations. His followers in these dangerous, but necessary, protests and demonstrations acquired a new sense of pride and dignity as they knocked down some of the old feudal barriers."

"While many of the black militants disapproved of Dr. King's goals and tactics, none questioned his courage and dedication. Despite the formation of such radical organizations, and the increasingly radical programs of SNCC, he steadfastly maintained a faith in nonviolence as a means of achieving black liberation."

(LIGHTS SHOULD BLINK OFF LEAVING ONLY A PROJECTED PICTURE OF DR. KING SHOWING ON A SCREEN AND THE SOUND OF THE NATIONAL ANTHEM IN THE BACKGROUND. AT THE END OF THE MUSIC, HOUSE SHOULD GO BLACK.)

THE END

#### PRODUCTION NOTES

- Playing Time: 80 minutes (includes showing of filmstrip)
- Cast: 4 males, teacher, 3 females
- Stage Furniture: 4 desks and 4 chairs, portable chalkboard, film projector and cassette player, screen, bench and a facsimile of prison bars
- Hand Properties: picket signs, letters
- Costumes: Modern American
- Lights: mainly color spots fading in and out on settings; no special effects; SCRAM could be used to project following:
- a) picketers
  - b) crowd with Stokely Carmichael
  - c) marchers with letters

Used with permission. *Martin Luther King, Jr. Resource Guide*, New York State Education Department, 1986.

## Civic Participation

### Elementary

#### INTRODUCTION

The skills we learn in school will provide the training we need to become helpful members of society. Those skills can be used to improve the way all Americans live. Working together, the major problems in our society can be solved. In this lesson students will construct a family tree in order to examine some of the problems in our society.

#### OBJECTIVES

At the end of this activity students will be better able to do the following:

1. Recognize Dr. King and what he stood for;
2. List ways Dr. King demonstrated his good citizenship; and
3. Recognize some of the problems Dr. King had while trying to help others.

#### MATERIALS

A bulletin board  
Pictures of Dr. King  
Pattern for a large tree, pattern for leaves  
Construction paper  
Magic Markers  
Background information on Dr. King and his activities to help others

#### PROCEDURE

Explain to the students that they will discuss some of Dr. King's characteristics. In order to organize the material for discussion, a family tree will be constructed. Each leaf will contain information about Dr. King.

- Display pictures of Dr. King in the classroom
- Have students trace and cut a picture of a large tree. Staple it to the bulletin board. (This is the first part of the family tree.)
- Discuss some facts about Dr. King's childhood years, including his parents' names and what they taught him.
- Discuss the influence Dr. Mays and Mahatma Gandhi had on Dr. King and his life's work.
- Review the six characteristics of nonviolence. A nonviolent resister:
  - Does resist, is not aggressive, but he is not a coward. The resister is continually trying to persuade his opponent that he is wrong.
  - Is always seeking to win friendship and understanding with his opponent.
  - Does not attack people, but instead he attacks the forces and institutions of evil.
  - Will allow his opponent to hit him without striking back.
  - Refuses to hate his opponent.

## **Civic Participation**

### **Elementary**

#### **PROCEDURE (continued)**

- Has a lot of faith in the future and believes that people want to do the right thing.
- Discuss the meaning of the Nobel Peace Prize. When, where and why was it given to Dr. King?
- Discuss some of the things that made Martin Luther King, Jr. a leader.
- Discuss the function of the King Center.
- At the end of the discussion and review, have students complete the family tree. Have them trace and cut leaves to go on the tree. Each leaf will include some information about Dr. King.
- Have students staple leaves onto the tree to complete the lesson.
- The King Family Tree can be used for further discussion at a later date.

#### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES**

1. List ways to eliminate hunger in America.
2. Examine the relationship of Americans to people in other parts of the world and why we should help them.
3. Define terms used in this lesson. Write a sentence using the words in context.
4. List some contributions made by different ethnic groups to America. List specific contributions by specific groups, e.g., Native Americans, Jewish Americans, black Americans, Irish Americans.

## Civic Participation

### Intermediate

#### INTRODUCTION

People living in this democratic society are guaranteed certain privileges and benefits. Along with those benefits come responsibilities. Making a commitment to improve the quality of life for all people is one of those responsibilities. In this activity, students will research some of the major issues facing our society. Listing some organizations and what they are doing to help will be part of the research. All the information will be put into a booklet to be shared schoolwide.

#### OBJECTIVES

At the end of this activity students will be better able to do the following:

1. Identify the main programs of the King Center and its location;
2. Discuss some of the methods the King Center uses to help people; and
3. Develop a list of activities and projects that promote the ideas of Dr. King.

#### MATERIALS

Lined paper and construction paper  
Library reference material  
King Center publications and service announcements  
Newspaper and magazine articles  
Publications, audio-visuals and other printed materials from the King Center.

#### PROCEDURE

The students will research and discuss some major issues facing our society. They will also identify some organizations devoted to improving the quality of life for all people. In addition they will make recommendations to bring about the desired changes. All the research information will be compiled into a booklet to be shared with other classes.

- Have the entire class work on this project.
- Write to the King Center to obtain materials.
- Research the programs of the King Center with the students.
- Information that should be in the booklet includes the following:
  - Where the King Center is located;
  - When and why the King Center was founded;
  - Names and brief descriptions of the programs of the King Center;
  - Descriptions of the social issues and problems being addressed by the Center;

## Civic Participation

### Intermediate

#### PROCEDURE (continued)

- Descriptions of the kinds of activities and projects that promote the ideas of Dr. King; and
- Descriptions of the events that led to the enactment of the Federal Holiday Act, and how long it took.
- Have students brainstorm a list of projects and activities that could be used in celebrating the National Holiday.
- At the end of this activity, have students combine all the information into a booklet. The booklet can be used schoolwide to celebrate Dr. King's birthday.

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Compare current civil rights organizations to those of the 1960s.
2. Recognize and list some contributions of black Americans.
3. Research the origin and purpose of some organizations dedicated to social change.
4. Make a list of some issues facing women presently.
5. Examine a variety of other problems confronting people in our society. Make a list of recommendations to bring about a change. Some areas of focus could include:

Language minorities;  
Senior citizens;  
The disabled;  
The homeless; and  
Teenage pregnancy.

## Civic Participation

### Secondary

#### INTRODUCTION

In order to protect the health of a democratic society, civic participation by every citizen is needed. The knowledge and skills necessary to solve problems that confront our diverse and complex society are essential. Being dedicated to improving the quality of life for all people is the responsibility of every citizen. In this lesson a community person will share personal experience he or she had while trying to solve some of the problems faced our society.

#### OBJECTIVES

At the end of this activity the students will be better able to do the following:

1. Identify and list some of the social issues during Dr. King's time;
2. Discuss Dr. King's opinion on some of the issues; and
3. Compare the issues of Dr. King's time to those of the present society.

#### MATERIALS

Guest speaker from the community.

#### PROCEDURE

- Have as the guest speaker someone who participated in some of the demonstrations during the civil rights movement.
- Have the speaker share his or her personal experiences.
- Have the speaker discuss what some of the social issues were at that time.
- Discuss how Dr. King spoke to those issues and what he did to help.
- Have students state some major issues for concern in the present society.
- Compare some issues of the 1960s with those of today. Some questions that could be included are:
  - How have the issues changed?
  - Were Americans as concerned about world peace as they are today?
  - Was nuclear war a threat at that time?
  - Were drugs and alcohol a problem in the 1960s? Why or why not?
  - How have Dr. King's activities affected the economic well-being of all Americans?
- At the end of this activity, have students discuss some of the major problems facing future generations.

## Civic Participation

### Secondary

#### ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES

1. Compare and contrast the movie or video "King" and "Gandhi".
2. Identify the basic principles of nonviolence as advocated and practiced by Gandhi.
3. State why Dr. King was against the Vietnam conflict.
4. Write an essay on current social problems or conditions.
5. Identify and write about some of the major issues affecting the world today.  
Examples include the following:
  - Apartheid in South Africa;
  - Famine in Africa; and
  - The Persian Gulf situation.
6. Describe the social issues and problems being addressed by the King Center today.
7. As a written exercise, have students define the terms used in the lesson and write a sentence using each in context.
8. Choose one of the following to research:
  - Racism;
  - Materialism; or
  - Militarism.

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