



Classroom Resources for Martin Luther King Day 2015
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On January 19, 2015 the annual holiday recognition of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement will be celebrated throughout the U.S. This holiday provides a time to reflect on the promise of freedom made through America's founding documents more than two hundred years ago, and how the struggle to realize those freedoms for all Americans still goes on today. The contributions of great leaders such as Martin Luther King, Jr., inspire and guide others in continuing the struggle. His incredible oration stirred many people to action in the 1960's, and continues to persuade us in the early 21st Century that more must be done to keep America's "Dream" alive.

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Holiday

<http://www.avoiceline.org/mlk/>

This is a brief resource site from African American Voices in Congress with a short history of the bill creating the MLK holiday including the debates, advocacy and legislation involved.

Commemorate the Life of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

<http://www.scholastic.com/teachers/collection/commemorate-life-dr-martin-luther-king-jr>

This Scholastic site has biographies, memorable quotes, and plays detailing the struggle for civil rights, as well as printables and multimedia resources about Dr. King. The resources also include

retrospective lessons and articles to guide your students while examining the state of his legacy and dream today.

Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service - MLK Day

<http://www.nationalservice.gov/special-initiatives/days-service/martin-luther-king-jr-day-service-0>

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Life's most persistent and urgent question is: 'What are you doing for others?'" Each year, Americans across the country answer that question by coming together on the King Holiday to serve their neighbors and communities. The MLK Day of Service is a part of [United We Serve](#), the President's national call to service initiative. It calls for Americans from all walks of life to work together to provide solutions to our most pressing national problems.

Here is a selection of websites with resources and classroom materials to promote discussion of Dr. King's contributions.

Elementary Materials

Web Resources

Happy Birthday, MLK

http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson046.shtml

This Education World article provides a wealth of suggestions about resources to explore and activities to pursue in the classroom to learn about the Civil Rights Movement and Dr. King's contributions to it.

Doing Justice to Martin Luther King Jr. Day with Young Children

<http://www.teachingforchange.org/doing-justice-to-mlk-day>

Early childhood educators often struggle with the question of how to honor Martin Luther King Jr. in a way that is developmentally appropriate, focused, and accurate. Two challenges arise in teaching about King: the first is effectively communicating historical information to young children, and the second is adequately representing the diversity, breadth, and collective nature of the civil rights movement.

Lessons

Dr. King's Dream

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/dr-kings-dream>

In this lesson learn about the life and work of civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. Students will listen to a brief biography, view photographs of the March on Washington, hear a portion of King's "I Have a Dream" speech, and discuss what King's words mean to them. Finally, they will create picture books about their own dreams of freedom for Americans today.

Let Freedom Ring: The Life & Legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/let-freedom-ring-life-legacy-martin-luther-king-jr>

Students about the life and work of civil rights leader Martin Luther King, Jr. by listening to a brief biography, viewing photographs of the March on Washington, and reading a portion of King's "I Have a Dream" speech. After studying King's use of imagery and allusion, students create original poetic phrases about freedom and illustrate them with symbols representing the forms of freedom that have yet to be realized in the United States.

Martin Luther King, Jr. and Me: Identifying with a Hero

<http://www.readwritethink.org/classroom-resources/lesson-plans/martin-luther-king-identifying-257.html>

This lesson explores ways to help students identify with Dr. King—an American hero who lived and died long before they were even born—through reading, writing, listening, and speaking activities that provide a glimpse into Dr. King's life. Students record what they know about Dr. King on a KWL chart. They then read aloud the picture book *My Brother Martin: A Sister Remembers* and add information to the KWL.

Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site

<http://www.nps.gov/malu/forteachers/lessonplansandteacherguides.htm>

The Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Legacy of Racial and Social Justice: A Curriculum for Empowerment is a teacher's resource guide that provides activities for students in kindergarten through eighth grade to explore the rich history of the civil rights movement and the persona of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Middle and High School Materials

Web Resources

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., Papers Project

<http://www.stanford.edu/group/king/>

This Stanford University site has a biography, a timeline, references, articles, and primary and secondary documents about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life and the Civil Rights Movement. One section of the site requires registration but there is no cost.

Martin Luther King Jr.

<http://seattletimes.nwsources.com/mlk/>

Few people have had as much impact on people's understanding of human rights as Martin Luther King. Learn about the man, the movement, the legacy and the holiday at this Seattle Times site. There are discussion questions also. There is an opportunity at this site for online discussion about King's life and legacy.

Rhetorical Analysis of "Letter to Birmingham Jail" by Martin Luther King Jr.

<http://www.studymode.com/course-notes/Rhetorical-Analysis-Of-Letter-To-Birmingham-1119160.html>

This analytical article by Britt Woody analyzes the “Letter to a Birmingham Jail” to explore MLK’s ideas on why segregation protests are important, and why the cause of him being jailed is false. She identifies King’s purpose as to prove that segregation is wrong, and people must act in a nonviolent way against it to see its demise.

The Whole World Was Watching: An Oral History of 1968

<http://www.stg.brown.edu/projects/1968/>

In this oral history project directed by Brown University, students from South Kingston High School interviewed a diverse body of Rhode Islanders about what they remember of the year 1968. Topics include the Vietnam War, the Civil Rights Movement, the assassinations of Martin Luther King, Jr. and Robert Kennedy, and women's issues. The timeline has hot links to web resources about people and events of the era.

Martin Luther King Jr.

http://topics.nytimes.com/top/reference/timestopics/people/k/martin_luther_jr_king/index.html

Here is a timeline, an overview, and a list of resources from around the Web about Martin Luther King Jr. as selected by researchers and editors of The New York Times.

I Have a Dream Speech

<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/speeches/mlkihaveadream.htm>

This is a photo, transcript, and audio of the Martin Luther King I have a Dream speech.

Lessons

Martin Luther King, Jr., and the Power of Nonviolence

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/martin-luther-king-jr-and-power-nonviolence>

This lesson introduces students to Martin Luther King, Jr.'s philosophy of nonviolence and the teachings of Mohandas K. Gandhi that influenced King's views. After considering the political impact of this philosophy, students explore its relevance to personal life. MS

Martin Luther King, Jr. and Nonviolent Resistance

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/martin-luther-king-jr-and-nonviolent-resistance>

By examining King's famous essay in defense of nonviolent protest, along with two significant criticisms of his direct action campaign, this lesson will help students assess various alternatives for securing civil rights for black Americans in a self-governing society. HS

Birmingham 1963

<http://www.archives.state.al.us/teacher/rights/rights3.html>

On April 12, 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. was sentenced to a nine-day jail term for his part in desegregation demonstrations. It was during this time that King wrote his essay, "Letter from the Birmingham Jail," which described his concerns for the laws of America and his hope for justice for black Americans. The national media publicized the powerful water hoses and the German shepherd police dogs that were used by the firemen and the policemen of Birmingham against the demonstrators. The documents in this lesson include telegrams sent to or by Gov. Wallace concerning the events in Birmingham. The notarized statements from the Intercitizens

Committee, Inc. provide a contrast to the official state government version of events in Birmingham.

Freedom's Story - The Civil Rights Movement 1919-1960s

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/freedom/1917beyond/essays/crm.htm>

and

Freedom's Story - The Civil Rights Movement 1968-2008

<http://nationalhumanitiescenter.org/tserve/freedom/1917beyond/essays/crm2008.htm>

These two National Humanities Center Teacher Serve pages provide overview essays, a guide for student discussion and a review of scholar debates on specific issues.

Freedom's Ring "I Have a Dream" Speech

<https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/news/freedoms-ring-i-have-dream-speech>

[Freedom's Ring](#) is Martin Luther King, Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, annotated. Here you can compare the written and spoken speech, explore multimedia images, listen to movement activists and uncover historical context.

General Resources

History Channel - Martin Luther King Jr.

<http://www.history.com/topics/black-history/martin-luther-king-jr>

This History Channel site has an excellent overview article provides a timeline of MLK's life and puts it in the context of the Civil Rights Movement. It includes videos, pictures and speeches.

The King Center

<http://www.thekingcenter.org/about-dr-king>

During the less than 13 years of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s leadership of the modern American Civil Rights Movement between 1955 and 1968, African Americans achieved more genuine progress toward racial equality in America than in the previous 350 years. Dr. King is widely regarded as America's pre-eminent advocate of nonviolence and one of the greatest nonviolent leaders in world history.

Spirituals

<http://edsitement.neh.gov/lesson-plan/spirituals>

Students explore the community-building power of religion by listening to a performance of "Swing Low, Sweet Chariot," perhaps the best-known spiritual. They then turn to the 19th-century biography of Harriet Tubman to examine how she used spirituals as a secret signal to fugitive slaves on the Underground Railroad. Against this background, students reconsider the impact of the line from "an old Negro spiritual" with which Martin Luther King, Jr., ended his famous "I Have A Dream" speech and the influence of spirituals on his speaking style.