

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 2021 ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

ELEMENTARY SCHOOL WINNERS

FIRST PLACE

#76 Riley Wiggins

Columbus Magnet School | 3rd Grade

SECOND PLACE

#7 Ariana Brown

Kendall College and Career Academy | 5th Grade

THIRD PLACE

#61 Guadalupe Trejo Reyes

Kendall College and Career Academy | 5th Grade

When Will Change Come?

I have a dream that one day live in a society not judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. represented equality for all not just people of color. In a time where people of color or anyone who supported people of color were discriminated against, he led marches and made speeches to get people to open their minds that we are all one. I wonder why people are treated differently just because of their skin color or background? If Dr. King were alive today his eyes would be filled with tears to see all the hate and injustice going on in the world. 400 years after slavery the question is still asked, Are we really free? When will the blindfolds be taken off and people stand up for what is right so we can all get along?

Even though segregation is not legal you can clearly see the friction and the lack of energy when it comes time to support people of color. Our school systems receive less money to support our needs, our communities are left with no attention, why can't we have nice things too? I sat with my family and saw the difference in treatment that was given last week at the capitol. In the summertime there was so much killing of people who looked like me by the hands of people who are supposed to protect us. When we came together to protest peacefully, we were beaten, tear gassed and killed. Looking last week nothing was done even close to the way we were treated. The difference in their behavior and ours was extremely different. One was peacefully done for a greater cause while the other was hostile. When will we all be able to stand together like Dr. King said and hold hands?

When can people of color walk the streets without others clinching their purse or calling the cops because of their skin color. If I wear a hoodie and my Caucasian friend wears a hoodie I would be treated like a criminal or a hoodlum just because of the article of clothing I have on and my skin complexion. It is time for a change in the way we think. It is time to let Dr. Kings words ring loud and clear. If we all came together and worked together this world would be a better place!

Martin Luther King Jr. was born January 15th in Atlanta, Georgia. He was a peaceful civil rights leader. He was born and lived in a time where people of color were treated unfairly, had no rights, and were segregated.

In the south during segregation, people of color were not able to enjoy the same amenities as the whites. For example, people of color could not eat at the same establishments. If they were allowed to buy food from the same place as whites, they had to enter through the back doors. Children of color were not able to attend the same schools as white children. In public, there were separate restrooms and water fountains labeled "colored" and "whites only". If a person of color was caught breaking the law, such as drinking out of the wrong water fountain they would be arrested or sometimes even beaten. These laws were very harsh and unjust.

As a child and teenager living in the south and being treated so poorly, as well as his family, Dr. King decided to start a movement. His movement started with a bus boycott that lasted over a year in which colored people refused to ride the bus because they had to sit in the back or give their seat to a white person. This boycott led to Dr. King's house being bombed after the boycott ended and the state court ruled to end segregation on all Montgomery buses.

Dr. King became famous and the spokesman for the civil rights movement. Thereafter, Dr. King began many peaceful protests and marches to end segregation also known as Jim Crow Laws in order to allow equality and voting rights for all. On August 28th 1963, Dr. King gave a speech about his dream at his March in Washington. This speech would later become famous and one of the best speeches in American history known as the "I Have a Dream" speech. After giving his speech, it helped put the civil rights agenda as a top priority and the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was created.

Dr. King believed that all people, no matter what color you are, should be treated equally. He worked with so many people and travelled all over the country giving speeches and protesting for change up until he was assassinated on April 4th, 1968. If it weren't for Dr. Martin Luther King's movements, people of color might not have had their rights. Even though we have our rights now it doesn't mean we are completely equal as white people are. We still have to work a lot harder than others.

This past year, we as a race and even other races witnessed how people of color are still treated differently from whites. There have been many protests and peaceful marches around the world this year because of how the police have been beating and even killing black people. Though, there were white people that protested and marched back in Dr. King's time, this time around it was different because some white people felt what people of color have been going through all their lives first hand at these protests because the police started to beat whites as well. While other white people could see what was happening in real time on the television. I am very proud of all the people no matter what color you are who have taken a stand and have spoken up against racial inequality. I think once we realize a problem exists, that is the first step to take in order to fix it.

Do you like learning about Biographies? Well, what do you know, i do too! Martin Luther King was one of the many Biographies I loved to read about. He was important for his peaceful protests, Speeches, and Etc. Many of his protests and speeches were mostly about one topic, Segregation. If you want more Knowledge about Dr King, keep reading to find out more facts about Martin Luther King jr.

What was Dr. King's dream? King's dream was "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character." I think his dream was special because it states how his children shouldn't be judged by their skin color, but of their content in their character. This shows that his dream affected how the world stands today. Another famous quote that I personally love and find inspiring is "If you can't fly, then run, if you can't run, then, walk, if you can't walk, then crawl, by all means, keep moving." To me this quote means a lot to me because even if you can't use your legs or arms, he wants you to keep going because giving up isn't a word in his vocabulary. This shows that Dr. King's dreams are important to our community.

My dream is for doctors to find a cure and we can all be safe. Another dream is to succeed in my job in the future. Dr King's dreams were not like any normal dream. He inspired many people like me. He discussed his emotions towards segregation and how he wanted those laws to change. You may ask, how does he inspire you? Well, he makes every word in his speeches feel important. I want my job in my future to be what I do for the rest of my life and to keep growing and succeeding in what I do in the future. Dr King's dream is important to me because he really impacted lives and gave anyone regardless of their color the right to speak up and be confident about themselves, He also protested for the rights they wanted, even if it would cause him to get into lots of trouble like being Arrested.

As a result, I hope my Essay inspires you as much as it inspired me. Never underestimate the power of a dream. Like he would say, Keep moving.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 2021 ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

MIDDLE SCHOOL WINNERS

FIRST PLACE

#32 Joalys Rosario

Roton Middle School | 6th Grade

SECOND PLACE

#9 Shanice Daniels

Roton Middle School | 6th Grade

THIRD PLACE

#37 Isla Tucker

Roton Middle School | 6th Grade

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Dr. Martin Luther King's dream was that every person was seen for that person not for his or her skin color but their character . And that everyone was treated equally no matter how diverse they were. He also made a famous speech, "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 made 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." Everyone walking united, hand in hand. That's what it means to me and what will be seen in my future one day.

My own aspiration is to be an artist, and as a person of color, I want to have my art speak equality and I hope I can ignore the judgment of others whether it's good or bad. This is the contribution I plan to make to continue MLK's dream. His valuable words have left a positive effect on all races, not just my race, because everyone deserves to be treated equally and fairly. It speaks volumes to my artistic aspirations because one of my dreams is to fight for equality through creative expression. That's because as a colored person I would have loved to have equality for people of color and for people of color not to live in fear constantly and to feel accepted and safe. Throughout all of the years all of the choices that colored people made to show that they want a quality of life for the future has helped the next generation, but I want to know if this is the generation that will stop and make everyone understand that we as a race want equal opportunity. MLK never stopped and when he got tired he never took a break. He continued marching, moving, speaking, and problem solving. That's what he showed me I need to do on my journey..

The importance of Dr. Martin Luther King's dream is simply wanting justice for all black and colored people. He wanted no discrimination or racism for all races and for all races to coexist and treat each other fairly. In his dream he also wanted all of the years of mistreatment to be overturned. What this means to me is that he didn't stop at one protest and just leave. Instead he continued to fight for my family and what that did for me is help the future of this world. It gave me a place in it. It also opened up the eyes of people and showed how important it was for people to be treated fairly. Don't look at my art through prejudiced eyes, but look at it as justice for all. I will be honest. I do not know what my art will do for others in my future, but my hope is I can have such an impact on at least one person's life because I want to inspire and leave a mark on the world through my art just like MLK did through the Civil Rights Movement. I want to believe in myself enough so that others will know that no matter what the color of their skin, they too have a right to feel like they deserve a peaceful, racist free world. That's what MLK wanted for kids who look like me.

Martin Luther King Racial Justice Equity

Martin Luther King, Jr. was a man whose intent was to change the way people see others just because of their skin color. He wanted people to focus more on how much the person was worth on the inside, instead of their appearance on the outside. He talked about the content of people's character and wanted us all to live equally together in peace. Seeing the world today, I believe his famous yet powerful speech has put a huge impact on the way African Americans live today, but with all of that progress we are still far away from the dream. We can now walk the streets when we want to, eat, wear, read, play, and learn all together in peace with different races, but we still have a great work to do. The world's problems may have been fixed today from this speech and other activists but outside somewhere there is a small number of people who still don't believe in equality and are angry that we have won the battle and they haven't changed the cruel ways in their hearts. They try to take our freedom and justice and put us down, but there is one of them and millions of us who are still fighting to stop racism. From country to country we stand tall and we aren't going down without a fight! This is America and we have the freedom other countries don't and for people to try and take that is very wrong. We are still protesting, holding events, donating, etc for equality.

My aspiration is to bring people together in unity because of the magnificent beauty that it brings. I will do this by using my values of showing love and kindness to people just like my Mommy does because I admire how she makes strangers smile and brightens people's day. Because of my values and what MLK taught of treating people with fairness I believe that I can obtain this wonderful goal.

Martin Luther King dreamed of freedom and justice not because of your skin color but because of the amazing person that you are is important to me because everyone deserves a fair chance in life. It is so important that regardless of how we see each other outside, we do not judge them but look at their heart on the inside. Although the desire is to have everyone created equal, we know this is a difficult outcome,

and we still have work to do in order to create unity, but it comes with a lot of work and patience. We must learn to love and appreciate one another and be kind and understanding that we are all different but we are so alike because we are all human beings.

I want to live in a world where there are no protests because someone was killed because of their skin color and one race is not upset with the next. We are all God's children and deserve a chance at equal opportunities to love and live freely. That is what Dr. King's dream means to me.

Thank you.



Martin Luther King Jr Essay

It all started on January 15, 1929. The day he was born. Martin had quite the childhood, considering all the racial segregation in the south. Ever since Martin was a kid he dreamt that everyone would be treated the same, no matter the color of their skin. Education also played a big part in his childhood, Martin's mom stepped in at a very young age and taught him how to read before he had even entered school. He became so intelligent that after completing elementary school he barely went to highschool and went to collage around the age of 15. King graduated college in 1948, with a bachelor of arts degree in sociology. Throughout King's life he'd been fascinated by Henry David Thoreau essays and poets. Especially the one about Civil Disobedience. King aspired to be everything that Henry was, a good writer. Later in life King took all of Henry's creations and accomplishments to heart. As a result, King made his own speech "I have a dream" which you are very familiar with. Martin wrote this speech not because he wanted to be like Henry, but because he knew it was what most people needed to hear. On August 28, 1963, 250,000 people came to listen to Martin Luther King's "I have a dream" speech. He dreamt that one day one's color would not matter, and that blacks and whites could be treated equally. He vaguely stated that he wanted both races to be able use the same bathrooms, restaurants, stores, and schools. He wanted both races to get the same education, he wanted everyone to be treated the same, no matter the color of their skin.

Martin Luthur King's dream inspired millions of people, including me. He taught me that everyone should be treated equally, we're all human and the color of one's skin shouldn't define us as someone that we are not. King's speech calmed protests, boycotts and marches. King continued to write more speeches that helped the world see things from a different perspective. After showing the world a different way to look at life King was absolutely shocked! But apparently, so was a man named James Earl Ray. On a Thursday evening April 4, 1968 King was standing on his balcony when he was assassinated by James he was immediately rushed to the hospital. Sadly he had passed only within an hour.

Martin Luther Kings "I have a dream" speech inspired me and so many people in different ways. It inspired some people to change the way they look at things, and some people to be thankful and grateful for what privileges they have. You might be wondering, "What made this speech so inspirational and why is it so important?" Martin Luther King's speech brought attention and awareness to the Civil Rights Movement which had also been going on for a long time. But more importantly, he brought awareness to equality, fairness, and peoples rights. Everyone should have the same rights regardless of the way they look. People should be able to go to the same restaurants, ride the same bus, go to the same bathroom, and get the same education as everyone else despite the color of their skin.

DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR. 2021 ESSAY CONTEST WINNERS

HIGH SCHOOL WINNERS

FIRST PLACE

#1 Denali Baker

Norwalk High School | 12th Grade

SECOND PLACE

#9 Ava Massucco

Brien McMahon High School | 9th Grade

THIRD PLACE

#4 Joanna Susan Gentle

Norwalk High School | 9th Grade

When one thinks of a protest, they might think of groups of people with signs marching along their streets and raising awareness to an issue they believe needs fixing. When a protest turns violent, it becomes classified as a riot, and most people look down on the use of violence to prove one's own beliefs. These ideas society has around peaceful protests has been influenced by the efforts Martin Luther King Jr. had in achieving his goal. One of the strongest pillars in Martin Luther King's legacy is his use of nonviolent protests in achieving racial equality. His actions have proved how nonviolence provokes change, and they have set an example for other racial justice protests to follow.

One of his most well-known protests was the Montgomery Bus Boycott, where King and his followers refused to take the bus for 381 days. This protest was easier said than done, because, despite King's push for nonviolence, there was a violent response against these protests. His followers were sent death threats, King's own house was bombed, and King was found guilty and jailed for two weeks. Despite these setbacks, King continued his push for a peaceful change, and urged his followers not to fight back with fists. It ended when the Supreme Court ruled the segregation of buses was unconstitutional. This protest, along with the myriad of protests King led and took part of, proved to the country how nonviolence works when demanding change. It showed people how, since nonviolence is proven to be successful, attacks are not needed in order to incite change.

King's legacy inspires generations today to raise awareness and demand change for the problems they face in the world. Even though King and other civil rights activists helped abolish segregation in all public places, there is still racism and inequity in the world. The most prominent example in this day and age are the Black Lives Matter (BLM) protests in the summer of 2020. Even though the movement was founded in 2013, it gained momentum after a video of Minneapolis police officer Derek Chauvin kneeling on George Floyd's neck sparked outrage across the country. Despite the news showing videos of violent riots and raids, 93% of BLM protests were peaceful, according to the Armed Conflict Location and Event Data Project (ACLED). Martin Luther King gave the American people a blueprint for demanding change in a caring and harmonious society. These protests followed his peaceful actions and continued his fight in racial equity.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. is widely known and celebrated in the United States with a day off on a Monday in January. Ever since elementary school, Dr. King has been ingrained in our education system, and his protests and speeches are known throughout the country. The legacy of Dr. King is important not only to learn about the man behind the push for racial equality, but to also set an example to students of a peaceful leader who succeeded in achieving his goals through nonviolence.

Sources:

Miller, Zeke J. "Martin Luther King Jr. And Lessons from Peaceful Protests." *Time*, Time, 12 Jan. 2018, time.com/5101740/martin-luther-king-peaceful-protests-lessons/.

Mansoor, Sanya. "93% Of Black Lives Matter Protests Have Been Peaceful: Report." *Time*, Time, 5 Sept. 2020, time.com/5886348/report-peaceful-protests/.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a great man and social activist as he helped bring equality, freedom, peace, and basic rights to African Americans in the United States. His speeches and non-violent protests opened the government's eyes to how they were treating people of color. Without him, our world would look a lot different. Even though African Americans are still fighting for equality today, Martin Luther King Jr. was a key piece in broadening the views of how people of color are just the same as white people as the only difference is skin color. He organized different events to broadcast the cause he was fighting for and those moments will be remembered in history forever.

Equity means fair and that's all Martin Luther King Jr. wanted. He believed in equality for all and that everyone should get the same opportunities in life. In education, it was clear that whites had more access to books and resources while blacks were less advanced with low funding to learn. Martin Luther King Jr. advocated for better education and even wrote a short article in 1947 arguing about how children need to learn how to use their critical thinking and moral compass to achieve success later in life. Many of his fights for equality in education were local and didn't make it across America, but at least he tried to help make learning better for some children. His beliefs of education are used today through how teachers teach and by governments making schooling more accessible for those who cannot afford it.

It was clear that since white people were more advantaged they would live in nicer places than black people. This is where environmental equity plays in as people of color would be living in poorer conditions with little to no money. Most jobs that African Americans had were the more dirty and dangerous ones where they get lower pay. Dr. King gathered people together to rally against these conditions and later on got the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and the Endangered Species Act passed. He realized that poverty, low wage, and racial injustice were all linked together making it much harder for African Americans to live. Today, Martin Luther King's actions for environmental equity are being used with climate change by bringing more people of color together to talk about these issues because these poorer communities don't have the resources to know what's going on.

As expressed, there was and still is, racial injustice amongst the black communities of America. They continue to fight this inequality together. Martin Luther King's equity work helped black people get the support and justice they needed. The most important thing Dr. King accomplished during his lifetime was the Civil Rights Act 1964 where segregation was no longer allowed. Martin Luther King is the definition of the word equity as he was the best advocate for the black community. He will always be remembered as an inspiration to stand up for what's morally right.

Have We Changed?

As seen from the title we will be asking a very important question, Have We Changed? Now to explain the question I have asked you, this revolves around the topic of Racial Equity and specifically in this essay Racial Equity towards people of color in America and if we have achieved the amount we like to claim we have. Throughout this, I will be providing what I was taught in school, What I have had to teach myself, and lastly the present-day problems. Before I start I would just like to say that this may be uncomfortable but I believe it is necessary to advance and educate.

To start us off we will be mapping out what we were taught from a young age in school. Our timeline was that slavery was a very dark part of our history as a country but it ended when the 16th president signed the 13th amendment in 1865. There still wasn't true equity though so people like Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks had to fight. They won and that's where we stopped learning about people of color's history in America. Sure there might have been a lesson here and there but that is all that we know from school. We were taught this history and were told that this was in our \ past and that we overcame it but is that true?

Now, this is the part where we get uncomfortable and dig deeper into the whole world of issues we weren't taught in school. One example is the "absent father" stereotype this harmful stereotype is rooted in slavery. When slaves gave birth to children, fathers were extremely involved so when masters took away their children it was extremely traumatic. Over time they became distant towards their children so it would not hurt as much. Now many may argue this history is not suited for young people. This is true but we still were not even taught about African American heroes such as Robert Smalls and Cathy Williams who are still deemed as too