

Martin Luther King

Martin Luther King was a clergyman and one of the most prominent members of the civil rights movement.

He was born of January 15, 1929. He became famous in the 1950 and 1960-es through opposition to racial segregation in the USA. King promoted non-violent methods of opposition such as boycotts or sit-ins.

In 1963 he helped organize March on Washington; the march drew hundreds of thousands of civil rights supporters to Washington, D.C., for a mass rally. At this march he delivered his most celebrated speech. He stressed the importance of non-violent protest and described a possible future of racial harmony in the US. He said: "I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream: I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be charged by the color of their skin but by the content by their character".

After this march Martin Luther King was put into jail; there he wrote his famous "Letter from Birmingham Jail" which he addressed to his fellow clergymen. In this letter he defended the civil rights movement, saying that without forceful actions like this march, equal rights for black people would never be gained. He claimed "one who breaks an unjust law must do it openly, lovingly." Such a person, King said, is showing respect for law because he insists that law should be just.

In 1964 Martin Luther King received the Nobel Prize for peace.

He was assassinated by James Earl Ray in 1968. A national holiday each January 15 commemorates his life.

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Darkness cannot drive out darkness; only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate; only love can do that.

— Martin Luther King, Jr.

Before reading

Match the definitions with the words.

1	to do something to show you remember an important person or event in the past with respect	A	Clergyman
2	expressing opinions strongly and demanding attention or action	B	Prominent
3	to protect someone or something from being attacked, especially by fighting	C	Segregate
4	a place where criminals are kept as a punishment	D	Violent
5	likely to hurt or kill someone else	E	Jail
6	to separate one group of people from another, especially one sex or race from another	F	Defend
7	important or famous	G	Forceful
8	a man who is a member of the clergy (= priests or religious leaders)	H	Commemorate

While Reading

Finish the sentences.

1	Martin Luther King was	A	commemorates his life.
2	King promoted	B	in 1968
3	In 1963 he	C	received the Nobel Prize for peace
4	I have a dream	D	he was put into jail
5	After this march	E	that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave-owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.
6	In 1964 Martin Luther King	F	helped organize March on Washington.
7	He was assassinated	G	non-violent methods of opposition.
8	A national holiday each January 15	H	one of the most prominent members of the civil rights movement.

Post Reading

Fill in the missing gaps with the words from the box.

Defend – commemorate – prominent – forceful – segregate

1. Yesterday the Catholic Church backed the council 's decision to pupils temporarily in the first weeks of the new campus opening.
2. She glanced up at him and tried to make her voice more
3. Doumer became a personage in Paris and was elected president of the chamber in January 1905, being re-elected in January 1906.
4. The Victoria bridge at Alirajpur was built to the Diamond Jubilee of 1897.
5. You him because you work for him and you're a loyal employee, but I'll bet you've wondered why he's so unresponsive.