

## **Competency: Describe Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday Intermediate Level**

Lesson Overview: The purpose of this lesson is to teach students to recognize who Martin Luther King, Jr. is and why we celebrate his birthday as a national holiday.

This lesson plan includes the following:

1. Pictures of Martin Luther King, Jr.
2. Martin Luther King, Jr. Vocabulary
3. Handout: Martin Luther King, Jr. Vocabulary Matching
4. The Story of Martin Luther King, Jr.
5. Martin Luther King, Jr. Crossword Puzzle
6. I Have a Dream Speech
7. My "Dream" for this Year!
8. Martin Luther King, Jr. Vocabulary Flashcards

Approximate Time: 2 hours

Prerequisite Skills: Students must be able to read and write simple sentences, be familiar with ordinal numbers, and have basic calendar skills.

Prerequisite Vocabulary:

African American  
Americans  
Atlanta, Georgia  
birthday  
born  
bus  
holiday  
honor  
January  
Monday  
problems  
restaurants  
ride  
sad  
solving  
someone  
third  
United States  
white  
worked

### Vocabulary:

agree  
believed in  
change  
famous  
hero(s)  
killed  
law(s)  
march  
Martin Luther King Jr.  
peacefully  
protested  
speech(es)  
unfair

Materials Needed: Whiteboard or flip chart, erasable markers, pictures of Martin Luther King, Jr., and handouts.

Equipment Needed: Multi-media computer with Internet access (optional)

### Activities:

1. Explain the purpose of the lesson.
2. Show the students a picture(s) of Martin Luther King, Jr. and ask if they know who he is or who he might be. If there are students who know who he is, ask them what they know about him. Write their responses on the board or on a flip chart. Ask those students if they know why we celebrate his birthday. **See pictures.**
3. Briefly review prerequisite vocabulary, then go over new vocabulary. You may want to write the words on the board.
  - a. First of all make sure that each student can correctly pronounce the new words by having them pronounce the words aloud as a group and then individually.
  - b. Give the students **Handout: Martin Luther King, Jr. Vocabulary**. Carefully explain each word and make sure that students understand the meanings.
  - c. Give students **Handout: Martin Luther King, Jr. Vocabulary Matching**. Review answers orally.

4. Read aloud the story of Dr. King's life. **Handout: The Story of Martin Luther King, Jr.**
5. Follow the story with a discussion about the new information learned. Write all of the new ideas and/or vocabulary from the students on the board or flip chart. Be sure to include all the major events that occurred from childhood until his death.
  - a. Explain that Martin Luther King, Jr. was famous because he helped our country change some very unfair laws and that he believed that there were peaceful ways of solving problems. You may want to have a very elementary discussion about fair and unfair rules or laws. Give examples of some rules that would be unfair to the students in your class. For example, all students wearing blue can use computers but those wearing red cannot.
  - b. Go back to the story and reread sections about unfair laws such as a) only white people could sit at the front of the bus; b) African American's could use only certain restaurants and drinking fountains; c) African-American children and white children could not go to the same school together or even play together in some cases.
  - c. Ask the students how King must have felt when he was not allowed to play with his best friend, a white child, who attended a school for white children.
  - d. Provide a very basic explanation of how those unfair laws have changed. Allow time for discussion if needed.
  - e. Explain to students that Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday is celebrated on the 3<sup>rd</sup> Monday of each January.
6. After having discussed the story, have students get in pairs or small groups and take turns reading a paragraph in the story until the entire story is completed. Repeat as necessary.
7. Read excerpts from his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. **Handout: I Have a Dream Speech**
  - a. Discuss with the students what Martin Luther King, Jr. meant by his "dream".
  - b. Explain the difference between a dream while sleeping and King's dream which was more of a wish or hope.

8. Give students ***Martin Luther King, Jr. Crossword Puzzle***. Use answer key to check students' work. This worksheet was made with Wordsheets 5.0 software available at [www.qualint.com](http://www.qualint.com). There is a free demonstration version that allows 10 printings. After that, the software must be purchased.
9. Ask the students to tell or write about their own dreams for the United States for this year using the ***My "Dream" for this year!*** handout.
10. Explain to the students why Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday is a national holiday.

#### Assessment/Evaluation of Learning:

1. Instructor evaluation of students' participation.
2. Evaluation of student worksheets.

#### Follow-up/Optional Activities:

1. On a map, show students the important places in the life of Martin Luther King, Jr.
2. Have students identify Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Birthday on a calendar.
3. For those classes with Internet access, go to <http://seattletimes.nwsource.com/mlk/man/MLKsound.html> for sound files of excerpts of Dr. King's speeches. (The quality of these sound files is very good.)
4. Have students write a sentence or two about the thing they remember most about Martin Luther King, Jr. Have them read their sentences to the class.
5. Ask the students if the countries they are from have special holidays to honor any of its national heroes?
6. Bring in video clips of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s marches or other videos of public demonstration. The video Legacy of a Dream by MPI Home Video has clips of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speeches. (This is available from Teacher's Video Company, or a state or local vendor carrying their products.)

7. Read a book about the life of Martin Luther King, Jr. to the class.
8. Have students complete the worksheet about Martin Luther King, Jr. found in the Famous Americans: Washington, Lincoln, and King Vol. 1 pages 23 - 29. This is available from Remedia Publications or a state or local vendor carrying their products. These worksheets teach sentence completion, math, abbreviations, definitions, and fact/opinion.
9. Have students complete the worksheet about Martin Luther King Jr. found in the Famous Americans: Washington, Lincoln, and King Vol. 2 pages 23 - 27. This is available from Remedia Publications or a state or local vendor carrying their products. These worksheets include writing paragraphs, name search, creative writing, and inference.
10. For more information on Martin Luther King, Jr., read to the students the handout found in the workbook Daily Comprehension: January pages 29 - 30. This is available from Remedia Publications or a state or local vendor carrying their products. The workbook includes a brief summary of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life and a crossword puzzle.