

Martin Luther King, Jr., Day

The black man in the picture is drinking from a water fountain. It is 1955. There is a sign COLORED on the drinking fountain. For many years, black Americans did not have the same rights as white Americans. Drinking fountains and rest rooms had WHITE or COLORED signs. African Americans had to sit in the backs of buses. Many restaurants did not serve food to black people. In some places, black children and white children did not go to the same schools. Many African Americans could not vote. They had trouble getting good jobs.

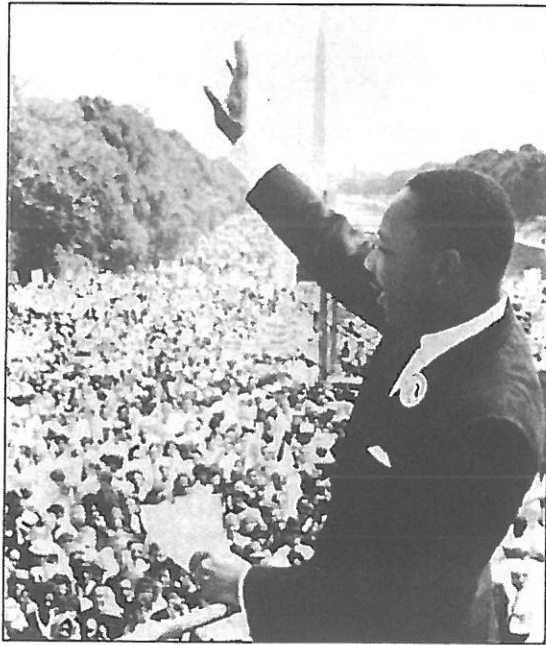
A young black man from Georgia became angry. His name was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. He wanted equal rights for all Americans. He worked hard to make people's lives better. He led many peaceful demonstrations. One important demonstration was in 1963. Dr. King gave a speech in Washington, D.C., at the Lincoln Memorial. There were 250,000 people there. You can see Dr. King talking to the people in the picture on the next page. He told them,

I have a dream . . . that one day little black boys and girls will join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers.

One year later, in 1964, Dr. King received the Nobel Peace Prize. In 1968, a white man assassinated Dr. King. When Dr. King died, he was only 39 years old.

Dr. King's dream of peace and better lives for all Americans is alive today. In 1983, his birthday became a national holiday. On the third Monday in January, many Americans remember Martin Luther King, Jr. Students study about him. People listen to speeches and think about equal rights.

Life for African Americans is better today than it was in 1955. But there are still many problems. Dr. King's dream is still a dream.



Martin Luther King, Jr.,
speaks to marchers from
the steps of the Lincoln
Memorial, Washington, D. C.

UNDERSTANDING NEW WORDS

Take turns reading these pairs of sentences with a partner. Is the meaning of the sentences the same or different? Decide with your partner. Circle SAME or DIFFERENT.

1. There is a sign **COLORED**
on the drinking fountain.
Only black people can drink from
this fountain. SAME DIFFERENT
2. Martin Luther King, Jr., wanted
equal rights for all Americans.
Martin Luther King, Jr., wanted all
Americans to have the same rights
and freedoms. SAME DIFFERENT
3. Martin Luther King, Jr., led many
peaceful demonstrations.
When Dr. King led
demonstrations, many people died. SAME DIFFERENT
4. In 1968, a white man **assassinated**
Dr. King.
In 1968, a white man killed Dr.
King. SAME DIFFERENT

UNDERSTANDING WHAT YOU READ

When Is the Holiday?

Fill in the year. Then write the dates for January. Circle Martin Luther King, Jr., Day.

January 19 ____

Sun.	Mon.	Tues.	Wed.	Thurs.	Fri.	Sat.

True or False?

Take turns reading these sentences with a partner. Is each sentence true or false? Decide with your partner. Put an X under TRUE or FALSE.

- | | TRUE | FALSE |
|---|-------------------|-------------------|
| 1. For many years, black Americans did not have the same rights as white Americans. | <u> X </u> | <u> </u> |
| 2. Whites had to sit in the backs of buses. | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |
| 3. A young black woman from Georgia became angry. | <u> </u> | <u> </u> |

TRUE

FALSE

- | | | |
|--|-------|-------|
| 4. Martin Luther King, Jr., worked hard to make people's lives better. | _____ | _____ |
| 5. On the third Monday in January, only African Americans remember Dr. King. | _____ | _____ |
| 6. Life for African Americans was better in 1955 than it is today. | _____ | _____ |
| 7. Dr. King's dreams of peace and better lives for all Americans is not alive. | _____ | _____ |
| 8. There are still many problems for black Americans today. | _____ | _____ |

BEFORE YOU CONTINUE

- Look at your guesses on page 9. Were you right?
- Now fill in Martin Luther King, Jr., Day on the Holiday Chart on page 153.



TALK ABOUT IT

When Americans are angry about laws, they do many things to protest. Martin Luther King, Jr., led peaceful demonstrations to change laws. Some people write letters and make telephone calls to government leaders. Some people march in demonstrations.

Interview a partner about the issues below. How important is each issue? Circle 1, 2, or 3. Would you protest against the issue? Put an X under **Yes** or **No**.

Partner's Name: _____

Would you
protest?

<i>ISSUE</i>	1 Very Important	2 Important	3 Not Important	Yes	No
nuclear weapons	1	2	3		
pollution	1	2	3		
high gasoline prices	1	2	3		
high taxes	1	2	3		
high medical costs	1	2	3		
expensive public transportation	1	2	3		
other:	1	2	3		

Which three issues are the most important to your partner? Share your partner's answers with the class.

1. _____

2. _____

3. _____



WRITE

Read the story and write in the missing words. Look at the words in the box below the story if you need help.

For many years, black₁ Americans did not have the same rights as white Americans. They could not eat in some _____₂. Many African Americans could not _____₃. _____₄, helped change laws. He led many peaceful demonstrations. In 1964, he won the Nobel _____₅ Prize for his work. Dr. King's dream of equal _____₆ is still alive.

black

vote

Martin Luther King, Jr.

rights

Peace

restaurants



LET'S SING

This song is from an old African American church song. It was very popular in the 1960s.

We Shall Overcome

We shall overcome,
We shall overcome,
We shall overcome some day.
Oh, deep in my heart
I do believe
We shall overcome some day.

We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand,
We'll walk hand in hand some day.
Oh, deep in my heart
I do believe
We shall overcome someday.

We shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace,
We shall live in peace some day.
Oh, deep in my heart
I do believe
We shall overcome some day.

We are not afraid,
We are not afraid,
We are not afraid today.
Oh, deep in my heart
I do believe
We shall overcome some day.

The whole wide world around,
The whole wide world around,
The whole wide world around
some day.
Oh, deep in my heart
I do believe
We shall overcome some day.

"We Shall Overcome" by Zilphia Horton, Frank Hamilton, Guy Carawan and Pete Seeger. TRO Copyright © 1960 (renewed) and 1963 Ludlow Music, Inc. New York, NY. Used by permission.