

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Pre-reading

Questions:

- What do you know about Martin Luther King, Jr.?

Definitions:

- Content – something that is inside
- Character – what a person is really like as shown through his/her thoughts, words, and actions
- Creed – a set of beliefs held by a person or group, often religious in nature
- Civil rights – the rights of a citizen



Reading

I Have a Dream

4 I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a
19 Nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin,
32 But by the content of their character.
39 I have a dream today!
44 I have a dream that one day... little black boys and girls
56 will be able to join hands with little white boys and girls
68 as sisters and brothers.
72 I have a dream today!

Martin Luther King, Jr. 1963

82 The dream of most Americans is a good education for their children. People with a good education get
100 better jobs and earn more money. They have more **opportunities** to be successful.

113 There are laws in the United States that promise an equal education for all children. These laws are for
132 children of all colors, creeds, and cultures. Children of both rich and poor families are to be given equal
151 educational opportunities.

153 People like Martin Luther King, Jr. fought for such laws. In the 1960's Dr. King and other civil rights
172 leaders saw that poor black children were not receiving a good education. Their schools were separate.
188 Black children attended one school, while white children attended a different school.

200 The black children's schools were **inferior** to the white children's schools. The "white only" schools
215 had more money, more educational materials, and better facilities. White children had a better chance of
231 getting a good education.

235 This **segregation** was also happening in other public places. Black people had to drink out of different
252 water fountains than white people. Black people also had to sit in separate areas from white people on city
271 buses. Black people were told to sit at the back of the bus, while white people sat toward the front. Some
292 restaurants would not even serve black people a meal.

301 Dr. King and other civil rights leaders worked extremely hard to change these conditions. Through the
317 efforts of many people, change did happen. New laws were passed creating greater equality for all.
333 However, many parents throughout the country still think their children are not receiving an equal
348 education. The struggle for racial equality continues.

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Understanding

1. How many years ago did Martin Luther King, Jr. deliver his “I Have a Dream” speech? _____

2. What is **segregation**? _____

3. Why do parents want a good education for their children? _____

4. What are two examples of segregation found in the reading? _____

5. What is an **opportunity**? _____

6. What was the peak decade of the civil rights movement? _____
7. What does the word **inferior** mean? _____

8. What was Martin Luther King, Jr.’s dream? _____

Writing

Option A: What did you learn about the civil rights work of Martin Luther King, Jr.?

Option B: In your opinion, how much has the United States grown in the area of racial equality?
