

# A TIME TO BREAK SILENCE

The Essential Works of Martin Luther King, Jr., for Students

Resource and Curriculum Guide

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# Introduction and Acknowledgements

## ABOUT THE GUIDE

The following Common Core aligned teachers' companion curriculum guide and online resources were developed by the Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute at Stanford University and serves as a companion to *A Time to Break Silence: The Essential Works of Martin Luther King, Jr., for Students*, published by Beacon Press. Arranged thematically in six parts, the book collection includes eighteen selections and is introduced by award-winning author Walter Dean Myers. Included are some of Dr. King's most well-known and frequently taught classic works, like "Letter from Birmingham Jail" and "I Have a Dream," as well as lesser-known pieces such as "The Sword that Heals" and "What Is Your Life's Blueprint?," which speak to issues young people face today.

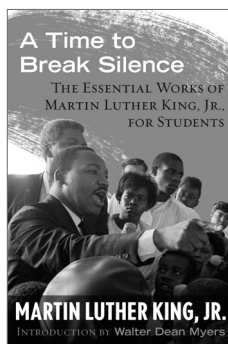
The online resource, *Freedom's Ring: King's "I Have a Dream" Speech* ([www.freedoms-ring.org](http://www.freedoms-ring.org)), and curriculum guide offer innovative strategies for engaging students in the study of Dr. King and the African American Freedom Struggle. In challenging students to rethink the traditional understandings of King, these activities require students to connect the past and present. Through these lessons and resources we hope students may begin to see themselves as actors in the ongoing struggle for freedom, equality, reconciliation, and justice.

## ACKNOWLEDGMENTS

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute and Beacon Press would like to extend deep gratitude to the creators and contributors of the *Freedom's Ring: King's "I Have a Dream" Speech* website and accompanying curriculum guide. Evan Bissell's artwork, vision, and

knowledge of the movement for peace and justice and Erik Loyer's gift for designing innovative online tools gave renewed life to King's most famous speech. Sabiha Basrai of Design Action Collective is the talented designer behind the curriculum guide. Matt Herron and Danny Lyon generously allowed for the use of their photos as the basis for particular sketches. Erin Cook permitted us to adapt her *Beyond Vietnam* lesson. Beacon Press gratefully acknowledges the Unitarian Universalist Veatch Program at Shelter Rock for its generous support of the King Legacy series. Finally, we'd like to extend gratitude to the many individuals whose tireless activism contributed to the freedom struggle. It is in their honor that we endeavor to learn from the past and build a more just future.

## ORDERING INFORMATION



A Time to Break Silence: The Essential Works of Martin Luther King, Jr., for Students

Martin Luther King, Jr.

Edited and Introduced by Walter Dean Myers

Paperback: 978-0-8070-3305-0 / \$14.00 / 272

pages

Exam copy price: \$3.00

Also available in e-book and hardcover

Examination copies of *A Time to Break Silence* are available to teachers seeking titles to review for inclusion in their school's curriculum or in their classes as multiple-copy classroom adoptions. Desk copies are available for an adopted text. To request an exam or desk copy, visit our distributor's website, [www.randomhouse.com/highschool](http://www.randomhouse.com/highschool).

If you are interested in placing a bulk student copy, you may place your order through your preferred bookseller or through an educational distributor.

To support the use of *A Time to Break Silence* in the classroom, this curriculum and supplemental resources are available online through [www.thekinglegacy.org/teachers](http://www.thekinglegacy.org/teachers)

## LESSON ONE:

# Love And Faith



*based on a photo by Danny Lyon*

## ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

- King often spoke of the inherent role of love and faith within the movement for justice. Why did King believe love was at the center of the struggle for justice?

## ACTIVITY ONE:

### Poetry and Photography Gallery Walk

1. Introduce students to the Freedom's Ring: King's "I Have a Dream" Speech website. Using the index, ask students to choose the theme "Love & Faith". Within this theme, ask students to explore "A Baptist Preacher" and "Army of Love". Lead a discussion about the role of love and faith in the African American freedom struggle.
2. Next, ask students to read the "Love and Faith" chapter in the King anthology. Ask students to choose three to six sentences that resonate with their life experiences.
3. Instruct students to break their chosen quote into phrases and then write each phrase on a strip of paper. Their writing should be large enough and clear enough so that it can be viewed from a few feet away. Put all phrases together on a large table.
4. Ask each student to choose a photo from the online gallery or books listed in the resource section at the end of this lesson. Each student will then print or photo copy their photo and write a brief placard. The placard should include the photographer's name, title of photo, year, and a few sentences to describe the context.
5. Return to the strips of paper with quotes and ask students to choose four to five phrases to connect with their photo. Students will place their photo, phrases and placards together on a classroom wall. The phrases should be arranged in a way that creates a short poem directly underneath the photo and placard.
6. Invite students to do a gallery walk and listen to *Soundtrack for a Revolution*.



## **ACTIVITY TWO:**

### **“Love”**

1. How do you define love? How do others define love? Ask students to seek out and bring to class poetry, literature, or quotes by famous individuals about the definition of love. Lead a discussion and create a class definition of love. Add your class definitions of love to the gallery walk.
2. Read the information and watch the interviews on the *Freedom’s Ring: King’s “I Have a Dream” Speech* website on the themes of “Love and Faith” and “Tactics of the Movement”.
3. Listen to “Loving Your Enemies” on the Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute website.
4. How does King define love in “Loving Your Enemies”? How has his Christian faith contributed to his understanding?
5. Lead a class discussion. Is it possible for you to forgive a person who hates you or has caused you harm? Is it possible for you to love a person or group of people who have caused harm to others? What does it take to end a cycle of hate?

## **ACTIVITY THREE:**

### **American Poets**

1. Lead the class in a study of African American poets, such as Langston Hughes, Maya Angelou, and Zora Neale Hurston. Identify and discuss literary elements used by these poets.
2. Return to King’s words from the selections in the chapter and the Freedom’s Ring: King’s “I Have a Dream” Speech website theme of “Love and Faith.” Think about the literary devices utilized by King. Ask students to find examples of metaphor, simile, descriptive language and biblical references.
3. Ask students to add poetry to the gallery wall from poets studied in class.

## **EXTENSION ACTIVITY:**

Using June Jordan's *Poetry for the People*, guide students in poetry writing around the themes of love, reconciliation, transformation, and justice as they relate to contemporary issues.

## **Resources:**

*Soundtrack for a Revolution*, a film by Bill Guttentag and Dan Sturman

*This Light of Ours: Activist Photographers of the Civil Rights Movement*, edited by Leslie G. Kelen

*Freedom's Ring: King's "I Have a Dream" Speech*, [www.freedoms-ring.org](http://www.freedoms-ring.org)

*Poetry for the People: A Revolutionary Blueprint*, by June Jordan

Civil Rights Movement Veterans website

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute website

## LESSON TWO:

# Nonviolent Resistance



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

- Is it possible for nonviolent direct action to transform a community?

## ACTIVITY ONE: PRIMARY SOURCE ANALYSIS

1. Split the class in half. Each half will receive either a copy of “The Six Principles of Nonviolence” or “Six Steps of Nonviolent Direct Action” (provided after this lesson description). In pairs, ask students to read and analyze the handout. Encourage them to write their thoughts and questions in the margins. After they have finished, have each pair seek out another pair with the other document. Ask them to teach each other about their assigned document.

## SIX PRINCIPLES OF NONVIOLENCE

1. *Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people.* It is active nonviolent resistance to evil.
2. *Nonviolence seeks to win friendship and understanding.* The end result of nonviolence is redemption and reconciliation.
3. *Nonviolence seeks to defeat injustice, not people.* Nonviolence recognizes that evil doers are also victims.
4. *Nonviolence holds that suffering can educate and transform.* Nonviolence willingly accepts the consequences to its acts.
5. *Nonviolence chooses love instead of hate.* Nonviolence resists violence to the spirit as well as the body. Nonviolence love is active, not passive. Nonviolent love does not sink to the level of the hater. Love restores community and resists injustice. Nonviolence recognizes the fact that all life is interrelated.
6. *Nonviolence believes that the universe is on the side of justice.* The nonviolent resister has deep faith that justice will eventually win.

Source: *The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change*



## SIX STEPS FOR NONVIOLENT DIRECT ACTION

### STEP ONE: INFORMATION GATHERING

Identify the issues in your community and/or school that are in need of positive change. To understand the issue, problem or injustice facing a person, community, or institution, you must increase your understanding of the problem. Your investigation should include all sides of the issue and may include formal research and listening to the experiences of others.

### STEP TWO: EDUCATE OTHERS

It is essential to inform others, including your opposition, about your issue. In order to cause change, the people in the community must be aware of the issue. By educating others you will minimize misunderstanding and gain support and allies.

### STEP THREE: PERSONAL COMMITMENT

Check and affirm your faith in the philosophy and methods of nonviolence. Causing change requires dedication and long hours of work. Meet with others regularly to stay focused on your goal. Prepare yourself to accept sacrifices, if necessary in your work for justice.

### STEP FOUR: NEGOTIATIONS

Using grace, humor and intelligence, confront the other individuals which need to participate in this positive change. Discuss a plan for addressing and resolving these injustices. Look for what is positive in every action and statement the opposition makes. Do not seek to humiliate the opponent but call forth the good in the opponent. Look for ways in which the opponent can become an ally.

### STEP FIVE: DIRECT ACTION

These are actions taken to convince others to work with you in resolving the injustices. Direct action imposes a “creative tension” into the conflict. Direct action is most effective when it illustrates the injustice it seeks to correct.

There are hundreds of direct action, including:

- Boycotts --- refusal to buy products
- Sit-ins
- Marches and rallies
- Letter-writing and petition campaigns
- Political action and voting

### STEP SIX: RECONCILIATION

Nonviolence seeks friendship and understanding with the opponent. Nonviolence does not seek to defeat the opponent. Nonviolence is directed against evil systems, forces oppressive policies, evil and unjust acts, not against persons.

*Derived from the essay “Letter from a Birmingham Jail”,  
Martin Luther King Jr.*

## **ACTIVITY TWO: “THE SWORD THAT HEALS”**

1. Read the selection, “The Sword That Heals” and identify quotes that connect with the “Six Steps for Nonviolent Direct Action.”
2. Ask students to research other direct action campaigns: Montgomery Bus Boycott, Birmingham Campaign, Mississippi Freedom Summer, Greensboro Lunch Counter Sit-ins, Freedom Rides. Many of these events are found in the “Tactics of the Movement” theme on the *Freedom’s Ring: King’s “I Have a Dream” Speech* website. Encourage your students to think beyond the civil rights movement and choose current issues important to them.
3. Identify the steps of each of these events based on the “Six Steps of Nonviolent Direct Action.”

## **ACTIVITY THREE: PHILOSOPHY OR STRATEGY?**

1. Read about and listen to reflections of direct action campaigns from the *Freedom’s Ring: King’s “I Have a Dream” Speech* website. Start with the phrases “soul force” and “to dramatize.”
2. Discuss the following question: Did activists see nonviolent direct action as a successful strategy or a way of life?

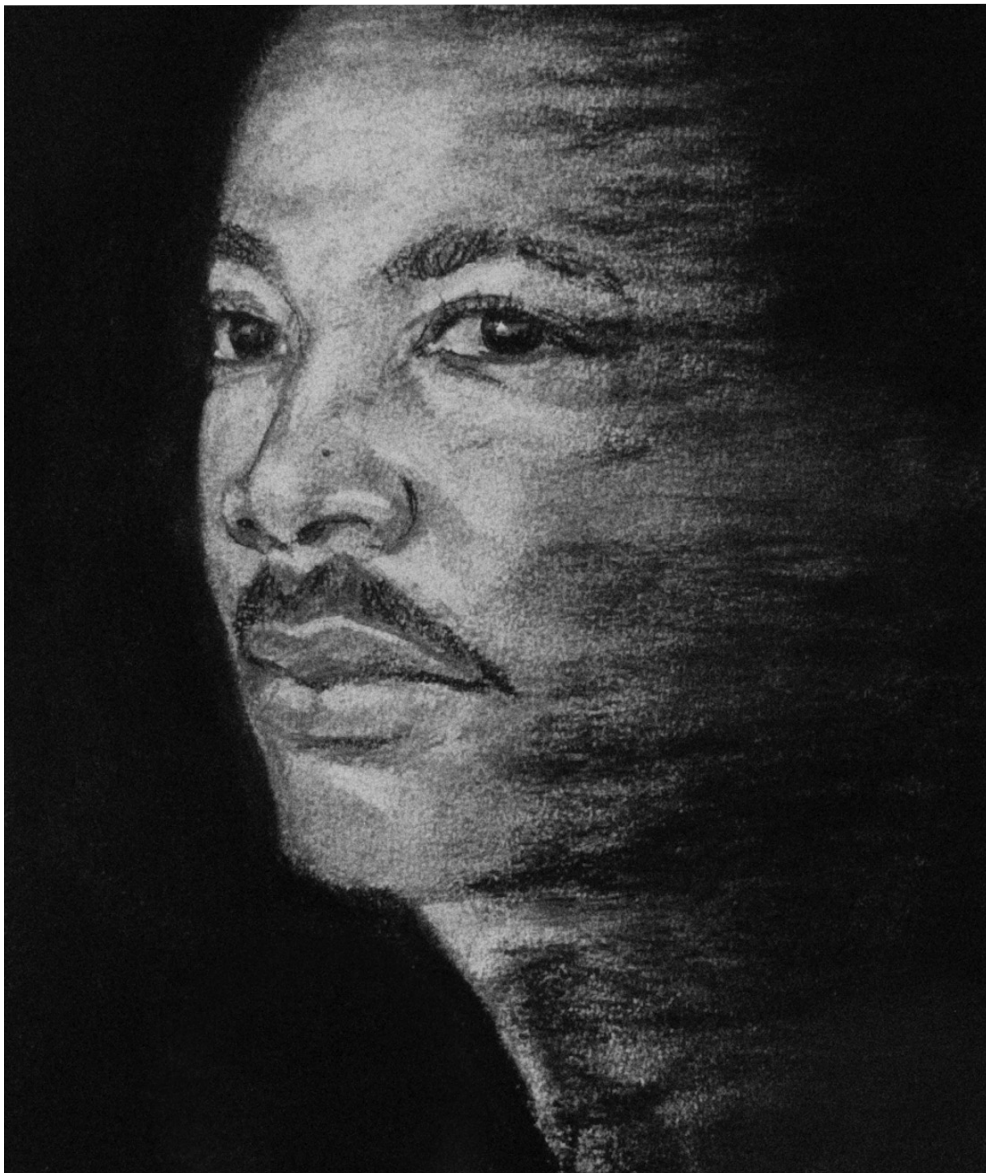
### **Resources:**

*Freedom’s Ring: King’s “I Have a Dream” Speech*, [www.freedoms-ring.org](http://www.freedoms-ring.org)

*Handout: Six Principles of Nonviolence*

## LESSON THREE:

# Consequences of War



## **ESSENTIAL QUESTION:**

- Why did King make the choice to speak out against US involvement in Vietnam when he risked doing harm to his status as a civil rights leader, as well as harming the movement itself?

## **ACTIVITY ONE: WHERE DO YOU STAND?**

1. Read the following introduction to students:

On April 4, 1967, King made his most public and comprehensive statement against the Vietnam War. Addressing a crowd of 3,000 people in New York City's Riverside Church, King delivered a speech entitled "Beyond Vietnam." King pointed out that the war effort was "taking the young black men who have been crippled by our society and sending them 13,000 miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest Georgia and East Harlem." Although some activists and newspapers supported King's statement, most responded with criticism. King's civil rights colleagues began to disassociate themselves from his radical stance, and the NAACP issued a statement against merging the civil rights movement and peace movement.

2. Ask students to "take a stand" on King's decision to denounce the war in Vietnam. Create an imaginary line with one end representing agreement and the other end representing disagreement. Based on where they stand, split the class in half. The half that is closest to the "disagree" position will receive the primary sources that support King's decision, and vice versa.
3. Give each group the packet containing the letter to the editor and editorials. Groups should use the documents to develop as strong an argument as possible.



**“DR. KING’S ERROR,” *NEW YORK TIMES*,  
APRIL 7, 1967, 36.**

In recent speeches and statements the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has linked his personal opposition to the war in Vietnam with the cause of Negro equality in the United States. The war, he argues, should be stopped not only because it is a futile war waged for the wrong ends but also because it is a barrier to social progress in this country and therefore prevents Negroes from achieving their just place in American life.

This is a fusing of two public problems that are distinct and separate. By drawing them together, Dr. King has done a disservice to both. The moral issues in Vietnam are less clear-cut than he suggests; the political strategy of uniting the peace movement and the civil rights movement could very well be disastrous for both causes.

Because American Negroes are a minority and have to overcome unique handicaps of racial antipathy and prolonged deprivation, they have a hard time in gaining their objectives even when their grievances are self-evident and their claims are indisputably just. As Dr. King knows from the Montgomery bus boycott and other civil rights struggles of the past dozen years, it takes almost infinite patience, persistence and courage to achieve the relatively simple aims that ought to be theirs by right.

The movement toward racial equality is now in the more advanced and more difficult stage of fulfilling basic rights by finding more jobs, changing patterns of housing and upgrading education. The battle grounds in this struggle are Chicago and Harlem and Watts. The Negroes on these fronts need all the leadership, dedication and moral inspiration that they can summon; and under these circumstances to divert the energies of the civil rights movement to the Vietnam issue is both wasteful and self-defeating.

Dr. King makes too facile a connection between the speeding up of the war in Vietnam and the slowing down of the war against poverty. The eradication of poverty is at best the task of a generation. This “war” inevitably meets diverse resistance such as the hostility of local political machines, the skepticism of conservatives in Congress and the intractability of slum mores and habits. The nation could afford to make more funds

available to combat poverty even while the war in Vietnam continues, but there is no certainty that the coming of peace would automatically lead to a sharp increase in funds.

Furthermore, Dr. King can only antagonize opinion in this country instead of winning recruits to the peace movement by recklessly comparing American military methods to those of the Nazis testing “new medicine and new tortures in the concentration camps of Europe.” The facts are harsh, but they do not justify such slander. Furthermore, it is possible to disagree with many aspects of United States policy in Vietnam without whitewashing Hanoi.

As an individual, Dr. King has the right and even the moral obligation to explore the ethical implications of the war in Vietnam, but as one of the most respected leaders of the civil rights movement he has an equally weighty obligation to direct that movement’s efforts in the most constructive and relevant way.

There are no simple or easy answers to the war in Vietnam or to racial injustice in this country. Linking these hard, complex problems will lead not to solutions but to deeper confusion.

**“LETTERS TO THE EDITOR OF THE TIMES,” *NEW YORK TIMES*, APRIL 12, 1967, 46. DR. KING BACKED**

To the Editor:

*The New York Times* has rendered a great disservice to the peace and civil right movements in this country by making a futile attempt to dissociate the two.

In an April 7 editorial *The Times* severely criticized the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, for fusing the peace and civil rights issues into a single concern.

Logically, the welfare of non-white peoples in this nation is inextricably linked with the welfare of nonwhite peoples

around the world. American negroes, Puerto Ricans, Indians and Mexicans all have exceedingly direct stake in the Administration's posture in Vietnam. They have experienced first hand the Government's disrespect for humanity and dignity at home and are compelled to voice their outrage at the calculated destruction abroad their Vietnamese brothers.

The American Government seems, in fact, to be embarked upon a program of systematic genocide in Vietnam and it is for this reason, perhaps more than any other, that colored peoples everywhere must speak out and act courageously.

Those Americans opposing the war cannot any longer be guilty of silence while American nonwhites who have been deprived of their full citizenship are sent to their death in President Johnson's illegal, immoral and unjust war.

In order to dramatize the growing opposition to the war, thousands of Americans of all races, creeds, religions and national origins will gather together in San Francisco and New York City on April 15 for Spring Mobilization protest march and rally.

Before the eyes of the world the Spring Mobilization will launch a sustained, serious movement which will begin to put an end to the senseless slaughter that is taking place in the name of democracy.

[Rev.] JAMES BEVELL  
National Director  
Spring Mobilization Committee  
To End the War in Vietnam  
New York, April 8, 1967

## WAR STAND REJECTED

To the Editor

I consider that my support of the Urban League and membership in the N.A.A.C.P., to say nothing of my contributions to various liberal causes, entitle me to consider myself a white person of goodwill as that term was used by Dr. Martin Luther King in *The Times* of April 5.

Far from being willing personally to boycott the Vietnam war, however, or even to have my son claim status as a conscientious objector, I assert that it is necessary to support the war in Vietnam.

Dr. King's simplistic assertion that our Government is the greatest purveyor of violence in the world today and his analogy between the use of new weapons by our forces in Vietnam and the use of strange medicines and torture by Hitler's murderers in the concentration of Nazi Germany raise grave doubts in my mind as to his ability to think clearly.

Dr. King and his ilk do not speak for me and mine.

JOSEPH LEWIS SIMON

New York, April 5, 1967



## ACTIVITY TWO: “BEYOND VIETNAM”

1. Introduce King’s “Beyond Vietnam” speech by showing Eyes on the Prize II: The Promised Land (first 10 minutes). Ask students to read both “Beyond Vietnam” and “The Casualties of the War in Vietnam” and be ready to discuss.

Some questions to consider for the discussion:

- a. Was King’s decision to speak out against the war a departure from his stated philosophical, political, and/or social commitments?
- b. What relevance does his role as a clergyman have for King’s position? What about as a Nobel Peace Prize recipient? What about his role as a civil rights leader?
- c. Do you believe there was a relationship between the war in Vietnam and the civil rights struggle at home? Why or why not?
- d. Were there any inconsistencies with King’s stated position on the war in Vietnam and his stated position as a civil rights leader? (Consider the role of nonviolence.)
- e. What were some of the main criticisms King’s opponents made regarding his statement on the war in Vietnam? What were some of the main arguments made by those defending King’s position?
- f. What if King had not taken a position on the war in Vietnam? Would it have undermined his stated commitment to nonviolence and social justice, or would it have merely highlighted his commitment to the civil rights movement?
- g. What role, if any, might King’s race have had to do with how his statement was received?
- h. Do you believe that moral, religious, and political considerations should be separated if it serves a tactical goal?

- i. In his letter “Dr. King Backed,” James Bevel states, “Logically, the welfare of non-white peoples in this nation is inextricably linked with the welfare of non-white peoples around the world.” Do you agree? Why or why not?
- j. What sort of impact do you believe King’s decision to speak out against the war had on the civil rights movement? If you believe it harmed the movement, was it worth it?
- k. Ralph Bunche stated that, “Dr. King should positively and publicly give up one role or the other. The two efforts have two little in common.” Do you agree?
- l. Finally, how are these issues relevant today? How might this relate to our current situation around the world? Could the case be made that our current foreign policy has implications for domestic policy? How?

### **ACTIVITY THREE: TAKING A STAND**

1. Ask students to return to the imaginary line and choose where to stand. Did their position change? Of the resources, discussions and readings, what influenced their position most?
2. As a class, choose a contemporary modern military conflict and conduct research. After gathering information and various positions about the conflict, discuss the following questions: Do King’s positions on Vietnam hold true for this conflict as well? What aspects are similar? What aspects are different? What is your position on this conflict?

### **Resources:**

Eyes on the Prize: America’s Civil Rights Years, *documentary by Henry Hampton at Blackside, Inc.*

## LESSON FOUR:

# Young People Working for Justice



*Based on a photo by Matt Herron,  
[www.takestockphotos.com](http://www.takestockphotos.com)*

## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- What role did young people play in the freedom struggle?

## ACTIVITY ONE: PARENT-CHILD NEGOTIATIONS

1. Watch either *Eyes on the Prize* segment on Birmingham or *Children's March* from Teaching Tolerance.
2. Tell students that they are going to be learning about the role that young people played in the African American freedom struggle, specifically in the Birmingham campaign, and write Malcolm X's statement, "Real men don't put their children on the firing line," on the board.
3. Begin with discussion prompts or quick write prompts: Would you be willing go to jail to challenge an unjust law? Would you let your child go to jail in an effort to overturn an unjust law? Would your parents allow you to go to jail in an effort to secure justice for your community?
4. Split the class in half and ask students to line up facing each other. One group of students will play the role of parents and one group the role of sons/daughters. Explain that they live in Birmingham in the 1960s. The daughters/sons should try to convince their parents to let them participate in the march. The parents do not want their children to risk arrest or worse. Allow the students to role-play the discussion for three to four minutes.

## ACTIVITY TWO: ROLE OF YOUTH IN THE MOVEMENT

1. Read one of the following of King's works; "The Time for Freedom Has Come," "The Burning Truth in the South," or "Black and White Together" from the anthology. Ask students to take notes on the role of youth in the movement.
2. Return to the *Freedom's Ring: King's "I Have a Dream" Speech* website and ask students to listen to interviews and read entries on the themes



of “Tactics of the Movement” and “A People’s Dream”. In particular, students may want to explore the entries titled “Role of Youth,” “Youth Challenge Montgomery,” “Freedom Now!,” “Direct Action,” “Dramatize Injustice” and “Fierce Urgency of Now.”

3. Using Ellen Levine’s *Freedom’s Children*, provide students with firsthand accounts from youth who participated in the movement.
4. In a class discussion, compare King’s description of youth in the movement and the young people’s account. Why did they get involved? What did they believe? How did they describe their experiences?

### **ACTIVITY THREE: UNSUNG HEROES AND SHEROES**

1. Research the following young people and events. Suggested resources include The Civil Right Movement Vets website and Ellen Levine’s book *Freedom’s Children*, and the Martin Luther King, Jr. Encyclopedia from the Martin Luther King, Jr Research and Education Institute.

Claudette Colvin

Barbara Johns

Children’s March in Birmingham

Little Rock Nine (Ernest Green, Elizabeth Eckford, Jefferson Thomas,

Terrence Roberts, Carlotta Walls LaNier, Minnijean Brown, Gloria

Ray Karlmark, Thelma Mothershed, and Melba Pattillo Beals)

Mary Loiuse Smith

Joann Bland

John Lewis

Diane Nash

Julian Bond

**Resources:**

*Eyes on the Prize, documentary by Henry Hampton at Blackside, Inc.*

*The Children's March, a film and curriculum guide by Teaching Tolerance*

*Freedom's Children by Ellen Levine*

*Civil Rights Movement Vets website*

*The Martin Luther King, Jr. Encyclopedia from the Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education website*

*Freedom's Ring: King's "I Have a Dream" Speech website*

## LESSON FIVE

# The Power of Freedom



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION:

- Did the nonviolent direct action, which King describes in his “Letter from a Birmingham Jail,” successfully, transform Birmingham, Alabama, from a segregated to a just society in 1963?

## ACTIVITY ONE: BIRMINGHAM

1. Watch the *Eyes on the Prize* segment on Birmingham
2. Ask student to read King’s “Letter from Birmingham Jail.” As a class, read the following excerpts and discuss the questions following each quote.

“Moreover, I am cognizant of the interrelatedness of all communities and states. I cannot sit idly by in Atlanta and not be concerned about what happens in Birmingham. **Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere. We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality, tied in a single garment of destiny.** Whatever affects one directly, affects all indirectly. Never again can we afford to live with the narrow, provincial ‘outside agitator’ idea. Anyone who lives inside the United States can never be considered an outsider anywhere within its bounds.”

*The line in bold print is considered one of King’s most famous quotations. What does this mean for individuals who have ignored the issues of Birmingham? What does this mean today for each of us living in the United States?*

“You may well ask: ‘Why direct action? Why sit-ins, marches and so forth? Isn’t negotiation a better path?’ You are quite right in calling for negotiation. Indeed, this is the very purpose of direct action. Nonviolent direct action seeks to create such a crisis and foster such a tension that a community which has constantly refused to negotiate is forced to confront the issue. It seeks so to dramatize the issue that it can no longer be ignored. My citing the creation of tension as part of the work of the nonviolent resister may sound rather shocking. But I must confess that I am not afraid of the word ‘tension.’ I have earnestly opposed violent tension, but there is a type of constructive, nonviolent tension

which is necessary for growth. Just as Socrates felt that it was necessary to create a tension in the mind so that individuals could rise from the bondage of myths and half truths to the unfettered realm of creative analysis and objective appraisal, so must we see the need for nonviolent gadflies to create the kind of tension in society that will help men rise from the dark depths of prejudice and racism to the majestic heights of understanding and brotherhood. The purpose of our direct action program is to create a situation so crisis packed that it will inevitably open the door to negotiation. I therefore concur with you in your call for negotiation. Too long has our beloved Southland been bogged down in a tragic effort to live in monologue rather than dialogue.”

***What does King mean by “constructive nonviolent tension,” and how does he define its goal?***

“We know through painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor; it must be demanded by the oppressed. Frankly, I have yet to engage in a direct action campaign that was ‘well timed’ in the view of those who have not suffered unduly from the disease of segregation. For years now I have heard the word ‘Wait!’ It rings in the ear of every Negro with piercing familiarity. This ‘Wait’ has almost always meant ‘Never.’ We must come to see, with one of our distinguished jurists, that ‘justice too long delayed is justice denied.’”

***The above paragraph is another of King’s most well-known statements. Choose an example from United States history that represents the “painful experience that freedom is never voluntarily given by the oppressor.” Choose an example that illustrates his point that “justice too long delayed is justice denied.”***

“You express a great deal of anxiety over our willingness to break laws. This is certainly a legitimate concern. Since we so diligently urge people to obey the Supreme Court’s decision of 1954 outlawing segregation in the public schools, at first glance it may seem rather paradoxical for us consciously to break laws. One may well ask: ‘How can you advocate breaking some laws and obeying others?’ The answer lies in the fact that there are two types of laws: just and unjust. I would be the first to advocate obeying just laws. One has not only a legal but

a moral responsibility to obey just laws. Conversely, one has a moral responsibility to disobey unjust laws. I would agree with St. Augustine that 'an unjust law is no law at all.'

Now, what is the difference between the two? How does one determine whether a law is just or unjust? A just law is a man made code that squares with the moral law or the law of God. An unjust law is a code that is out of harmony with the moral law. To put it in the terms of St. Thomas Aquinas: An unjust law is a human law that is not rooted in eternal law and natural law. Any law that uplifts human personality is just. Any law that degrades human personality is unjust. All segregation statutes are unjust because segregation distorts the soul and damages the personality. It gives the segregator a false sense of superiority and the segregated a false sense of inferiority. Segregation, to use the terminology of the Jewish philosopher Martin Buber, substitutes an 'I it' relationship for an 'I thou' relationship and ends up relegating persons to the status of things. Hence, segregation is not only politically, economically and sociologically unsound, it is morally wrong and sinful. Paul Tillich has said that sin is separation. Is not segregation an existential expression of man's tragic separation, his awful estrangement, his terrible sinfulness? Thus it is that I can urge men to obey the 1954 decision of the Supreme Court, for it is morally right; and I can urge them to disobey segregation ordinances, for they are morally wrong. Let us consider a more concrete example of just and unjust laws. An unjust law is a code that a numerical or power majority group compels a minority group to obey but does not make binding on itself. This is difference made legal. By the same token, a just law is a code that a majority compels a minority to follow and that it is willing to follow itself. This is sameness made legal."

***King describes two types of law, just and unjust. How does he define each? Can you give other examples in the present of unjust laws you feel a moral obligation to disobey? Would you be willing to accept the consequences? What are the effects of segregation?***

"I hope you are able to see the distinction I am trying to point out. In no sense do I advocate evading or defying the law, as would the rabid segregationist. That would lead to anarchy. One who breaks



an unjust law must do so openly, lovingly, and with a willingness to accept the penalty. I submit that an individual who breaks a law that conscience tells him is unjust, and who willingly accepts the penalty of imprisonment in order to arouse the conscience of the community over its injustice, is in reality expressing the highest respect for law.”

***Breaking an unjust law lovingly? Could you get to this state? Why does he think this would be an expression of respect for the law? What if his actions do not arouse the conscience of the community? Would breaking the law be worth it then?***

“But though I was initially disappointed at being categorized as an extremist, as I continued to think about the matter I gradually gained a measure of satisfaction from the label. Was not Jesus an extremist for love: ‘Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which spitefully use you, and persecute you.’ Was not Amos an extremist for justice: ‘Let justice roll down like waters and righteousness like an ever flowing stream.’ Was not Paul an extremist for the Christian gospel: ‘I bear in my body the marks of the Lord Jesus.’ Was not Martin Luther an extremist: ‘Here I stand; I cannot do otherwise, so help me God.’ And John Bunyan: ‘I will stay in jail to the end of my days before I make a butchery of my conscience.’ And Abraham Lincoln: ‘This nation cannot survive half slave and half free.’ And Thomas Jefferson: ‘We hold these truths to be self evident, that all men are created equal . . .’ So the question is not whether we will be extremists, but what kind of extremists we will be. Will we be extremists for hate or for love? Will we be extremists for the preservation of injustice or for the extension of justice? In that dramatic scene on Calvary’s hill three men were crucified. We must never forget that all three were crucified for the same crime—the crime of extremism. Two were extremists for immorality, and thus fell below their environment. The other, Jesus Christ, was an extremist for love, truth and goodness, and thereby rose above his environment. Perhaps the South, the nation and the world are in dire need of creative extremists.

*Why does King welcome the label “extremist”?*

*What is your favorite quote? Why? How can you connect this to your life or issues in your community today?*

### **ACTIVITY THREE: THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM**

1. Using the National Archives and Record Administration’s “Document Analysis Worksheet,” ask students to read and examine the documents provided below.
2. Return to the *Freedom’s Ring: King’s “I Have a Dream” Speech* website. Read the information and listen to the interviews within the “A People’s Dream” theme, especially the sections “The March Program” and “Meeting the Demands”.

*An Appeal to You from*

**JAMES FARMER**

Congress of Racial Equality

**MARTIN LUTHER KING**

Southern Christian  
Leadership Conference

**JOHN LEWIS**

Student Non-violent  
Coordinating Committee

**A. PHILLIP RANDOLPH**

Negro American Labor Council

**ROY WILKINS**

National Association for the  
Advancement of Colored People

**WHITNEY YOUNG**

National  
Urban League

# to **MARCH ON WASHINGTON**

***America Faces a crisis...***

***Millions of Negroes are denied freedom...***

***Millions of citizens, black and white, are unemployed...***

Discrimination and economic deprivation plague the nation and rob all people, Negro and white, of dignity and self-respect. As long as black workers are disenfranchised, ill-housed, denied education and economically depressed, the fight for white workers for a decent life will fail.

Thus we call on all Americans to join us in Washington:

- ♦ to demand the passage of effective civil rights legislation which will guarantee to all
  - ... decent housing
  - ... access to all public accommodations
  - ... adequate and integrated education
  - ... the right to vote
- ♦ to prevent compromise or filibuster against such legislation
- ♦ to demand a federal massive works and training program that puts all unemployed workers, black and white, back to work
- ♦ to demand an FEP Act which bars discrimination by federal, state and municipal governments, by employers, by contractors, employment agencies and trade unions
- ♦ to demand a national minimum wage, which includes all workers, of not less than \$2.00 an hour.

In your community, groups are mobilizing for the March. You can get information on how to go to Washington from civil rights organizations, religious organizations, trade unions, fraternal organizations and youth groups.

**JOIN THE MARCH ON WASHINGTON FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM**  
and become part of the great American revolution for human freedom and justice Now.

*National Office—*

**MARCH ON WASHINGTON FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM**

**170 West 130 Street**

**New York 27, New York**

**Cleveland Robinson**

*Chairman, Administrative Committee*

**Bayard Rustin**

*Deputy Director*



# MARCH ON WASHINGTON FOR JOBS AND FREEDOM

AUGUST 28, 1963

## LINCOLN MEMORIAL PROGRAM

1. The National Anthem *Led by Marian Anderson.*
2. Invocation *The Very Rev. Patrick O'Boyle, Archbishop of Washington.*
3. Opening Remarks *A. Philip Randolph, Director March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.*
4. Remarks *Dr. Eugene Carson Blake, Stated Clerk, United Presbyterian Church of the U.S.A.; Vice Chairman, Commission on Race Relations of the National Council of Churches of Christ in America.*
5. Tribute to Negro Women  
Fighters for Freedom  
Daisy Bates  
Diane Nash Bevel  
Mrs. Medgar Evers  
Mrs. Herbert Lee  
Rosa Parks  
Gloria Richardson  
*Mrs. Medgar Evers*
6. Remarks *John Lewis, National Chairman, Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.*
7. Remarks *Walter Reuther, President, United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, AFL-CIO; Chairman, Industrial Union Department, AFL-CIO.*
8. Remarks *James Farmer, National Director, Congress of Racial Equality.*
9. Selection *Eva Jessye Choir*
10. Prayer *Rabbi Uri Miller, President Synagogue Council of America.*
11. Remarks *Whitney M. Young, Jr., Executive Director, National Urban League.*
12. Remarks *Mathew Ahmann, Executive Director, National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice.*
13. Remarks *Roy Wilkins, Executive Secretary, National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.*
14. Selection *Miss Mahalia Jackson*
15. Remarks *Rabbi Joachim Prinz, President American Jewish Congress.*
16. Remarks *The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., President, Southern Christian Leadership Conference.*
17. The Pledge *A Philip Randolph*
18. Benediction *Dr. Benjamin E. Mays, President, Morehouse College.*

**"WE SHALL OVERCOME"**

6  
7

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

*Statement by the heads of the ten organizations calling for discipline in connection with the Washington March of August 28, 1963:*

"The Washington March of August 28th is more than just a demonstration.

"It was conceived as an outpouring of the deep feeling of millions of white and colored American citizens that the time has come for the government of the United States of America, and particularly for the Congress of that government, to grant and guarantee complete equality in citizenship to the Negro minority of our population.

"As such, the Washington March is a living petition—in the flesh—of the scores of thousands of citizens of both races who will be present from all parts of our country.

"It will be orderly, but not subservient. It will be proud, but not arrogant. It will be non-violent, but not timid. It will be unified in purposes and behavior, not splintered into groups and individual competitors. It will be outspoken, but not raucous.

"It will have the dignity befitting a demonstration in behalf of the human rights of twenty millions of people, with the eye and the judgment of the world focused upon Washington, D.C., on August 28, 1963.

"In a neighborhood dispute there may be stunts, rough words and even hot insults; but when a whole people speaks to its government, the dialogue and the action must be on a level reflecting the worth of that people and the responsibility of that government.

"We, the undersigned, who see the Washington March as wrapping up the dreams, hopes, ambitions, tears, and prayers of millions who have lived for this day, call upon the members, followers and wellwishers of our several organizations to make the March a disciplined and purposeful demonstration.

"We call upon them all, black and white, to resist provocations to disorder and to violence.

"We ask them to remember that evil persons are determined to smear this March and to discredit the cause of equality by deliberate efforts to stir disorder.

"We call for self-discipline, so that no one in our own ranks, however enthusiastic, shall be the spark for disorder.

"We call for resistance to the efforts of those who, while not enemies of the March as such, might seek to use it to advance causes not dedicated primarily to civil rights or to the welfare of our country.

"We ask each and every one in attendance in Washington or in spiritual attendance back home to place the Cause above all else.

"Do not permit a few irresponsible people to hang a new problem around our necks as we return home. Let's do what we came to do—place the national human rights problem squarely on the doorstep of the national Congress and of the Federal Government.

"Let's win at Washington."

SIGNED:

Mathew Ahmann, Executive Director of the National Catholic Conference for Interracial Justice.

Reverend Eugene Carson Blake, Vice-Chairman of the Commission on Race Relations of the National Council of Churches of Christ in America

James Farmer, National Director of the Congress of Racial Equality.

Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., President of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference.

John Lewis, Chairman of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee.

Rabbi Joachim Prinz, President of the American Jewish Congress.

A. Philip Randolph, President of the Negro American Labor Council.

Walter Reuther, President of the United Automobile, Aerospace and Agricultural Implement Workers of America, AFL-CIO, and Chairman,

Roy Wilkins, Executive Secretary of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People.

Whitney M. Young, Jr., Executive Director of the National Urban League.

## WHAT WE DEMAND\*

1. Comprehensive and effective civil rights legislation from the present Congress—without compromise or filibuster—to guarantee all Americans

access to all public accommodations  
decent housing  
adequate and integrated education  
the right to vote

2. Withholding of Federal funds from all programs in which discrimination exists.

3. Desegregation of all school districts in 1963.

4. Enforcement of the Fourteenth Amendment—reducing Congressional representation of states where citizens are disfranchised.

5. A new Executive Order banning discrimination in all housing supported by federal funds.

6. Authority for the Attorney General to institute injunctive suits when any constitutional right is violated.

7. A massive federal program to train and place all unemployed workers—Negro and white—on meaningful and dignified jobs at decent wages.

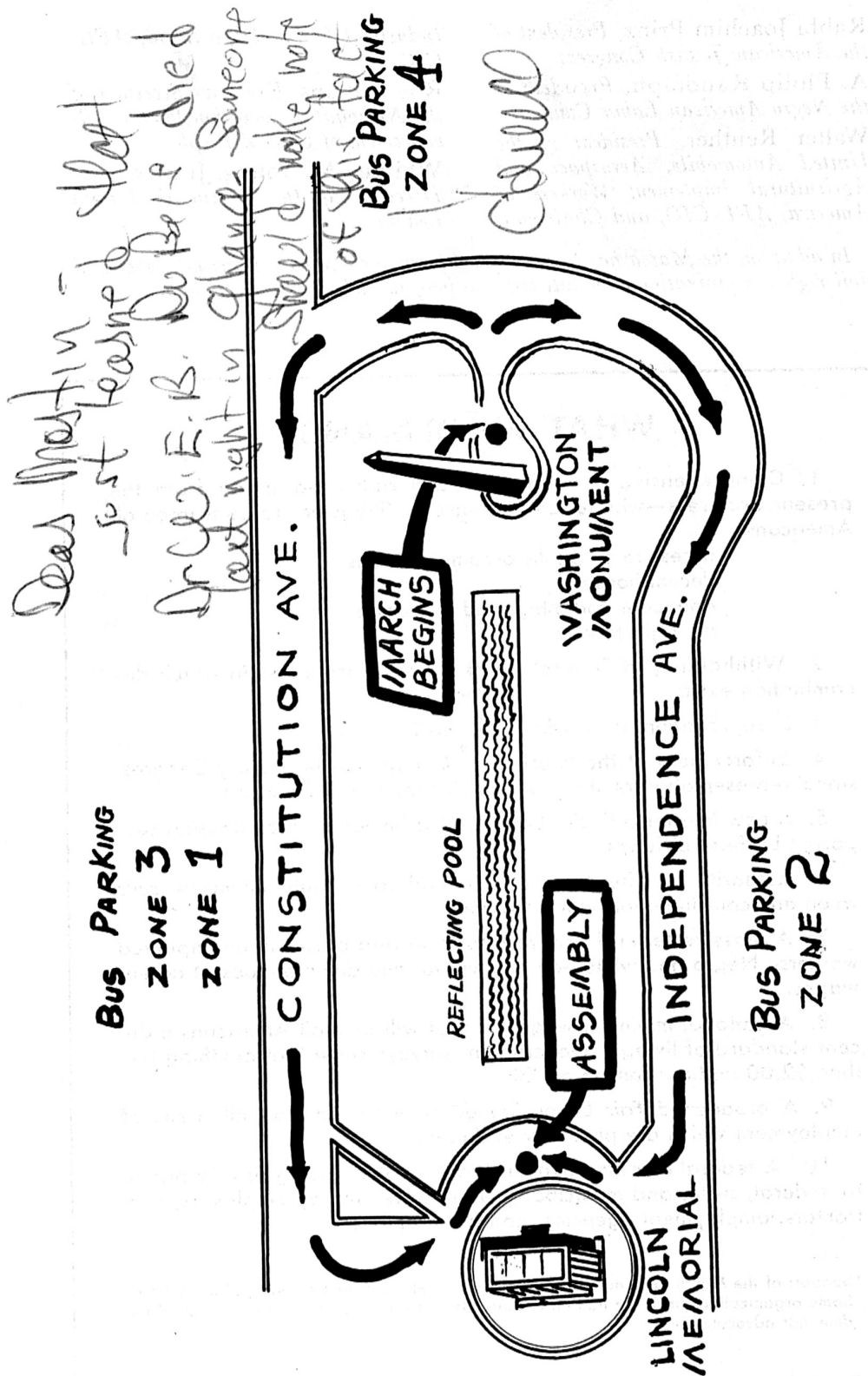
8. A national minimum wage act that will give all Americans a decent standard of living. (Government surveys show that anything less than \$2.00 an hour fails to do this.)

9. A broadened Fair Labor Standards Act to include all areas of employment which are presently excluded.

10. A federal Fair Employment Practices Act barring discrimination by federal, state, and municipal governments, and by employers, contractors, employment agencies, and trade unions.

\*Support of the March does not necessarily indicate endorsement of every demand listed. Some organizations have not had an opportunity to take an official position on all of the demands advocated here.







## ACTIVITY FOUR: FREEDOM'S RING

1. Play Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech from the *Freedom's Ring: Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" Speech* website. You may want to play the speech once without the text and once with the text. Discuss with students the following; What is new to them? Which images stood out to them? How is it different than watching archival footage? What questions do they have about the speech?
2. Allow student to explore the site individually. Ask them to watch interviews and to read information associated with at least four of the phrases.
3. Ask students to choose three sketches from the *Freedom's Ring: King's "I Have a Dream" Speech* website that represent the themes of Justice, Transformation and Reconciliation.

## EXTENSION ACTIVITY

Choose a phrase or few sentences from another of King's speeches and create a visual representation of the words.

### Resources:

*Handout: "An Appeal to you to March on Washington"*

*Handout: "March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom Program"*

*Eyes on the Prize: America's Civil Rights Years, documentary by Henry Hampton at Blackside, Inc.*

*The Children's March, a film and curriculum guide by Teaching Tolerance*

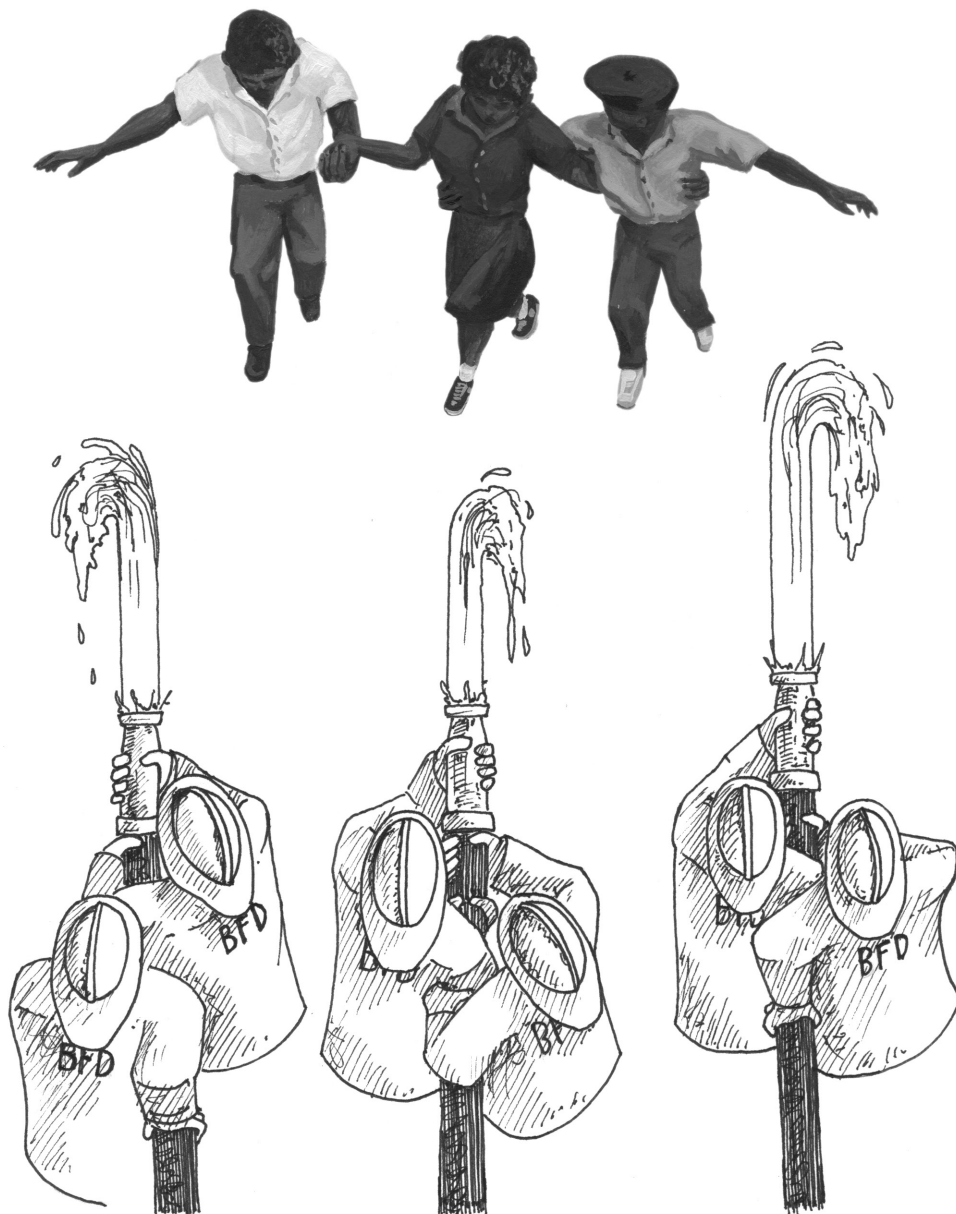
*Freedom's Ring: King's "I Have a Dream" Speech, [www.freedoms-ring.org](http://www.freedoms-ring.org)*

*National Archives and Records Administration website*



## LESSON SIX

# Suffering, Hope, and the Future



## ESSENTIAL QUESTION

- Who are the “drum majors for justice” in your life?

### ACTIVITY ONE: REMEMBERING THE CHILDREN

1. Watch Spike Lee’s film *Four Little Girls* and read King’s “Eulogy for the Martyred Children.”
2. Ask students to think about the young people in their lives who have been lost to violence.
3. Read Langston Hughes’ poem “Kids Who Die.”
4. Ask students to research organizations and individuals in the community who work to end violence among young people. Ask students to consider how they can get involved to reduce the violence in local and national communities.
5. Using the *Freedom’s Ring: King’s “I Have a Dream” Speech* website, explore the theme “A People’s Dream” including the entries for “Investing in Justice and Peace” and “What does it mean to be free?”

### ACTIVITY TWO: WHAT IS YOUR LIFE’S BLUEPRINT?

1. Read King’s “What is Your Life’s Blueprint?”
2. Ask students to reflect on their life’s blueprint and write their responses to these questions. What are their dreams? How do they hope to achieve them? What changes can they make in their daily lives to make those dreams possible? Who will they rely on when they encounter barriers? What will give them strength to overcome adversity?

## **ACTIVITY THREE: WHO ARE THE DRUM MAJORS FOR JUSTICE IN YOUR COMMUNITY?**

1. Read and listen to King's "The Drum Major Instinct." The audio can be found on The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute website.
2. Focus on King's description of a "drum major for justice." Who in your community fits this description? Who is living the philosophy of nonviolence? Identify community members.
3. Prepare interview questions for your community members. For example, ask them about their "blueprint for life." What guides them? What gives them strength? What inspires them? Has it always been easy? When things in life did not turn out the way they wanted or expected, what did they do?

## **ACTIVITY FOUR: HONORING OUR DRUM MAJORS FOR JUSTICE**

1. After conducting interviews, ask students to write biographies or spoken word poems about the local "drum majors for justice." You may also ask student to take photos or create artistic portraits of their chosen community member.
2. Create a celebration to honor these local community members. This could take the form of a poetry slam, potluck dinner or an awards ceremony. Find ways to include the broader community in the celebration.

### **Resources:**

*Four Little Girls, a film by Spike Lee*

*"Kids Who Die," a poem by Langston Hughes*

*Freedom's Ring: King's "I Have a Dream" Speech website; [freedoms-ring.org](http://freedoms-ring.org)*

*The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute website*

# Martin Luther King, Jr. and the African American Freedom Struggle

**1929 January 15:** Michael King, later known as Martin Luther King, Jr., is born in Atlanta, Georgia.

**1942:** African American WWII veterans returning from Europe and the Pacific establish the Double V campaign insisting that victory over racism at home is essential for victory in the global war against fascism.

**1944 September 20:** King begins his freshman year at Morehouse College in Atlanta, Georgia.

**1945 October 24:** The United Nations is founded in San Francisco and the headquarters are later moved to New York City. African American scholar, Ralph Bunche, plays an integral role in the formation of the UN charter, specifically, the article dealing with the future of the colonial world.

**1945 December 10:** The UN General Assembly adopts the Universal Declaration of Human Rights.

**1947 October 23:** The NAACP files a petition titled “An Appeal to the World” in the United Nations, protesting the treatment of blacks in the United States. W.E.B. Dubois is the principal author.

**1951:** William Patterson, chairman of the Civil Rights Congress (CRC), delivers a petition to the United Nations Committee on Human Rights in Geneva, Switzerland, claiming that the US government was complicit in genocide against African Americans. The lengthy petition, titled “We Charge Genocide,” consists of documentation of 153 killings, among other human rights abuses, from 1945 to 1951.

**1953 June 18:** King and Coretta Scott are married at the Scott home near Marion, Alabama.

**1954 September 1:** King begins his pastorate at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama.

**1954 May 17:** In *Brown v. Board of Education of Topeka, Kansas*, the US Supreme Court rules that segregated schools are “inherently unequal” and orders that schools be integrated with “all deliberate speed.”

**1955 June 5:** King is awarded a doctorate in systemic theology from Boston University.



**1955 July:** Rosa Parks attends Highlander Folk School in Tennessee and studies the UN's Universal Declaration of Human Rights during a workshop focused on the dismantling of Southern segregation laws.

**1955 November 17:** Yolanda Denise King, the Kings' first child, is born.

**1955 December 1:** Rosa Parks is arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a bus in Montgomery. A well-planned boycott of city buses continues for over a year and results in desegregation on city buses and the hiring of black bus drivers. King and boycott leaders utilize the Gandhian philosophy of nonviolent direct action to inspire the disciplined boycott.

**1955 December 5:** At a mass meeting at Holt Street Baptist Church, the Montgomery Improvement Association (MIA) is formed. King becomes its president.

**1956 January 27:** According to King's later account in *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*, he receives a threatening phone call in the evening, prompting a spiritual revelation that fills him with strength to carry on in spite of persecution.

**1956 January 30:** At 9:15 p.m., while King speaks at a mass meeting, his home is bombed. His wife and daughter are not injured. Later, King addresses an angry crowd that gathers outside the house, pleading for nonviolence.

**1956 November 13:** The US Supreme Court affirms the lower court opinion in *Browder vs. Gayle* declaring Montgomery and Alabama bus segregation laws unconstitutional.

**1957:** Ghana achieves its independence from Great Britain. Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah hosts African American leaders at the independence festivities, including, Martin Luther King, Jr., A. Philip Randolph, Adam Clayton Powell, and Ralph Bunche. King returns to Montgomery and tells his congregation, "Ghana tells us that the forces of the universe are on the side of justice ... An old order of colonialism, of segregation, discrimination is passing away now. And a new order of justice, freedom and good will is being born."

**1957 January 10–11:** Southern black ministers meet in Atlanta to share strategies in the fight against segregation. King is named chairman of the Southern Negro Leaders Conference on Transportation and Nonviolent Integration (later known as the Southern Christian Leadership Conference—SCLC).

**1957 March 6:** King attends the independence celebrations of the new West African nation of Ghana and meets with Prime Minister Kwame Nkrumah.

**1957 May 17:** At the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, King delivers his first national address, "Give Us The Ballot," at the Prayer Pilgrimage for Freedom.

**1957 June 13:** King and Ralph D. Abernathy meet with Vice President Richard M. Nixon and issue a statement on their meeting.

**1957 October 23:** Martin Luther King, III, the Kings' second child, is born.

**1957 September 4:** Nine students volunteer to integrate Little Rock Central High School, but are kept from entering the school by armed Arkansas national guardsmen. International press coverage and outrage directed at US embassies abroad contribute to President Dwight D. Eisenhower's decision to order the 101st Airborne to protect students.

**1957 November 17:** King delivers his sermon "Loving Your Enemies" at Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery.

**1957 December 10:** Human Rights Day is organized "to protest the apartheid policies of the Union of South Africa and to demand that the Union live up to its obligations under Article I, Paragraph 3 of the United Nations Charter." The event is organized by the American Committee on Africa, including International Chairman Eleanor Roosevelt, US Chairman James A. Pike, and US Vice Chairman Martin Luther King, Jr.

**1958 June 23:** King and other civil rights leaders meet with President Eisenhower in Washington, DC.

**1958 September 17:** King's first book, *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*, is published.

**1958 September:** King's "An Experiment in Love" is published in *Jubilee* as an excerpt from *Stride Toward Freedom*.

**1958 September 20:** During a book signing at Blumstein's Department Store in New York City, King is stabbed by Izola Ware Curry. He is rushed to Harlem Hospital, where a team of doctors successfully removes a seven-inch letter opener from his chest.

**1959 February:** King visits India, where his involvement in the Montgomery Bus Boycott was well documented in local newspapers. King recalled, "We were looked upon as brothers, with the color of our skins as something of an asset. But the strongest bond of fraternity was the common cause of minority and colonial peoples in America, Africa, and Asia struggling to throw off racism and imperialism."

**1960:** In what is known as the "Year of Africa," numerous African nations gain independence. African Americans pay close attention this historic transformation. James Baldwin quoted one African American as saying, "At the rate things are going here ... all of Africa will be free before we can get a lousy cup of coffee."

**1960:** The sit-in campaigns of 1960 and the ensuing creation of the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC) demonstrated the potential strength of grassroots militancy and enabled a new generation of young people to gain confidence in their own leadership. King describes the student sit-ins as an "electrifying movement of Negro students [that] shattered the placid surface of campuses and communities across the South," and he expresses pride in the new activism for being "initiated, fed, and sustained by students."

**1960 February 1:** King moves from Montgomery to Atlanta to devote more time to SCLC and the freedom struggle. He becomes assistant pastor to his father at Ebenezer Baptist Church.

**1960 April 27:** King's essay "Suffering and Faith" is published in the Christian Century.

**1960 May:** In his article, "The Burning Truth in the South," King commends the young activists involved in the lunch counter sit-ins and frames their protests within a historical context of nonviolent direct action.

**1960 June 23:** King meets privately in New York with Democratic presidential candidate John F. Kennedy.

**1960 October 19:** King is arrested during a sit-in demonstration at Rich's Department Store in Atlanta. He is sentenced to four months hard labor for violating a suspended sentence he received for a 1956 traffic violation. He is released on \$2,000 bond on 27 October.

**1961 January 31:** Dexter Scott King, the Kings' third child, is born.

**1961 May 21:** After the initial group of Freedom Riders seeking to integrate bus terminals is assaulted in Alabama, King addresses a mass rally at a mob-besieged Montgomery church.

**1961 September 10:** King's article "The Time for Freedom Has Come" cites young people as one of the most significant catalysts in the freedom struggle.

**1961 October 16:** King meets with President John F. Kennedy and urges him to issue a second Emancipation Proclamation to eliminate racial segregation.

**1961 December 16:** King, Ralph Abernathy, Albany Movement president William G. Anderson, and other protesters are arrested by Police Chief Laurie Pritchett during a campaign in Albany, Georgia.

**1962 July 27:** King is arrested at an Albany prayer vigil and jailed. He is released after spending two weeks in jail.

**1962 September 28:** During the closing session of the SCLC conference in Birmingham, Alabama, a member of the American Nazi Party assaults King, striking him twice in the face.

**1963:** King's sermon "A Knock at Midnight" is published in Strength to Love.

**1963 March 28:** Bernice Albertine King, the Kings' fourth child, is born.

**1963 April:** King and the SCLC join with Birmingham's existing local movement, the Alabama Christian Movement for Human Rights (ACMHR), under the leadership of Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, in a massive direct action campaign to attack the city's segregation system. On 3 April, the desegregation campaign is launched with a series of mass meetings, direct actions, lunch counter sit-ins, marches on City Hall, and a boycott of downtown merchants. King speaks to black citizens about the philosophy of nonviolence and its methods, and appeals for volunteers at the end of the mass meetings. With the number of volunteers increasing daily, actions soon expand to kneel-ins at churches, sit-ins

at the library, and a march on the county building to register voters. Hundreds are arrested.

1963 April 12: On Good Friday, King is arrested in Birmingham after violating an anti-protest injunction and is kept in solitary confinement.

**1963 April 16:** During his time in jail, King pens the “Letter from Birmingham Jail” on the margins of the Birmingham News in reaction to a statement published in that newspaper by eight Birmingham clergymen condemning the protests.

**1963 May 3:** Under the leadership of Reverend Fred Shuttlesworth, the nonviolent campaign to end segregation and extend employment to African Americans intensifies. Young nonviolent protesters are met with brutal repression tactics, including police dogs, firehoses, and physical attacks by police. Photographs of the events appear on the front pages of newspapers worldwide.

**1963:** In his essay “Black and White Together,” King recounts the Children’s Crusade of the Birmingham protests and praises the young people as critical in ending segregation in Birmingham.

**1963 May 23:** First meeting of the Organization of African Unity takes place in Addis Ababa, Ethiopia, and is attended by African heads of state, who discuss the harsh treatment of civil rights protestors in Birmingham and draft a statement for President Kennedy.

**1963 June:** *Strength to Love*, King’s book of sermons, is published.

**1963 June 23:** At the end of the Great March on Detroit, Michigan, King delivers his “American Dream” speech in front of Cobo Hall.

**1963 August 28:** More than 250,000 people gather at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC, for the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. John Lewis, representing the SNCC, delivers a speech demanding protecting voting rights of African Americans: “One man, one vote is Africa’s cry and it is our cry.” The March was an international event, spawning sympathy marches around the world. King delivers his most famous speech, “I Have a Dream.”

**1963 September 15:** Four young girls are killed in Birmingham when the 16th Street Baptist Church is bombed in retaliation for the nonviolent protest of the summer. International outrage falls on the US government for failure to protect its citizens.

**1963 September 18:** King delivers his “Eulogy for the Martyred Children” at the funeral of Addie Mae Collins, Carol Denise McNair, and Cynthia Dianne Wesley, three of the four children who were killed in the 15 September bombing of the 16th Street Baptist Church. Carole Rosamond Robertson, the fourth victim, is buried in a separate ceremony.

**1963 October 10:** US Attorney General Robert Kennedy authorizes the FBI to wiretap King’s home phone.

**1964:** King explains the rationale for nonviolent direct action in his essay “The Sword That Heals.”

**1964:** Malcolm X goes on a pilgrimage to Mecca, Saudi Arabia, and returns with new insight regarding the possibility of positive race relations among blacks and whites in America.

**1964 January 3:** King is named “Man of the Year” by *Time* magazine.

**1964 January 18:** President Lyndon B. Johnson meets with King, Roy Wilkins, Whitney Young, and James Farmer and seeks support for his War on Poverty initiative.

**1964 February 9:** Robert Hayling, leader of the civil rights movement in St. Augustine, Florida, invites King and SCLC to join the struggle.

**1964 March 26:** King meets Malcolm X in Washington, DC, for the first and only time.

**1964 June:** King’s book *Why We Can’t Wait* is published.

**1964 June 11:** King is arrested and jailed for demanding service at a white-only restaurant in St. Augustine, Florida.

**1964 June 28:** Malcolm X announces the formation of the Organization of Afro-American Unity at a press conference in New York City.

**1964 July 2:** President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act of 1964, outlawing discrimination in public places, federal programs, and employment.

**1964 July 20:** King and SCLC staff launch a People-to-People tour of Mississippi to assist the SNCC and the Congress of Racial Equality (CORE) in the Mississippi Freedom Summer campaign.

**1964 December 10:** King receives the Nobel Peace Prize at a ceremony in Oslo, Norway. He declares that “every penny” of the \$54,000 award will be used in the ongoing civil rights struggle.

**1965 March 7:** In an event that will become known as “Bloody Sunday,” voting rights marchers are beaten by state troopers at the Edmund Pettus Bridge in Selma, Alabama, as they attempt to march to Montgomery.

**1965 March 17–25:** King, James Forman, and John Lewis lead civil rights marchers from Selma to Montgomery after a US district judge upholds the right of demonstrators to conduct an orderly march.

**1965 July 9:** Congress passes the Voting Rights Act of 1965. The Act prohibits the states from using literacy tests and other methods of excluding African Americans from voting.

**1965 August 12:** King publicly opposes the Vietnam War at a mass rally at the Ninth Annual Convention of SCLC in Birmingham.

**1966:** Muhammad Ali, world heavyweight champion, refuses to be inducted into the US army in protest against the war in Vietnam.

**1966:** The Black Panther Party (BPP) is formed in Oakland, California. As part of their ten-point program, they demand, “We want land, bread, housing, education, clothing, justice and peace.”

**1966 January 26:** King and his wife move into an apartment at 1550 South Hamlin Avenue in Chicago to draw attention to the city’s poor housing conditions.

**1966 December:** King’s sermon, “A Gift of Love,” is published in McCall’s magazine.

**1967 February 25:** King delivers “The Casualties of the War in Vietnam” at the Nation Institute held in the Beverly Hilton Hotel, Los Angeles, California.

**1967 April 4:** King speaks out against the war in Vietnam, addressing a crowd of three thousand people in Riverside Church in New York City. In his speech, entitled “Beyond Vietnam,” King argues that the war effort is “taking the young black men who have been crippled by our society and sending them eight thousand miles away to guarantee liberties in Southeast Asia which they had not found in southwest Georgia and East Harlem.” Two weeks later, he and other activists lead thousands of demonstrators on an antiwar march to the United Nations.

**1967 June:** King’s book *Where Do We Go from Here: Chaos or Community?* is published.

**1967 October 26:** Dr. King speaks to a group of students at Barratt Junior High School in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, asking them, “What Is Your Life’s Blueprint?”

**1967 December 4:** King publicly reveals his plans to organize a mass civil disobedience campaign, the Poor People’s Campaign, in Washington, DC, to force the government to end poverty.

**1968 February 4:** Dr. King delivers one of his most famous sermons, “The Drum Major Instinct,” at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta.

**1968 March 28:** King leads a march of six thousand protesters in support of striking sanitation workers in Memphis, Tennessee. The march descends into violence and looting, and King is rushed from the scene.

**1968 April 3:** King returns to Memphis, determined to lead a peaceful march. During an evening rally at Mason Temple, King delivers his final speech, “I’ve Been to the Mountaintop.”

**1968 April 4:** King is shot and killed while standing on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis.

**1968 April 9:** King is buried in Atlanta.



# Common Core State Standards

The curriculum guide and online resources align with the following Common Core State Standards:

## **HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES GRADE 9-10**

### **Key Ideas and Details**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, attending to such features as the date and origin of the information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary of how key events or ideas develop over the course of the text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.3 Analyze in detail a series of events described in a text; determine whether earlier events caused later ones or simply preceded them.

### **Craft and Structure**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including vocabulary describing political, social, or economic aspects of history/social science.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.5 Analyze how a text uses structure to emphasize key points or advance an explanation or analysis.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.6 Compare the point of view of two or more authors for how they treat the same or similar topics, including which details they include and emphasize in their respective accounts.

### **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.8 Assess the extent to which the reasoning and evidence in a text support the author's claims.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.9-10.9 Compare and contrast treatments of the same topic in several primary and secondary sources.

## **HISTORY/SOCIAL STUDIES: GRADE 11-12**

### **Key Ideas and Details**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.1 Cite specific textual evidence to support analysis of primary and secondary sources, connecting insights gained from specific details to an understanding of the text as a whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.2 Determine the central ideas or information of a primary or secondary source; provide an accurate summary that makes clear the relationships among the key details and ideas.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.3 Evaluate various explanations for actions or events and determine which explanation best accords with textual evidence, acknowledging where the text leaves matters uncertain.

### **Craft and Structure**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including analyzing how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term over the course of a text.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.5 Analyze in detail how a complex primary source is structured, including how key sentences, paragraphs, and larger portions of the text contribute to the whole.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.6 Evaluate authors' differing points of view on the same historical event or issue by assessing the authors' claims, reasoning, and evidence.

### **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, as well as in words) in order to address a question or solve a problem.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.8 Evaluate an author's premises, claims, and evidence by corroborating or challenging them with other information.

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RH.11-12.9 Integrate information from diverse sources, both primary and secondary, into a coherent understanding of an idea or event, noting discrepancies among sources.

## **READING INFORMATIONAL TEXTS**

### **Integration of Knowledge and Ideas**

CCSS.ELA-Literacy.RI.9-10.9 Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (e.g., Washington's Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech, King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail"), including how they address related themes and concepts.

## **NATIONAL COUNCIL FOR THE SOCIAL STUDIES CURRICULUM STANDARDS**

**The following themes from the NCSS Curriculum standards are represented in the curriculum guide:**

**I. Culture:** How do belief systems, such as religion or political ideals, influence other parts of the culture? How does the culture change to accommodate different ideas and beliefs? What does language tell us about the culture?

**II. Time, Continuity, and Change:** Human beings seek to understand their historical roots and to locate themselves in time. Knowing how to read and reconstruct the past allows one to develop a historical perspective and to answer questions such as: Who am I? What happened in the past? How am I connected to those in the past? How has the world changed and how might it change in the future? Why does our personal sense of relatedness to the past change?

**IV. Individual Development and Identity:** Personal identity is shaped by one's culture, by groups, and by institutional influences. Students should consider such questions as: How do people learn? Why do people behave as they do? What influences how people learn, perceive and grow? How do people meet their basic needs in a variety of contexts? How do individuals develop from youth to adulthood?

**V. Individuals, Groups, and Institutions:** Institutions such as schools, churches, families, government agencies, and the courts play an integral role in people's lives. It is important that students learn how institutions are formed, what controls and influences them, how they influence individuals and culture, and how they are maintained or changed. Students may address questions as: What is the role of institutions in this and other societies? How am I influenced by institutions? How do institutions change? What is my role in institutional change?

**VI. Power, Authority, and Governance:** Understanding the historical development of structures of power, authority, and governance and their evolving functions in contemporary U.S. society and other parts of the world is essential for developing civic competence. In exploring this theme, students confront questions such as: What is power? What forms does it take? Who holds it? How is it gained, used, and justified? What is legitimate authority? How are governments created, structured, maintained, and changed? How can individual rights be protected within the context of majority rule?

**X. Civic Ideals and Practices:** An understanding of civic ideals and practices of citizenship is crucial to full participation in society and is a central purpose of the social studies. Students confront such questions as: What is civic participation and how can I be involved? How has the meaning of citizenship evolved? What is the balance between rights and responsibilities? What is the role of the citizen in the community and the nation, and as a member of the world community? How can I make a positive difference?