

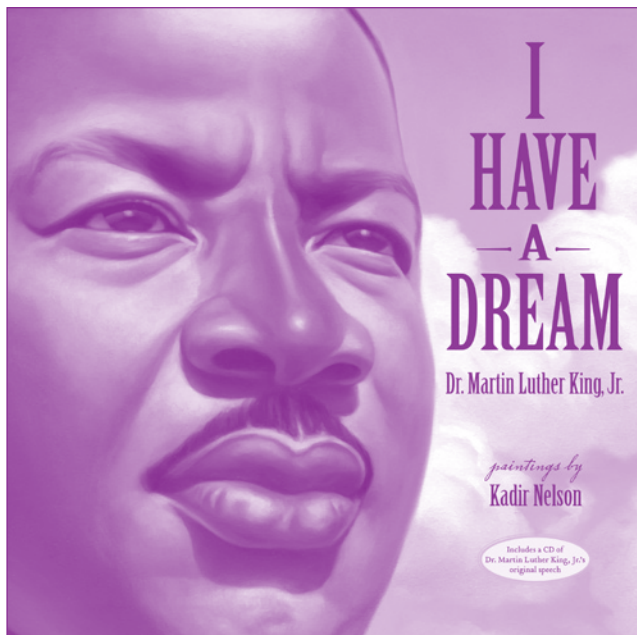
BOOKNOTES

educators guide

I HAVE A DREAM

by Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Paintings by Kadir Nelson



Schwartz & Wade Books
Book and CD: 978-0-375-85887-1
GLB: 978-0-375-95887-8

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

Discrimination • Injustice
Social Action • Civil Rights

ALL AGES

ABOUT THE BOOK

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s speech of August 28, 1963, delivered during the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, is one of the most significant addresses in all of American history.

The speech was a catalyzing moment in the civil rights movement and paved the way for the Civil Rights Act of 1964. Dr. King's urgent and inspirational call for freedom and equality for all people reverberates to this day.

To commemorate and celebrate the 50th anniversary of Dr. King's landmark speech, *I Have a Dream* presents an excerpt of its most powerful passage, illustrated with moving paintings by Coretta Scott King Award—and Caldecott Honor-winning illustrator Kadir Nelson. In the only picture book version of Dr. King's speech in print, today's children and generations of children to come will be inspired by his words of justice and hope.

"My father's dream continues to live on from generation to generation, and this beautiful and powerful illustrated edition of his world-changing 'I Have a Dream' speech brings his inspiring message of freedom, equality, and peace to the youngest among us—those who will one day carry his dream forward for everyone."

—Dr. Bernice A. King

PRE-READING ACTIVITY

Present the book cover and title to students and ask volunteers to offer facts that they know about the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Create a graphic representation of students' responses on a piece of chart paper. Explain to students that 50 years ago, Dr. King gave a speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C. Impress on students that his speech is considered one of the most important ever given in American history. Play the CD of Dr. King's original speech. Pause the CD periodically to check for understanding. After listening, gather students together and discuss what students think are the "big ideas" that Dr. King presented in his speech, such as equality, freedom, justice, hope, and brotherhood.

THEMATIC CONNECTIONS

QUESTIONS FOR GROUP DISCUSSION

FAIRNESS/EQUALITY

Lead a discussion with students about the meanings of the words *fair* and *equal*. Have students offer personal examples of fairness. Dr. King refers to the line from the Declaration of Independence: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." Explain the meaning of *self-evident*, and then ask students what it means to be "created equal."

SEGREGATION/DISCRIMINATION

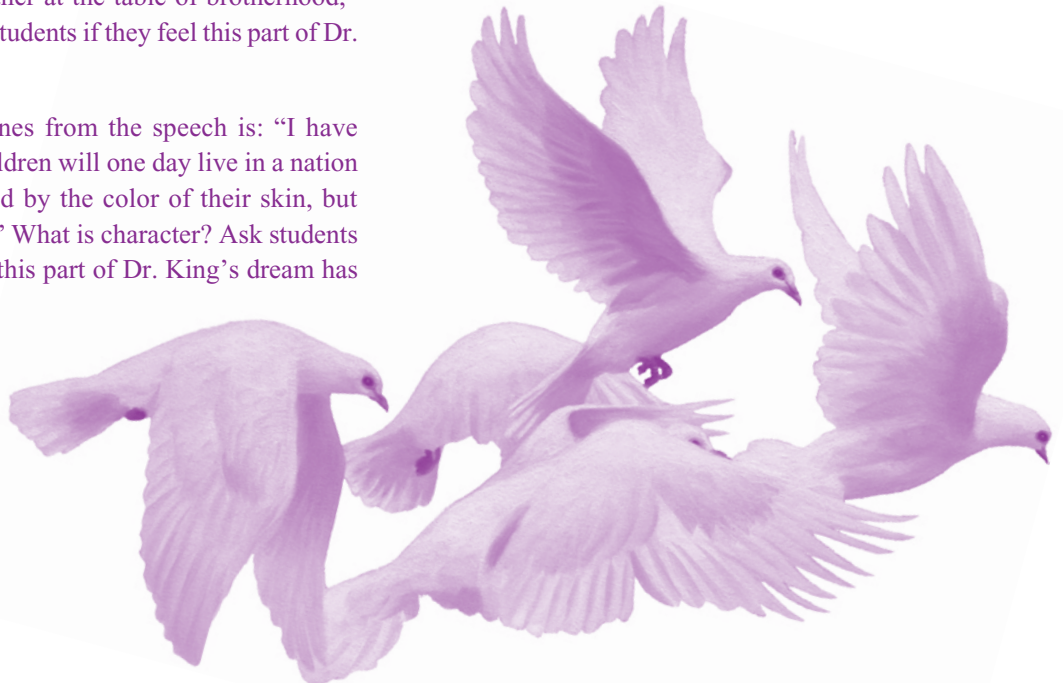
Lead a discussion about the racial climate in the United States at the time Dr. King delivered his speech, and the segregation laws that called for separate facilities for black Americans and white Americans. Refer to the passage from King's speech that states, "I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood," and discuss its meaning. Ask students if they feel this part of Dr. King's dream has come true.

One of the most powerful lines from the speech is: "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but the content of their character." What is character? Ask students to consider if, after 50 years, this part of Dr. King's dream has been realized.

FREEDOM

Discuss the meaning of the word *liberty*, and why it is such a treasured value to the American people. Ask students to give examples of how they are free. Point out to students that due to segregation laws, African Americans were not truly free. Bring in pictures from 1963 that depict examples of "separate but equal," and lead children in a discussion of how these laws kept African Americans from being truly free.

In his speech, Dr. King proclaimed, "With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day." Discuss how Dr. King and many others often spent time in jail as an outcome of their nonviolent protests. Ask students if they would be willing to go to jail for a cause that they believe in and why?



CONNECTING TO THE CURRICULUM

SOCIAL STUDIES

To give students a sense of the magnitude of the 1963 March on Washington, create a slideshow of images from the event. Set the images to the audio of Dr. King’s speech.

In his speech, Dr. King states that his dream “is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.” Explain to students that Dr. King is referring to equality for all Americans regardless of their race. Give students time to create a personal definition of the American dream. Once students have settled on a definition, give them time to write a short essay or story describing their dream and how they might make the dream become a reality.

Do an image search of Jim Crow laws to give students a visual understanding of “separate but equal.” (Older students can work in pairs to conduct a Web quest). Present the images as a slideshow. After screening, have the students place their chairs in a large circle. Give students the opportunity to express what they were feeling as they viewed the images. Challenge students to explain why these laws were unfair.

MUSIC

Dr. King cites the lyrics of the patriotic song, “America” (“My Country, ’Tis of Thee”) in his speech. This song, although a celebration of America as a country, is at its heart about freedom. Prepare the lesson by printing out the full lyrics of the song, which can be found at: kids.niehs.nih.gov/games/songs/patriotic/mycountry.htm. Review the lyrics with the class, highlighting each time the words *freedom* or *liberty* appears in the song. Clarify any language that students may not understand. Give students time to learn the lyrics and rehearse the song. Let students perform the piece at a school-wide *I Have a Dream* music/art celebration dedicated to the 50th anniversary of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.’s iconic

speech. Work with the school’s music teacher to help students learn to play “America” (“My Country, ’Tis of Thee”) on the handbells.

VISUAL ARTS

The concept of equality is integral to the message that Dr. King delivered in his *I Have a Dream* speech. For young children, the concept of fairness is far simpler to understand. Read the book to students and use the fairness/equality discussion questions found above. Give students time to create a poster with the title “Fairness Is . . .” Have students spend time sketching a design on drawing paper. When their design is complete, distribute poster board and direct students to sketch and color their final composition. Give each student time to present his/her poster to the class.

LANGUAGE ARTS

One of the most enduring lines from Dr. King’s speech is: “I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.” For this activity, introduce/review adjectives as a part of speech. Guide each student to generate a list of adjectives that describe aspects of their character, such as loving, helpful, hardworking, friendly, and honest. Next, share the illustration of the line, depicting King’s children. Give students time to create a self-portrait. Instruct them to leave room around the edges of the paper in which to place their “character” words. Challenge older students to create a self-portrait that incorporates their character words *in* the image.

As an enrichment activity for older students, present the examples of the descriptive language featured in the speech (see list below) and challenge students to illustrate one or more of the phrases.

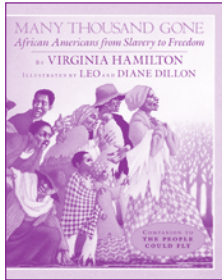
VOCABULARY | USE OF LANGUAGE

Some of the words in Dr. King’s speech will not be familiar to young students. Consider previewing the following vocabulary words prior to reading or listening to the speech.

Vocabulary: *creed, self-evident, brotherhood, transformed, oasis, content, character, exalted, jangling, discords, symphony, prodigious, hew*

Figurative Language: *Sit down together at the table of brotherhood; sweltering with the heat of injustice; transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice; hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope; transform the jangling discords of our nation; a beautiful symphony of brotherhood*

CONNECTING I HAVE A DREAM WITH OTHER RELATED TITLES



Many Thousand Gone: African Americans from Slavery to Freedom

Virginia Hamilton
Illustrated by Leo and Diane Dillon
Grades 3 up
Alfred A. Knopf
PB: 978-0-679-87936-7



As Good as Anybody

Richard Michelson
Illustrated by Raul Colón
Grades 1-5
Knopf Books for Young Readers
978-0-375-83335-9
GLB: 978-0-375-93335-6



My Dream of Martin Luther King

Faith Ringgold
Grades K-3
Dragonfly Books
978-0-517-88577-2



Child of the Civil Rights Movement

Paula Young Shelton
Illustrated by Raul Colón
Grades PreK-3
Schwartz & Wade Books
978-0-375-84314-3
GLB: 978-0-375-95414-6

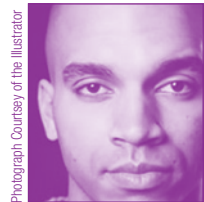
ABOUT THE AUTHOR



Photograph © Flip Schulte/Corbis

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. (1929–1968), is one of the most important Americans of the 20th century. He was a clergyman, a writer, an activist, and a leader in the American civil rights movement. His speech “I Have a Dream” became the defining moment in the struggle for civil rights. In 1964, Dr. King became the youngest person ever to receive the Nobel Peace Prize, for his work to end racism, segregation, and discrimination through nonviolent means. He was posthumously awarded the Presidential Medal of Freedom in 1977 and the Congressional Gold Medal in 2004. In 2011, the Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., National Memorial was dedicated in Washington, D.C. In 2012, the recording of the “I Have a Dream” speech was a Grammy Hall of Fame Selection. Learn more at TheKingCenter.org.

ABOUT THE ILLUSTRATOR



Photograph Courtesy of the Illustrator

Kadir Nelson is the highly acclaimed and bestselling illustrator of many books for children. He has won two Caldecott Honors for *Moses: When Harriet Tubman Led Her People to Freedom* by Carole Boston Weatherford and *Henry's Freedom Box: A True Story from the Underground Railroad* by Ellen Levine. He is also the author and illustrator of *We Are the Ship: The Story of Negro League Baseball*, a Robert F. Sibert Medal winner and a Coretta Scott King Honor Award recipient, and *Heart and Soul: The Story of America and African Americans*. Mr. Nelson lives in Los Angeles. Visit him at KadirNelson.com.

ON THE WEB

For bios, teachers guides, and more, visit our FREE online site:

Be sure to sign up for our online newsletter
RHTeachersLibrarians.com



INTERNET RESOURCES

National Parks Service
Martin Luther King King, Jr., National Historic Site
www.nps.gov/malu/index.htm

PBS.org
www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/teachers/lessonplans/history/dream2_8-20.html

Generation On/KidsCare.org
www.kidscare.org/clubcentral/projects/let-freedom-ring-streamer

Martin Luther King, Jr., National Memorial
www.mlkmemorial.org

National Public Radio
www.npr.org/news/specials/march40th