

# Media Constructions of Martin Luther King, Jr.

## A Media Literacy Kit



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# **MEDIA CONSTRUCTIONS OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.**

**Collaboration by:**

**Project Look Sharp at Ithaca College  
and the  
Ithaca City School District, Ithaca N.Y.**



**[www.projectlooksharp.org](http://www.projectlooksharp.org)**

## **Mission Statement**

Project Look Sharp is a not-for-profit, mission driven initiative committed to providing teachers with the training and materials they need to integrate media literacy, critical thinking and 21<sup>st</sup> century learning into the curriculum.



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Project Look Sharp provides staff development workshops and consulting.

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## About This Kit

This kit was designed by educators in Ithaca, New York as part of the 2010 Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Build. These lessons were intended to integrate media literacy and critical thinking skills into a study of the history and ideas of Dr King for the English Language Arts curriculum. The content and document-decoding approach makes the lessons usable (or easily adaptable) for middle school through college level classes in English, social studies, history, politics, and media studies.

All materials can be accessed for free on our website and are also available through mobile non-Internet based versions viewed on a digital media device. Digital devices include a master PDF as well as all specified media within lesson folders purchased from the Ithaca College Bookstore. Access the bookstore through our website.

### FAIR USE NOTICE:

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# Media Constructions of Martin Luther King, Jr.

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# **Introduction:**

# **Media Constructions of Martin Luther King, Jr.**

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## OVERVIEW OF THE KIT

# Media Constructions of Martin Luther King, Jr.

## Overview, Objectives, Pedagogy, and Practice

### Overview

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was assassinated before his 40<sup>th</sup> birthday, yet his image and words have come to define the popular notion of social change in America. “I Have A Dream” has become as iconic as the image of King himself. But Martin King, the nonviolent visionary who poetically confronted segregation, was also a harsh critic of U.S. foreign policy, the economic system’s tolerance of poverty, and our very system of capitalism. It’s clear that some of Dr. King’s speeches and ideas are more frequently repeated in the popular media than others; some visual images of him and his work have made their way into popular culture, while others have been ignored. When new generations come to see and learn about who Martin Luther King, Jr. was and why he is considered such an important figure in American history, what do they see and hear? And what *don’t* they see and hear? Who gets to decide which King we see, which King gets remembered, which King to honor?

These lessons intend to help young people to understand and analyze the messages about Martin Luther King, Jr. that have been, and continue to be, constructed by different sources for different audiences and different purposes. These media constructions have complex historical contexts and diverse political biases, are likely to be interpreted differently depending upon the unique lenses of each viewer. If we can educate a generation to be capable of understanding these complexities and able to make their own thoughtful judgments about the challenge of change in our communities, then we will have made a deep contribution to Dr. King’s legacy.

### Objectives:

- To teach core background information about the life, ideas, and legacy of Dr. King and the civil rights movement.
- To have students identify and understand both the literary and oratorical devices used and philosophical positions taken in three of Dr. King’s speeches.
- To train students to understand and evaluate authorship, credibility and bias in different media sources and forms.
- To teach students to analyze how the portrayal of Dr. King has been constructed differently and gives different meaning to his memory depending upon: who was doing the constructing, for what purpose, for what audience, with what bias, from what historical context, using what techniques, and using what media form.
- To engage all students, but particularly those disengaged from traditional school work, in complex critical thinking and the development of reading, listening and visual decoding skills and attitudes that support life-long democratic citizenship.
- \* To have students reflect on justice, human rights and the challenges of social change.

### Design of the Curriculum Kit

This kit was designed by educators in Ithaca, New York as part of the 2010 Martin Luther King, Jr. Community Build. These lessons were intended to integrate media literacy and critical thinking skills into a study of the history and ideas of Dr. King for the English Language Arts curriculum. The content and document-decoding approach makes the lessons usable (or easily adaptable) for middle school through college level classes in English, social studies, history, politics, and media studies.

**Media Literacy and Citizenship**

The founders of the United States articulated the need for a literate citizenship as core to the development of a deep and enduring democracy. We live in an age when the most influential messages about pressing social issues and events are delivered through mass media, such as television, magazines and the Internet. Most students use the Internet as their primary source of information, yet few have any formal training in assessing the credibility of information in Web sites. It is essential to the success of our democracy that young people consciously and consistently analyze and evaluate media messages. They need to be taught to seek out current, accurate, and credible sources of information; they need to be aware of the influence of media messages on their understanding of the world; and they need training in identifying and using various techniques for communicating messages in different media forms. Without these critical skills, we risk losing the diversity and freedom of thought that underpins a culture of true democracy.

**Collective Reading of Media Messages**

This curriculum is based on the classroom practice of collective reading and discussion, in which the teacher leads the class through the process of decoding images, sounds and text as a way of developing a range of critical thinking skills while teaching core knowledge. This constructivist approach encourages the development of moral reasoning as students clarify their own interpretations, listen to the analysis of their peers, and discuss ethical issues. Decoding of the documents in this curriculum will help train students to distinguish fact from opinion, analyze point of view and identify bias, interpret historical documents, and use evidence to back up a thesis. The classroom decoding process is particularly effective in involving students who rarely share their opinions about print-based material, including students with reading disabilities, visual learners, and English language learners.

**Challenges in Creating This Kit**

In creating the series of lessons for this curriculum kit, we faced a number of challenges. One had to do with how to refer to Martin Luther King, Jr. (should he always be called Dr. King? Reverend King? Just Martin King?). Another had to do with the terms used when discussing different racial and ethnic groups (White or Caucasian? Black or African-American? Or Negro, the term Dr. King himself typically used?). In the end we used a range of terms, depending on the context of the material – but we encourage you to reflect on and discuss these issues as you explore the lessons.

It's also important to note what is left out of the media constructions included in these lessons. There is very little here from the Black Press or from alternative media sources; most of the lessons focus on the mainstream press and popular media constructions with which the students are likely to be already familiar. Again, we encourage you – if you have the time and interest – to explore how Dr. King's words and image have been constructed in those other types of sources, and to compare them with more mainstream and traditional media representations.

Finally, these lessons were designed primarily to be used in middle and high school English classes. If your context for presenting the lessons is very different (e.g., in a college level politics or history course), you will want to adapt the background material and questions to address your own particular context and needs.



## OVERVIEW OF THE KIT

# How to Use These Materials

## Technology Needs

All materials can be accessed for free on our website and include PowerPoint Slide Shows, video and audio clips, and all print materials (PDF). Materials are also available through mobile non-Internet based versions viewed on a digital media device. Digital devices include a master PDF as well as all specified media within lesson folders purchased from the Ithaca College Bookstore. If you wish to purchase the digital device, visit the Project Look Sharp website for more information:

[www.projectlooksharp.org](http://www.projectlooksharp.org)

You will also need speakers for your computer to be able to play the audio and video clips.

## Teacher Guides and Student Handouts

Teachers may want to print and review the lesson plan and teacher guide for each of the four lessons, and to make copies of student handouts prior to instruction.

The *Teacher Guide* includes information and instructions in gray boxes such as this one (sometimes marked *Background Information* or *Introduce the Lesson/Activity*). Content in the gray boxes is intended to be conveyed to the students (by paraphrasing or reading it verbatim). Teachers may find that students are already familiar with the background information, in which case they may simply wish to remind students of some important points before moving into the activity.

These materials may be downloaded free-of-charge online at the Project Look Sharp website. Mobile non-Internet based versions are also available with the purchase of a digital media device, which includes the master PDF of the kit and all specified media within lesson folders. Visit our website for more information.

## Encouraging Multiple Readings

Although the Teacher Guides for each lesson include “possible answers” to the probe questions, the teacher should encourage multiple readings and a diversity of responses for most of the questions posed in the teacher guide. It is important that students give evidence in the document to explain their conclusions. The “possible answers” given in the teacher guide are intended to reflect typical responses that address key historical and media literacy concepts and information. However, it is important that students recognize that all people do not interpret media messages the same way. Depending upon each reader’s background, including life experience, age, gender, race, culture, or political views, he or she may have very different interpretations of a particular text. The collective reading experience provides the opportunity to explore these differences and discuss the important concept that readers interpret messages through their own lenses.

## Reading Bias

A major theme of these materials is the recognition that all media messages come from particular points of view and have biases that reflect the intent and perspectives of the creators and sponsors of those messages. With these materials, teachers can train students to recognize bias and point of view. The teacher should encourage students to ask critical questions about any media messages encountered inside or outside the classroom using the *Media Literacy Questions* introduced in Lesson 1, and an expanded version available as a separate handout (*Key Questions To Ask When Analyzing Media Messages*) on the Project Look Sharp Web site.

**Bias in this Curriculum and in the Classroom**

This series of lessons, like all media, also has a point of view and a bias. As teachers use the lessons, they may identify opinionated language, selective facts, missing information, and many other subjective decisions that went into constructing this view of history. The same questions the curriculum applies to other documents can be applied to this media construction: Who produced this curriculum for what purpose and what is its bias? Teachers and students could and should be asking critical questions about the editorial choices that went into constructing these lessons. For instance, why did we choose to focus on certain topics (e.g., Dr. King's anti-war speeches, the use of Dr. King's image in advertising), but not others (e.g., his religious beliefs and the role of the church and family in his life)? And, what is your evidence for these conclusions? When using these materials teachers will make their own decisions of what to include and to edit, what questions to use and what issues to avoid. All of these decisions, both by the creators and users of the curriculum, will influence the view of history that students receive. Teachers should encourage students to thoughtfully analyze and discuss the stories, the perspectives, and the biases celebrated and criticized within our own classrooms. Those skills and practices are core to an educated democratic citizenship.

**Fair Use of Media Documents**

The classroom critique of political and cultural documents is essential to the development of civic literacy skills in our media saturated democracy. Project Look Sharp provides these media documents and lessons free of charge for the purpose of commentary, criticism, and education as provided for by the fair use clause of the U.S. Copyright Act of 1976. The documents in this curriculum are presented for the purpose of direct critique and solely to be used in an educational setting.

For more information about fair use in Media Literacy Education, go to the Media Education Lab at Temple University at

***[www.mediaeducationlab.com](http://www.mediaeducationlab.com)***

**Additional Resources**

For more information about media decoding download these documents from the project Look Sharp website:

- Key Questions to Ask When Analyzing Media Messages
- Tips for Media Decoding
- Core Principles for Media Literacy Education

For more information regarding how to determine **Web site credibility**, visit our website [www.projectlooksharp.org](http://www.projectlooksharp.org) and select "Media Literacy Handouts" from the left menu bar. Then select "Evaluating Websites".

These and many other educational materials and curriculum kits are available free for educators on our Web site:

***[www.projectlooksharp.org](http://www.projectlooksharp.org)***

# Lesson #1: A Media Chronology

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PowerPoint and Digital Clips..... (Access online or via Lesson 1 digital media folder)	
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Student Handout:.....	43





**LESSON PLAN**

# A Media Chronology



**PowerPoint Slide Show**



**Video Clips**

## Lesson Objectives:

- Students will be introduced to media literacy including the definition of media, the qualities of different media forms, and core questions to ask when analyzing any media message.
- Students will learn the history of Dr. King's public accomplishments and apply that knowledge to the analysis of historic media documents.
- Students will learn to analyze media documents for key media literacy concepts relating to audience, authorship, message and representation.
- Students will reflect on the historical context of media constructions of Dr. King.

## Vocabulary:

Montgomery bus boycott, Fellowship of Reconciliation, Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC), Gandhi, nonviolent direct action, civil disobedience, "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," the Holocaust, "I Have a Dream" speech, Rosa Parks, Highlander Folk School, Bloody Sunday, Selma, voting rights act, Clergy and Laity Concerned, "Beyond Vietnam – A Time to Break the Silence" speech, Poor People's Campaign, Memphis sanitation strike, "I've Been to the Mountaintop" speech, Martin Luther King Day, Boycott Arizona campaign, National Black Republican Association, Barack Obama, King's legacy, historical context, bias

## Media:

**In PowerPoint Slide Show:** comic books, button, book covers, magazine article, letter, magazine cover, billboards, newspaper front page, article, posters, music videos, Internet videos, songs.



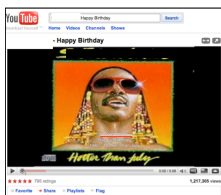
**Clip#1: "A Dream"**  
 Music Video excerpt [2:07]



**Clip#2: "Beyond Vietnam"**  
 Video excerpt [1:06]



**Clip#3: "Why? (The King of Love is Dead)"**  
 Song excerpt [1:10]



**Clip#4: "Happy Birthday"**  
 Music Video excerpt [1:06]



**Clip#5: "By the Time I Get to Arizona"**  
 Music Video excerpt [2:12]

**Materials Needed:**

- *PowerPoint* slide show (access online or via Lesson 1 digital media folder)
- Video and audio clips for Lesson 1 (access online or via Lesson 1 digital media folder)
- *Teacher Guide* for Lesson 1
- Four-page Student Reading: *Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Making History – Making News*
- One-page Student Handout: *Media Literacy Questions*

**Time**

80 minutes

**Lesson Procedures:**

1. Have students read the 4-page *Student Reading* in class or for homework.
2. Using the lesson material in the *Teacher Guide*, lead students through decoding the media documents (*PowerPoint* slides and short video clips).

The *Teacher Guide* includes information and instructions in gray boxes such as this one (sometimes marked *Background Information* or *Introduce the Lesson/Activity*). The content in the gray boxes is intended to be conveyed to the students (by reading it verbatim or paraphrasing). Teachers may find that students are already familiar with the background information included, in which case they may wish to remind students of the most important points before moving into the activity.

The *Teacher Guide* also includes *Possible Answers* to model student application of key knowledge through evidence-based analysis. Ask *Further Questions* and add *Additional Information* where appropriate.

3. Hand out the *Media Literacy Questions* that are covered on Slide 8 either before the lesson begins or when the students get to that slide; they should keep this handout available as they also apply to Lessons 1, 2 and 3.

TEACHER GUIDE

# SLIDE #1: *Media Constructions of Martin Luther King, Jr., cover image*

## INTRODUCE THE LESSON

We are beginning a series of lessons that explore the ways in which the image and ideas of Martin Luther King, Jr. have been presented in the U.S. media. The first lesson will explore the history or chronology of some of the most important events and milestones in King's life and legacy. The second lesson will analyze three of King's speeches. The third lesson will ask you to identify patterns in the representation of King from a variety of different media forms including magazine covers, monuments, advertisements, Web sites and film clips. We will begin the first lesson with a brief introduction to the concept of "Media Literacy."

### QUESTION

**What is meant by the title "Media Constructions?"**

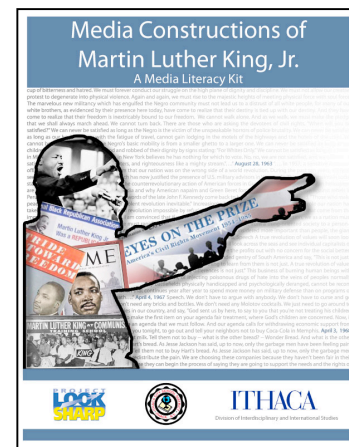
### POSSIBLE ANSWERS

The way that various media forms and examples have presented an event or person. "Constructions" reflect the way the message is created and the point of view of the person or organization that created the message. Martin Luther King, Jr. has been portrayed in various ways across a wide range of media, which has influenced the ways we perceive the man himself, the history of the civil rights movement, and King's legacy.

### ADDITIONAL INFO

These lessons were created in 2010 by a group of middle and high school English Language Arts teachers in Ithaca, New York working with *Project Look Sharp*, a media literacy initiative based at Ithaca College.

### SLIDE #1



***Media Constructions of Martin Luther King, Jr., cover image***

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #2: *Definition of Media*

### → Animated slide with 5 Panels

**Panel 1:** Media and image of iPhone

QUESTION	<b>What do we mean by the terms <i>media</i>? How would you define it?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	Answers will vary.
SAY	<b>Here is how we are going to define the term “media.”</b>

**Panel 2:** Messages conveyed through visuals, language and/or sound

**Panel 3:** (Mass) produced for a (mass) audience mediated by a form of technology

**Panel 4:** The producer of the message is not in the same place as the receiver of the message

QUESTION	<b>Why might this last point be important?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	Because the receiver cannot interact directly with, or question, the producer.

**Panel 5:** What media forms have you experienced today?

QUESTION	<b>From the time you first woke up today, what media forms have you experienced?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	Students will likely list many forms.
NOTE	Point out forms that are NOT media according to the definition, for instance the telephone or the teacher. The teacher’s messages are typically not mediated with technology (although they would be if the teacher was shown talking on a video or TV broadcast). Similarly, one can interact directly with a person on the telephone (unless you just hear a recording in which case it would be considered “media”).

### SLIDE #2

- Messages conveyed through visuals, language and/or sound
- (Mass) produced for a (mass) audience mediated by a form of technology
- The producer of the message is not in the same place as the receiver of the message



**What media forms have you experienced today?**

## *Definition of Media*

### ADDITIONAL INFO

This definition comes from Project Look Sharp.

New media forms such as texting and blogging confound this definition of media. Text messages are typically person to person, but can be a form of mass media (e.g., Obama announcing Biden as his VP through texting). Blogs are clearly media but one can often interact with bloggers.



TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #3: *Types of Media*

NOTE

After students have named many different types of media, step through the panels on the slide commenting on each media type if appropriate. For advertising, for example, you may want to point out that advertising occurs on clothing, food packaging, and billboards – and have students notice the advertising in your classroom.

### → Animated slide with 11 Panels

**Panel 1:** Types of Media

**Panel 2:** Radio

**Panel 3:** Television

**Panel 4:** Newspapers, Magazines

**Panel 5:** Internet

**Panel 6:** Advertising in All Forms

**Panel 7:** Image of Capri Sun beverage package

QUESTION

**Why do we often not notice advertising?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

Because it is all over the place; we see and hear so much of it, we forget that it is there; sometimes we don't think of things as advertising that really are.

**Panel 8:** Videos, DVDs, Films

**Panel 9:** Computer & Video Games

**Panel 10:** Recorded Music (e.g., CDs)

QUESTION

**Do you think this list was developed from the responses of kids or adults? Why?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

Adults. Because adults often wake up to their radio, while kids often wake up to their cell phone or Internet. Kids are less likely to use newspapers or magazines than adults.

*Continued on next page...*

### SLIDE #3

#### Types of Media

- Radio
- Television
- Newspapers, Magazines
- Internet
- Advertising in All Forms
- Videos, DVDs, Films
- Computer & Video Games
- Recorded Music (CDs)
- Other...



#### *Types of Media*

**Panel 11: Other...**

QUESTION	<b>What are other media forms not already mentioned?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	Students may list many other new and old media forms.
NOTE	If the student do not think of <i>books</i> as a media form you may give them a hint...
QUESTION	<b>What media form hasn't been mentioned that you probably use many times every day in school if not at home? It is arguably the most prominent media form in education?</b>

**ADDITIONAL INFO**

There are many others forms of communication that are often not considered to be "media," but fit all of the criteria, including forms that are found in classrooms (e.g., maps, images of other countries) and outside of school (e.g., money, board games like Monopoly). An important part of media literacy involves increased awareness of the media messages we encounter in our lives, who made them and why, and how they might impact our beliefs, attitudes and behaviors.

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #4: *Are Books Media?*

QUESTION

**Based on this definition, are books media?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWER

Yes. They meet all the criteria.

QUESTION

**Why do we not think of books when we think of media?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

- Books have been around for a long time whereas media is thought of as relatively new.
- Books are not as high tech as most newer media.
- Books are considered “good” for you whereas many types of media are considered bad for you.

QUESTION

**When did books become mass produced media?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWER

With the invention of movable type by Johannes Gutenberg around 1440.

QUESTION

**What are other sources of messages that we might not think of as “media”?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

Dictionaries, encyclopedias, comic books, paintings, etchings, maps, money, mass produced games, tattoos, cave paintings, etc.

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**Why are books considered “good” media?**

**Was the mass production of books a good or bad thing for education? Why?**

**What do you think was the response of people in the 15<sup>th</sup> century to the mass production of books?**

### SLIDE #4

- Messages conveyed through visuals, language and/or sound
- (Mass) produced for a (mass) audience mediated by a form of technology
- The producer of the message is not in the same place as the receiver of the message

#### Are Books Media?



**What are other sources of messages that we might not think of as “media”?**

### *Are Books Media?*

### ADDITIONAL INFO

As with most forms of new media there was great concern about the impact of the book on the next generation. Some critics feared that books would undermine education by changing the teacher-student relationship. In fact the mass production of books did change that special relationship and did have a great impact on education.

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #5: *Media Literacy*

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Although books continue to be an important source of information and ideas in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, other forms have come to dominate our media diet. According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, young people in the United States in 2005 spent on average only 23 minutes a day reading books but nearly 4 hours a day watching TV, DVDs and videos. Of the 6.5 hours a day 8-18 year olds spent with media outside of school, only 43 minutes was spent reading books, magazines and newspapers (Roberts).

Citizenship and learning in the 21<sup>st</sup> century requires that young people be literate, able to access, analyze, evaluate and produce messages, in many different forms of communication and expression. Young people today need to be media literate.

### SLIDE #5

#### Media Literacy



Media literacy is the ability to access, analyze, evaluate and produce media in a variety of forms

### FURTHER INFORMATION

According to the National Association of Media Literacy Education, the purpose of media literacy education is to “help individuals of all ages to develop the habits of inquiry and skills of expression that they need to be critical thinkers, effective communicators and active citizens in today’s world.” (NAMLE)

#### *Media Literacy*

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #6: *Each Media Form Has Different Qualities*

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

One important concept in media literacy education is to recognize that each media form has different qualities and characteristics and a unique “language” of construction. (NAMLE) We typically spend lots of time in school studying the grammatical forms and literary devices that are used in written communication, but all media forms, print and non-print, use their own techniques, their own grammar, to communicate messages. Filmmakers, video game producers, painters, photographers - all media makers - use specific techniques to communicate meaning in their specific form. In our media-saturated world it is important for students, both as consumers and as producers of media messages, to understand these various techniques and to reflect on the unique qualities and characteristics of different media forms.

NOTE

Guide students through the list of qualities of books on this slide in preparation for the next slide (#7) where they will identify qualities in other media forms.

### → Animated slide with 11 Panels

**Panel 1: Each Media Form Has Different Qualities**

**Panel 2:** What are the **qualities** of books?

**Panel 3:** require print literacy

**Panel 4:** can be read at a variable pace

**Panel 5:** text allows the reader to create their own images

**Panel 6:** relatively easy to mass produce and access

**Panel 7:** easy to re-read and review as you go along

**Panel 8:** lots of books to choose from

**Panel 9:** portable and easy to store

**Panel 10:** fun to curl up with in bed

**Panel 11: OTHER...**

QUESTION

**What are other qualities of books?**

Answers will vary; may include elements of printed language (e.g., parts of speech), text size and font, organizational structure and layout, inclusion of images (or not).

### SLIDE #6

#### Each media form has different qualities



#### What are the **qualities** of books?

- require print literacy
- can be read at a variable pace
- text allows the reader to create their own images
- relatively easy to mass produce
- relatively cheap and easy to access
- lots of books to choose from
- portable and easy to store
- fun to curl up with in bed
- OTHER...

***Each Media Form Has Different Qualities***

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #7: *Describe the Qualities of Each Media Form*

### INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

These are some of the different media forms we will analyze in this lesson as we use historical documents to help us learn about and reflect on the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

NOTE Have students work in pairs or small groups to identify and briefly state the qualities of each of these media forms.

QUESTION

**What are qualities of comic books?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

image-based, easy to read, short, typically dramatic and action oriented, often serialized

QUESTION

**What are qualities of buttons (with messages)?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

you wear them, brief message, often graphic, typically takes a stand on an issue, public

QUESTION

**What are qualities of magazine covers?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

usually have images and text, often colorful and well designed, convey/create emotions, advertising

QUESTION

**What are qualities of YouTube music videos?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

often popular music, visuals to go with the music, typically short, often made by every-day people, sometimes hard to determine credibility or accuracy

QUESTION

**What are qualities of newspaper articles?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

often seen as credible source, lots of information, up to date, sometimes photos with the text, access online

QUESTION

**What are qualities of billboards?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

meant to be seen from the road, short text, graphic imagery, author often unknown, propagandistic

QUESTION

**What are qualities of songs (recorded)?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

the emotion of music and the human voice, lyrics, no images to distract from the audio, often beautiful

QUESTION

**What are qualities of posters?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

often beautiful or takes a stand, can put up on a wall, typically graphic, well designed, colorful, emotional

SLIDE #7



***Describe the Qualities of Each Media Form***

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #8: *Media Literacy Questions*

### INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

In addition to reflecting on the qualities of different media forms it is also important to practice asking critical thinking questions about all media messages. You should always question the source of a media message, its credibility and accuracy, its bias and point of view, who sponsored or paid for this message, and who was the target audience. In addition you should practice analyzing the content in media messages and the techniques used to communicate those messages. You should think about the events that influenced the creation of this message, its historical context. Finally, it is important to recognize that your analysis will not necessarily be the same as that of your peers or teachers since we each interpret these messages through our own unique perspective.

Here are some of the media literacy questions we will ask when analyzing media documents about the life and legacy of Dr. King.

NOTE

Ensure that students have the *Media Literacy Questions* handout, and then guide students through the questions below.

### → Animated slide with 11 Panels

- Panel 1: MEDIA LITERACY QUESTIONS** for analyzing media documents about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Panel 2:** What are the messages about Dr. King in this document?
- Panel 3:** How are those messages communicated?
- Panel 4:** Who produced this document, and for what purpose?
- Panel 5:** When was this produced, and what was its historical context?
- Panel 6:** Who was the target audience?
- Panel 7:** Is this an accurate and credible representation of Dr. King?
- Panel 8:** How does this reflect the perspective or bias of its creator?
- Panel 9:** What information or perspective is left out of this message?
- Panel 10:** How might different people interpret this message differently?
- Panel 11:** Who might benefit from – and who might be harmed by – this message?

### SLIDE #8

#### MEDIA LITERACY QUESTIONS for analyzing documents about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

What are the messages about Dr. King in this document?  
How are those messages communicated?  
Who produced this document, for what purpose?  
When was this produced, what was its historical context?  
Who was the target audience?  
Is this an accurate and credible representation of Dr. King?  
How does this reflect the perspective or bias of its creator?  
What information or perspective is left out of this message?  
How might different people interpret this message differently?

### *Media Literacy Questions*



TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #9: *A Media Chronology*

### INTRODUCE THE CHRONOLOGY LESSON

As we ask these kinds of media literacy questions when we discuss and analyze historic media documents about Martin Luther King, you will need to apply your knowledge of U.S. history related to Dr. King and the civil rights movement. We call this process “media decoding.”

We will begin with a document from 1955, shortly after Dr. King first gained national notoriety. He was 27 years old.

NOTE

Students should read (or have read already) the 4-page Student Reading, *Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Making History - Making News*, before continuing this decoding lesson.

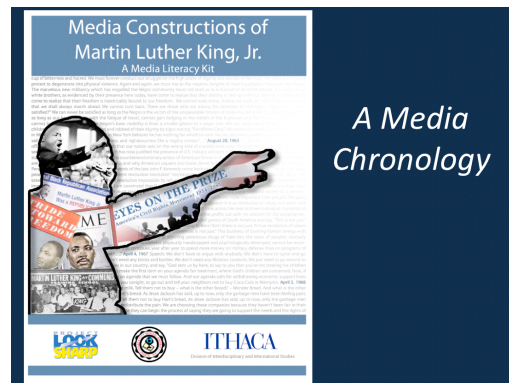
QUESTION

**What is a chronology?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWER

A listing or timeline of events in the order they occurred.

SLIDE #9



*A Media Chronology*



TEACHER GUIDE

# SLIDE #10: *Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story*, comic cover

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 1956 the Fellowship of Reconciliation (FOR) produced and sold over 250,000 copies of this comic book. The FOR was founded by Christian churches during World War One as an international ecumenical peace organization. In the mid-1950s FOR-USA organized nonviolence workshops in the South and helped Dr. King and others in their work in Montgomery.

### QUESTION

**What historical event does this 1956 comic book cover represent? Give evidence to support your answer.**

### POSSIBLE ANSWER

The Montgomery bus boycott

### EVIDENCE

“The Montgomery Story” and images of a bus with the text box “found a new way to end racial discrimination.”

### QUESTION

**What are the messages about Dr. King’s role in the Montgomery bus boycott?**

### POSSIBLE ANSWER

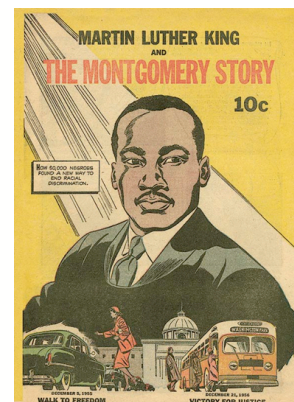
He played the most important role in leading the boycott. He was divinely inspired.

### EVIDENCE

Most important – His image fills most of the cover and his name appears at the top

Divinely inspired – beam of light from above shining on him in clergyman’s robe

## SLIDE #10



***Martin Luther King and the Montgomery Story*  
1956 comic cover**

## FURTHER QUESTIONS

**Why would a Christian peace organization like FOR produce a comic book about ending racial discrimination?**

**Who might have been the target audience for this comic?**

## ADDITIONAL INFO

Since its founding, FOR has groups in over 40 countries. Its membership includes Jews, Christians, Buddhists, Muslims, and people of other faith traditions, as well as those with no formal religious affiliation. (FOR)

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #11: *El Boicot a Los Autobuses De Montgomery*, comic cover

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2007 the World Almanac Library published this comic written by Kerri O'Hern and Frank Walsh.

QUESTION

**What is this comic book about? Give evidence to support your answer.**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

The Montgomery Bus Boycott, the lunch counter sit-ins and the wider civil rights movement.

EVIDENCE

The title refers to the Montgomery bus boycott, as does the image of Rosa Parks. The images of the young men at the lunch counter reference the sit-ins. The marchers and signs refer to the wider movement for racial equality.

QUESTION

**What are the messages about Dr. King's role in the Montgomery bus boycott?**

POSSIBLE ANSWER

He was only one among many who participated in the movement.

EVIDENCE

Dr. King is shown on the far right leading a march. His image is smaller than the three in the foreground and is shown as one among many others working for equality.

QUESTION

**Why might Dr. King's role in the movement be shown so differently in these two comics?**

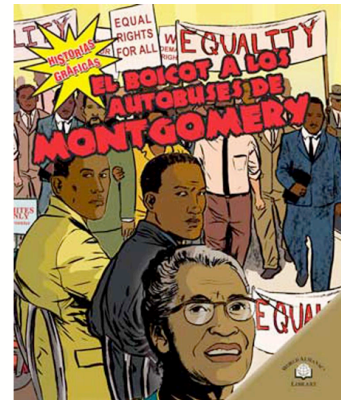
POSSIBLE ANSWERS

The time period each was made, the target audiences, the views of the creators.

### FURTHER QUESTION

**Who might have been the target audience for this comic?**

SLIDE #11



*El Boicot a Los Autobuses De Montgomery*  
2007 comic cover

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #12: *Southern Christian Leadership Conference, button*

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 1957 Dr. King was elected the first president of the newly formed Southern Christian Leadership Conference or the SCLC. The group's founding principles included a commitment to nonviolent mass action to challenge segregation and to work with local community organizations across the South.

QUESTION

**What other founding principle of the SCLC is represented by this button? Give evidence to support your answer.**

POSSIBLE ANSWER

A commitment to work across racial divides.

EVIDENCE

The button shows images of a black and white hand entwined representing a commitment to racial integration.

QUESTION

**In what way is a button a form of media?**

POSSIBLE ANSWER

Buttons are means to convey messages from person to person without direct communication from the creator of the message.

SLIDE #12



***Southern Christian Leadership Conference  
1957 button***

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**Who might have worn this button?**

**Why might this image be considered controversial?**

**Can you think of other logos that identify a social change organization with a single image?**

### ADDITIONAL INFO

In 2010 SCLC is a nationwide organization. "Its sphere of influence and interests has become international in scope because the human rights movement transcends national boundaries." (Our History)

TEACHER GUIDE

# SLIDE #13: *Stride Toward Freedom, Strength to Love, Why We Can't Wait, Where Do We Go From Here?*, book covers

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Dr. King was a scholar, a theologian and an author. He published four major books during his lifetime. Many more compilations of his speeches and writings have been published in the years since his death.

### QUESTION

What do these book covers tell you about the principles that guided Martin Luther King's beliefs about social change?

### POSSIBLE ANSWER

He believed in principles of freedom, love and community.

### EVIDENCE

"Strive Toward Freedom," "Strength to Love," and "Chaos or Community."

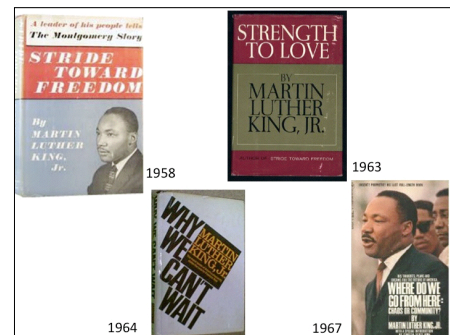
### QUESTION

In his most famous speech, "I Have a Dream", Dr. King spoke of the "Fierce urgency of Now." How do the book titles of his later two books reflect this urgency?

### POSSIBLE ANSWER

"Why We Can't Wait" suggests the need for immediate action as does the title "Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community."

## SLIDE #13



***Strive Toward Freedom***  
1958

***Strength to Love***  
1963

***Why We Can't Wait***  
1964

***Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community***  
1967

## FURTHER QUESTIONS

What is the purpose of a book cover?

What kinds of actions might a student of your age have taken in response to these messages at the time they were published? And now?

TEACHER GUIDE

# SLIDE #14: *My Trip to the Land of Gandhi*, magazine article

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In early 1959 Dr. King traveled with his wife, Coretta Scott King, to India to study the techniques of nonviolence at the invitation of Indian prime minister Nehru. Gandhi had led a successful campaign of nonviolent direct action to force the British government to accept Indian independence. Gandhi was assassinated in 1948 by a Hindu nationalist who opposed Gandhi's support for Muslims. This article was published in the monthly magazine, *Ebony*, which targeted the African American community.

### QUESTION

**Why might Dr. King have chosen to write this article for *Ebony* magazine?**

### POSSIBLE ANSWER

Perhaps to further explain the history and promise of nonviolence to his African American followers who were engaged in freedom struggles at that time.

### QUESTION

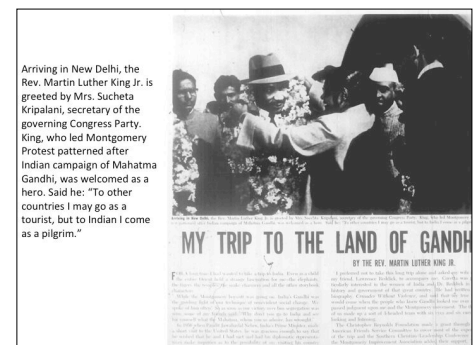
**What did Dr. King mean by the phrase, "To other countries I may go as a tourist, but to India I come as a pilgrim?"**

### POSSIBLE ANSWER

India had special meaning for Dr. King as the birthplace of one of his heroes and an inspiration for the promise of social change through the practices of nonviolence.

The word "pilgrim" implies that King was on a religious or spiritual quest.

## SLIDE #14



## *My Trip to the Land of Gandhi* 1959 magazine article

## FURTHER QUESTIONS

**What do you know about Gandhi and how were his goals similar to King's?**

**What other nonviolent activists are you aware of?**

## ADDITIONAL INFO

King quoted in the article "My Trip to the Land of Gandhi":

While the Montgomery boycott was going on, India's Gandhi was the guiding light of our technique of nonviolent social change. We spoke of him often.

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #15: *Letter From Birmingham Jail*, letter

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 1963 Dr. King was arrested for protesting segregation in Birmingham, Alabama. While in jail he addressed an open letter to “My Dear Fellow Clergymen” to eight “liberal” pastors who had urged him to put aside civil disobedience and allow the courts to decide the issue. (Letter 83)

QUESTION

**Why might Dr. King have written the letter on this paper?**

POSSIBLE ANSWER

In jail one must write on whatever paper might be available.

QUESTION

**Who was the target audience for this letter?**

POSSIBLE ANSWER

The clergymen who had written him but also the wider public, especially Christians, who might have questioned his tactics of nonviolence civil disobedience.

QUESTION

**What do you think Dr. King hoped to accomplish by writing this letter from jail?**

POSSIBLE ANSWER

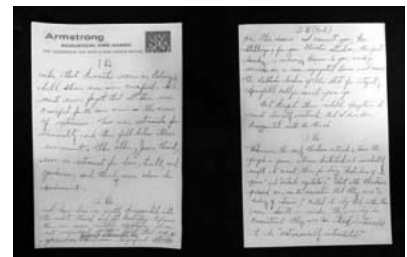
To achieve understanding and support from other Christian ministers and laypeople regarding his choice to suffer the consequences of breaking the law to uphold a moral principle.

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**Is a letter a form of media? Why or why not? Can you think of contemporary examples where personal correspondence have become public media documents?**

**An original draft of this letter is held in the archive at Morehouse College, Dr. King’s alma mater. Why would a simple handwritten letter draft be maintained in a college archive?**

### SLIDE #15



***Letter from Birmingham Jail*  
1963 letter draft**

### ADDITIONAL INFO

Excerpt from Dr. King’s letter:

I am in Birmingham because injustice is here. . . I am cognizant of the inter-relatedness 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. (Letter 84)

TEACHER GUIDE

# SLIDE #16: *A Dream*, music video excerpt

## INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

Nearly all Americans have seen or heard the segment from Dr. King's 1963 speech where he proclaims, "I have a dream." These words have been repeated in countless poems, songs and YouTube mash-ups. The music video you are about to view was produced by *Black Eyed Peas* co-founder Will.i.am to promote *Common's* song, "A Dream." The song was used in the 2007 film *Freedom Writers* which depicts high school students working through conflict in a newly integrated school by keeping personal diaries and studying the history of the Holocaust.



Play this music video excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 1 or via our website

QUESTION

**What is the message about King's dream?**

POSSIBLE ANSWER

That his dream for equality and justice applied not only to the Black Freedom movement of the 1960s but also to the survivors of the Holocaust and to students in the contemporary U.S.

QUESTION

**What techniques do the musical artists and video producer use to communicate this message?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

They intercut footage of Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech with animated and archival images of Holocaust survivors and civil rights demonstrators and clips from the film *Freedom Writers* including images of contemporary students. They tie their dream to Dr. King's by placing Will.i.am on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial, where King gave his 1963 speech, while *Common* raps "Hold the same fight that made Martin Luther the King."

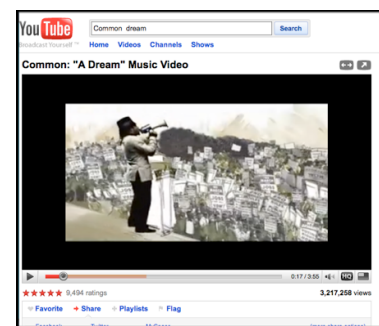
## FURTHER QUESTIONS

**What are the purposes of a music video?**

**Who might benefit from this message?**

**What is the relationship, if any, between Dr. King and hip hop music?**

## SLIDE #16



***A Dream*  
2006 music video  
excerpt [2:07]**

## ADDITIONAL INFO

Partial Lyrics:

"I walk with a boulder on my shoulder, It's a Cold War - I'm a colder soldier, Hold the same fight that made Martin Luther the King, I ain't usin' it for the right thing, In between Lean and the fiends, hustle and the schemes, I put together pieces of a Dream, I still have one."



TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #17: *Man of the Year*, magazine cover

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 1963 *Time* Magazine awarded Martin Luther King its designation as Man of the Year. From this cover story: "The U.S. Negro... made 1963 the year of his outcry for equality, of massive demonstrations, of sit-ins and speeches and street fighting, of soul searching in the suburbs and psalm singing in the jail cells" ("Man of the Year: Martin Luther King, Jr.").

#### QUESTION

**What events in 1963 might have caused *Time* to honor Dr. King in this way at this time?**

#### POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Dr. King's arrest in Birmingham and his letter from a Birmingham jail. His "I Have a Dream" speech at the Lincoln Memorial. The publication of his book, "Strength to Love."

#### QUESTION

**What additional honor was awarded to Dr. King in 1964?**

#### POSSIBLE ANSWER

The Nobel Peace Prize

#### SLIDE #17



***Man of the Year*  
1964 magazine cover**

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**What are the purposes of a magazine cover?**

**What techniques does the artist use to highlight Dr King's achievements and to tie his life to the wider movement for freedom?**

**What different choices could the artist or editor have made that would have presented King in a different light (e.g. King smiling, orating, gesturing in anger)?**

### ADDITIONAL INFO

Excerpt from Dr. King's acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize:

I accept this award in behalf of a civil rights movement which is moving with determination and a majestic scorn for risk and danger to establish a reign of freedom and a rule of justice.



TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #18: *Martin Luther King at Communist Training School, billboard*

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Martin Luther King and Rosa Parks (at left) in 1957 at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee. Highlander trained activists in the labor and civil rights movement and was one of the only places in the South where African Americans and Whites could meet to strategize and socialize together during the 1950s.

QUESTION

**What types of media forms are shown here?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWER

A photograph and a billboard.

QUESTION

**What is the message about Dr. King?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWER

He is a communist.

QUESTION

**Why might someone have produced this billboard?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWER

It was produced in an attempt to discredit Dr. King by suggesting that he associated with communists.

EVIDENCE

Communist associations were seen as very negative during the McCarthy-era witch hunts of the 1950s.

### SLIDE #18



***King at Communist Training School***  
**1965 billboard**

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**Who would have been the target audience for this billboard?**

**What is *communism* and might people in 1965 have considered a good or a bad thing?**

**How might different people have interpreted this billboard differently?**

### ADDITIONAL INFO

Highlander played a central role as a multiracial organization in teaching strategies for social change during the Black freedom movement. Highlander staff provided education and support for the leadership of the Montgomery boycott, the citizenship schools and the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee (SNCC). Highlander was also the place where the anthem "We Shall Overcome" began its rise to worldwide familiarity.

TEACHER GUIDE

# SLIDE #19: *The Big Parade: On the Road to Montgomery, newspaper*

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On March 7, 1965, also known as Bloody Sunday, marchers for voting rights in Selma, Alabama were attacked by state troopers on horseback. Two weeks later Dr. King led a march along the same route with Federal protection. This was just days after President Johnson addressed Congress, demanding a voting rights act that would “strike down restrictions to voting in all elections” (Carson 281).

### QUESTION

**What is the main news story highlighted on this front page from March 22, 1965?**

### POSSIBLE ANSWER

The Selma to Montgomery march

### QUESTION

**What techniques have the editors used to highlight this march as noteworthy on the front page?**

### POSSIBLE ANSWERS

They have placed a large photograph at the right center of the page beneath a single row of large headlines. The article to the right of the photo is also about the Selma march, thus giving more than half the front page above the fold to the story of the day about the march from Selma to Montgomery.

## SLIDE #19



***The Big Parade***  
**1965 newspaper**  
**front page**

## FURTHER QUESTIONS

**What values are implied in this front page?**

**Why do you think the editors of the *New York Times* decided to give so much front page coverage to this march?**

**How might other papers have covered the event?**

## ADDITIONAL INFO

The marchers' leis were a gift from the Reverend Abraham Akaka of Hawaii, the state's first civil rights commissioner. Rev. Akaka had met Dr. King the year before in a celebration of Civil Rights Week at the University of Hawaii. He sent the leis to Dr. King as a symbol of his support for the marchers (Kahu: Leis for the March).

TEACHER GUIDE

# SLIDE #20: *Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break the Silence*, Internet video excerpt

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On April 4, 1967, exactly one year before he was assassinated, Dr. King gave a sermon at a meeting of Clergy and Laity Concerned at Riverside Church in New York City entitled “Beyond Vietnam – A Time to Break the Silence.” It is excerpted here in a video posted in 2006 on the website MLK Online.



Play this video excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 1 or via our website

QUESTION

In this one-minute excerpt on the “true revolution of values” what arguments does Dr. King give as to why he opposes war?

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

War is unjust and inhumane. War injects hatred into those who are normally humane. War exacts a terrible physical and psychological toll on military veterans. War steals money from programs of social uplift. War leads to spiritual death.

QUESTION

What war does the filmmaker refer to in images as Dr. King speaks about the Vietnam War? What is your evidence?

POSSIBLE ANSWER

The war in Iraq.

EVIDENCE

Images of Baghdad burning, Iraqi fighters, a U.S. soldier in front of an Arabic banner, helicopter in the desert, President Bush, Secretary of State Powell and Defense Secretary Rumsfeld

## FURTHER QUESTIONS

What risks did Martin Luther King, Jr. take in clearly and publicly opposing the war in Vietnam?

Why didn't the filmmaker use images of the Vietnam War?

Why do contemporary anti-war activists use this speech of King's?

## SLIDE #20



Location



Internet Video

***Beyond Vietnam***  
**1967 Speech**  
**2006 Internet video**  
**[1:06]**

## ADDITIONAL INFO

More from the Riverside sermon:  
America, the richest and most powerful nation in the world, can well lead the way in this revolution of values. There is nothing except a tragic death wish to prevent us from reordering our priorities so that the pursuit of peace will take precedence over the pursuit of war.  
 (“Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break the Silence”)

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #21: *Poor People's Campaign*, poster

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On August 16, 1967 Dr. King spoke to the SCLC concerning "Where do we go from here?" There are forty million poor people here. And one day we must ask the question, "Why are there forty million poor people in America?" And when you begin to ask that question, you are raising questions about the economic system, about a broader distribution of wealth. When you ask that question, you begin to question the capitalistic economy. And I'm simply saying that more and more, we've got to begin to ask questions about the whole society. (Speech. SCLC Annual Meeting 176)

#### QUESTION

**Who created this and for what purpose?**

#### POSSIBLE ANSWER

The SCLC created this to invite people to join the Poor People's Campaign

#### QUESTION

**According to the poster, what are the goals of the Poor People's Campaign?**

#### POSSIBLE ANSWERS

The goals are to demand decent jobs and income for poor people.

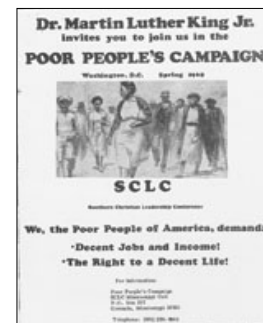
#### EVIDENCE

**Why did some civil rights leaders criticize King for speaking out about war and economic justice?**

#### POSSIBLE ANSWER

Some in the civil rights movement felt that King was diverting attention away from the focus on racial integration.

### SLIDE #21



*Poor People's Campaign*  
1968 poster

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**Dr. King spoke of the "evil triplets" of racism, materialism and militarism." How do his speeches in 1967 reflect these concerns?**

**Have you heard about Dr. King's work with the Poor People's Campaign before this? Why or why not?**

### ADDITIONAL INFO

More from the SCLC speech:  
You see, my friends, when you deal with this, you begin to ask the question, "Who owns the oil?" You begin to ask the question, "Who owns the iron ore?" You begin to ask the question, "Why is it that people have to pay water bills in a world that is two thirds water?" These are questions that must be asked. (176)

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #22: *Why? (The King of Love is Dead)*, song excerpt

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

On April 4, 1968 Dr. King was gunned down by an assassin while standing on the balcony outside his motel room in Memphis. James Earl Ray was later captured and convicted of his murder. This song was written by Calvin Taylor and was performed by singer Nina Simone at a special memorial concert just days after Dr. King's murder.



Play this music excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 1 or via our website

QUESTION

**How does the songwriter characterize the life of Dr. King?**

POSSIBLE ANSWER

As a courageous prophet of love

EVIDENCE

Well see he'd seen the mountaintop/  
And he knew he could not stop/  
Always living with the threat of death ahead/...What' gonna happen now that the king of love is dead?

QUESTION

**How do the performers communicate the emotional impact of Dr. King's recent murder?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

The slow pace of the song is sad, like a funeral dirge. The ending crescendo is a anguished wail pleading to know "What's gonna happen now that the king of love is dead?"

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**What is your interpretation of this song?**

**What do you learn about yourself from your interpretation?**

**What, if any, parts of King's vision have been met since his death? What still needs to happen?**

### SLIDE #22



***Why? (The King of Love is Dead)***  
**1968 song excerpt**  
**[1:10]**

### ADDITIONAL INFO

Nina Simone's brother Samuel played the organ at the concert and described the debut of the song:

We learned that song that (same) day. We didn't have a chance to have two or three days of rehearsal. But when you're feeling compassion and outrage and wanting to express what you know the world is feeling, we did it because that's what we felt (Waymon)

TEACHER GUIDE

# SLIDE #23: *Happy Birthday*, song & music video excerpt

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

Ten years after Dr. King's death his widow, Coretta Scott King, presented Congress with a petition to make Dr. King's birthday a Federal holiday. The petition, circulated by the King Center, was signed by more than 6 million people, the largest such initiative in U.S. history. (Jones) In 1983 Congress passed a bill and President Reagan signed it into law designating the third Monday of every January as Martin Luther King Day.



Play this music video excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 1 or via our website

QUESTION

**Who is the musician?**

ANSWER

Stevie Wonder

QUESTION

**What is this song about?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

The need to make a MLK holiday in order to celebrate Dr. King's life

EVIDENCE

There ought to be a law against  
Anyone who takes offense  
At a day in your celebration

QUESTION

**What visual images did the video producer use to convey that message?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

A portrait of Dr. King, Stevie Wonder singing, a marcher holding a pennant with Dr. King's image, a loving family

## SLIDE #23



***Happy Birthday***  
**1980 song & music**  
**video excerpt**  
**[1:06]**

## ADDITIONAL INFO

Further lyrics:

I just never understood  
How a man who died for good  
Could not have a day that would  
Be set aside for his recognition  
Because it should never be  
Just because some cannot see  
The dream as clear as he  
That they should make it become  
an illusion.

## FURTHER QUESTIONS

**What techniques in this video production date it to the 1980s?**

**Why might Stevie Wonder have devoted such energy to helping create this national holiday?**

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #24: *By the Time I Get to Arizona*, music video excerpt

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

At the time that Martin Luther King Day was proclaimed a national holiday most states had already passed laws designating the holiday. One state that refused to honor the holiday was Arizona where several Congress members including Senator John McCain opposed the law. The National Football League moved Super Bowl XXVII from Sun Devil Stadium in Tempe to California in protest and a "Boycott Arizona" campaign was initiated. In 1993 Arizona voters approved a ballot referendum to approve the holiday. Next we will view an excerpt from a music video by the hip-hop group, *Public Enemy*.



Play this music video excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 1 or via our website

QUESTION

**What is this song about?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWER

The commitment to boycott Arizona until the King holiday is approved.

EVIDENCE

I'm countin' down to the day deservin'  
Fittin' for a king  
I'm waitin' for the time when I can  
Get to Arizona

QUESTION

**What are the visual references to the civil rights movement?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

Black and White reenactments of segregation scenarios on a bus and voting line, and of arches and protest.

QUESTION

**Does this video reflect Dr. King's goals and values? Why or why not?**

NOTE

The entire music video may be viewed on YouTube. It culminates in a mock assassination of an Arizona politician.

### FURTHER QUESTION

**How might different people interpret Public Enemy's music video differently?**

### SLIDE #24



***By the Time I Get to  
Arizona*  
1991 music video excerpt  
[2:12]**

### ADDITIONAL INFO

From an article in the *Boston Globe* at the time of the video release:

Public Enemy has released a rap video in which make-believe public officials responsible for thwarting creation of an Arizona state holiday in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. are assassinated. "It's a trip into the fantasy world of Public Enemy. You know, the big payoff," Chuck D, the group's lead rapper said. (Blowen)



TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #25: *Martin Luther King, Jr. Was a Republican*, billboard

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

In 2008 Dr. King was often quoted in the media as Barack Obama's presidential campaign took off. During the Wisconsin primary Obama responded to primary opponent Hillary Clinton's remark that he needed a "reality check" by saying, "Martin Luther King didn't stand on the steps of the Lincoln and say 'go home, ya'll need a reality check.'" (Fournier)

QUESTION

**Who paid for this billboard?**

ANSWER

The National Black Republican Association (NBRA) paid for this.

EVIDENCE

The sponsors are prominently displayed on the top and at the web address below.

QUESTION

**When and where did this appear and for what purpose?**

POSSIBLE ANSWER

It appeared during the 2008 campaign in Denver, Colorado to encourage potential voters to see the Republican Party as devoted to the same principles as Dr. King.

EVIDENCE

The year is displayed on the Denver 2008 banner to the right. The fact that this was an election year with an African American candidate running on the Democratic ticket meant that Republicans felt the need to reach out to African American voters.

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**Is it true that Dr. King was a Republican?  
How could you find out if this claim is true?**

**Given that MLK was seen as a radical by many conservative Republicans in the 1960s, why would some conservatives want to claim him as a Republican in 2008?**

### SLIDE #25



***Martin Luther King Jr.  
was a Republican  
2008 billboard***

### ADDITIONAL INFO

From a Fox News report on the billboard campaign:

King held great sway over black voters and carefully courted both Republicans and Democrats. He never officially endorsed a party or candidate. But the founder of RagingElephants.org, the black conservative group that sponsored the sign, told FOXNews.com that the sign was designed to get blacks to rethink their political affiliation. (Abrams)



TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #26: *Martin Walked So Barack Could Run*, poster

### BACKGROUND INFORMATION

This poster was produced forty years after the death of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The phrase was coined by a Pennsylvania woman named Kiari Day.

#### QUESTION

**What is the message of this poster?**

#### POSSIBLE ANSWER

Rosa Parks, Martin King and Barack Obama are all part of a legacy of struggle for justice and equality that continues into the next generation.

#### QUESTION

**How does the poster artist use words and images to convey the message?**

#### POSSIBLE ANSWERS

The words “sat,” “walked”, “run” and “fly” suggest a progression toward higher development. The three adults all are linked to efforts for equality and justice for African American people. Rosa and Martin look directly at the viewer reminding us of their role in the struggle while Barack and the children look upward as though to the future. The line of marchers above suggests that all these figures are part of an ongoing walk toward a future of freedom and equality.

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**In what ways does the movement for freedom and equality that Dr. King worked for continue today?**

**How does this movement show itself in your community, school or home?**

### SLIDE #26



***Martin Walked So Barack Could Run***  
2009 poster

### ADDITIONAL INFO

Several graphic designers used these words to inspire their work on posters, postcards and T Shirts. One company put out a postcard with this explanation:

These three Americans are symbols for millions who work tirelessly for justice & peace. Pennsylvania mom Kiari Day wrote these words while imagining what Barack Obama's election might mean for her one-year old son. ("Rosa Sat So That Martin Could Walk")



## Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Making History - Making News

### Lesson #1

Martin Luther King, Jr. was born in Atlanta on January 15, 1929 to Reverend and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Sr. No one would have imagined at the time that 55 years later a national holiday would be proclaimed to celebrate this man and his legacy. Dr. King died before the age of forty but during his short public life he became known throughout the world as a symbol of hope, as a voice for justice and as a visionary leader.

Young Martin King was an advanced student. Before the age of twenty he had graduated from Morehouse College with a BA degree in sociology, had been ordained as a Baptist minister and chosen as assistant pastor to his father at Ebenezer Church in Atlanta and had enrolled in Crozer Theological Seminary. While he was in seminary Martin was inspired by sermons about the life and work of the Indian nonviolence activist, Mohandas Gandhi. Gandhi had pioneered the use of nonviolent direct action techniques to pressure the British government to grant independence to the people of India. Through reading Gandhi he was further inspired by Henry David Thoreau and his night in jail in Massachusetts for refusing to pay taxes to support the Mexican war and extend slavery.



**What media form is this and what does it tell you about Dr. King's tactics for social change?**

In 1955 Martin King married Coretta Scott who became his lifelong partner in the movements for social justice and peace. Two years later he gained the title of "Dr. King" by earning a PhD from Boston University. Dr. King's tireless studies, his immersion in the church and his strong family relations all prepared him for the next major event in his life, an event deeply connected to choices made by the activist, Rosa Parks. In 1955 Mrs. Parks had attended a leadership conference at the Highlander Folk School in Tennessee. Highlander was one of the very few places in the South during the 1950s where multiracial groups could share education, meals and songs together, all in the interest of social transformation. Mrs. Parks later said of her time at Highlander that it was there she "gained strength to persevere in my work for freedom, not just for blacks but for all oppressed people."  
(Shipp)

On December 1, 1955 Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama bus to a White man as required by law in the segregated city. She was arrested for her act of conscience. Four days later Dr. King was elected to head the new Montgomery Improvement Association, a group devoted to challenging Montgomery's Jim Crow policies of racial division. At his side was Reverend Ralph Abernathy, who was to remain a close friend and ally of Martin's in the coming years of relentless struggle for human dignity.

Following Gandhi's example and Dr. King's leadership, the African American community in Montgomery embarked on a year-long boycott of Montgomery's bus system, demanding that the city end its policies of segregation on city transit. Using Dr. King's tactics of nonviolent direct action and relying on mutual aid within the community the movement was eventually successful in persuading the Federal Courts and then the city to break the

the long tradition of segregation on public transit. It was the first of many such battles in the years to come.

The Montgomery victory propelled Dr. King into the national spotlight for the first time. In 1956 and 1957 he was pictured on the front page of the *New York Times* and the cover of *Time* magazine and he appeared on the nationally televised interview program, *Look Here*. While many people applauded Dr. King's efforts on behalf of justice and human dignity there were others who made clear that his efforts would be met with stiff resistance by those opposed to change.

The opposition to Dr. King took many forms in the early years. Vandals wrapped a chain around the television transmission tower of the local station in Alabama, depriving viewers in 35 Alabama counties of the opportunity to see the *Look Here* broadcast. White Citizen's Council members published pamphlets attacking Dr. King for his efforts to help break the long-standing practices of white supremacy. Some attacks were more direct and personal in nature. In 1956 Dr. King's home was bombed and in 1958 he was stabbed and seriously injured. These efforts to silence and discredit Dr. King continued into the 1960s when the FBI, under orders from its director J. Edgar Hoover, began to illegally wiretap Dr. King's conversations. Such efforts continue today through the presence of such Internet hate sites as *Stormfront*.



**What message was  
Jet Magazine  
giving about Dr.  
King by titling this  
cover article  
"Alabama's  
Modern Moses"?**

Although Dr. King was often portrayed as a solitary leader the truth is that he most often worked within the framework of organized groups. In January 1957, the Southern Christian Leadership Council (SCLC) was formed at Dr. King's Ebenezer Baptist Church. They selected Dr. King as their first leader. Dr. King made efforts to communicate his philosophy of nonviolence in the service of justice by giving sermons, making speeches and authoring books. His first book, *Stride Toward Freedom: The Montgomery Story*, was published in 1958. He followed this publication with two other books released in 1963 and 1964, *Strength to Love* and *Why We Can't Wait*.

In 1963 Dr. King traveled to Birmingham, Alabama to join sit-in demonstrations to protest segregated restaurants. During this protest he was arrested and jailed. While in jail he responded to a group of Christian ministers who wanted him to set aside civil disobedience and let the courts decide on how best to move integration forward. "Letter From a Birmingham Jail" is one of Dr. King's most widely known essays. In it he defends the use of nonviolent civil disobedience to pressure the Southern authorities to release their lock on power. He wrote, "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere" ("Letter From a Birmingham Jail" 85).

1963 was a pivotal year for Martin Luther King. In addition to his book publications and his Birmingham jailing and subsequent letter, he was among the leaders of the massive March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom that August. He gave perhaps the most famous speech of his life there, the "I Have a Dream" speech in which he called on all people in the United States to embrace a vision of justice and freedom.

1964 became a year of great honors for Martin Luther King, Jr.. In January *Time* magazine honored him as Man of the Year, and in December he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. It was also a year of great success as well as deep tragedy for the movement. In July he attended President Johnson's signing of the Civil Rights Act at the White House. The next month the bodies of civil rights workers James Chaney, Andrew Goodman and Michael Schwerner were found buried in an earthen dam near Philadelphia, Mississippi.

There were some in the Freedom movement who felt that nonviolence was a victim's path in the face of centuries of white brutality. One such voice was that of Nation of Islam leader Malcolm X. Martin and Malcolm met only once but their respective legacies of committed nonviolence and determined resistance to oppression would fuel debate and action by their movement heirs long after their murders.

In 1965 Dr. King led a march from Selma to Montgomery, Alabama following the "Bloody Sunday" attack of mounted police against peaceful marchers in Selma. Public sympathy for the demonstrators was sharpened when television footage of such racist violence was shown on the nightly news. In the face of

such outrages President Johnson decided to present his Voting Rights Bill to Congress with the movement slogan "We Shall Overcome."

In 1966 Dr. King made a difficult and important decision. He decided to risk the relationship he had worked hard to cultivate with President Johnson and others in the government by speaking out publicly against the war in Vietnam. In May he issued a statement against the war and agreed to serve as co-chair of the group, Clergy and Laymen Concerned About Vietnam. Many of his allies in the civil rights movement and many more in the media decried his antiwar remarks as damaging to his credibility as a "civil rights leader." Dr. King had decided that he could no longer accept such restrictions. In a remarkable speech in April 1967 at New York's Riverside Church entitled "Beyond Vietnam – A Time to Break Silence" he made a clear and compelling argument against the Vietnam War and what he called the "evil triplets" of racism, militarism and materialism. From this point forward in his final year Dr. King pushed ever deeper in his analysis of the roots of distress within the U.S.

In 1968 he published the last book to be released during his lifetime. *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community* is a powerful reflection on the interconnected roots of these triplets. Dr. King wrote:

The bombs in Vietnam explode at home; they destroy the hopes and possibilities for a decent America...The curse of poverty has no justification in our age. It is socially as cruel and blind as the practice of cannibalism at the dawn of civilization, when men ate each other because they had not yet learned to take food from the soil or to consume the abundant animal life around them. The time has come for us to civilize ourselves by the total, direct and immediate abolition of poverty. (*King, A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King* 617)



**Why might  
antiwar  
activists have  
used Dr. King's  
words and  
image in this  
2005 poster?**

In November 1967, in keeping with his ongoing practice of blending theory with practice, Dr. King announced that the SCLC would begin a Poor People's Campaign, a multiracial effort to address the needs of those living in poverty in the United States. He invited poor people from around the country to come to Washington in the spring of 1968 to press their demands for decent jobs and humane living conditions.

It was this same conviction that led Dr. King to join the final campaign of his short life. In March 1968 he agreed to go to Memphis, Tennessee to join striking sanitation workers whose rallying cry was, "I am a man." They demanded to be treated as such. The week before his assassination Dr. King led 6,000 protesters on a march through the streets of downtown Memphis. Unlike so many of his previous efforts, however, this march descended into violence, resulting in many injuries and one death. In the aftermath of this breakdown in nonviolent discipline Martin Luther King shared with others privately that he felt depressed because of his inability to prevent violence on the march.

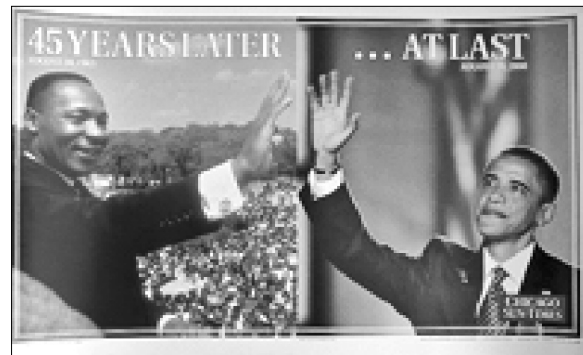
On April 3, 1968 Dr. King gave his final speech, known as his "Mountaintop" speech. In this speech he urged the predominantly African American listeners in Memphis to use nonviolent action and economic power to achieve their goals by means of boycotts and "bank-ins" to support Black American owned banks. He concluded his remarks with these prophetic words:

Like anybody, I would like to live a long life. Longevity has its place. But I'm not concerned about that now. I just want to do God's will. And He's allowed me to go up to the mountain. And I've looked over. And I've seen the Promised Land. I may not get there with you. But I want you to know tonight, that we, as a people, will get to the promised land!

("I See the Promised Land")

The day after these words Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was killed by a sniper's bullet as he stood on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. The nation grieved and raged in the immediate aftermath of his assassination. His widow, Coretta Scott King founded the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change in order to carry forward his work.

Fifteen years after his murder President Ronald Reagan signed a law establishing a Federal Holiday to honor Dr. King. Martin Luther King Day came about through the dedicated work of Coretta Scott King and others like the musician Stevie Wonder whose hit song, "Happy Birthday" called for "a world party on the day you came to be." Forty years after Dr. King's death, on November 4, 2008, Barack Obama was elected president of the United States. Although King's dream of an end to war and poverty has not been reached, the election of an African American president marks one more step on the path toward the realization of Dr. King's vision.



**What do the words "45 YEARS LATER...AT LAST. August 28, 2008" refer to in this *Chicago Sun-Times* spread?**

Who gets to construct our contemporary image of Dr. King? From whose point of view is King's legacy defined? Which of Dr. King's words, ideas and messages are held up and which ones are forgotten? These are some of the questions we will explore as we analyze media constructions of Martin Luther King, Jr..

## MEDIA LITERACY QUESTIONS

Use these questions to analyze media documents about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

- What are the messages about Dr. King in this document?
- How are those messages communicated?
- Who produced this document, and for what purpose?
- When was this produced, and what was its historical context?
- Who was the target audience?
- Is this an accurate and credible representation of Dr. King?
- How does this reflect the perspective or bias of its creator?
- What information or perspective is left out of this message?
- How might different people interpret this message differently?
- Who might benefit from – and who might be harmed by – this message?





# Lesson #2: Three Speeches

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LESSON PLAN

# Three Speeches



Printed Documents



Video & Audio Clips

## Lesson Objectives:

- Students will identify key issues that Dr. King raised in these speeches including segregation, war, and poverty.
- Students will identify some of the literary devices King used in his “I Have a Dream” speech (repetition, imagery, simile, metaphor, alliteration).
- Students will reflect on the differences between watching, listening to and reading a speech.
- Students will compare and contrast the historical context, meaning, delivery, and the popularity of the three speeches.

## Vocabulary:

Martin Luther King Jr., “I Have A Dream” speech, protest march, justice, segregation, civil rights movement, Voting Rights Act, Civil Rights Act, literary devices, repetition, imagery, simile metaphor, alliteration, “Beyond Vietnam” speech, non-violence, foreign policy, revolution, “Mountaintop” speech, foreshadowing, sanitation workers strike, boycott, poverty

## Media:



Clip#1: “I Have A Dream”  
Video excerpt from King’s  
1963 speech [4:36]



Clip#2: “Beyond Vietnam”  
Audio excerpt from King’s  
1967 speech [5:01]



Clip#3: “Mountaintop”  
Video excerpt from King’s  
1968 speech [1:20]

## Materials Needed:

- Nine-page teacher guide
- One-page student worksheet: *Context and Meaning*
- Two-page student worksheet: *Literary Devices*
- 3 separate transcripts of the three speech excerpts
- Video clips for Lesson 2 (access online or via Lesson 2 digital media folder)

**Time:**

80 minutes

**Lesson Procedures:**

**Day 1:**

1. Organize and make copies for the class activities
2. Introduce the lesson
3. Hand out the transcript of the *I Have A Dream* speech excerpt  
Hand out the worksheets: *Context and Meaning* and *Literary Devices*
4. Introduce the activity
5. Play the video excerpt from the *I Have A Dream* speech [4:36]
6. Have students work in pairs to complete the 2 worksheets
7. Discuss student responses to the worksheet *Context and Meaning*
8. Review the student responses to the worksheet *Literary Devices*
9. Collect the student worksheets

**Day 2:**

10. Hand out the transcripts for *On Vietnam* and *Mountaintop* speech excerpts  
Hand out the worksheet: *Context and Meaning* (partially completed during previous day's lesson)
11. Introduce the next activity
12. Introduce the second speech
13. Play the audio excerpt from the *Beyond Vietnam* speech [5:01]
14. Have students work in pairs to complete the worksheet *Context and Meaning* for the second speech
15. Discuss student responses to the worksheet
16. Introduce the third speech
17. Play the video excerpt from King's *Mountaintop* speech [1:20]
18. Introduce the reading activity (speech excerpt)
19. Have students read the excerpt and complete the worksheet *Context and Meaning* for the third speech
20. Discuss student responses to the worksheet  
Assign Lesson Extension Activities (OPTIONAL)
21. Introduce the final writing activity (OPTIONAL)

TEACHER GUIDE

# Three Speeches

## Day 1: “I Have A Dream” Speech

1. **Organize and make copies** for the class activities.
2. **Introduce the lesson:**

### Introduce the Lesson

This 2-period lesson will analyze short excerpts from three different speeches by Martin Luther King, Jr. The lesson begins with a 4.5-minute video excerpt from his famous “I Have a Dream” speech from 1963. On day 2 an audio clip is introduced of King’s 1967 speech where he came out in opposition to the U.S. war in Vietnam. The lesson ends with reading the speech King gave the night before his assassination in 1968. The three speeches will be compared by analyzing the different audiences for these speeches, the events at that time that influenced the speeches, and the messages that King was communicating in each. We will also explore the difference between watching, listening to, and reading a speech.

3. **Hand out the transcript** of the “I Have A Dream” speech excerpt.  
**Hand out the worksheets:** *Context and Meaning* and *Literary Devices*.
4. Introduce the activity:

### Introduce the Activity

Before you view the video clip from the first speech, look over the 2 worksheets. The first worksheet, *Context and Meaning*, will be used for all three speeches. After watching, listening to, or reading the speech you will fill in the worksheet for that speech. You will write a brief note on the audience for the speech, the historical context of the speech (what was going on in society at that time and influenced the speech), and the messages in the speech. Next you will fill out the *Literary Devices* worksheet, identifying the different techniques that King used to persuade and move his audience.

OPTIONAL: review the literary devices on *Literary Devices* worksheet.

#### QUESTION

**What do you know about King’s “I Have a Dream speech”?  
When and where did he give it and who was the audience?**

#### POSSIBLE ANSWERS

King gave the historic speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington, DC on August 28, 1963. He spoke to a crowd of hundreds of thousands of people assembled for the “March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom”. It is considered by many to be one of the defining moments in the civil rights movement and one of the most important speeches in American history.

### Introduce the Speech

King's entire speech lasted 16 minutes. The 4:32-minute segment you will view comes before his famous line, "I Have A Dream". It is worth asking why this one phrase has become the best known of all of King's words.



Video excerpt from Martin Luther King Jr.'s "**I Have a Dream**" speech, August 28, 1963, Washington DC [4:36]

5. Show video, *I Have a Dream*,  
Play this video excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 2 or via our website
6. Have students work in pairs to complete the 2 worksheets.
7. Discuss student responses to the worksheet *Context and Meaning*.

### CONTEXT & MEANING & ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS

QUESTION	<b>Who was the audience for King's "I Have A Dream" speech?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	<p>King spoke to hundreds of thousands of people of all races who gathered for the "March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom".</p> <p>King was aware that his words would be carried throughout the nation and the world through newspapers, television and other media forms.</p>
QUESTION	<b>Does King address White people or Black people in his speech? Give evidence to back up your answer.</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	King specifically addresses both African Americans and Whites.
EVIDENCE	<p><u>African Americans</u>: "But there is something I must say to my people...", and</p> <p><u>Whites</u> "And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening..."</p>
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	The 1963 "March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom" was one of the largest protest marches in U.S. history. It was organized by civil rights, labor and religious groups. Many historians credit this march with helping to pass the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, two of the most important pieces of legislation to come out of the civil rights movement.

QUESTION

**What was the historical context for this speech?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

1963 was the height of the civil rights movement.

ADDITIONAL  
INFORMATION

Dr. King's "I have a dream speech" came at a watershed moment in the civil rights movement. Aided by the 1954 Supreme Court decision, *Brown v Board*, the civil rights movement had gained momentum in the late nineteen fifties, challenging segregated bussing in Montgomery in 1956 and segregated schools in Little Rock in 1957. In 1961 "Freedom Riders" were met with violence as they traveled throughout the South to force desegregation in food and transportation services. In June of 1963 President Kennedy ordered the Alabama National Guard to protect Black American students trying to enroll at the University of Alabama in a very public confrontation with Alabama's segregationist governor. While King continued to call for nonviolence, other Black leaders, including Malcolm X, called for greater militancy in confronting white supremacy. It was in the context of these rising tensions within the country and within the civil rights movement that Dr. King spoke to hundreds of thousands of people in the nation's capital in August, 1963.

QUESTION

**What messages did King give in the excerpt we saw from this speech?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

- We will not give up in this struggle for justice.
- African Americans must remain nonviolent and work with White supporters.
- We will not accept the many injustices perpetrated against Black Americans.
- Despite our many challenges you must keep working for justice.

QUESTION

**What were some of the specific injustices against Black Americans that King mentions?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

- Police brutality.
- Segregation in travel and lodging.
- Segregation in ghettos.
- Lack of voting rights and meaningful elections.

**8. Review the student responses** to the *Literary Devices* worksheet.

OPTIONAL: Probe for student emotional response to some of King's literary devices.

**9. Collect the student worksheets.**

**NOTE:** You will hand back the *Context and Meaning* worksheet for the next activity.

**This is a logical stopping point for 40-minute class periods.**





TEACHER GUIDE

## Day 2: “Beyond Vietnam” Speech and “Mountaintop” Speech

10. **Handout the transcripts** for the “Beyond Vietnam” and “Mountaintop” speech excerpts.  
**Handout the worksheet:** *Context and Meaning*.
11. **Introduce the activity.**

### LESSON OVERVIEW

We recently viewed a few minutes from Martin Luther King, Jr.’s 1963 “I Have a Dream” speech. Today we will compare two additional King speeches, one that we will listen to and one that we will read. Again we will analyze the audience, the historical context and the messages King delivered.

12. **Introduce the second speech, “Beyond Vietnam”.**

### INTRODUCTION TO THE SPEECH

On April 4, 1967 Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered another historic speech, this time criticizing U.S. foreign policy, particularly the U.S. war in Vietnam. Other civil rights leaders warned King that he should keep focused on domestic issues relating to the cause of civil rights. They argued that President Lyndon Johnson had been supportive of the civil rights cause and they did not want King to publicly oppose Johnson’s foreign policy. But King felt the need to speak out about the injustice of the U.S. war in Vietnam. Reverend King delivered the speech at the Riverside Church in New York City to a group of religious leaders opposed to the war. You will now listen to a 5-minute excerpt from King’s speech, “Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence”, that he gave exactly one year before his death.

13. **Play audio clip, “Beyond Vietnam” [5:01].**  
Play this video excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 2 or via our website

14. **Have students work in pairs** to complete the *Context and Meaning* worksheet.

### AUDIO CLIP

“Beyond Vietnam: A Time to Break Silence”  
Martin Luther King Jr., April 4th, 1967

Audio excerpt “Beyond Vietnam: Breaking the Silence” [5:01]



Location of speech:  
Riverside Church,  
New York City  
April 4, 1967

**15. Discuss student responses** to the worksheet.

**CONTEXT & MEANING & ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

QUESTION	<b>Who was the audience for King’s “Beyond Vietnam” speech?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	King spoke to a group of religious leaders opposed to the war.  King was aware that his words would be carried throughout the nation and the world through newspapers, television and other media forms.
ADDITIONAL INFORMATION	King was co-chair of the group, Clergy and Laity Concerned About Vietnam for whom he gave this speech. The group was made up of Protestant, Jewish and Catholic leaders including William Sloane Coffin and Father Daniel Berrigan who led acts of civil disobedience in opposition to the war in Vietnam.
QUESTION	<b>What was the historical context for this speech?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	By 1967 U.S. public opinion was turning against the U.S. war in Vietnam. Civil rights and anti-war activism helped lead to a popular questioning of the status quo in American society.
QUESTION	<b>What messages did King give in the excerpt we heard from this speech?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>American foreign policy is unjust. We should support, not oppose, a worldwide revolution in values.</li> <li>African Americans must remain non violent and work with White supporters.</li> <li>We will not accept the many injustices perpetrated against African Americans.</li> <li>Despite our many challenges you must keep working for justice.</li> </ul>
QUESTION	<b>How was listening to a speech from Dr. King different from watching a speech?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The video was more “interesting”, it had visual information.</li> <li>Viewing Dr. King made it more real, believable, I could see the event.</li> <li>The audio alone was less distracting and helped me focus on his words.</li> </ul>

**16. Introduce the third speech, “Mountaintop.”**

**INTRODUCE THE SPEECH**

One year after his “Beyond Vietnam” speech King was in Memphis Tennessee to support a strike by sanitation workers who were demanding better pay and working conditions. Since the mid sixties King had sharpened his focus on issues of economic justice. On the night of April 3rd. thousands of people had gathered in the Mason Temple in Memphis hoping to hear Martin King, Jr. speak. Ralph Abernathy, the scheduled speaker, called King at his hotel room after the crowd demanded to hear Dr. King. King appeared in the hall and delivered the last speech of his life. The next day he was assassinated on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel. King was 39 years old. If he were alive today he would be \_\_?\_ (born Jan 15, 1929).

First we are going to watch a short video clip of the very end of the speech Dr. King gave that night, which has become known as the “Mountaintop” speech.

**17. Play the video excerpt from King’s “Mountaintop” speech [1:20].**

Play this video excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 2 or via our website.



Video excerpt from Martin Luther King Jr.’s **“Mountaintop”** speech, April 3, 1968, Mason Temple, Memphis, [1:20]

QUESTION

**What was Dr. King foreshadowing in this speech? Explain.**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

His assassination the next day.

EVIDENCE

“I would like to live a long life...  
but I am not concerned about that now...  
I’ve seen the Promised Land, I may not get there with you...  
I’m not fearing any man. *Mine Eyes Have Seen the Glory of the Coming of the Lord.*”

**18. Introduce the speech excerpt reading activity.**

**INTRODUCE THE READING**

You will now read a longer excerpt from earlier in that same speech in Memphis. Again you should be thinking about the audience, the historical context and the messages King was delivering. When you are done reading, fill in the third column in your *Context and Meaning* worksheet.

- 19. Have students read the speech excerpt and complete the worksheet *Context and Meaning*.**

OPTIONAL: Have students read aloud in pairs or read aloud to the class.

- 20. Discuss student responses to the *Context and Meaning* worksheet.**

**CONTEXT & MEANING & ADDITIONAL QUESTIONS**

QUESTION	<b>Who was the audience for King’s “Mountaintop” speech?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	King was speaking to an audience of supporters in Memphis.  King was aware that his words would be carried throughout the nation and the world through newspapers, television and other media forms.
QUESTION	<b>What was the historical context for this speech?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	King was in Memphis to support striking sanitation workers. With the passing of the Civil Rights and Voting Rights Acts, King, like many others in the civil rights leaders, saw poverty and economic injustice as the key focus for the civil rights cause. King was also responding to the growing Black Power movement that emphasized self-reliance within African American communities.
QUESTION	<b>What messages did King give in the excerpt we heard from this speech?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The African American community contains huge wealth.</li> <li>• We should not use anger and violence to make change.</li> <li>• We should boycott businesses that have unfair hiring practices and that do not support their workers.</li> <li>• We should support Black-owned businesses.</li> </ul>
QUESTION	<b>How was reading King’s speech different from listening to it?</b>
POSSIBLE ANSWERS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The audio was more “interesting”, I could hear his voice.</li> <li>• Reading helped me to focus on his words and ideas.</li> <li>• I could move at my own pace and reread if I needed to.</li> <li>• Listening to the speech communicated emotional content.</li> </ul>
QUESTION	<b>Which helps you to focus more on his ideas, the video, the audio, or the reading?</b>
NOTE	Responses will vary. Help students to recognize this and to identify their own learning style.

QUESTION

**What were the differences in the content and delivery of the three speeches?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

- The Dream speech was more literary in its delivery. It focused on issues of racial injustice.
- The Vietnam speech was also quite philosophical, although less literary. It focused on issues of foreign policy and criticized capitalism.
- The Mountaintop speech was the least poetic and most practical. Of the three it was the most focused on the specific strategies for social change targeting that particular audience.

QUESTION

**Why might the “I have A Dream” speech be the most famous and most referenced of King’s speeches?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

- It was to the largest audience.
- It was filmed and run on TV.
- It was the one that focused on segregation, a policy that has been discredited. That speech reminds us of how far we have come as a nation.
- The other speeches criticize our nation’s capitalist/materialist system and are threatening to the status quo.

**LESSON EXTENSIONS**

**Research which lines from King’s speeches are most frequently quoted in the media. Which are most often presented in schools? Speculate on the reasons.**

**How was media coverage in the 1960’s different from today’s media coverage of similar events.**

**Research media coverage at the time of King’s speeches. Compare coverage in the Black press with mainstream coverage.**

**Research the ways in which media representations of Black Americans and the civil rights movement influenced global perceptions of the United States.**

**How are poverty, war and injustices presented in the media today?**

**21. Optional Writing Activities. (See next page.)**

### OPTIONAL WRITING ACTIVITIES

1. Write a fictional diary entry from the point of view of someone who was present at one of Dr. King's speeches; "I Have A Dream" – 1963, "Beyond Vietnam" – 1967, or King's "Mountaintop" speech in 1968.

Choose one of the following characters and write from that perspective:

- a news reporter
  - a supporter of civil rights
  - someone who opposed civil rights
  - a police officer charged with crowd control in 1963
  - a soldier in Vietnam in 1967
  - a striking Memphis sanitation worker in 1968
  - other...
2. Write a dialogue between two of the above characters discussing the ideas of Dr. King.
  3. Write a short speech about a contemporary justice issue using some of the literary devices used by Dr. King.

## "I Have a Dream" Excerpt

Martin Luther King, Jr.  
August 28, 1963 Speech

### Transcript 1

".... It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. And there will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people, who stand on the warm threshold, which leads into the palace of justice: In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force.

The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom.

We cannot walk alone. And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back. There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-hood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: "For Whites Only." We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until 'justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream'...."





## "Beyond Vietnam" Excerpt

Martin Luther King, Jr.  
April 4, 1967 Speech

## Transcript 2

".... In 1957, a sensitive American official overseas said that it seemed to him that our nation was on the wrong side of a world revolution. During the past ten years, we have seen emerge a pattern of suppression which has now justified the presence of U.S. military advisors in Venezuela. This need to maintain social stability for our investments accounts for the counter-revolutionary action of American forces in Guatemala. It tells why American helicopters are being used against guerrillas in Cambodia and why American napalm and Green Beret forces have already been active against rebels in Peru.

It is with such activity in mind that the words of the late John F. Kennedy come back to haunt us. Five years ago he said, "Those who make peaceful revolution impossible will make violent revolution inevitable." Increasingly, by choice or by accident, this is the role our nation has taken, the role of those who make peaceful revolution impossible by refusing to give up the privileges and the pleasures that come from the immense profits of overseas investments. I am convinced that if we are to get on the right side of the world revolution, we as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. We must rapidly begin...we must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a person-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.

A true revolution of values will soon cause us to question the fairness and justice of many of

our past and present policies. On the one hand, we are called to play the Good Samaritan on life's roadside, but that will be only an initial act. One day we must come to see that the whole Jericho Road must be transformed so that men and women will not be constantly beaten and robbed as they make their journey on life's highway. True compassion is more than flinging a coin to a beggar. It comes to see that an edifice, which produces beggars, needs restructuring.

A true revolution of values will soon look uneasily on the glaring contrast of poverty and wealth. With righteous indignation, it will look across the seas and see individual capitalists of the West investing huge sums of money in Asia, Africa, and South America, only to take the profits out with no concern for the social betterment of the countries, and say, 'This is not just.' It will look at our alliance with the landed gentry of South America and say, 'This is not just.' The Western arrogance of feeling that it has everything to teach others and nothing to learn from them is not just.

A true revolution of values will lay a hand on the world order and say of war, "This way of settling differences is not just." This business of burning human beings with napalm, of filling our nation's homes with orphans and widows, of injecting poisonous drugs of hate into the veins of peoples normally humane, of sending men home from dark and bloody battlefields physically handicapped and psychologically deranged, cannot be reconciled with wisdom, justice, and love. A nation that continues year after year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death...."



### **"Mountaintop" Excerpt**

Martin Luther King, Jr.  
April 3, 1968 Speech

### **Transcript 3**

"....Now the other thing we'll have to do is this: always anchor our external direct action with the power of economic withdrawal. Now, we are poor people. Individually, we are poor when you compare us with white society in America. We are poor. Never stop and forget that collectively -- that means all of us together -- collectively we are richer than all the nations in the world, with the exception of nine. Did you ever think about that? After you leave the United States, Soviet Russia, Great Britain, West Germany, France, and I could name the others, the American Negro collectively is richer than most nations of the world. We have an annual income of more than thirty billion dollars a year, which is more than all of the exports of the United States, and more than the national budget of Canada. Did you know that? That's power right there, if we know how to pool it.

We don't have to argue with anybody. We don't have to curse and go around acting bad with our words. We don't need any bricks and bottles. We don't need any Molotov cocktails. We just need to go around to these stores, and to these massive industries in our country, and say, 'God sent us by here, to say to you that you're not treating his children right. And we've come by here to ask you to make the first item on your agenda fair treatment, where God's children are concerned. Now, if you are not prepared to do that, we do have an agenda that we must follow. And our agenda calls for withdrawing economic support from you.'

And so, as a result of this, we are asking you tonight, to go out and tell your neighbors not to buy Coca-Cola in Memphis. Go by and tell them not to buy Sealtest milk. Tell them not to

buy -- what is the other bread? -- Wonder Bread. And what is the other bread company, Jesse? Tell them not to buy Hart's bread. As Jesse Jackson has said, up to now, only the garbage men have been feeling pain; and what is the other bread company, Jesse? Tell them not to buy Hart's bread. As Jesse Jackson has said, up to now, only the garbage men have been feeling pain; now we must kind of redistribute the pain. We are choosing these companies because they haven't been fair in their hiring policies; and we are choosing them because they can begin the process of saying they are going to support the needs and the rights of these men who are on strike. And then they can move on downtown and tell Mayor Loeb to do what is right.

But not only that, we've got to strengthen black institutions. I call upon you to take your money out of the banks downtown and deposit your money in Tri-State Bank. We want a "bank-in" movement in Memphis. Go by the savings and loan association. I'm not asking you something that we don't do ourselves at SCLC. Judge Hooks and others will tell you that we have an account here in the savings and loan association from the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. We are telling you to follow what we are doing. Put your money there. You have six or seven black insurance companies here in the city of Memphis. Take out your insurance there. We want to have an "insurance-in." Now these are some practical things that we can do. We begin the process of building a greater economic base. And at the same time, we are putting pressure where it really hurts. I ask you to follow through here...."



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

CONTEXT AND MEANING  
Martin Luther King, Jr. Speeches

	"I Have a Dream" --1963	"Beyond Vietnam" --1967	"Mountaintop" --1968
Who was the <b>audience</b> for this speech?			
What was the <b>historical context</b> of this speech?			
What <b>messages</b> or themes did King give in this excerpt from the speech?			



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

**LITERARY DEVICES**  
**Excerpts from “I Have a Dream” speech, by Martin Luther King Jr., 1963**

QUOTES FROM THE SPEECH	LITERARY DEVICE(S) USED	YOUR RESPONSE OR EXPLANATION
<b>EXAMPLE:</b>  “This sweltering summer of the Negro’s legitimate discontent...”	<b>EXAMPLE:</b>  <b>Alliteration:</b> sweltering summer <b>Imagery:</b> sweltering summer <b>Metaphor:</b> sweltering summer compared to Negro discontent	<b>EXAMPLE:</b>  This quote makes me feel the oppressive heat in two ways. One in terms of the heat of a typical summer day in the South, but also because of the anger rising up within the Black communities because of the injustices they face on a daily basis.
“...until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality.”		
“ ...to satisfy our thirst for freedom...”		

QUOTES FROM THE SPEECH	LITERARY DEVICE(S) USED	YOUR RESPONSE OR EXPLANATION
"...by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred."		
"The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation..."		
"The marvelous new militancy..."		
"We cannot walk alone." "We cannot turn back." "We can never be satisfied...." "We can not be satisfied..."		
"...justice rolls down like waters..."		



# Lesson #3: Constructing King

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PowerPoint and Digital Clips.....	
(Access online or via Lesson 3 digital media folder)	



LESSON PLAN

# Constructing King



PowerPoint Slide Show



Video Clips

## Lesson Objectives:

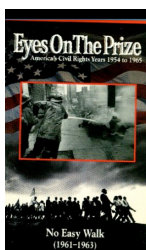
- Students will analyze the representations of Dr. King in different media forms including magazine covers, advertisements, film clips, web sites and monuments.
- Students will ask key media literacy questions relating to audience, authorship, message and representation.
- Students will develop and articulate their own opinions on issues of nonviolence, the commercialization of Dr. King's image and the ways he has been portrayed in the media, and Dr. King's legacy.
- Students will reflect on how the media constructions of Dr. King reflects different interests, perspectives, and historical contexts.

## Vocabulary:

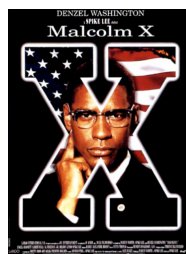
*Time* magazine, *Ebony* Magazine, target audience, advertising, values, Malcolm X, Nation of Islam, nonviolence, Google search, credibility, Stormfront, monuments, media constructions, representation, legacy

## Media:

**In PowerPoint Slide Show:** magazine covers, advertisements, feature and documentary films, Web sites, sculptures.



Clip#1: *Eyes on the Prize*  
Internet Video excerpt [2:58]



Clip#2: *Malcolm X*  
Feature Film excerpt [2:19]



Clip#3: *King*  
TV Mini-Series excerpt [1:50]

**Materials Needed:**

- *PowerPoint* slide show (access online or via Lesson 3 digital media folder)
- Video clips for Lesson 3 (access online or via Lesson 3 digital media folder)
- *Teacher Guide* for Lesson 3

**Time:**

80 minutes

**Lesson Procedures:**

1. Have students retrieve the handout on *Media Literacy Questions* introduced in Lesson 1.
2. Using the lesson material in the *Teacher Guide*, lead students through decoding the media documents (*PowerPoint* slides and short video clips).

The *Teacher Guide* includes information and instructions in gray boxes such as this one (sometimes marked *Background Information* or *Introduce the Lesson/Activity*). The content in the gray boxes is intended to be conveyed to the students (by reading it verbatim or paraphrasing). Teachers may find that students are already familiar with the background information included, in which case they may wish to remind students of the most important points before moving into the activity.

The *Teacher Guide* also includes *Possible Answers* to model student application of key knowledge through evidence-based analysis. Ask *Further Questions* and add *Additional Information* where appropriate.

3. OPTIONAL: Have students write the document-based essay (last page of the *Teacher Guide*).

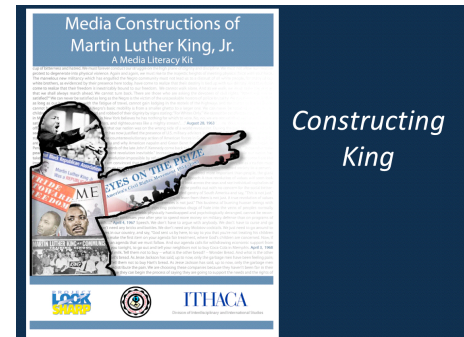
TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #1: *Constructing King*

### INTRODUCE THE LESSON

In this lesson we will analyze the ways in which the legacy of Dr. King has been portrayed in different media forms, including magazine covers, advertisements, film clips, Web sites, and monuments.

### SLIDE #1



### *Constructing King*

## SLIDE #2: *Martin Luther King, Jr. on the Cover of Time Magazine*

### INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

Magazines and newspapers play an influential role in constructing our national perspective on current events. They also act as the repository of our cultural memory of what was important in recent history.

*Time* magazine is one of the oldest and most widely read weekly news magazines in the United States.

### QUESTION

How many times would you guess that Dr. King appeared on the cover of *Time* magazine between December 1955, when he first became known for his role in the Montgomery Bus Boycott, and December 2009? There were approximately 2,800 issues in that time period.

### SLIDE #2



Martin Luther King Jr. on the cover of *Time* magazine

*Time* magazine has published approximately 2800 issues between December 1955 and December 2009. How many times do you think that Dr. King has appeared on the cover of *Time* during that period?

### *Martin Luther King, Jr. on the Cover of Time Magazine*

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #3: *Time*, magazine covers

Dr. King appeared 4 times on the cover of *Time* magazine between December 1955 and December 2009.

QUESTION

**Were you surprised that Dr. King only appeared four times on the cover of *Time*? Why or why not?**

QUESTION

**What are the messages about Dr. King on the four *Time* covers he appeared on between 1957 and 2009?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

He is a solitary and troubled leader and orator.

EVIDENCE

Solitary – He appears by himself in all four covers  
Troubled – He is portrayed without a smile. The last cover story references his “secret agony”  
Leader and orator – He is portrayed standing at the pulpit (1957), speaking (1965) and as Man of the Year (1964).

NOTE

In hindsight it appears remarkable that there was no image or even text reference to Dr. King on any *Time* magazine cover after his assassination in April of 1968.

### SLIDE #3



**Martin Luther King, Jr.  
on Covers of  
*Time* Magazine**

### ADDITIONAL INFO

From the book *Symbols, the News Magazines and Martin Luther King* by Richard Lentz: Immediately after the [Montgomery bus] boycott...King's visibility was great-the best proof being found in *Time*, which featured his face on the cover in February of 1957. The cover story signaled a significant shift in the interpretations by *Time* and *Newsweek*. The latter, which had celebrated King more intensely during the boycott, now seemed to regard King with wariness, even suspicion. *Time*, by contrast, all but canonized King beginning in early 1957. The cover treatment was the first major promotion of King. (Lentz 34)

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #4: *Ebony*, magazine covers

Dr. King appeared on the cover of the monthly *Ebony* magazine five times over the 90 issue period shown here (Nov. 1962-April 1970), compared to four times over a period of 2,800 issues for *Time* magazine.

QUESTION

**Why might *Ebony* have had far more covers than *Time* of Dr. King relative to the total number of issues?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

*Ebony* targets an African American readership that would likely be more interested in civil rights and Dr. King than a mainstream, mostly White, readership.

QUESTION

**What are the messages about Dr. King on the five *Ebony* covers he appeared in between 1962 and 1970?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

He was a respected movement leader and family man who was honored in death as much as in life.

EVIDENCE

Respected movement leader – He is shown leading a march (May 1965); he is wearing an honorary sash and compared to Booker T Washington, a great African American leader of the 19<sup>th</sup> century (November 1962) and he is shown in profile similar to a statuary bust above references to two movement watersheds, the Montgomery bus boycott and the Memphis Sanitation Worker's strike (April 1970).

Family man – he is shown walking hand in hand with his wife Coretta on two of the covers.

Honored in death – three of the five covers were published following his assassination.

### FURTHER QUESTION

**Why might *Time* and *Ebony* have represented Dr. King in these different ways?**

SLIDE #4



### Martin Luther King, Jr. on Covers of *Ebony* Magazine

### ADDITIONAL INFO

From a 2004 CNN interview With *Ebony* senior editor Joy Bennett:

CNN: Now because of your dad's friendship with MLK, you guys really had an edge. You got places where a lot of people didn't and were able to really get inside the movement. Right?

KINNON: Very much so. We had an access, access granted to [Martin Luther King] that was unparalleled for the time. And really, we had the vision to seek that access and to put the story on the forefront for Black Americans and for all Americans. (Kinnon)

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #5: *Advertisements: Using Dr. King to Sell and Persuade*

### INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

Martin Luther King, Jr. has become an iconic figure. His name and image have deep meanings for the public long after his death. Since the late 1990s there has been a debate over whether it is appropriate for his speeches and photo to be used to sell products. Dr. King's heirs have approved the sale of their father's image for commercial purposes in order to help fund the Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change and thus bring his message to a wider public. Critics argue that this commercialization of Dr. King is counter to his own messages about the dangers inherent in materialism.

For each of the following media documents consider who made the message and for what purpose and whether or not you think this use of Dr. King's name is in keeping with his values.

### SLIDE #5



**Advertisements:**  
**Using Dr. King  
to Sell  
and Persuade**

***Advertisements:  
Using Dr. King to Sell  
and Persuade***

**Optional:** Print out copies of each of the following 5 advertisements (from the PowerPoint slides) and have students work in small groups to analyze each advertisement (one per group), answering the questions on the teacher guide and then presenting to the class.



TEACHER GUIDE

## Slides #6-10: Advertisements

QUESTION

**Who made this message and for what purpose?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWER

Supporters of the Martin Luther King High School athletic program made this to encourage support for their teams.

QUESTION

**Do you think this use of Dr. King is in keeping with his values? Why or why not?**

SLIDE #6



*Martin Luther King High School mug*

QUESTION

**Who made this message and for what purpose?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWER

Living Tree Community Food made this to sell their almond butter.

QUESTION

**Do you think this use of Dr. King is in keeping with his values? Why or why not?**

SLIDE #7



*Living Tree Community Foods Almond Butter ad*

QUESTION

**Who made this message and for what purpose?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

Apple Computers made this to sell their products through their "Think Different" ad campaign.

QUESTION

**Do you think this use of Dr. King is in keeping with his values? Why or why not?**

QUESTION

**Why do you think that Apple computers choose these particular people for their "think different" ad campaign?**

SLIDE #8



*Apple Computer ad*

**SLIDE #9**

QUESTION

**Who made this message and for what purpose?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

The ACLU made this to warn people of the dangers of government wiretapping under the Bush administration.

QUESTION

**Do you think this use of Dr. King is in keeping with his values? Why or why not?**

QUESTION

**During Dr. King's lifetime the FBI monitored his phone calls without his permission or knowledge. Why would the American Civil Liberties Union have reminded people of this in an ad campaign in 2006?**



***American Civil Liberties Union advertisement***

**SLIDE #10**

QUESTION

**Who made this message and for what purpose?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

*Rolling Stone* cover editors made this to sell their magazine.

QUESTION

**Do you think this use of Dr. King is in keeping with his values? Why or why not?**



***Rolling Stone magazine cover***

**FURTHER QUESTIONS**

**What might Martin Luther King Jr. say about these uses of his image?**

**Has the capitalist system that King criticized taken control of his image and co-opted his message?**

**Is it ever appropriate to use images of social justice leaders to make a profit? Why or why not?**

**Who might the target audience be for each of these documents?**

**ADDITIONAL INFO**

From a 2001 article in the *Washington Post* entitled "King's 'Dream' Becomes Commercial":

'I guess this is just proof that in America even the most sacred icons of the civil rights movement are not immune to exploitation and commercialization,' says Julian Bond, chairman of the NAACP. 'It's certainly true that the business of America seems to be business and business prevails. It's a sad situation, but that's America.' Adds King biographer Richard Lischer, 'There's a part of us that says some things shouldn't be for sale. Racial reconciliation and justice shouldn't be on the market.' (Farhl)

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #11: *Introduction to Eyes on the Prize*, documentary video clip

### INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

Films have been addressing issues of race in America since 1915. D.W. Griffith's movie, *Birth of a Nation*, was the first major motion picture produced in the United States. It was a cinematic breakthrough using innovative camera techniques and narrative style, and it perpetuated a white supremacist view of race in America.

Since then countless movies have dealt with issues of race relations in the United States. You will watch and analyze short excerpts from three films, all dealing with two of the most important figures in the Black freedom movement of the 1960s, Martin Luther King, Jr. and Malcolm X.

Like Martin King, Malcolm X was a defining leader during height of the civil rights movement in the 1960s. Although Malcolm and Martin shared many of the same views and goals, they differed in their ideas about violence as a strategy for social change. While Martin King preached nonviolence, Malcolm X advocated that Black Americans gain their just rights and respect "by any means necessary."

The two leaders met only one time in March 1964, one year before Malcolm X was assassinated. No film was shot at this meeting but that has not stopped filmmakers from imagining or editing a dialogue between these civil rights leaders. This lesson uses three different film constructions that contrast Malcolm and Martin. As you watch these clips consider how the filmmakers portray each man, how their perspectives on nonviolence are presented, and how feature films use documentary film in developing their story lines.

### SLIDE #11



*Eyes on the Prize*  
(1963)  
Internet Video  
Excerpt  
from the Web Site of  
the Documentary  
Film Series  
[2:58]

### *Introduction to Eyes on the Prize*, documentary video clip [2:58]

NOTE: SLIDE #11 continued on next page...

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #11 *Continued: Eyes on the Prize,* documentary video clip



Play this video excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 3 or via our website

QUESTION

**What is your impression of Martin Luther King in this clip? Give evidence to support your answer.**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

King is articulate, respected by his followers and straightforward in his approach.

QUESTION

**What is King's perspective on the use of nonviolence in the freedom movement?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

King is deeply committed to the use of nonviolence based in love and rejecting bitterness and violence as self-defeating

QUESTION

**What is your impression of Malcolm X in this clip? Give evidence to support your answer.**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

Malcolm X is quick thinking, combative toward his enemies and a devout follower of the teaching of Elijah Mohammad

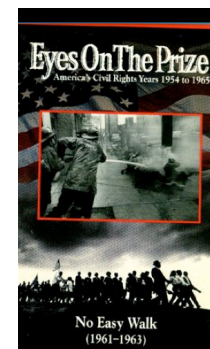
QUESTION

**What is Malcolm X's perspective on the use of nonviolence in the freedom movement?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

Malcolm X says that nonviolence renders "uncle Tom Negroes" defenseless in the face of White racist violence on the part of the Klan and police

VIDEO



*Eyes on the Prize*  
Internet video

[2:58]

From the Web site of the  
documentary film series,  
*Eyes on the Prize*

ADDITIONAL INFO

From Kenneth Clark's introduction to the 1963 PBS program *The Negro and the American Promise*:

Martin Luther King and Malcolm X are, in different ways, symbols and spokesmen for the Negro crying out for his full rights as an American citizen. If one dares to look for the common denominator of such seemingly different forms of Negro protest, one sees in each of these men a dramatic response to America's attempt to deny to its Negro citizens the fulfillment of the American promise. (Clark)

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #12: *Introduction to Malcolm X*, video clip

### INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

This next excerpt is from the feature film *Malcolm X* directed by Spike Lee and starring Denzel Washington as Malcolm X. The man on the stage with dark glasses and a hat is meant to be Elijah Mohammad, Malcolm's spiritual leader when he was a minister with the Black Muslims.

Malcolm X's real name was Malcolm Little; born May 19, 1925 in Omaha, Nebraska and died February 21, 1965.

### SLIDE #12



***Malcolm X***  
(2000)  
Feature Film  
Excerpt  
[2:19]

*Introduction to Malcolm X*,  
video clip  
[2:19]

**NOTE: SLIDE #12 continued on next page...**

TEACHER GUIDE

# SLIDE #12 Continued: Malcolm X, video clip



Play this video excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 3 or via our website

QUESTION

**What is your impression of Martin Luther King in this clip? Give evidence to support your answer.**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

King is a courageous leader, committed to the principle of nonviolence in the face of racist violence as seen in the newsreel images of his leadership. King is, as Malcolm says, “an ignorant Black preacher” and an “uncle Tom.”

QUESTION

**What is King’s perspective on the use of nonviolence in the freedom movement?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

In the newsreel of his speech he says that nonviolence is the only viable path in the movement and that “if you can’t be nonviolent don’t get in it (the picket line.”

QUESTION

**What is your impression of Malcolm X in this clip? Give evidence to support your answer.**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Malcolm X is a devout follower of “the honorable Elijah Mohammad” as seen by his frequent use of that phrase. He is a forceful and commanding speaker as his followers applaud and cheer him on. He is thoughtful and reflective as he watches the TV images of movement protesters and racist violence.

QUESTION

**What is Malcolm X’s perspective on the use of nonviolence in the freedom movement?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Malcolm X preaches that Black people have the right to protect themselves against racist violence and that to do so is merely “intelligent” and “natural.” He demeans the “ignorant Black preachers” who propose nonviolence.

VIDEO



**Malcolm X**  
2000 Feature Film  
[2:19]

ADDITIONAL INFO

Malcolm X quoted in *Extraordinary Politics: How Protest and Dissent are Changing American Democracy* by Charles C. Euchner:

I am for violence if nonviolence means we continue postponing a solution to the American Black man’s problem - just to avoid violence...If it takes violence for the Black man to get his human rights in this country, I’m for violence exactly as you know the Irish, the Poles or Jews would be if they were flagrantly discriminated against. (170)

TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #13: *King*, video clip

### INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

This final excerpt is from the TV mini-series, *King*, directed by Abby Mann and starring Paul Winfield as Martin Luther King. The encounter between Dr. King and Malcolm is a fictional account of what might have happened had the two men met in private for a conversation.

### SLIDE #13



***King***  
(1978)  
TV Mini-Series  
Excerpt  
[1:50]

***King***  
**1978 TV Mini-series**  
**[1:50]**

**NOTE: SLIDE #13 continued on next page...**



TEACHER GUIDE

## SLIDE #13 *Continued: King, video clip*

→ Play this video excerpt from the digital media folder for Lesson 3 or via our website

QUESTION

**What is your impression of Martin Luther King, Jr. in this clip? Give evidence to support your answer.**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

King appears to be direct, serious, inquisitive, sad.

QUESTION

**What is King's perspective on the use of nonviolence in the freedom movement?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

King is committed to nonviolence, feels that violence only leads to more hatred and that he must believe in the White man who is "as flawed as anyone else."

QUESTION

**What is your impression of Malcolm X in this clip? Give evidence to support your answer.**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Malcolm X "courts" the hatred of the White man and respects Dr. King for his courage and leadership though he finds him misguided.

QUESTION

**What is Malcolm X's perspective on the use of nonviolence in the freedom movement?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Malcolm says that "hate is something to have" and that nonviolence will not be able to overcome the economic underpinnings of segregation.

### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**Which leader do you agree with, Malcolm X or Martin Luther King, Jr.? Why?**

**How do the second two films, *X* and *King*, use the language of Dr. King and Malcolm X from the press conference and interview in the first film to construct their fictionalized story lines?**

**Discuss the very different portrayals of Dr. King and Malcolm X in the two biographies. Which, if either, is closer to a true portrait and why?**

**How do films impact viewers' perspectives on violence and nonviolence?**

### VIDEO



***King***  
**1978 TV Mini-series**  
**[1:50]**

### ADDITIONAL INFO

From *Malcolm and the Cross: The Nation of Islam, Malcolm X, and Christianity* by Louis A. DeCaro:

In the spring of 1963, Martin Luther King, Jr. was quoted in the *Pittsburgh Courier* in speaking about Malcolm X. 'I've never met him, but I've heard him a number of times,' King said. 'Some of his critiques are sound. For example I'm inclined to agree with him when he points out the laxities of Christianity.' King said further that all the civil rights leaders 'seem to have a similar diagnosis for the (racial) disease,' but that he could not accept Malcolm X's cure. 'It's totally unrealistic.' (178)



TEACHER GUIDE

## Slides #14-17: Web sites on Martin Luther King

### INTRODUCE THE LESSON

A Google search of “Martin Luther King” turns up millions of sites. Some of these are resources with solid credibility and others not. Look carefully at the top results of the Google search and consider the message about Dr. King, who sponsored the site, what is its purpose and whether the information is credible.

**NOTE:** The third Web site in this set, *martinlutherking.org*, contains disturbing allegations involving racist, anti-Semitic and sexual innuendo. This image may be offensive or uncomfortable for some students. Teachers should always evaluate the appropriateness of working with stereotypical documents with their particular students and assess their impact should they choose to use them in the classroom. If we do not teach students to analyze these images and words in our classrooms, our students are unlikely to decode their meaning, critically evaluate their messages, and understand the cultural context of their power outside the classroom. Used appropriately, critical decoding of media messages can teach students to understand and evaluate the sources and the impact of racist and stereotypical messages.

#### QUESTION

**What are the messages about Dr. King in this 2009 Google search? What is your evidence?**

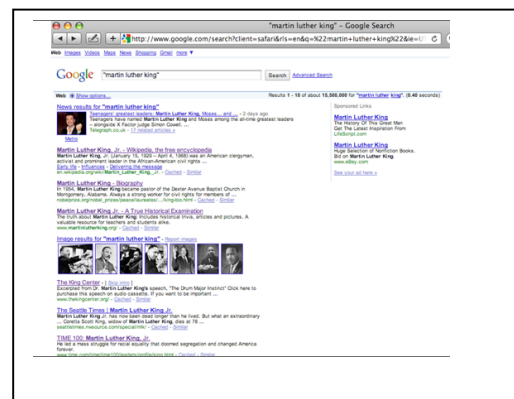
#### POSSIBLE ANSWERS

He is world famous and still respected by young people today.

#### EVIDENCE

There are more than 15 million results for this search. The top news entry indicates that British teenagers name him as one of the world’s greatest leaders

### SLIDE #14



### FURTHER QUESTIONS

**How does Google determine the ranking of web pages? How can I find this out?**

**How does one determine if a Web site is accurate and credible?**

**2009 Google  
Web Search for  
“Martin Luther King”**

**INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY**

We will now look at three web sites that came up in a Google search for “Martin Luther King.”

QUESTION

**What are the messages about Dr. King in this web page?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

He is friendly, expressive and highly accomplished.

EVIDENCE

Friendly and expressive – the photo shows him looking directly at the camera, raising his hand and speaking as though to welcome the viewer  
Highly accomplished – A quick scan of these two paragraphs show many accomplishments.

QUESTION

**Who wrote this Wikipedia article?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

Unknown readers of Wikipedia write and edit all entries.

QUESTION

**Is this a credible web site?**

**SLIDE #15**



**Wikipedia  
Web Page for  
“Martin Luther King”**

QUESTION

**What are the messages about Dr. King in this web page?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

He is a distinguished orator and winner of the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize.

EVIDENCE

Distinguished orator – well dressed in suit and tie, links to Nobel lecture and acceptance speech  
Peace Prize winner- “the Nobel Peace Prize 1964”.

QUESTION

**Who sponsored the site and what is its purpose?**

POSSIBLE ANSWERS

The Nobel Prize organization to educate people about Nobel Prize winners.

QUESTION

**Is this a credible web site?**

**SLIDE #16**



**Nobel Prize Committee  
Web Page for  
“Martin Luther King”**

**QUESTION** What are the messages about Dr. King in this web page?

**POSSIBLE ANSWERS** He is unworthy of respect.

**EVIDENCE** “sounds of illicit sex,” “Why the King holiday should be repealed!”

**QUESTION** Who created the site and what is its purpose? Give your evidence.

**POSSIBLE ANSWERS** It is not clear who made it but it seems intended to discredit Dr. King.

**EVIDENCE** The sponsors of martinlutherking.org are not clear on this web page. The demeaning references to Dr. King and other links such as “Black Invention Myths” and “Jews and Civil Rights: Who Led the Civil Rights Movement” suggest the racist and anti-Semitic nature of this information designed to cause readers to question Dr. King’s character.

**QUESTION** How do the designers of this site target young people?

**POSSIBLE ANSWERS** “Attention Students: Try our MLK pop quiz,” “Rap lyrics: New”.

**QUESTION** How do the designers suggest that they are telling the truth?

**POSSIBLE ANSWERS** “A True Historical Examination,” “Truth About King”

**QUESTION** Is this a credible Web site?

### **FURTHER QUESTIONS**

**How can one judge credibility and bias for any web site?**

**Why might Don Black, leader of Stormfront, have purchased the domain name martinlutherking.org in the early 1990s?**

**Should hate sites like this be allowed on the Internet? Why or why not?**

### **SLIDE #17**



### ***martinlutherking.org* Web Page**

### **ADDITIONAL INFO**

The *martinlutherking.org* web site is hosted by the organization *Stormfront* whose logo reads, “White Pride World Wide.”

From a 2009 ABC News report, “Hate Groups Effectively Use Web as a Recruiting Tool”:

Stormfront, which encourages children to print out this information and take it to school, is recognized as the first online hate site, said Mark Weitzman, the director of the task force against hate and terrorism at the Simon Wiesenthal Center. Hate groups began using the Web from the very beginning, even before most people had access to the Web in their homes, Weitzman said. ‘You don’t have to go hunting for it. It goes right into your house,’ said Weitzman. (Ibanga)

TEACHER GUIDE

## Slides #18-22: *Monuments to Dr. King*

### INTRODUCE THE ACTIVITY

In the years following his death many artists and architects have designed public sculptures and structures to honor Dr. King. In this final media decoding activity we will look at 5 different monuments to Dr. King. These media constructions literally “set in stone” the legacy of Dr. King. As you look at them consider what messages about Martin Luther King, Jr. are presented in each monument and what techniques the sculptors or architects use to convey the messages. Are these the messages you want to communicate about Dr. King?

**Optional:** Print out copies of each of the following 5 monuments (from the PowerPoint slides) and have students work in small groups to analyze each monument (one per group), answering the questions on the teacher guide and then presenting to the class.

#### SLIDE #18

QUESTION

**What is the message about Dr. King?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

He is a learned and forward-looking orator.

QUESTION

**What techniques did the sculptor or architect use to convey the message?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

He is portrayed holding a book, looking upward and reaching forward as he speaks.



***Erik Blome, sculptor  
Milwaukee, WI***

#### SLIDE #19

QUESTION

**What is the message about Dr. King?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

He is an inspirational figure for children  
Cares about future generations

QUESTION

**What techniques did the sculptor or architect use to convey the message?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

He shows Dr. King leading two children as one looks up at him with admiration



***Donald Howard, sculptor  
Chico, CA***

**SLIDE #20**

QUESTION

**What is the message about Dr. King?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

He was committed to freedom & is strong.

QUESTION

**What techniques did the sculptor or architect use to convey the message?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

Crafting two strong hands pulling apart prison bars.



***Olof Hellstrom, sculptor  
Upsalla, Sweden***

**SLIDE #21**

QUESTION

**What is the message about Dr. King?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

His message was uplifting and unifying

QUESTION

**What techniques did the sculptor or architect use to convey the message?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

The many parts coming together into an upward sweeping pinnacle.



***Gerald Gladstone & Harold  
Williams, designers  
Compton, CA***

**SLIDE #22**

QUESTION

**What is the message about Dr. King?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

He is solid and determined.

QUESTION

**What techniques did the sculptor or architect use to convey the message?**

POSSIBLE  
ANSWERS

He shows Dr. King coming from solid stone with a straight-ahead gaze and crossed arms.



***Lei Yixin, sculptor  
National Mall,  
Washington, D.C.***

### **FURTHER QUESTIONS**

**What monuments to Dr. King exist in your community?**

**Which of these images most fits your image of Dr. King? Why?**

**What process of nonviolent decision-making could be used to help decide on a fitting memorial to Dr. King?**

### **ADDITIONAL INFO**

The sculpture by Lie Yixin is part of the new Martin Luther King Jr. National Memorial and is planned to be opened on the National Mall in Washington, DC in 2012. It will be within sight of the spot where King delivered his “I Have a Dream” speech in 1963.

### **OPTIONAL WRITING ACTIVITY**

## **Write an Essay Analyzing Media Constructions of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Discuss three different media documents (magazine covers, advertisements, monuments, Web sites, film clips) featuring Dr. King.

- Describe each document, including its purpose, target audience, historical context, and creator/author/source.
- Explore the messages that each construction gives about Dr. King and his legacy.
- Evaluate the appropriateness of each of the constructions based on your understanding of Dr. King’s actions and beliefs.

# Lesson #4: The Challenge of Change

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LESSON PLAN



Printed Documents

# The Challenge of Change

## Lesson Objectives:

- Students will examine a passage about change from Martin Luther King, Jr.'s book, *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community*, explore King's use of language and the meaning of the passage.
- Students will relate King's passage about change to excerpts from letters about a controversial community issue, the renaming of State Street to Martin Luther King Blvd.
- Students will work in groups to complete tasks and report to the class.
- Students will identify challenges to change.

## Vocabulary:

liabilities, status quo, fraternities, indifferent, notorious, vigilant, metaphor

## Media:

Excerpts from letters to *The Ithaca Journal*

## Materials Needed:

- *Teacher Guide* for Lesson 4
- Two-page student worksheet: *Exploring the Text*
- 6 Two-page student worksheets: *Taking a Position*
- 6 blank Sheets of paper, one for each group

## Time:

40 minutes

## Lesson Procedures:

1. Organize and make copies of the worksheets.
2. Introduce the lesson.
3. Hand out the worksheet, *Exploring the Text*. Have students work individually or in groups to complete the worksheet.
4. Review the answers to the worksheet using the prompts in the *Teacher Guide*.
5. Hand out the 6 different worksheets, *Taking a Position*, each with a different letter to the editor or guest column excerpt. Have the groups complete one worksheet each.
6. Have each group report out on their letter excerpt. Other students keep notes and list the "challenges to change" on the blank sheets of paper and turn in.
7. OPTIONAL: Assign writing activities at the completion of this lesson.



TEACHER GUIDE

## The Challenge of Change

1. **Organize and make copies** for the class activities.

2. **Introduce the lesson:**

### Introduce the Lesson

In the spring of 2004, the *Circle of Recovery*—a group of high school seniors led by Gino Bush, a local activist—suggested that a street in Ithaca be named in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. in order to recognize his contributions and those of African Americans today and in the past. Later, the group specifically suggested that State Street be renamed Martin Luther King Blvd.

As the suggestion was considered in press and in municipal forums, controversy grew. Most of those opposed cited costs of changing street markers and addresses on business stationery as the reason they opposed the idea. Many of them said that they supported a fitting memorial to Dr. King but they were opposed to changing the name of State Street. Some of those who favored the renaming of State Street viewed the opposition's arguments as trivial or as thinly disguised examples of racism.

Today, we are going to explore the challenges to change these young people experienced. Studying challenges and support for change can help us be more effective at working for social justice. We will start by exploring a passage from Dr. King's book, *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?*

3. **Hand out the worksheet** *Exploring the Text*.

Have students work individually or in groups to complete the worksheet.

4. **Review the answers** to the worksheet.

**5. Hand out the 6 different worksheets, *Taking a Position*, each with a different letter to the editor excerpt.**

**Have 6 groups complete the worksheets.**

Roles in groups:

- Facilitator of group work—also reports out on question 1
- Reader of letter
- Notetaker (sheet must be turned in)
- Reporter for question 2
- Reporter for question 3

**6. Have each group report out** their answers on their letter excerpt.

Ask each group to read the quote and letter and answer the questions including:

1. Is this letter advocating or opposing the street name change?
2. What are the main arguments for their position?
3. Given the above quote from King, do you think that he would have supported or opposed the change? Give evidence to back up your position.

After each presentation, **have students keep a log of the “challenges to change”** on a separate sheet of paper, or alternatively on the worksheets themselves.

#### OPTIONAL WRITING ACTIVITIES

Create a class poem using students’ statements of challenges to change.

Ask each student to write a letter to a local paper about a change they want to propose in their community. Letters should include a clear statement of the desired change, arguments in support of the change, and responses to challenges they anticipate.

## Student Worksheet: Exploring the Text

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Excerpt from: **Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?**

By Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

“One of the great liabilities of history is that all too many people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change. Every society has its protectors of the status quo and its fraternities of the indifferent who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions. But today our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change. The large house in which we live demands that we transform this world-wide neighborhood into a world-wide brotherhood. Together we must learn to live as brothers or together we will be forced to perish as fools” (171).

Definitions of words from the text:

1. **liabilities** (noun) – something which someone is responsible for
2. **status quo** (noun) – the existing state of affairs
3. **fraternities** (noun) – any group or class of persons having common purposes and interest
4. **indifferent** (adj) – having no concern or interest; apathetic
5. **notorious** (adj) – widely and unfavorably known
6. **vigilant** (adj) – keenly watched to detect danger

Dr. King frequently uses **metaphors** in his writing to reinforce his points and grab his audiences' attention. A metaphor is a comparison between two unlike things not using the words “like or as” and it is a very effective literary device to use in writing.

**Answer the following questions about metaphors from King's excerpt above.**

1. **“The large house in which we live....”**

What is Dr. King talking about when he refers to a large house in which we live?

2. **“...people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change.”**  
**“...who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions.”**

How are the words “awake” and “sleeping” being used in these quotes?

3. **“...its fraternities of the indifferent.”**

Who are the “fraternities” that Dr. King is referring to?

4. What is the theme or message of this quote from Dr. King’s book, Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?

## Student Worksheet: Taking A Position Letter#1, Mary Loehr

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the excerpt from the letter concerning the renaming of State Street to Martin Luther King Blvd. (below). Review King's quote at the bottom and answer the questions on the back. Prepare to report your answers to the class.**

From a Guest Column, The Ithaca Journal, Oct. 16, 2006

*....Our country was settled by white people. Those people naturally named the streets for loved ones of people they respected. There are very few streets in Ithaca that are named after and reflect the lives of people of color who make up approximately 26.2% of our population according to 2000 Census Bureau statistics.*

*Martin Luther King, Jr. was a black man, but he was not limited to that identity. He was an icon of the 20th century who stood up for the rights of all people, of all races and all classes. He won the Nobel Peace Prize. He is one of my heroes, and I have white skin.*

*Since the idea was put forth by young men of all races who learned about each others cultures, who talked about racism and who learned about many amazing people who have stepped up to better our society, including King, Gandhi and Harriet Tubman, I say, lets respect these young people and take pride in naming a major artery after Martin Luther King, Jr..*

*Mary Loehr, Ithaca*

*One of the great liabilities of history is that all too many people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change. Every society has its protectors of the status quo and its fraternities of the indifferent who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions. But today our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change. The large house in which we live demands that we transform this world-wide neighborhood into a world-wide brotherhood. Together we must learn to live as brothers or together we will be forced to perish as fools.*

**Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?**

By Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

- 1. Is this letter advocating or opposing the street name change?**
- 2. What are the author's main arguments?**
- 3. Given the above quote from King, do you think that he would have supported or opposed the change? Give evidence to back up your position.**

Roles in groups:

- Facilitator of group work—also reports out on question 1
- Reader of letter
- Notetaker (sheet must be turned in)
- Reporter for question 2
- Reporter for question 3



## Student Worksheet: Taking A Position Letter#2, Ellen Dorney

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the excerpt from the letter concerning the renaming of State Street to Martin Luther King Blvd. (below). Review King's quote at the bottom and answer the questions on the back. Prepare to report your answers to the class.**

From a Letter to the Editor, The Ithaca Journal, July 19, 2006

*This is my idea for Martin L. King. We already have a King Street. Why make everyone on State Street change everything. People would have to change everything from their driver's license to every bill they have.*

*It's just not practical to do that. Use some common sense. One, why not just fix the Greater Ithaca Activities Center building and rename it the Martin L. King Building.*

*Two, get the park and name that Martin L. Park; or three, take one building at Stewart Park and re-dedicate it to Martin L. King.*

*There are all sorts of things you can do and not inconvenience so many people. I'm sure as great a man as he was, he would put the people first and he would be looking down happy to know so many care and think of him so much.*

*Ellen Dorney (Brooktondale)*

*One of the great liabilities of history is that all too many people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change. Every society has its protectors of the status quo and its fraternities of the indifferent who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions. But today our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change. The large house in which we live demands that we transform this world-wide neighborhood into a world-wide brotherhood. Together we must learn to live as brothers or together we will be forced to perish as fools.*

**Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?**

By Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

- Roles in groups:

- 102

## Student Worksheet: Taking A Position Letter#3, Gino Bush

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

Read the excerpt from the letter concerning the renaming of State Street to Martin Luther King Blvd. (below). Review King's quote at the bottom and answer the questions on the back. Prepare to report your answers to the class.

From Guest Column in The Ithaca Journal, Oct. 9, 2006

*The Circle of Recovery High School students, class of 2004, are determined young men, who for four years, worked on issues of race. They wanted to change, and they did. I am very proud of them because they refused to accept less than the best within themselves.*

*The youth in this community feel a sense of hopelessness, especially African-American youth. One of the greatest misconceptions about youth is that adults think that youth aren't able to define their own dreams. I feel that the people who oppose the renaming of State Street really can't relate to black and poor youth. Many of these youth have applied for jobs on State Street this past summer—none of them got a job.*

*We all know what the problem is; it has been well outlined statistically and historically. The problem is white racism. The problem is discrimination. The problem is racial prejudice. The continuing controversy is about values and vision. But it's also about people with privilege who cannot stand to see people of color and poor people stand up for something they believe in. Everything that African-Americans live with on a daily basis is influenced by institutional racism....So when the final decision is made we will truly know what kind of city we live in, we will know if this city is willing to seriously confront the sad issues of racism.*

*Gino Bush (Guest Columnist)*

*One of the great liabilities of history is that all too many people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change. Every society has its protectors of the status quo and its fraternities of the indifferent who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions. But today our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change. The large house in which we live demands that we transform this world-wide neighborhood into a world-wide brotherhood. Together we must learn to live as brothers or together we will be forced to perish as fools.*

**Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?**

By Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

1. Is this letter advocating or opposing the street name change?
2. What are the author's main arguments?
3. Given the above quote from King, do you think that he would have supported or opposed the change? Give evidence to back up your position.

Roles in groups:

- Facilitator of group work—also reports out on question 1
- Reader of letter
- Notetaker (sheet must be turned in)
- Reporter for question 2
- Reporter for question 3

## Student Worksheet: Taking A Position Letter#4, Jim Delrosso

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the excerpt from the letter concerning the renaming of State Street to Martin Luther King Blvd. (below). Review King's quote at the bottom and answer the questions on the back. Prepare to report your answers to the class.**

From a Letter to the Editor, The Ithaca Journal, Oct. 24, 2006

*As a citizen of Ithaca, I oppose the renaming of State Street, not simply because it would inflict financial hardship on the businesses and residents thereof, not only because it would remove an important element of this society's history, but because it would be an empty gesture. Despite the claims of the plan's proponents, there is no reason to believe that it will actually lead to positive change in the lives of minorities in this city. It won't change the divide that the color of your skin or the origin of your ancestors can create between you and the people around you.*

*So, don't rename State Street. Use the powers of the government to build programs that tackle racism and the direct effects it has on people's lives here in Ithaca.*

*Get people jobs, get people health care, and get them opportunity. That's the sort of memorial that every community should build to Martin Luther King, Jr. – a better world than he lived in, a better world than we live in today.*

*And, heck, build something tangible, too. Build the man a memorial right in the center of The Commons, right in this city's heart. But it's more important to live how he challenged us to live... not to turn his name into an empty epithet, a condescending illusion of change where no true change exists.*

*Jim Delrosso (Ithaca)*

*One of the great liabilities of history is that all too many people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change. Every society has its protectors of the status quo and its fraternities of the indifferent who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions. But today our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change. The large house in which we live demands that we transform this world-wide neighborhood into a world-wide brotherhood. Together we must learn to live as brothers or together we will be forced to perish as fools.*

**Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?**

By Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

1. Is this letter advocating or opposing the street name change?
2. What are the author's main arguments?
3. Given the above quote from King, do you think that he would have supported or opposed the change? Give evidence to back up your position.

Roles in groups:

- Facilitator of group work—also reports out on question 1
- Reader of letter
- Notetaker (sheet must be turned in)
- Reporter for question 2
- Reporter for question 3

## Student Worksheet: Taking A Position Letter#5, Stuart Carpenter

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the excerpt from the letter concerning the renaming of State Street to Martin Luther King Blvd. (below). Review King's quote at the bottom and answer the questions on the back. Prepare to report your answers to the class.**

From a Letter to the Editor, The Ithaca Journal, Oct. 3, 2006

*As a lifelong resident of Ithaca who lived on State Street as a young child, and has worked several different times at businesses located on State Street, I have many memories associated with State Street. Life long memories like walking up State Street Hill with my late grandmother, playing in the snow with my sled as I slid down a State Street sidewalk, backyard barbecues, seeing deer in my yard, shoveling the sidewalks during snowstorms, responding to fire alarms from Ithaca Fire Station 6. These State Street memories are important to me....*

*I feel changing the name of State Street to any other name is a dishonor to any other name is a dishonor to the many besides me who have grown up, lived and worked on State Street. How can you honor a man by dishonoring so many others? Many alternative plans have been offered to honor Dr. King; wouldn't one of those be a far better way of honoring him rather than dishonoring others?*

*Stuart Carpenter (Ithaca)*

*One of the great liabilities of history is that all too many people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change. Every society has its protectors of the status quo and its fraternities of the indifferent who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions. But today our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change. The large house in which we live demands that we transform this world-wide neighborhood into a world-wide brotherhood. Together we must learn to live as brothers or together we will be forced to perish as fools.*

**Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?**

By Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

- Roles in groups:

- 108



## Student Worksheet: Taking A Position Letter#6, Olivia Jones

NAME \_\_\_\_\_ DATE \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the excerpt from the letter concerning the renaming of State Street to Martin Luther King Blvd. (below). Review King's quote at the bottom and answer the questions on the back. Prepare to report your answers to the class.**

From a Letter to the Editor, the Ithaca Journal, Sept. 30, 2006

*We as black people in Ithaca need to be more cohesive in our fight against racism.*

*If it means boycotting, picketing or any other action that will call attention to our plight.*

*We must understand that white folks have no idea who black people are. They know nothing of our culture. We have so much to struggle with. Our schools deny African- American history to our children, jobs are very, very difficult to obtain, police profiling, over 10 percent of black drivers stopped by police are likely to be searched as opposed to 3.5 percent of white drivers stopped by police.*

*One of every three black males born today can expect to go to prison in his lifetime. We can expect to be discriminated against on a daily basis.*

*What we must do is start nation-building; read our history, search it out, read black authors.*

*Let's get it on. And please support the renaming of State Street to Martin Luther King Street.*

Olivia Jones (Ithaca)

*One of the great liabilities of history is that all too many people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change. Every society has its protectors of the status quo and its fraternities of the indifferent who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions. But today our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change. The large house in which we live demands that we transform this world-wide neighborhood into a world-wide brotherhood. Together we must learn to live as brothers or together we will be forced to perish as fools.*

**Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?**

By Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

1. Is this letter advocating or opposing the street name change?
2. What are the author's main arguments?
3. Given the above quote from King, do you think that he would have supported or opposed the change? Give evidence to back up your position.

Roles in groups:

- Facilitator of group work—also reports out on question 1
- Reader of letter
- Notetaker (sheet must be turned in)
- Reporter for question 2
- Reporter for question 3

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