



**Set the Stage for Learning**

Richmond, VA

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

## **Classroom Connections Study Guide**

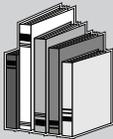


### **In the Classroom**

(For teachers & students  
Grades 3 - 12)

*"I Have a Dream" - The Life  
and Times of Martin Luther*

*King, Jr.* and the *Classroom Connections Study Guide* are produced in support of the teaching of: Language Arts & History and Social Sciences. In Virginia, they support the teaching of the following Standards of Learning: History and Social Sciences: 3.7, 3.9, 3.11, 3.12, VS.1, VS.9, USII.1, USII.7, USII.8, CE.3, CE.9; Language Arts: 3.1, 3.2, 3.5, 3.6, 4.1, 4.2, 4.4, 5.1, 5.2, 5.3, 5.5, 5.6, 6.2, 6.4, 6.5, 7.1, 7.2, 7.5, 8.3, 8.5, 8.6, 9.3, 9.5, 10.6, 11.6, 12.6.



### **At the Library**

Children's Reading Level:  
Thank You, Dr. Martin Luther  
King, Jr.! by Eleanora Tate

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s  
I Have a Dream Speech in

Translation: What It Really Means (Kids'  
Translations) by Leslie J. Holland

Adult Reading Level:

A Call to Conscience: The Landmark  
Speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
by Clayborne Carson, Kris Shepard, and  
Andrew Young

The Autobiography of Martin Luther King,  
Jr. by Martin Luther King, Jr.



### **On the Web**

NobelPrize.org Biography:  
[http://nobelprize.org/nobel\\_prizes/peace/laureates/1964/king-bio.html](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1964/king-bio.html)

The King Center: [www.thekingcenter.org](http://www.thekingcenter.org)

Library of Congress Wise Guide:  
[www.loc.gov/wiseguide/jan03/kingjr.html](http://www.loc.gov/wiseguide/jan03/kingjr.html)

# "I Have a Dream"

*The Life and Times of Martin Luther King, Jr.*

by Bruce Craig Miller



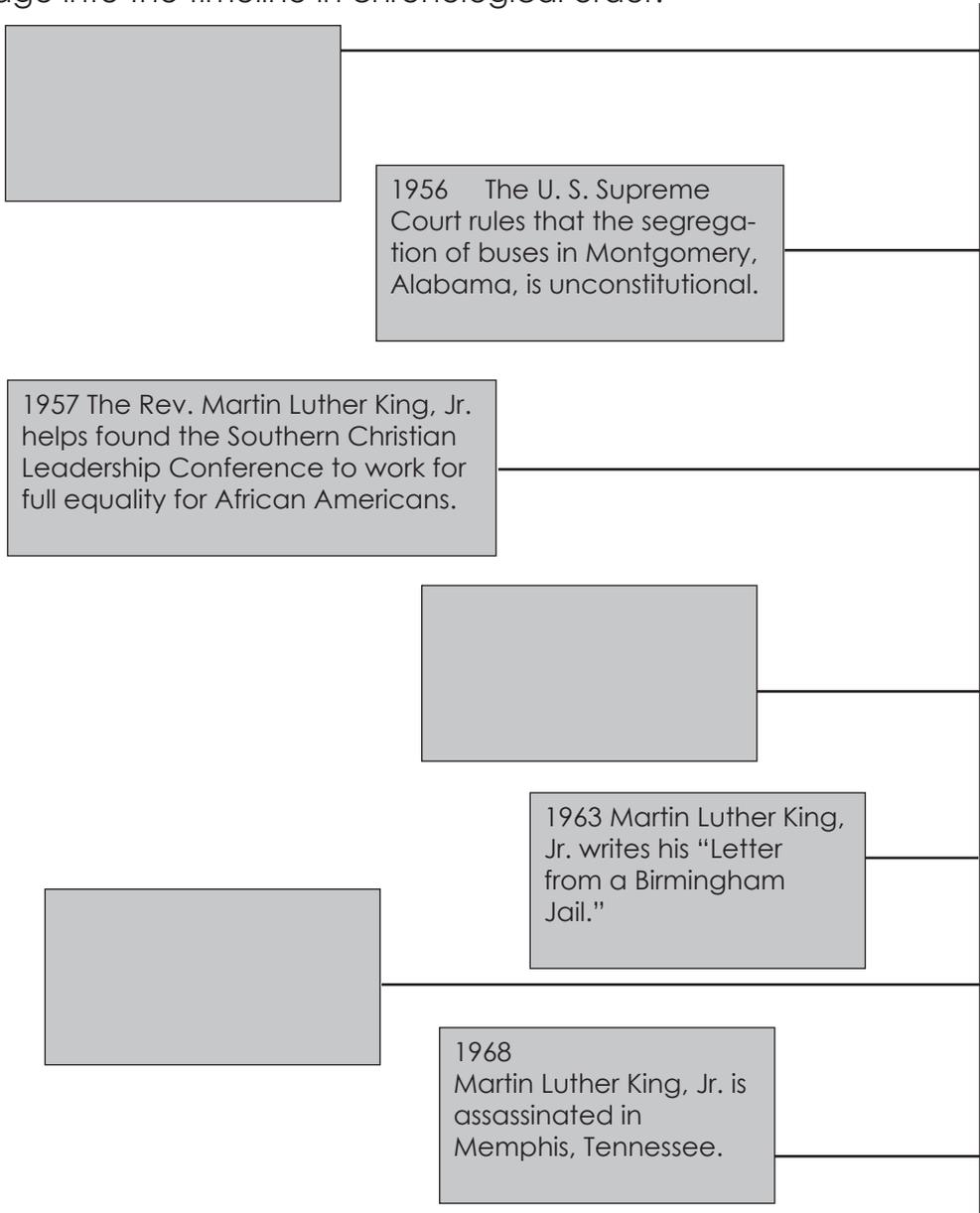
*Portrait of Dr. Martin Luther King, by Artist Betsy G. Reyneau. Record Group 200, Donated Collections, National Archives and Records Administration.*

*"I Have a Dream" - The Life and Times of Martin Luther King, Jr.* chronicles the phenomenal impact of Dr. King's life as he becomes one of the most influential and charismatic leaders of the "American Century."

Inspired by the arrest of Rosa Parks, Dr. King becomes the prime mover behind the Montgomery, Alabama bus boycott, putting his philosophy of non-violent protest to work. He gains national recognition and becomes the dominant force in the Civil Rights Movement during its decade of greatest achievement. Students will be stirred at the reenactment of his great "I Have a Dream" speech. This great leader's struggle and his dream of lifting "our nation from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood" is a story of inspiration for us all.

# Timeline: MLK & Civil Rights

Review the following timeline of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s involvement in the Civil Rights Movement. There are events missing. Place the events from the box at the bottom of the page into the timeline in chronological order.



**For Further Study:**

The following lists other notable names from the Civil Rights Era. How did each contribute?

**Malcolm X**

**Stokely Carmichael**

**Huey P. Newton**

**Maulana Karenga**

**Thurgood Marshall**

**Edward W. Brooke**

**Shirley Chisholm**

**Rev. Jesse Jackson**

Nearly a quarter million people march on Washington, DC, in the largest civil rights demonstration ever. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivers his "I Have a Dream" speech.

Rosa Parks refuses to give up her seat on a Montgomery, Alabama, bus to a white person. This triggered a successful, year-long African American boycott of the bus system.

Challenge: Once you have added these final events in the proper spaces, use the space that is left to record one additional event, in chronological order. Use social studies' resources to help research an event, or log on to [www.pbs.org/wnet/aaworld/timeline/civil\\_01.html](http://www.pbs.org/wnet/aaworld/timeline/civil_01.html) for a timeline of the Civil Rights Era.

# Discovering Martin Luther King, Jr.



Civil Rights March on Washington, D.C. [Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. speaking.] on 08/28/1963; Miscellaneous Subjects, Staff and Stringer Photographs, 1961-1974; Records of the USIA; Record Group 306; National Archives

Martin Luther King, Jr., was born January 15, 1929. Martin's family lived on Auburn Avenue, a bustling "black Wall Street." It was home to large, prosperous black businesses and churches. King experienced the South under Jim Crow. He never forgot when one of his white playmates announced that his parents would no longer allow him to play with Martin, due to his race.

He attended segregated public schools in Georgia, graduating high school at fifteen. Before beginning college, he spent the summer on a tobacco farm in Connecticut. This was his first experience of race relations outside the segregated South. He was shocked. "Negroes and whites go [to] the same church," he noted in a letter to his parents. "I never [thought] that a person of my race could eat anywhere."

He received a B. A. in 1948 from Morehouse College then spent three years at Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. There he became acquainted with Mohandas Gandhi's philosophy of nonviolence; he earned a bachelor of divinity degree in 1951. A renowned speaker, King was elected president of Crozer's student body, which was almost exclusively white! King earned his doctorate from Boston University in 1955. In Boston he met and married Coretta Scott, with whom he had four children.

In 1954, Martin Luther King became pastor of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, AL. King, a strong worker for civil rights, was on the executive committee of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In December, 1955, he led the first great Negro nonviolent

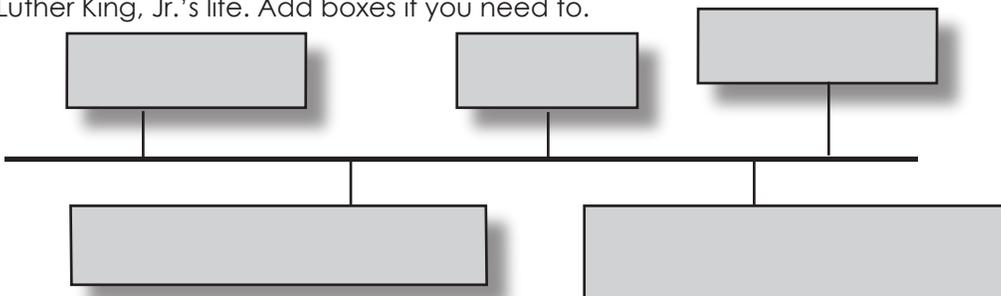
demonstration of contemporary times in the U.S., the bus boycott, which lasted 382 days. On December 21, 1956, the U.S. Supreme Court declared unconstitutional the laws requiring segregation on buses. During the boycott, King was arrested, his home bombed, and he was subjected to personal abuse. At the same time, he emerged as a great leader.

In 1957 he was elected president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, formed to provide leadership for the burgeoning civil rights movement. Martin Luther King, Jr. took the ideals for this organization from Christianity; its nonviolent techniques from Gandhi. Between 1957 - 1968, King traveled over six million miles and spoke over twenty-five hundred times, appearing wherever there was injustice, protest, and action. He wrote five books, and numerous articles. In these years, he led a massive protest in Birmingham, AL, that caught the attention of the entire world, providing what he called a coalition of conscience. and inspiring his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail", a manifesto of the Negro revolution; he planned voter registration drives in Alabama; he directed the peaceful march on Washington, D.C., of 250,000 people to whom he delivered his address, "I Have a Dream." He conferred with President John F. Kennedy and campaigned for President Lyndon B. Johnson. He was arrested many times and assaulted as well; he was awarded five honorary degrees; was named Man of the Year by Time magazine in 1963; and at the age of 35 he was the youngest man to have received the Nobel Peace Prize. He became the symbolic leader of American blacks, and a world figure.

On April 4, 1968, he was assassinated while standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee, where he was to lead a protest march. the killing sparked riots and disturbances in over 100 cities across the country. On March 10, 1969, the accused white assassin, James Earl Ray, pleaded guilty to the murder and was sentenced to 99 years in prison.

## Questions to Consider:

1. Why do you think Martin Luther King, Jr. was the target of so much hatred?
2. Martin Luther King, Jr. lived from 1929 - 1968, a time of tremendous racial injustice and (thanks in large part to him) change. In what ways do you think today's America might be different if Dr. King had not been assassinated at such a young age?
3. Using the information above, create a timeline of important events in Martin Luther King, Jr.'s life. Add boxes if you need to.



## Challenge

### Think About It:

Did Martin Luther King, Jr. pave the way for Barack Obama to become President of the United States in 2009? Why or why not? Dr. King was a most eloquent speaker. What would he have said about the 2008 election?



# Notable Quotes

**Dialogue:** A conversation between two or more characters in a story or a play.

**Quotation marks** (“ ”) are used to show the beginning and end of a piece of dialogue.

***“Our actions must be guided by the deepest principals of our Christian faith. Love must be our regulating ideal.”***

**- Martin Luther King, Jr.**

Listen for these lines in the play. Then, discuss them as a class, and answer the questions below:

***“I’ll tell you where I think I am. I think I am sitting in my seat that I paid for in the back of the bus, which you have designated as the Negro section. And I intend to stay put.”***

**- Rosa Parks**

Why do you think Rosa Parks said, “I intend to stay put?”

---

---

---

***“That’s right, Mr. King, you just come on down here to Birmingham. Governor Wallace and I know how to take care of uppity colored boys like you.”***

**- City of Birmingham Commissioner of Public Safety, Bull Connor.**

When Martin Luther King, Jr. referred to the “table of brotherhood,” what do you think he meant?

---

---

---

***“I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.”***

**- Martin Luther King, Jr.**

What would you have said to Bull Connor in response to his statement?

---

---

---

***“Martin gave his life in search of a more excellent way, a more effective way, a creative rather than a destructive way. We intend to go on in search of that way, and I hope that you who loved and admired him will join us in fulfilling his dream.”***

**- Coretta Scott King**



# Social Studies: Using Primary Sources

## Easy Activity:

Read the excerpts below with a partner, and discuss. Draw a picture of Martin Luther King, Jr. giving his “I Have a Dream” speech. Add details, based on the excerpt and the play.

## Challenge Activity:

Read the excerpt below. Highlight important phrases that you think are relevant in today’s world. Choose your favorite phrase, and explain how it is relevant today.

## Extra Challenge:

Read the excerpt below. Think about the changes, political, economic, and technological, that have occurred since this was written. List some of these changes. Then, write a letter to Martin Luther King, Jr. telling him about how life in America has changed since he delivered this famous speech.

The following are excerpts from Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” speech, given in Washington, DC in 1963:

“When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men - yes, black men as well as white men - would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note, insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked ‘insufficient funds.’”

“Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. 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.”

“I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: ‘We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.’”

“I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, but by the content of their character.”

“I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at a table of brotherhood.”

“This is our hope. This is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood.”

“Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God’s children.”

“Let freedom ring. And when this happens, and when we allow freedom to ring—when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God’s children—black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics—will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: “Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!”

## What is an **excerpt**?

**Excerpt:** (n.) A part taken from a longer work; a passage; a selection.



***Our actors like to hear from their audience! Write us a letter or draw us a picture and send it to the address on the next page.***





# The Theatre Team

**Actors** learn the play and perform it live on stage in front of you.

**The Director** tells the actors when and where to move on the stage and oversees the work of everyone involved in the play.

**The Stage Manager** is responsible for calling lighting and sound cues and for supervising the technical crew.

**The Playwright** writes the play. What they write tells the actors what to say on stage.

**The Prop Master** is in charge of the objects used by the actors on stage.

**The Costume Designer** plans the clothing the actors wear, called costumes. Costumes give clues about when and where a story takes place, and about the characters who wear them.

**The Set Designers** plan the scenery for the play.

Theatre IV Presents  
*"I Have a Dream"*  
*The Life and Times of Martin Luther King, Jr.*

By Bruce Craig Miller

Theatre IV:  
Bruce C. Miller,  
Artistic Director

Phil Whiteway,  
Managing Director

Classroom Connections Study Guide  
written by Heather Widener, MAT  
Widener Consulting LLC

This Classroom Connections Study Guide and the text contained herein are the property of Theatre IV. Photocopying of the study guide is permitted. Any other use of the contents must be accompanied by the phrase, "Text used with permission from Theatre IV - Richmond, VA."  
© Theatre IV, 2009.

114 West Broad St.  
Richmond, VA 23220  
1.800.235.8687

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



## YOU Have an Important Part to Play

It wouldn't be a play without you! Your part is to pretend the play is real. Part of this includes accepting certain theatre ways, or *conventions*:

1. Actors tell the story with words (dialogue), actions (blocking), and songs.
2. Actors may sing songs that tell about the story or their feelings.
3. Actors may speak to the audience.
4. An actor may play several different characters ("doubling") by changing their voice, costume or posture.
5. Places are suggested by panels on the set, and by props.

### How to Play Your Part

A play is different from television or a movie. The actors are right in front of you and can see your reactions, feel your attention, and hear your laughter and applause. **Watch** and **listen** carefully to understand the story. The story is told by the actors and comes to life through your imagination.



NATIONAL  
ENDOWMENT  
FOR THE ARTS

THIS ARTS EVENT IS MADE POSSIBLE IN PART BY THE

VIRGINIA  
COMMISSION  
for the



AND THE NATIONAL ENDOWMENT FOR THE ARTS