



# Martin Luther King Jr.: Defender of the Dream

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## ☑ **Lesson Objectives**

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### **Core Content Objectives**

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Students will:

- ✓ Describe the life and contributions of Martin Luther King Jr.
- ✓ Identify the main causes for which Martin Luther King Jr. fought during his lifetime
- ✓ Explain the terms *segregation* and *activist*
- ✓ Explain the concepts of *nonviolence* and *civil rights*
- ✓ Describe the connection between Rosa Parks and Martin Luther King Jr.
- ✓ Identify Martin Luther King Jr. as an important leader of the civil rights movement

### **Language Arts Objectives**

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The following language arts objectives are addressed in this lesson. Objectives aligning with the Common Core State Standards are noted with the corresponding standard in parentheses. Refer to the Alignment Chart for additional standards addressed in all lessons in this domain.


Students will:

- ✓ Describe how words and phrases supply meaning in a free verse poem about Martin Luther King Jr. (RL.2.4)
- ✓ Identify the main topic of the read-aloud “Martin Luther King Jr.: Defender of the Dream” (RI.2.2)
- ✓ Describe the connection among Martin Luther King Jr., Rosa Parks, and the Montgomery Bus Boycott (RI.2.3)
- ✓ Interpret information from a timeline associated with “Martin Luther King Jr.: Defender of the Dream,” and explain how the timeline clarifies information in the read-aloud (RI.2.7)

- ✓ Plan, draft, and edit a free verse poem in which they provide their opinion about Martin Luther King Jr.'s achievements (W.2.1)
- ✓ With assistance, organize facts and information from "Martin Luther King Jr.: Defender of the Dream" into a timeline to answer questions (W.2.8)
- ✓ Prior to listening to "Martin Luther King Jr.: Defender of the Dream," orally identify what they know and have learned about civil rights, discrimination, and people who fought for civil rights and human rights
- ✓ Identify and express how African Americans might have felt when segregation was declared illegal
- ✓ Use knowledge of the words *extra* and *ordinary* to predict the meaning of *extraordinary*

## Core Vocabulary

- activists, n.** People who take some kind of action to achieve a goal  
*Example:* Susan B. Anthony led a determined group of women's rights activists.  
*Variation(s):* activist
- banned, v.** Stopped or prohibited something or someone  
*Example:* Unfair laws were banned in the United States.  
*Variation(s):* ban, bans, banning
- character, n.** Qualities or traits that make up and distinguish a person  
*Example:* Lucy is so honest that cheating could never be part of her character.  
*Variation(s):* none
- extraordinary, adj.** Something that is incredible or out of the ordinary  
*Example:* The magician's skills were quite extraordinary and amazed the audience.  
*Variation(s):* none
- minister, n.** A person who works for a church and performs religious functions and duties  
*Example:* The minister continues to inspire the members of her church.  
*Variation(s):* ministers
- sit-ins, n.** Nonviolent protests that involve a person, or people, sitting down, or occupying, specific locations  
*Example:* As part of the civil rights movement, many people participated in organized sit-ins.  
*Variation(s):* sit-in

<b><i>At a Glance</i></b>	<b>Exercise</b>	<b>Materials</b>	<b>Minutes</b>
<b><i>Introducing the Read-Aloud</i></b>	<b>What Have We Already Learned?</b>	timeline from previous lessons	10
	<b>Image Preview</b>		
	<b>Purpose for Listening</b>		
<b><i>Presenting the Read-Aloud</i></b>	<b>Martin Luther King Jr.: Defender of the Dream</b>	world map or globe	15
<b><i>Discussing the Read-Aloud</i></b>	<b>Comprehension Questions</b>		10
	<b>Word Work: Extraordinary</b>	chart paper, chalkboard, or whiteboard	5
 <b>Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day</b>			
<b><i>Extensions</i></b>	<b>Timeline</b>	Image Card 7	20
	<b>Free Verse Writing</b>	Instructional Masters 2B-1, 7B-1	



# Martin Luther King Jr.: Defender of the Dream

7A

## Introducing the Read-Aloud

10 minutes

### What Have We Already Learned?

Using the timeline from the previous lessons and the following questions, review some of the content of this domain.

- Who is depicted in these images? (Susan B. Anthony, President Lincoln, Eleanor Roosevelt, Mary McLeod Bethune, Jackie Robinson, Rosa Parks)
- What did Susan B. Anthony want women to be able to do?
- What were some of the causes for which Eleanor Roosevelt fought?
- In what ways did Mary McLeod Bethune work for equal rights for all?
- How would you describe Jackie Robinson's achievements?
- Why do you think Major League Baseball retired Jackie Robinson's number?
- How did Rosa Parks respond to being denied equal rights?

### Image Preview

Remind students that civil rights are the rights the government promises to every citizen in our country. Although slavery had ended after the U.S. Civil War, many African Americans didn't gain all their civil rights. The fight for this cause—especially during the time of Rosa Parks—is called the civil rights movement.

Tell students that today they will hear about one of the most important leaders of the civil rights movement. That leader's name was Martin Luther King Jr.



← **Show image 7A-11: Martin Luther King Jr. at Lincoln Memorial**

Ask students if they recognize the man in this image. If they do not recognize him, state that they may be more familiar with his name. Explain that this man was so important to our nation's history that there is even a special day set aside each year to honor this man and what he did to make people's lives better.

### **Purpose for Listening**

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Read the title of today's read-aloud, and ask students if they can tell what this story might be about. Explain to students that often the title of a story will give a clue about the main idea, or main topic, of a story.

Tell students to listen carefully to find out what the main topic of this read-aloud is and how Martin Luther King Jr. fought for the cause of civil rights.



## Martin Luther King Jr.: Defender of the Dream

### ◀ Show image 7A-1: Martin Luther King Jr.

1 What does *discrimination* mean?

2 An activist is someone who takes action to achieve a goal.

3 What does it mean to challenge something?

As a young African American boy growing up in the South, Martin Luther King Jr. witnessed and experienced discrimination.<sup>1</sup> Martin knew that it was unfair, and it made him sad. As a young boy, he could not have known that he would grow up to become one of the most famous and respected civil rights **activists** and leaders in American history.<sup>2</sup> In his short life he would challenge discrimination and change laws and attitudes.<sup>3</sup> He would bring people of all races together, and this nation would become a better place because of him.



### ◀ Show image 7A-2: Martin Luther King Jr.'s childhood home

Martin was born in 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. Martin had an older sister, Willie Christine, and a younger brother, Alfred Daniel. He lived in a loving home with his parents, his brother and sister, and his grandparents. Martin's father, Martin Luther King Sr., was the pastor of Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. Martin was a member of his father's church.



### ◀ Show image 7A-3: Martin Luther King Jr. and Rosa Parks

Just like Rosa Parks, Jackie Robinson, and Mary Bethune, Martin was born during a time when African American people in the United States did not have equal rights. Segregation kept people apart and prevented African Americans from being full and equal members of society.<sup>4</sup>

4 What is segregation?

Martin was a very bright boy. He began attending school when he was five years old. He was a student at Oglethorpe Elementary School. After elementary school, Martin attended Booker T. Washington High School in Atlanta.



### ◀ Show image 7A-4: Morehouse College

Because he was such a good student, Martin skipped two

5 A minister is someone who works for a church and performs religious functions and duties.

6 A doctorate is the highest academic honor or degree awarded to a student. When someone receives a doctorate, they are called “doctor.” Martin was known as Dr. King.



grades. At just fifteen years of age, Martin became a student at Morehouse College. Students usually start college at age seventeen or eighteen, so Martin was very young to be a college student. At first, Martin considered becoming a doctor or a lawyer, but he later changed his mind and decided to become a **minister** like his father and grandfather before him.<sup>5</sup>

After graduating from Morehouse, Martin attended Crozer Theological Seminary. There his studies prepared him for his work as a minister. Martin completed his education at Boston University. He received his doctorate when he was just twenty-five years old.<sup>6</sup>

← **Show image 7A-5: Martin Luther King Jr. and his wife Coretta**

Martin had not only gained a doctorate in Boston, he had also gained a wife—a beautiful young lady named Coretta Scott. Coretta had been studying music at the New England Conservatory in Boston. Upon receiving his doctorate, Martin and Coretta moved to Montgomery, Alabama, where he became the minister of the Dexter Avenue Baptist Church. Martin was now ready to begin the career he had prepared for.



← **Show image 7A-6: Rosa Parks on the bus**

As a young teenager riding city buses in the South, Martin had experienced the same discrimination that Rosa Parks had experienced.<sup>7</sup> African Americans had to sit at the back of the bus, and if the bus was full, the driver would ask a person of color to stand up so that a white person could sit down. Martin thought it was humiliating. And so, as well as being a pastor in Montgomery, Alabama, Martin decided that he would become a civil rights activist.<sup>8</sup>

When Rosa Parks challenged racial segregation in the Montgomery city bus system, and a bus boycott began, Martin was asked to be the leader of this movement.<sup>9</sup> The African American community stood together under his leadership. They refused to ride the buses until they were able to choose a seat freely.

7 What was the discrimination Rosa, Martin, and others experienced on buses?

8 What is an activist?

9 What is a boycott?



← **Show image 7A-7: Civil rights march**

The boycott lasted more than a year. People walked, rode bicycles, and rode in car pools to get to work. Martin led the boycott. Martin and his fellow activists were threatened and intimidated. But they did not back down. Finally, the United States Supreme Court, the most powerful court in the country, ruled that bus segregation was illegal and had to stop. At that moment, Martin became one of the most important people in the American civil rights movement. In fact, Martin became its leader.<sup>10</sup>

10 How do you think African American people felt when bus segregation was finally declared to be against the law?

Martin was prepared to be the leader of the civil rights movement even though he knew he was putting himself and his family in danger. There were many people who did not like the changes he and his fellow activists wanted. For his part, despite the dangers, he insisted that those involved in the civil rights movement remain peaceful and never use force.<sup>11</sup> Martin believed that an organized, nonviolent movement that protested against inequality with thoughtful words—not fists and guns—would succeed. He greatly admired others who used nonviolence to protest.

11 What is the word you learned in the first read-aloud in this domain that refers to this type of peaceful response to unfair treatment? (*nonviolence*)



← **Show image 7A-8: Martin Luther King Jr. delivering a sermon**

Martin and sixty other ministers and activists founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference. This was an excellent way to organize members of African American churches throughout the country. They all worked together to try to bring about social changes that would improve the lives of all Americans. They also set out to register African Americans in the South to vote so that they could use the power of their vote to bring about change.<sup>12</sup>

12 Why do you think Martin encouraged people to vote?

In his first speech to this group, Martin said, “We have no alternative but to protest. For many years we have shown an amazing patience. We have sometimes given our white brothers the feeling that we liked the way we were being treated. But we come here tonight to be saved from that patience that makes us patient with anything less than freedom and justice.”





← **Show image 7A-9: Lunch counter sit-in**

13 Sit-ins were nonviolent protests that involved people sitting down in specific locations. [Point to the lunch counter in the image, and explain that such counters were common in restaurants during the 1950s and 1960s.]



← **Show image 7A-10: Martin Luther King Jr., Coretta, and children**

Martin and his family moved to Atlanta, where he worked with his father at the Ebenezer Baptist Church. Both Martin's father and grandfather were ministers who had, during their lifetimes, worked for equal rights for African Americans.

The civil rights movement kept going. Martin and others continued to demonstrate peacefully and to lead marches. During one demonstration in Birmingham, Alabama, Martin was sent to jail. There he wrote his famous "Letter from the Birmingham Jail." In this letter he explained that it was his view that whereas just, or fair, laws must be obeyed, unjust, or unfair, laws, such as segregation laws, must be ignored.



← **Show image 7A-11: Martin Luther King Jr. at Lincoln Memorial**

The following year, Martin led a march on Washington, D.C., to pressure the government into changing segregation laws in southern states. More than two hundred thousand people walked from the Washington Monument to the Lincoln Memorial. There in front of the Memorial, Martin delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. He said that he hoped for a day when people would be judged not by the color of their skin, "but by the content of their **character**." <sup>14</sup>

14 *Character* means how a person is on the inside, and how they act or treat other people, which often reveals who they really are.

Later, Martin was given one of the highest awards anyone can achieve: the Nobel Peace Prize. With this award came \$54,000 in prize money, which he donated to a number of civil rights groups.



← **Show image 7A-12: Martin Luther King Jr. in jail**

Martin often felt threatened. He often feared for his own safety and that of his family. In his lifetime, Martin was jailed thirty times. But he was a peaceful warrior who fought with words. Sadly, in 1968, this courageous man was killed.

This terrible tragedy happened in Memphis, Tennessee. Martin had gone to that city to support workers who were not being treated fairly. Martin seemed to have had a feeling that he would not live to see the changes he so wanted. The night before he died, Martin told a crowd gathered to hear him speak, “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.”



← **Show image 7A-13: Martin Luther King Jr. monument**

Because of Martin Luther King Jr. and those people involved in the civil rights movement, a law was passed called the Civil Rights Act, which **banned** segregation.<sup>15</sup> This was followed by a law called the Voting Rights Act which removed any restrictions on the right to vote for African Americans. Martin Luther King Jr. had led the way for a better, brighter future for all people.

Almost twenty years after his death, the United States Congress decided the third Monday in January would become a federal holiday in Martin’s honor. On this day we remember this **extraordinary** man for all that he achieved.<sup>16</sup> This day is now celebrated as a national day of service where all people are encouraged to find ways to help others, just as Martin did during his life.

There is also a monument not far from the Lincoln Memorial, from which Martin delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. It opened to the public in August 2011. It is the first monument on the Mall to honor an African American. The young boy who experienced discrimination grew up to become a national hero.

15 *Banned* means stopped or prohibited something.

16 Something that is extraordinary is incredible or out of the ordinary.

### Comprehension Questions

10 minutes

1. *Evaluative* What was the main topic of today's read-aloud? (The main topic was Martin Luther King Jr.'s role in the civil rights movement and the nonviolent way he fought for civil rights.)
2. *Literal* What college did Martin attend? (Martin attended Morehouse College.)
3. *Inferential* What were some of the ways Martin Luther King Jr. worked for civil rights? (Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. protested, marched, and spoke about civil rights.)
4. *Literal* What did Martin do after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat? (Martin organized the Montgomery Bus Boycott.)
5. *Literal* Did Martin believe in fighting peacefully for equal rights, or did he believe in using force or violence? (Martin believed in peaceful protest.)
6. *Evaluative* [Reread the quote from Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech.] How would you explain to your family or friends what these words mean? (Dr. King wanted people to be judged by their character, not by the color of their skin.)
7. *Evaluative* What are some adjectives that you can use to describe Martin Luther King Jr.? (fair, peace-loving, hardworking, etc.)

[Please continue to model the *Think Pair Share* process for students, as necessary, and scaffold students in their use of the process.]

I am going to ask a question. I will give you a minute to think about the question, and then I will ask you to turn to your neighbor and discuss the question. Finally, I will call on several of you to share what you discussed with your partner.

8. *Evaluative Think Pair Share:* Do you think Martin's dream of people being judged by the content of their character rather than by the color of their skin has come true? Why or why not? (Answers may vary.)

9. After hearing today's read-aloud and questions and answers, do you have any remaining questions? [If time permits, you may wish to allow for individual, group, or class research of the text and/or other resources to answer these questions.]

### **Word Work: Extraordinary**

**5 minutes**

1. In the read-aloud you heard, "On this day we remember this *extraordinary* man for all that he achieved."
2. Say the word *extraordinary* with me.
3. The word *extraordinary* means that someone or something is incredible or out of the ordinary.
4. The first moon landing was an extraordinary moment in history.
5. In what ways would you say that Martin Luther King Jr. was an extraordinary man? Try to use the word *extraordinary* when you tell about it. [Ask two or three students. If necessary, guide and/or rephrase the students' responses: "Martin Luther King Jr. was extraordinary because . . ."]
6. What's the word we've been talking about?

Use a *Compound Word* activity for follow-up. Directions: Explain to students that the word *extraordinary* is an adjective because it is used to describe nouns, or people, places, or things. Explain to the students that *extraordinary* is a word that has been created by joining two separate words together—*extra* and *ordinary*. The word *extra* means something additional, or something that has been added on. The word *ordinary* means something that is regular, or not unusual in any way. Explain to students that when these two words are combined, or put together, they form or create a new word with a new meaning. Explain to students that words like this are called compound words. Explain that compound words are written as one word. Ask students what the word *extraordinary* means. Remind students that they have already learned several compound words in this domain. Remind students of the words *teammates* and *sit-ins*. Write these words on chart paper, a chalkboard, or a whiteboard. Ask students to look at the separate parts of these compound words and describe what happens when they are combined to form a new word. Ask students for examples of other compound words, and add those to the list.



### **Complete Remainder of the Lesson Later in the Day**



# Martin Luther King Jr.: Defender of the Dream

**7**  
**B**

## Extensions

**20** minutes

### Timeline

Review the individuals placed on the timeline thus far. Show students Image Card 7 (Martin Luther King Jr.). Ask students to describe the cause for which Martin Luther King Jr. fought, and how his hard work helped everyone have access to more equal rights. Help students understand that before Martin Luther King Jr. led the March on Washington and gave his “I Have a Dream” speech, he helped organize the bus boycott in which Rosa Parks was involved. Tell students that Dr. King gave his “I Have a Dream” speech after Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on the bus. Ask students where on the timeline the Image Card of Martin Luther King Jr. should be placed. (after Rosa Parks)

### Free Verse Writing (Instructional Masters 2B-1 and 7B-1)

Ask students what type of poetry they have been writing. Ask what parts of a free verse poem can relate, or tell, the poet’s opinion. (the words, phrases, and rhythm)

Explain to students that they are going to write a free verse poem in which they express an opinion about Martin Luther King’s achievements. Explain that they are going to work in groups to discuss the content of the read-aloud they have just heard. Ask students to try to recall key facts about Martin Luther King’s life and achievements. Encourage students to use these facts in their free verse poems. Remind students that there are no rules about how to write free verse poems. Free verse poems do not have to rhyme, there can be as many or as few words on a line as they wish, and free verse poems are simply made up of the words they choose to write. In addition, remind students that their free verse poems can form shapes. Students can accomplish this by placing different numbers of words on each line. Tell students that

they first need to plan their poem by brainstorming ideas, using Instructional Master 2B-1. Have students write “Martin Luther King Jr.” in the circle in the center of Instructional Master 2B-1, and then write the ideas, words, or phrases they might use to write their free verse poem in the other circles. Remind students that planning is the first step in the writing process, and that drafting and editing are the next steps.

After students work in groups to brainstorm ideas for their free verse poems, have them individually create a free verse poem in which they express their opinion of Martin Luther King Jr. and his achievements. Students should write their free verse poems on Instructional Master 7B-1, writing Martin Luther King Jr.’s name on the line to the left of the image of Martin.