

# TEACHER PAGES

## Introduction

This booklet adapts the teaching and witness of Martin Luther King, Jr, for US youth, challenging them to learn and live his principles of nonviolence and teach them to elementary school-age children, especially during the Season for Nonviolence (January 30 - April 4). The first section presents step-by-step directions for teachers who want to teach the five major themes of this booklet. In the pockets are also the outline of a one-day youth training program for teaching two of Dr. King's issues to younger students, a "Student Pages Packet" for this training, and a 75-minute presentation on Dr. King and the Pledge of Nonviolence for junior high students. It can also be used for high school audiences and spread out over 2 or 3 class periods.

## Step 1 - Understanding Dr. King's Teaching

After most of the quotations from Dr. King, there are questions designed for personal reflection and group discussion.

## Step 2 - Putting His Teaching into Practice

Many of the quotations and questions ask youth to decide how they can put Dr. King's teaching into practice on a variety of values and issues:

- Serving others compassionately
- Resolving conflicts nonviolently
- Making amends to those we have hurt
- Forgiving those who have hurt us
- Resisting materialism and consumerism
- Standing with others who are treated unfairly
- Challenging racism, nationalism, and war

There are several case studies that ask youth to identify how they can respond concretely to situations of injustice.

## Step 3 - Teaching Dr. King's Principles to Children

1. The first round of presentations will come at the beginning of the Season for Nonviolence and should focus on nonviolent conflict resolution.
2. The second round of presentations will come near the anniversary of the assassination of Dr. King (April 4, 1968) and focus on speaking out courageously against violence or injustice, perhaps one of the issues he was assassinated for: racism, poverty/materialism, and war militarism.

# The Season for Nonviolence

## (January 30 – April 4)

This "Season for Nonviolence" is the creation of the Association for Global New Thought and Arun and Sunanda Gandhi. This grassroots awareness campaign was launched in 1998 to honor the memorial anniversaries of Mahatma Gandhi (assassinated on January 30, 1948) and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr (assassinated on April 4, 1968).

As its director puts it, "The passion behind the Season has been to create an awareness of nonviolent principles and practice as a powerful way to heal, transform and empower our lives and communities. Through an educational and community action campaign, we have recognized those who are using nonviolence to build a community that honors the dignity and worth of every human being. By identifying 'what works' in these new models of reconciliation and human harmony, we are demonstrating that every person can move the world in the direction of peace through their daily nonviolent choices and actions. Since 1998, almost 1000 unique events and programs have been developed and carried out at the local level in more than 125 cities in 40 states, and 10 countries."

Since 2003, the Season for Nonviolence makes available a variety of resources to assist schools, faith communities and local communities in focusing on the practice of nonviolence during the special ten weeks of the Season. These resources include a pamphlet on "64 Ways for 64 Days;" a CD rom with many documents, graphics and templates that can be opened on your own computer and customized for use in your city; and a hardcopy **MANUAL ON NONVIOLENCE**, produced by co-sponsor Fellowship of Reconciliation. The CD rom by itself is \$35; with the **MANUAL**, \$60 (includes shipping).

For further information and ideas on how your community or school can participate, contact Barbara Fields, *Project Coordinator*

Association for Global New Thought  
220 Santa Anita Rd, Santa Barbara, CA  
93105

tel: 805-563-7343, fax: 805-563-7344

email: [AGNT2000@aol.com](mailto:AGNT2000@aol.com);

website: [www.agnt.org](http://www.agnt.org).

# **ACTIVITY #1: Nonviolent Conflict Resolution**

## **TEACHER DIRECTIONS**

### **STEP 1 - Understanding Dr. King on Nonviolent Conflict Resolution (pp. 13-14)**

- Have students read the quotation for the first of the four principles of nonviolent conflict resolution; invite clarification questions before asking students to answer the questions following the quotation.
- Have students share their answers in pairs before discussing them as a whole class.
- Repeat this process for each of the other three principles.

### **STEP 2 - Conflict Situation Case Studies: There IS Another Way (p. 15)**

- Read the introductory paragraph aloud and make sure that students understand the "fight" and "flight" options, using Situation #1 as a way of clarifying the two.
- Brainstorm together what they think Dr. King's response to Situation #1 would be and why.
- Brainstorm together as many other responses as they can identify.
- Have students do Situation #2 on their own and share their answers in pairs before discussing them as a whole group.
- Repeat this process for Situation #3 and Situation #4.

### **STEP 3 - Some Conflict Situations from Your Own Life (p. 16)**

- Have students do this Worksheet on their own, perhaps at home.
- Have them share work in pairs or triads, with each person focusing on one of the situations they wrote about.
- Depending on time, repeat this process for additional situations.
- As a whole class, have students name what they learned about themselves from doing these conflict situations.
- As a whole class, have them raise questions that surfaced as they did the Worksheet and/or in their small group discussions.

### **STEP 4 - Prepare Lesson Plans for Classroom Presentations (pp. 17-18)**

- Have students read over the "Sample Lesson Plan" and invite clarification questions.
- Identify as a group other possible activities for different age groups.
- Decide as a group whether you want to follow the Sample Lesson Plan as is or make some changes in its basic components.
- Have each classroom group put together their specific activities and assign responsibilities for each.

## **ACTIVITY #2: Making Amends and Forgiving Others**

### **TEACHER DIRECTIONS**

#### **STEP 1 - Understanding "Dr. King on Forgiveness" (p. 20)**

- Have students read the first of the two Dr. King quotations and invite clarification questions before asking students to answer the questions following the quotation.
- Have students share their answers in pairs before discussing them as a whole class.
- Repeat this process for the second quotation.

#### **STEP 2 - "Making Amends" Worksheet (p. 21)**

- Go over this Worksheet with students to make sure they understand what it is asking.
- Have students complete this Worksheet, perhaps outside of class.
- Have them share in pairs what the experience meant for them and what they learned from doing it.

#### **STEP 3 - "Letting Go of Grudges" Worksheet (p. 22)**

- Go over this Worksheet with students to make sure they understand what it is asking.
- Have students complete this Worksheet, perhaps outside of class.
- Have them share in pairs what the experience meant for them and what they learned from doing it.

## **ACTIVITY #3: Serving Others in Need**

### **TEACHER DIRECTIONS**

#### **STEP 1 - Understanding Dr. King on Service of Others (p. 23)**

- Have students read the excerpts from Dr. King's eulogy; invite clarification questions before discussing the eulogy as a whole class.

#### **STEP 2 - Your Own Eulogy**

- Have students write their own eulogy or obituary in the space provided or on a separate piece of paper if they need more space.
- Have students compare their eulogies with Dr. King's and identify how central the value of service of others is in their lives.

#### **STEP 3 - Service Projects at Your School**

- Identify with your class the various service opportunities already available for students at your school.
- Brainstorm additional possibilities.
- Invite students to check out what would be involved in working as part of any of these possibilities (time requirements, type of service, who the groups serves, specific tasks students can do, transportation, etc) and report back to the class.

#### **STEP 4 - "Coming to Decisions and Action" (p. 24)**

Have students use this Worksheet as a way of sifting through these service possibilities and making decisions about their participation.

## **ACTIVITY #4: Standing with Others Who Are Treated Unfairly**

### **TEACHER DIRECTIONS**

#### **STEP 1 - Facing Our Fears (p. 25)**

- Have students read the passage from Dr. King and discuss the first two questions as a whole group.
- Have students answer the next question ("How do you handle yours [fears]?" on their own and perhaps share them in pairs before some kind of whole group discussion.

#### **STEP 2 - Identify Situations Calling for Courage (p. 26)**

- Post the list of "Some Situations Calling for Courage" Worksheet on newsprint or the blackboard.
- Ask students to identify several other conflict situations they have experienced in the four categories on the bottom half of the Worksheet that might be even more appropriate for this class and post these as well.

#### **STEP 3 - Choose and Roleplay One Situation**

- With the class, choose one situation to roleplay first.
- Invite one group of students to roleplay the situation.
- Have the participants reflect on their feelings, thoughts and actions in the situation.
- Have the class share some of their observations.
- Then invite a second group of students to roleplay the same situation and demonstrate a different way of handling it; perhaps a third group if the situation invites additional ways of handling it.
- Have the class evaluate the various alternatives in the situation and decide on the best way(s) and why.

#### **STEP 4 - Do Additional Replays**

- Depending on the time available, decide with the class on one or more of the situations to roleplay, using the same process as in STEP 3.
- Consider roleplaying a school bus situation and draw some comparisons with Rosa Parks' courageous response to her own bus situation. Note: A dramatization of the Rosa Parks action is available from the Institute for Peace and Justice.

#### **STEP 5 - Further Reflection**

Be sure to add your own experience with these questions:

- Why is it hard to be courageous in these situations, especially if others are watching?
- What can we do to foster greater courage in ourselves and others who might be witnessing situations like these?
- Have students complete the Worksheet on "Thinking Through Courage: Decisions and Action" (p. 27) as a way of pulling this unit together and reflecting further on courage in their own lives and to make some initial decisions.

## **ACTIVITY #5: Speaking Out Against Injustice**

### **TEACHER DIRECTIONS**

#### **STEP 1 - The Need to Speak Out (p. 29)**

Have students read "Dr. King on Noncooperation and 'Positive Peace'" from his "Letter from a Birmingham City Jail" and answer the questions following the segment.

#### **STEP 2 - Consider Specific Injustices (pp. 30-38)**

See the Step by step directions for the "Giant Triplets of Racism, Materialism, and Militarism" and decide which of these you will present to your students.

#### **STEP 3 - (OPTIONAL) "...Help the Dream Come True" (p. 39)**

Have students read the excerpts (p. ) from Dr. King's final Christmas message, December 24, 1967, and invite clarification questions.

Have students answer the questions about what they can do to help the dream come true, perhaps sharing their answers in pairs before discussing them as a whole class.

#### **STEP 4 - (OPTIONAL) "Is It Worth It? Can We Win?" (p. 40)**

4. Have students read the first quotation and invite clarification questions.
5. Have students write their answers to the two questions, perhaps sharing their answers in pairs before discussing them as a whole class.
6. Repeat this process for the second quotation and questions.

#### **STEP 5 - Decisions - "It Depends, in Part, on You" (p. 41)**

- Have students read the top quotation and discuss the first question as a whole class.
- Have students answer the second question individually in writing, perhaps sharing it in pairs before inviting some sharing with the whole class.
- Have students write out their decision on the final question about how each will speak out and the first steps in their plan.

#### **STEP 6 - Prepare Lesson Plans for Classroom Presentations (pp. 43-44)**

- Have students read over the "Sample Lesson Plan" and invite clarification questions.
- Identify as a group other possible activities for different age groups.
- Decide as a group whether you want to follow the Sample Lesson Plan as is or make some changes in its basic components.
- Have each classroom group put together their specific activities and assign responsibilities for each.

# Challenging Materialism

## TEACHER DIRECTIONS

### STEP 1 - Understanding Dr. King on Materialism and Consumerism (p. 30)

- Have students read the quotation on "extreme materialism" and invite clarification questions.
- Have students write their answers to the three questions, perhaps sharing their answers in pairs before discussing them as a whole group.

### STEP 2 - "Consider These Facts" (p. 31)

- Have students share their feelings and thoughts about the two statistics and what they think the impact of these realities is on their thinking and actions.
- Have students write their answers to the three questions, perhaps sharing their answers in pairs before discussing them as a whole group.

### STEP 3 - "Consider This Mindset" (p. 31)

- Have students read the excerpt from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch about St. Louis Mills and share their feelings about the article, perhaps in pairs before discussing the article as a whole class.
- Have students write their answers to the first three questions, perhaps sharing their answers in pairs before discussing them as a whole group.

### STEP 4 - What to Do about It

- Have students write their answers to the final question on p. 31, perhaps sharing them in pairs before inviting some of them to share their decisions with the whole class.
- Consider the possibility of inviting those students who want to do something about materialism to do so with others in the class who want to do something similar.



# Challenging Racism at School: A Case Study

## TEACHER DIRECTIONS

### STEP 1 - Present the Case Study (pp. 33-34)

Have students read the editorials from the St. Louis Post-Dispatch about the incident of racist name-calling on the school bus and invite clarification questions.

### STEP 2 - How Can Students Deal with This at the Moment

- Have students identify ways that students on the bus could handle situations like this.
- OPTION: Roleplay the situation several times with several different students demonstrating different ways of responding to the racist name-calling
- Have them identify similar situations from their own experience.

### STEP 3 - How Should the Parents, Principal and School Board Respond

- Have students discuss how the girl's parents responded and how the principal and superintendent responded and whether they agree with the first editorial that more should have been done.
- Have them consider the additional actions taken by the school board and whether these are appropriate to the situation.

### STEP 4 - "Courageous Conversations"

The second editorial calls for "courageous conversations." Have students discuss whether these are needed at their own school, at home with their parents, and throughout their school district. And how they could be part of one of these "courageous conversations."

### STEP 5 - "Challenging Racism" (p. 32)

- Have students read the first quotation from Dr. King, invite clarification questions, and discuss the question as a whole class.
- Repeat this process for the second quotation, perhaps having students conduct their own "X-ray" in writing individually, before brainstorming the question as a whole class.
- 7. Have students write out their answers to the last question on their worksheet, perhaps sharing them in pairs before discussing the question as a whole class.
- 8. Invite each student to commit to their decision and decide a good time for reporting back on how they implemented their decision.

# Challenging Militarism and War

## TEACHER DIRECTIONS

### STEP 1 - Responding to King's Sense of Patriotism (p. 35)

- Have students answer the questions following the quotations, perhaps sharing them in pairs before discussing them as a whole class.
- For a fuller statement of Dr. King's understanding, have students read his whole "When Silence Is Betrayal" speech on pp. 37-38.

### STEP 2 - Personal Expression

Have students write an essay or paragraph on "What does it mean to be an American and a Christian" or do a picture collage expressing their vision.

### STEP 3 - Dr. King on War (p. 36)

- Have students read the King quotations and invite clarification questions to make sure they understand what King means.
- Have students answer the questions with the quotations and choose one or two for the whole class to discuss.
- Have students read King's "When Silence Is Betrayal" speech (pp. 37-38) and invite clarification questions to make sure they understand what King means.
- Take each of the 4 highlighted segments for separate consideration with the first question.
- Have students answer the remaining questions with the quotations and choose one or two for the whole class to discuss. Be sure to spend time on the last question and see whether any group action might emerge from the discussion. At a minimum, encourage students to follow through on the specific policy or practice they identify as needing to be changed.

# STUDENT PAGES

# Nonviolent Conflict Resolution

"You must not harbor anger,' I admonished myself.  
'You must be willing to suffer the anger of the opponent,  
and yet not return anger. You must not become bitter.  
No matter how emotional your opponents are, you must become calm."  
Dr. King's advice to himself in STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM, p. 121.

## Dr. King on Nonviolent Conflict Resolution

### 1. Recognize and appeal to the good in our enemies

"There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies. When we look beneath the surface, beneath the impulsive evil deed, we see within our enemy-neighbor a measure of goodness and know that the viciousness and evilness of the acts are not quite representative of all that the person is..." STRENGTH TO LOVE, p. 43.

**Questions:** Is Dr. King naïve about "some good in the worst of us"? Why or why not?

List the people you dislike the most or who have hurt you the most. Try to identify at least two good things about each person. Was this difficult to do? Why or why not?

### 2. The goal is to win the other person(s) over

"Nonviolence... does not seek to defeat or humiliate the opponent, but to win his friendship and understanding." STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM , p. 102

**Question:** Explain what this principle means and how it changes the way you deal with (i.e. your tactics) those with whom you disagree or in conflict. Give some examples

### 3. Meet the other person's anger calmly

"You must not harbor anger,' I admonished myself. 'You must be willing to suffer the anger of the opponent, and yet not return anger. You must not become bitter. No matter how emotional your opponents are, you must become calm.'" Dr. King's advice to himself in STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM, p. 121.

**Questions:** What does Dr. King mean by "suffer the anger of the opponent"? Why is this difficult to do?

What steps can you take to "not harbor anger"?

What can you do to prevent yourself from becoming bitter?

How can you remind yourself to remain calm in conflict situations?

**4. Be open to learning from those with whom you disagree**

"Here is the true meaning of compassion and nonviolence, when they help us to see the enemy's point of view, to hear his questions, to know his assessment of ourselves.

For from his view we may indeed see the basic weakness of our condition. And if we are mature, we may learn and grow and profit from the wisdom of those who are called the opposition." Dr. King, *THE TRUMPET OF CONSCIENCE*, p. 29.

**Question:** What are some situations you're in where you can practice this attitude and skill?

## **Conflict Situation Case Studies- There Is Another Way**

We often think that "fight" and "flight" (running away or avoiding the conflict) are our only two choices in a conflict, but often we have more options than that. In the situations below, list possible "fight" and "flight" responses (the first one is done for you). Then list ways to deal with the situation that don't involve fighting or fleeing, starting with what you think Dr. King's response would be. Try to come up with as many possibilities as you can. Then identify some conflict situations from your own life and do the same, concluding each situation by choosing what you consider to be the best way for you to respond and why.

**Situation #1** - Someone borrows your new CD and loses it

Fight response: Curse the person and demand payment.

Flight response: Mumble "that's OK."

What would Dr. King do:

Other possible responses:

**Situation #2** - You work at a fast-food restaurant where your boss is always criticizing you. She never has anything good to say to you, and you think she's unfair.

Fight response:

Flight response:

What would Dr. King do:

Other possible responses:

**Situation #3** - Someone in your homeroom has accused you, unjustly, of stealing from their locker.

Fight response:

Flight response:

What would Dr. King do:

Other possible responses:

**Situation #4** - You are walking with your boy/girl friend and some students start making fun of you and call the girl some ugly names.

Fight response:

Flight response:

What would Dr. King do:

Other possible responses:

## Some Conflict Situations from Your Own Life

### Situation -

Fight response:

Flight response:

What would Dr. King do:

Other possible responses:

What's the best thing for you to do (and why):

### Situation -

Fight response:

Flight response:

What would Dr. King do:

Other possible responses:

What's the best thing for you to do (and why):

### Situation -

Fight response:

Flight response:

What would Dr. King do:

Other possible responses:

What's the best thing for you to do (and why):



## Sample Lesson Plan on Nonviolent Conflict Resolution

### **DRAMATIC INTRODUCTION - Make Dr. King Present**

Show a video clip, play a cassette recording, or dramatically present one of Dr. King's statements or stories on the necessity of nonviolence.

WHAT QUOTATION & WHO LEADS:

### **ACTIVITY #1 - Dr. King on Nonviolent Conflict Resolution (for Grades 3-8)**

- For grades 3-8, choose one of Dr. King's principles of nonviolent conflict resolution to present to your students and write this on poster board to post in front of the classroom or on a worksheet that you duplicate for each of your students.
- Ask a number of students to explain what Dr. King means by the various phrases in the quotation and the other questions from the Worksheet.

WHAT PRINCIPLE & WHO LEADS:

### **ACTIVITY #2 - Apply Dr. King to a Conflict Situation Case Study**

- Then choose a conflict situation, like one of those on the "Conflict Situation Case Studies" worksheet, that your students can relate to. This might a conflict situation from your own life when you were closer in age to your students.
- Explain the "fight" and "flight" ways of responding.
- Then ask them how they think Dr. King would respond and why. Be sure to get a number of different ways that he might respond.
- As a way of increasing its impact, you might have some students help you act out the situation and the various responses.

WHAT SITUATION & WHO LEADS:

### **ACTIVITY #3 - How You Applied Dr. King to One of Your Own Conflicts**

- Depending on time, have one or all members of your team describe a conflict situation you were in, but don't tell them yet how you responded. It could be a situation that you handled well or one that you didn't. If it is one that you didn't handle nonviolently, be sure at the end to explain what you intend to do differently the next time you're in a situation like that.
- Have your students identify the various ways that you could act and whether each of those ways would be a "Dr. King way" or not and why.
- Then tell your students how you actually responded, including the various options you considered and what you thought about them, and how you felt about it afterwards.

WHAT SITUATION & WHO LEADS:

### **ACTIVITY #4 - Applying Dr. King to Their Own Conflict Situations**

- To help them focus on themselves, ask your students to name conflict situations that they have been in during the past week or two; write these on the board.
- For grades 3-8, give each of your students a copy of the "Some Conflict Situations from Your Own Life" and have each of them do just one situation. Walk around the room to check on who might need some help and/or to encourage them.
- Encourage the teacher to have students use the Worksheet for additional situations after you leave.
- For grades K-2, you might choose one conflict situation that your students name at the beginning of this activity and roleplay the situation and various ways it could be handled - some "Not Dr. King Ways" and at least one "Dr. King way"

WHAT WILL YOU DO WHO LEADS:

### **CONCLUSION - A Final Word or Prayer from Dr. King**

9. Choose some sentence or phrase from Dr. King that you used during your presentation that will help your students remember what you taught them.
10. Creatively repeat this phrase several times and in different ways to increase its impact.

WHAT PHRASE or PRAYER & WHO LEADS:

# Making Amends And Forgiveness

**"Forgiveness is a catalyst creating the atmosphere necessary for a fresh start and a new beginning."**

Martin Luther King, Jr., STRENGTH TO LOVE

**"Forgiveness is not an occasional act;  
it is a permanent attitude."**

Dr. King, THE STRENGTH TO LOVE, p. 26.

## Dr. King on Forgiveness

"It is impossible even to begin the act of loving one's enemies without the prior acceptance of the necessity, over and over again, of forgiving those who inflict evil and injury upon us... Forgiveness is a catalyst creating the atmosphere necessary for a fresh start and a new beginning... The evil deed is no longer a mental block impeding a new relationship..." STRENGTH TO LOVE, pp. 42-43.

**Questions:** Have you ever experienced forgiveness as the "catalyst leading to a fresh start" in your relationships with others?

Name some situations in your own life where you could take this step.

What's holding you back from doing so?

"There is some good in the worst of us and some evil in the best of us. When we discover this, we are less prone to hate our enemies. When we look beneath the surface, beneath the impulsive evil deed, we see within our enemy-neighbor a measure of goodness and know that the viciousness and evilness of the acts are not quite representative of all that the person is... Then we love our enemies by realizing that they are not totally bad and that they are not beyond the reach of... Love." STRENGTH TO LOVE, p. 43.

**Questions:** Do you agree? Why or why not?

Focus on one person who has hurt you and apply this thought to yourself and to this person; that is, try to see the good and the evil in each of you and get beyond the single deed done to you. Does it help at all?

## Making Amends Worksheet

Write the names of all the people you can remember having hurt in some way (in the 1<sup>st</sup> column), how you think they felt (2<sup>nd</sup> column), and how you could make amends (3<sup>rd</sup> column)

**Name**

**How They Felt**

**How I Could Make Amends**

Choose one of these persons to address. Now close your eyes and imagine the offended person in front of you. Then write a letter telling that person how you hurt them and how you think they felt. Then add your apology.

Then add to your letter what you are going to do to make amends to that person for what you have done to them. Whether or not you mail it, the letter is important way for you to identify and take responsibility for your actions.

When and how do you think it would be good to convey your apology and what you plan to do to make amends?

As a final step in this process, you might imagine that person saying to you - "Be at peace because I forgive you." Then you might describe how it feels to be forgiven.

## Letting Go of Grudges Worksheet

1. Why should I let go of grudges and forgive?

2. Why is it so hard sometimes to forgive?

### 3. Letting Go of Grudges

Make a list of all the grudges you have been carrying, with the name of the person(s) who hurt or offended you in some way, how long you have been holding on to that grudge, whether it's time to let go, and what you might say or do to that person or person to show forgiveness.

**Name/Grudge**

**How Long Ago?  
Is It Time to Let Go?**

**How Could You Forgive?**

4. What else can I do to become a more forgiving person?

# Serving Others in Need

**"Everyone can be great, because everyone can serve."**

## **Dr. King's Eulogy and Yours**

### **Dr. King's Own Eulogy - "A Drum Major for Justice"**

"...I'd like somebody to mention that day that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to give his life serving others.

I'd like for somebody to say that day that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to love somebody.

I want you to say that I tried to be right on the war question.

I want you to be able to say that day that I did try in my life to clothe those who were naked.

I want you to say on that day that I did try in my life to visit those who were in prison.

And I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity...

And that is all I want to say. If I can help somebody as I pass along; if I can cheer somebody with a song; if I can show somebody he's traveling wrong; then my living will not be in vain..."

From "Then My Living Will Not Be in Vain," Ebenezer Baptist Church, February 1968; quoted in Kathleen McGinnis, *DREAMING GOD'S DREAM*, p. 39.

**Questions:** What does Dr. King mean by "then my living will not be in vain"?

Make a list of what you will need to do in life so that you will be able to look back and say that "my living will not be in vain"?

Put these thoughts together and write what you definitely want the preacher or someone else to be able to say about you at your funeral. Use additional paper as needed.

## Coming to a Decision and Action on Service

After reading and reflecting on the quotations, video clips, and questions above, what did you learn about yourself?

Referring back to questions #1 and #2, what would be a good practice to make more a part of your life so that you become a more service-oriented person?

Referring back to question #3, what kind of service would make good use of the talents and life experiences you have had?

Referring back to question #4, what person or group of people who are especially in need might you be able to develop a longer-term, mutual relationship with where you could be helpful and where you could learn from the people you would be serving?

What is it inside yourself or in your current situation makes you hesitate or resist taking these steps? And how could you overcome these obstacles?

So what is your plan for putting these decisions into action?

How will you monitor your progress as you implement these decisions?



# Standing with Others Who Are Treated Unfairly

"Courage faces fear and thereby masters it.  
Cowardice represses fear and is thereby mastered by it."  
Dr. King, THE STRENGTH TO LOVE, p. 111.

## Dr. King's fears

Dr. King acknowledging his own fears at age 26, just weeks after agreeing to be the leader of the Montgomery Bus Boycott. Sitting at his kitchen table in January 1956, he picked up the phone and heard -- "Listen, nigger, we've taken all we want from you. Before next week you'll be sorry you ever came to Montgomery.' I hung up but I could not sleep... I got out of bed and began to walk the floor. I tried to think of a way to move out of the picture without appearing to be a coward. In this state of exhaustion, when my courage had almost gone, I determined to take my problem to God. My head in my hands, I bowed over the kitchen table and prayed aloud:

"I am here taking a stand for what I believe is right. But now I am afraid. The people are looking to me for leadership. If I stand before them without strength and courage, they too will falter. I am at the end of my powers. I have nothing left... I can't face it alone.'

**Questions:** Does this surprise you about Dr. King? He was 26 years old at this point. He turned to prayer in the face of his fears? How do you handle yours?

What might have happened if he had given in to his fears?

## **Some Situations or Issues Calling for Courage**

**“What can you or should you do when...**

You see a student being disrespectful to a staff member

You see someone in authority being rude or demeaning to a student

You know someone was cheating on a test

You see older students are bullying younger students

You know someone is doing something illegal

You know someone is hurting him/herself (e.g., drugs, alcohol)

You know someone is being pressured sexually

**In other situations of your life**

What situations occur on a school bus that call for courage?

What other situations occur at school that call for courage?

What other situations occur at home that call for courage?

What other situations occur in your neighborhood that call for courage?

## Thinking Through Courage; Decisions and Action

1. What have you learned about courage from your study of Dr. King so far?
2. Who are some of the most courageous people you have known in your life -- perhaps even in your own family or circle of friends? What have they shown you about the meaning of courage?
3. In what situations of violence or injustice in the past have you shown courage (e.g., standing up for someone who was being picked on; challenging someone who was using racist or hateful language or telling racist or sexist jokes; speaking out for doing the right thing)?
4. In what situations of violence or injustice in the past could you have shown courage but you didn't?
5. Why is it hard sometimes to challenge violence or injustice?
6. Name some situations right now in your life where you could challenge a person or practice that is hurting themselves or others?
7. Choose one of these situations and write out a plan here for doing something about it.

# Speaking Out Against Injustice & Violence:

## Dr. King's Giant Triplets of Materialism, Racism & Militarism

**"Noncooperation with evil  
is as much a duty as is cooperation with good"**  
- Dr. King

"If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down  
the long, dark, and shameful corridors of time  
reserved for those who possess power without compassion,  
might without morality, and strength without sight"  
- Dr. King

"Hate begets hate; violence begets violence;  
toughness begets a greater toughness.  
We must meet the forces of hate with the power of love;  
we must meet physical force with soul force."  
- Dr. King, STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM, p. 87.

## **The Need to Speak Out - Dr. King on Noncooperation and "Positive Peace"**

"During the Montgomery Bus Boycott one of the leading white citizens approached King after a council meeting and said, 'Over the years we have had such peaceful and harmonious race relations here. Why must you and your associates destroy this long tradition?' 'Sir, you have never had a real peace in Montgomery,' King replied. 'You have had a sort of negative peace in which the Negro too often accepted his state of subordination. But this is not true peace. True peace is not the absence of tension; it is the presence of justice. The tension we see in Montgomery today is the necessary tension that comes when the oppressed rise up and start to move forward toward a permanent, positive peace.'" Quoted in *THE WISDOM OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.*, p. 159.

"I have almost reached the regrettable conclusion that our greatest stumbling block in the stride toward freedom is not the Ku Klux Klanner, but the white moderate who is more devoted to 'order' than to justice; who prefers a negative peace, which is the absence of tension, to a positive peace, which is the presence of justice; who constantly says 'I agree with you in the goal you seek, but I can't agree with your methods of direct action.'" Letter from a Birmingham City Jail.

**Questions:** What are the differences between a negative peace and a positive peace?

Is Dr. King fair to "white moderates"? Why or why not?

"Actually, we who engage in nonviolent direct action are not the creators of tension. We merely bring to the surface the hidden tension that is already alive. We bring it out in the open where it can be seen and dealt with. Like a boil that can never be cured as long as it is covered up, but must be opened with all its pus-flowing ugliness to the natural medicines of air and light, injustice must likewise be exposed, with all of the tension its exposing creates, to the light of human conscience and the air of national opinion before it can be cured." Letter from a Birmingham City Jail.

**Questions:** Do you think Dr. King was correct in his defense of direct action? Why or why not?

Are there situations of negative peace in your life, school or community that you could surface and challenge in some way?

# Challenging Materialism & Consumerism

## Dr. King on "extreme materialism"

"...We as a nation must undergo a radical revolution of values. 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."

**Questions:** In what ways is our society more "thing-oriented" than "people oriented"?

Do you agree with Dr. King that "machines and computers, profit motives and property rights, are considered more important than people"? Why or why not?

How does consumerism or materialism affect how people view their role in the world? Has it affected your own view of your role in the world? How so?

## Realities of Consumerism in the US Today

### Consider These Facts

- 93% of teen-aged girls say store-hopping is their favorite activity.
- Before they graduate from high school, typical American students have been exposed to 360,000 ads; 30,000 of those before they entered first grade.

### Consider This Mindset

#### **“Ultimate Consumer Theme Park” Opens Today - 1-million-square-foot complex is expected to draw thousands”**

This frontpage announcement in the Business section of the St. Louis Post-Dispatch described the excitement that had been building for weeks in anticipation of this newest suburban mega-mall offering the ultimate retail/entertainment complex. In the words of its CEO: “I think a Mills project is the ultimate consumer theme park. Shopping can often be mundane, because malls are basically the same. Consumers should be enjoying themselves when they are doing it.” It’s shopping as entertainment. Says the general manager of Off 5<sup>th</sup>-Saks Fifth Avenue Outlet, one of the 200+ outlet stores and specialty shops: “It’s going to be a feeding frenzy.”

And to make sure that there are thousands every day feeding at this materialistic trough, the complex features an 18-screen Regal Cineplex; the Ice Zone, a practice facility for the St. Louis hockey team; a NASCAR SpeedPark; an ESPN X Games, Skatepark for skateboarding, bike-stunt riding and in-line skating - to entice the male of the species to the trough.

**Questions:** Are you glad that one of these Mills retail/entertainment complexes has come to the St. Louis area? Why or why not?

How often and for what reasons do you go to shopping malls?

True or false: Shopping malls have become the religious temples of America. Explain.

If this consumerism (and the poverty of others who don't have enough) is a form of injustice for you, how can you speak out against it and do something about it?

# Challenging Racism

## **Racism and poverty cause most international problems**

"Racism and its perennial ally - economic exploitation - provide the key to understanding most of the international complications of this generation." *WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?* p. 173.

Give examples to support Dr. King's statement that racism and poverty are "the key to understanding" most international problems.

## **"The problem of race is America's greatest moral dilemma."**

*STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM*, p. 205.

"For too long the depth of racism in American life has been underestimated. The surgery to extract it is necessarily complex and detailed. As a beginning, it is important to X-ray our history and reveal the full extent of the disease." *WHY WE CAN'T WAIT*, p. 119.

Conduct your own "X-ray" of US history and write down what it reveals of racism.

## **Racism can destroy nations. Will we let it happen to us?**

"History has shown that, like a virulent disease germ, racism can grow and destroy nations." *WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?*, p. 93.

How could racism destroy our nation? Has widespread is the disease at this time?

"The racism of today is real, but the democratic spirit that has always faced it is equally real." *WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?* p. 83.

How willing is our nation to seriously tackle racism?

How willing are you to seriously tackle racism? If you're willing, what is your first/next step in doing so?



## An Example of Racism in the Parkway Schools

PARKWAY SCHOOLS

# The power of one

**T**HE ADVERTISING COUNCIL has unveiled a powerful campaign to get people to think seriously about prejudice. The campaign, released to coincide with the opening of the National Underground Railroad Museum in Cincinnati, shows how the power of one voice can make a difference.

It's the voice of a black girl who intervenes after her bigoted black classmates seated in a school lunchroom initially refuse to make a place for a white girl who wants to join them. The campaign asks viewers "What would you do . . ." as it presents scenarios in which a single person speaks up and makes a difference.

The power of one voice was absent recently when a 10-year-old white boy used racial slurs when speaking to an 8-year-old black girl on a school bus in the Parkway School District. Not only was the voice absent on the bus, it didn't speak loudly in the principal's office or in the superintendent's suite either.

The principal could have suspended the bully for 10 days. She decided it was enough to simply tell the kid to stay off the bus for a week, sit behind the driver thereafter, apologize to the girl and undergo counseling.

Last week, Superintendent Paul Delanty announced he was setting up a committee to review the district's disciplinary policies. That is a step in the right direction, but does not go far enough.

The district should look upon this incident as a teachable moment about the cancer of racism rather than addressing preju-

dice in such a cotton candy fashion that children miss the point about its poisonous power. That poison landed on Chesterfield lawns last week with the distribution of racist and anti-Semitic fliers distributed by a group called the National Alliance.

Kids need to know that epithets such as "nigger" are unacceptable, and they need to know the stories of American history and racism that tell them why. What child, moved by the story of Rosa Parks, would act the way the 10-year-old acted?

Adults in the district need to add their voices. That means parents need to talk to each other and to their children. They must also pay attention to whether their children are getting racist messages from movies and TV.

One question that the School Board should ask itself is whether it sent the right message about prejudice earlier this year when it watered down its bullying policy by removing specific categories of protected individuals.

Many Parkway parents undoubtedly think the bus incident has been blown out of proportion. But confronting the issue is better than covering it over.

Imagine how different the outcome of the bus incident might have been had some kid stood up and told the boy to put his hate speech back in the gutter. Parkway and other districts should use this incident to inspire students to speak out against prejudice just as many people of all backgrounds did during the era of the Underground Railroad.

If you were on this bus, how would you probably have acted and why? How could you act more courageously in the situation?

If you were the principal, would you have handled the situation any differently? Why or why not?

If you were the girl's parents, would you have done any differently than the Johnson's did? Why or why not?

Do you think the situation was blown out of proportion? Why or why not?

## PARKWAY SCHOOLS

# Lessons learned

**P**ARKWAY SCHOOL OFFICIALS have mined positive developments from last month's incident in which an 8-year-old girl was the target of racial slurs from a 10-year-old boy on a school bus. The boy was suspended from the bus for a week, ordered to sit behind the driver thereafter, told to write an apology to the girl and undergo counseling.

But the girl's parents, Demetrious and Pat Johnson, objected that the punishment was too light and refused to let the matter rest. After meeting with the Johnsons, school officials set up a committee to review its disciplinary policies; Mr. Johnson is a member of that committee. Parkway also will begin making public the race and gender of students who are disciplined, and will require staff members to show zero tolerance for racial harassment, bullying and intimidation.

All this is to the good. So is the district's willingness to reconsider its own practices and attitudes, rather than respond defensively, or act as if racial problems don't ex-

ist. Parkway made public its survey of high school students who said sexist, racist and homophobic remarks were common. So were nasty comments about disabilities and looks. The students also reported that school staff members often didn't intervene and were sometimes guilty themselves of making demeaning remarks.

After the Johnsons complained about the district's handling of the bus incident, some of their neighbors in Chesterfield found racist fliers on their doorsteps. Parkway countered with an open letter addressing "a continued culture of racism and discrimination that pervades our communities."

One of the most important points in that letter is a plea for "courageous conversations" locally and nationally "to admit that intolerance is a part of the iceberg that lies dangerously below the surface."

Because of the bus incident — and the Johnsons' determination — Parkway has begun its own courageous conversation. Would that other school districts and communities follow Parkway's brave lead.

The editorial is entitled "Lessons Learned." What lessons do you think were learned? What did you learn from considering this case study?

The first editorial is entitled "The power of one." What one thing could you do to challenge racism and improve race relations in your school and/or community?

# Challenging Nationalism & Militarism/War

## King on Patriotism

"In the days ahead we must not consider it unpatriotic to raise certain basic questions about our national character. We must begin to ask, 'Why are there forty million poor people in a nation overflowing with such unbelievable affluence? ...Why have we substituted the arrogant undertaking of policing the whole world for the high task of putting our own house in order?'" WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE? p. 133.

Questions: Is it unpatriotic to raise critical questions about the policies of your country, as Dr. King is doing here? Why or why not?

### **Dr. King speaking in 1967 about the US war in Southeast Asia:**

"We are called to speak for the weak, for the voiceless, for the victims of our nation, for those it calls "enemy," for no document from human hands can make these humans any less our brothers and sisters. I think of them, too, because it is clear to me that there will be no meaningful solution until some attempt is made to know them and hear their broken cries...This call for a worldwide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class, and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love for all humankind... May our country, on the brink of war, take to heart the final refrain of "America, the Beautiful": 'America! America! God mend thine ev'ry flaw. Confirm thy soul in self-control, Thy liberty in law.'" Speech at Riverside Church, New York, April 4, 1967.

Is it unpatriotic to sing the final refrain of "America the Beautiful" - "America! America! God mend thine ev'ry flaw"? Why or why not?

Is there one national "flaw" that you could do something about? If so, what is it and what could you do to help mend it?

Dr. King asks us to speak for those our nation calls "enemy" and to do so even in the middle of war. What do you think he means? Do you agree with this? Why or why not?

"If we are to have peace on earth, our loyalties must transcend our race, our tribe, our class, and our nation; and this means we must develop a world perspective." THE TRUMPET OF CONSCIENCE, p. 68. Question: How can we do this and maintain a love for our own country?

## Dr. King on War

### **War is obsolete because the weapons of war are now too destructive**

"Wisdom born of experience should tell us that war is obsolete. There may have been a time when war served as a negative good by preventing the spread and growth of an evil force, but the destructive power of modern weapons eliminates even the possibility that war may serve as a negative good." THE STRENGTH TO LOVE, p. 29.

**Questions:** Do you agree with Dr. King that war is obsolete because of its destructiveness? Why or why not?

What wars in the past do you believe "served a negative good" and why?

### **War is the enemy of the poor**

"I knew that America would never invest the necessary funds or energies in rehabilitation of its poor so long as adventures like Vietnam continued to draw men and skills and money like some demoniacal destructive suction tube. And so I was increasingly compelled to see the war not only as a moral outrage but also as an enemy of the poor, and to attack it as such." THE TRUMPET OF CONSCIENCE, pp. 22-23.

**Questions:** Why does Dr. King claim that war is the enemy of the poor? Do you agree? Why or why not?

Have recent US wars proven Dr. King correct? Why or why not?

## **"When Silence Is Betrayal"**

by Martin Luther King, Jr., at Riverside Church, New York, April 4, 1967

"A time comes when silence is betrayal. Even when pressed by the demands of inner truth, men [sic] do not easily assume the task of opposing their government's policy, especially in time of war. Nor does the human spirit move without great difficulty against all the apathy of conformist thought within one's own bosom and in the surrounding world. Moreover, when the issues at hand seem as perplexing as they often do in the case of dreadful conflict, we are always on the verge of being mesmerized by uncertainty. But we must move on.

"Some of us who have already begun to break the silence of the night have found that the calling to speak is often a vocation of agony, but we must speak. We must speak with all the humility that is appropriate to our limited vision, but we must speak. For we are deeply in need of a new way beyond the darkness that seems so close around us.

"We are called to speak for the weak, for the voiceless, for the victims of our nation, for those it calls "enemy," for no document from human hands can make these humans any less our brothers. I think of them, too, because it is clear to me that there will be no meaningful solution until some attempt is made to know them and hear their broken cries.

"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 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 lay hand on the world order and say of war, 'This way of settling differences is not just.' A nation that continues year and year to spend more money on military defense than on programs of social uplift is approaching spiritual death.**

"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 over the pursuit of war.

"This call for a worldwide fellowship that lifts neighborly concern beyond one's tribe, race, class, and nation is in reality a call for an all-embracing and unconditional love for all mankind. **We can no longer afford to worship the God of hate or bow before the altar of retaliation. The oceans of history are made turbulent by the ever-rising tides of hate. History is cluttered with the wreckage of nations and individuals that pursued this self-defeating path of hate.**

"We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent co-annihilation. We must move past indecision to action. **If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark, and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight.**

"Now let us begin. Now let us rededicate ourselves in the long and bitter, but beautiful struggle for a new world. If we will but make the right choice, we will be able to speed up the day, all over America and all over the world, when justice will roll down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

"May our country, on the brink of war, take to heart the final refrain of "America, the Beautiful": 'America! America! God mend thine ev'ry flaw. Confirm thy soul in self-control, Thy liberty in law.'"

**Questions:** What does King mean in each of the highlighted sentences? What aspects do you agree with and why? What aspects do you disagree with and why?

At what point does "silence become betrayal"? Betrayal of what?

In your opinion, is our nation "approaching spiritual death"? If so, in what ways and why? If not, why not?

If there is some policy you think needs to be challenged publicly, how could you add your voice to those already speaking on the issue?

## **"Keep the Dream Alive - Help the Dream Come True"**

There are so many before us who have given their lives to overcome violence and injustice. Gandhi, Rosa Parks and Dr. King, Cesar Chavez and Dorothy Day, and millions of other nonviolent drum majors for justice form a sacred cloud of witnesses who hover over us. They learned the courage it takes to stand up against the forces of domination and oppression, of violence and injustice. And their spirits inspire us in our own time and place to face our fears, lend our hands and voices, and work to keep their dreams alive.

From the Montgomery Bus Boycott in 1956 until his assassination in Memphis in 1968, Dr. King struggled against racism, war, and poverty, and offered our nation and the world a "dream." Near the end of his short life, he returned to this dream and offered us a word of hope and challenge:

"I tried to talk to the nation about a dream that I had. But I must confess to you today that not long after talking about that dream I started seeing it turn into a nightmare. Yes, I am personally the victim of deferred dreams, of blasted hopes. But in spite of that, I close today by saying that I still have a dream. Because you know that you can't give up in life. If you lose hope, somehow you lose that vitality that keeps life moving. You lose that courage to be, that quality that helps you go on in spite of... "So this is our faith as we continue to hope -- that if there is to be peace on earth and goodwill toward all, let us know that in the process we have cosmic companionship.

"So today I still have a dream -- that we will rise up and come to see that we are made to live together as brothers and sisters. I still have a dream this morning -- that one day every person of color in the world will be judged on the basis of the content of their character rather than the color of their skin; that everyone will respect the dignity and worth of human personality; and that brotherhood will be more than a few words at the end of a prayer, but the first order of business on every legislative agenda. I still have a dream today -- that justice will roll down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream. I still have a dream -- that war will come to an end, that individuals will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and nations will no longer rise up against nations. Neither will they study war any more. I still have a dream." (December 24, 1967, Ebenezer Baptist Church)

### **Questions**

What fears do you have when you think about challenging violence or injustice?

What and who can help you to face and overcome these fears?

What can you do to help Dr. King's dream come true?

## Is It Worth It? Can We Win?

**King: "And our victory will be a double victory"**

"Somehow we must be able to stand up before our most embittered opponents and say we will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force. Do to us what you will and we will still love you. Throw us in jail and we will still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators of violence into our communities after the midnight hour and drag us out on some wayside road and leave us half-dead as you beat us and we will still love you. But be you assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. And we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process. And our victory will be a double victory."

### **Questions**

How would this be a "double victory?"

Which do you think has been more effective in bringing about the positive changes from the Civil Rights movement, Dr. King's nonviolence or the use and threat of violence? Why?

### **Ultimately truth and unconditional love will win**

"Sooner or later, all the people of the world will have to discover a way to live together in peace... I refuse to accept the cynical notion that nation after nation must spiral down a militaristic stairway into the hell of thermonuclear destruction. I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the last word in reality. This why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant." Dr. King's Nobel Peace Prize acceptance speech, December 10, 1964.

Questions: From Dr. King's perspective, how is "right temporarily defeated stronger than evil triumphant"? What in history can you cite to support Dr. King's assertion? What would tend to contradict it?



## It Depends, in Part, on You!

"We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people, but for the appalling silence of the good people. We must come to see that human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability. It comes through the tireless efforts and persistent work of people willing to be co-workers with God, and without this hard work time itself becomes an ally of the forces of social stagnation."  
Dr. King, "Letter from a Birmingham City Jail."

### Questions:

1. What does Dr. King mean by "human progress never rolls in on wheels of inevitability"?
2. Have you been part of "the appalling silence of the good people" in the face of violence and injustice? How so?
3. What issue or specific kind of violence or injustice do you choose to speak out against? How do you plan to start or take the next step in speaking out?
4. What phrase, sentence or paragraph from Dr. King's speeches and writings touches you heart and calls you to action?
5. What are some ways you can share this concern with others (telling a friend, finding someone to work with you on it, wearing a Dr. King button, writing a letter to your school paper or local newspaper, etc)

## Finally, Consider This Story:

A Native American grandfather was talking to his grandson about how he felt. He said, "I feel as if I have two wolves fighting in my heart. One wolf is the vengeful, angry, violent one. The other wolf is the loving, compassionate one." The grandson asked him "Which wolf will win the fight in your heart?" The grandfather answered, "The one I feed."

### Questions:

In what ways are you currently feeding the "vengeful, angry, violent" wolf?

In what ways can you stop feeding this wolf?

In what ways are you currently feeding the "loving, compassionate" wolf?

In what ways can you feed this wolf more?

# **Sample Lesson Plan on Speaking Out Against Injustice & Violence**

## **DRAMATIC INTRODUCTION - Make Dr. King Present**

Show a video clip, play a cassette recording, or dramatically present one of Dr. King's statements or stories where he speaks out against some injustice, especially one that is important to you.

WHAT STATEMENT & WHO LEADS:

## **ACTIVITY #1 - Dr. King on the Need to Speak Out Courageously**

- Use the quotation about "silence is betrayal" from his "When Silence Is Betrayal" speech or the quotation from "The Letter from a Birmingham City Jail" (on the worksheet entitled "It Depends, in Part, on You") and have your students try to explain what Dr. King meant.
- For younger students, you will need to simplify the language and focus on just one key phrase.

WHAT QUOTATION or PHRASE & WHO LEADS:

## **ACTIVITY #2 - Your Own Willingness to Speak Out**

Share with your students how each of you has decided to speak out against some form of injustice or violence and why, plus some of your fears or other concerns in doing so.

WHAT WILL EACH OF YOU SHARE & WHO STARTS:

## **ACTIVITY #3 - Challenging Your Students to Speak Out**

- Brainstorm with your students how students their age have spoken out against forms of injustice or violence and/or how they have stood up for others who have been treated unfairly.
- Brainstorm ways that your students can themselves speak out or stand up for others and write these on the board or a piece of newsprint.

WHAT EXAMPLES WILL YOU USE TO GET THEM STARTED (IF NEEDED) & WHO LEADS:

## **ACTIVITY #4 - Making and Sharing Decisions**

**Note:** Lack of time may make it necessary for the classroom teacher to have students make their decisions after you leave.

- Make copies of the card below and give one to each of your students, asking them to write their decision about how they will speak out or stand up for someone else and thus help make Dr. King's dream come true. **OR**
- As an alternative, have students write their decisions on strips of paper or "postems" to be placed on an enlarged version of the "We Will Help the Dream Come True" poster below.
- If time permits and the classroom teachers agrees that this is a good idea, invite those students who are willing to share their decision with the whole class to come forward and share their decision.
- If students will need more time and discussion before making their decisions, ask the classroom teacher to complete this activity after you leave.

DECIDE WHETHER TO USE THE CARD OR THE POSTER AND MAKE THEM.

WHO CHECKS WITH THE TEACHER & WHO LEADS:

### **CONCLUSION - A Final Word from Dr. King and/or a Prayer**

- Choose some sentence or phrase from Dr. King that you used during your presentation that will help your students remember what you taught them.
- Creatively repeat this phrase several times and in different ways to increase its impact.
- Use a prayer of Dr. King's or your own, perhaps asking for the courage to carry out our decisions to speak out or stand with others.

WHAT PHRASE and/or PRAYER & WHO LEADS:

#### **How I Will Help Dr. King's Dream Come True**

"And so today I still have a dream. People will rise up and come to see that they are made to live together as brothers and sisters." - Dr. King

I will help Dr. King's dream come true by:

# Yes We Can, Yes We Will



"And so today I still have a dream.  
People will rise up and come to see  
that they are made to live together  
as brothers and sisters."

- Martin Luther King, Jr

## Help the Dream Come True

# Appendices

## **Dr. King Adapts Gandhi's Principles**

The two passages and questions give students a glimpse of the influence that Gandhi had on Dr. King and how Dr. King adapted Gandhi's principles of nonviolence to the realities of racism in the United States.

## **Chronology of Dr. King's Life**

This chronology gives students an outline of the major events in Dr. King's life. While some of them personal, most of them identify key moments in the Civil Rights Movement in the United States during Dr. King's lifetime.

## **Some Resources by and about Dr. King**

Some of these are books written by Dr. King and recordings of Dr. King; others are books, videos, and websites about Dr. King and the Civil Rights Movement.

## Dr. King Adapts Gandhi's Principles

"In his book NONVIOLENT RESISTANCE, Gandhi expressed the idea of love as a transforming power. 'The force of love is the same as the force of soul or truth,' wrote Gandhi. 'Complete nonviolence is absence of ill will against all that lives. It is pure love...'

"As I delved deeper into the philosophy of Gandhi, my skepticism concerning the power of love gradually diminished, and I came to see for the first time its potency in the area of social reform. Prior to reading Gandhi, I had about concluded that the ethics of Jesus were only effective in individual relationships. The 'turn the other cheek' philosophy and the 'love your enemies' philosophy were only valid, I felt, when individuals were in conflict with other individuals. When racial groups and nations were in conflict a more realistic approach seemed necessary. But after reading Gandhi, I saw how utterly mistake I was. Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale. For Gandhi, love was a potent instrument for social and collective transformation. It was in the Gandhian emphasis on love and nonviolence that I discovered the method for social reform that I had been seeking. I came to feel that this was the only morally and practically sound method open to oppressed people in their struggle for freedom." STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM, p. 97.

"Somehow we must be able to stand up before our most embittered opponents and say **we will match your capacity to inflict suffering with our capacity to endure suffering. We will meet your physical force with soul force.** Do to us what you will and we will still love you. Throw us in jail and we will still love you. Send your hooded perpetrators of violence into our communities after the midnight hour and drag us out on some wayside road and leave us half-dead as you beat us and we will still love you. But be you assured that we will wear you down by our capacity to suffer. And we will so appeal to your heart and conscience that we will win you in the process. And our victory will be a double victory." STRENGTH TO LOVE, pp. 41-50.

Questions:

What does Dr. King mean by saying "Gandhi was probably the first person in history to lift the love ethic of Jesus above mere interaction between individuals to a powerful and effective social force on a large scale"? What's the difference between "individual interactions" and "social force on a large scale"?

What does Dr. King mean by "soul force"? How did he show it?

## Chronology of the Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.

### 1929

January 15 Martin Luther King Jr. is born to Rev. and Mrs. Martin Luther King, Sr. (the former Alberta C. Williams), in Atlanta, GA.

### 1935-1944

King attends schools in Atlanta.

### 1948

February 28 King is ordained to the Baptist ministry.

June King graduates from Morehouse College, Atlanta, with a B.A. in sociology.

September King enters Crozer Seminary, Chester, PA; begins study of Gandhi.

### 1953

June 18 King marries Coretta Scott in Marion, AL.

### 1954

September 1 King becomes pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church, Montgomery, AL.

### 1955

June 5 King receives a Ph.D. in theology from Boston University.

November 17 Kings' first child, Yolanda Denise, is born.

December 5 Montgomery bus boycott begins. King is elected president of the Montgomery Improvement Association.

### 1956

January 30 A bomb is thrown on the porch of Dr. King's home. No one is injured.

February 21 Dr. King is indicted for his part in the boycott.

### 1957

February The Southern Christian Leadership Conference (SCLC) is founded. Dr. King is elected president.

May 17 Dr. King delivers a speech at the Lincoln Memorial, celebrating the third anniversary of the Supreme Court's desegregation decision.

October 23 Kings' second child, Martin Luther III, is born.

### 1958

September 3 Dr. King is arrested on a charge of loitering.

September 17 STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM: The Montgomery Story is published.

September 20 King is stabbed while in New York City.

### 1959

February 2- March 10 Dr. and Mrs. King visit India to study Gandhi.

### 1960

January 24 The King family moves to Atlanta. Dr. King becomes co-pastor, with his father, of Ebenezer Baptist Church.

October 19 King arrested at an Atlanta sit-in for violating the state's trespass law.

### 1961

January 30 The Kings' third child, Dexter Scott, is born.

December 15 Dr. King helps desegregate public facilities in Albany, GA.

December 16 Dr. King is arrested at an Albany demonstration.

### 1962

February 27 Dr. King is convicted for leading the December march in Albany.



## 1963

- March 28 The Kings' fourth child, Bernice Albertine is born.  
April 16 King writes "Letter from Birmingham City Jail."  
May 3-5 "Bull" Connor turns police dogs and fire hoses on Birmingham marchers.  
June STRENGTH TO LOVE is published.  
August 28 The March on Washington. King delivers his "I Have A Dream" speech.  
September 15 Four Black girls are killed as bomb explodes in the Sixteenth Street Baptist Church, Birmingham.

## 1964

- May-June Dr. King joins other SCLC workers demonstrating for the integration of public accommodations in St. Augustine, Fla. He is jailed.  
June King's WHY WE CAN'T WAIT is published.  
July 2 Dr King present when President Johnson signs the Civil Rights Act.  
December 10 Dr. King receives Nobel Peace Prize in Oslo, Norway.

## 1965

- March 7 1<sup>st</sup> Selma-Montgomery march with 500 marchers for Black voting rights.  
March 21-25 2<sup>nd</sup> Selma to Montgomery march with 30,000. Dr. King speaks at end.  
August 6 Dr. King present when President Johnson Voting Rights Act.

## 1966

- January 7 King announces "Open City" housing campaign in Chicago.  
March Dr. King takes over a slum building and is sued by its owner.  
May 16 Dr. King speaks at Washington, D.C. rally to protest the war in Vietnam.  
August 5 Dr. King pelted with stones in a Chicago march by angry White crowds.

## 1967

- January King writes WHERE DO WE GO FROM HERE?  
April 4 King delivers "Beyond Vietnam" speech at Riverside Church, New York City, denouncing U.S. policy in Vietnam.  
June 23 The century's worst race riot, in Detroit; riots spread to 50 U.S. cities.  
November 27 Dr. King announces a Poor People's Campaign to march on Washington.

## 1968

- March 28 Dr. King leads a Memphis march for striking sanitation workers.  
April 3 Dr. King's last speech, entitled "I've Been to the Mountaintop," is delivered at the Memphis Masonic Temple.  
April 4 Dr. King is assassinated as he stands talking on the balcony of the Lorraine Motel in Memphis. Riots erupt in 125 cities.  
April 8 Coretta King leads a march with 42,000 people in Memphis in her husband's place.  
April 9 King's funeral and burial in Atlanta. A crowd of 50,000-100,000 lines the mule-drawn cortege route. King's last sermon is broadcast to the crowd: "Say that I was a drum major for peace, for righteousness."

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- Johnson, Charles, et al. *King: The Photobiography of Martin Luther King, Jr.*
- Mattern, Joanne. *Young Martin Luther King, Jr.* Troll, 1992.
- McKissack, Patricia. *Martin Luther King, Jr.: A Man to Remember.* Children's Press, 1984.
- Rappaport, Doreen. *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* Hyperion, 2001.
- If You Lived at the Time of Martin Luther King*

### By King

- A Testament of Hope: The Essential Writings and Speeches of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, ed. by James M. Washington
- I Have a Dream: Writing and Speeches That Changed the World* ed. by James M. Washington.
- I Have a Dream.* (and Coretta Scott King). Scholastic, 1997.
- The Meaning of a Man.* Fortress, 1988.
- Letter from a Birmingham Jail.* Harper, 1994.
- Strength to Love,* Fortress, 1963.
- Stride Toward Freedom,* Harper, 1958.
- The Trumpet of Conscience.* Beacon, 1968.
- Where Do We Go From Here? Chaos or Community?* Harper & Row, 1967
- Why We Can't Wait,* Signet, 1964

### Related books

- Bridges, Ruby. *Through My Eyes.* 1999
- Bullard, Sara. *Free at Last: A History of the Civil Rights Movement and Those who Died in the Struggle.* 1994.
- Carson, Claybornem ed. *Eyes on the Prize,* Penguin Books, 1991.
- Clark, Kenneth B. *The Negro Protest: James Baldwin, Malcolm X, Martin Luther King, Jr.* Beacon Press, 1963.
- Griffin, John. *Black Like Me*
- Hill, Christine M. *John Lewis: From Freedom Rider to Congressman,* 2002.
- Levine, Ellen. *Freedom's Children: Young Civil Rights Activists Tell Their Own Stories.* 2001
- Litwin, Laura Baskes. *Fannie Lou Hammer: Fighting for the Right to Vote.* 2002
- Meltzer, Milton. *There Comes a Time: The Struggle for Civil Rights.* 2002.
- Parks, Rosa. *Rosa Parks: My Story* 1992
- Rochelle, Belinda. *Witnesses to Freedom: Young People Who Fought for Civil Rights*
- Stein, R. Conrad. *The Story of the Montgomery Bus Boycott*
- Autobiography of Malcolm X*

## **Recordings / CDs**

"A Call to Conscience" ed. by Clayborne Carson, 2001

"A Knock at Midnight" (sermons)

"In Search of Freedom: excerpts from his most memorable speeches."

"MLK: the Martin Luther King, Jr., tapes"

"We Shall Overcome"

## **Websites**

<http://www.thekingcenter.com> - official website of the Martin Luther King, Jr., Center

<http://www.civilrightsmuseum.org> - site of the National Civil Rights Museum at the Lorraine Motel in Memphis, Tennessee

<http://www.naacp.org> - site of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People

<http://www.stanford.edu/group/king> -- site for the collected papers of Dr. King

<http://www.law.cornell.edu/> -- information relating to Civil Rights legislation

## **Videos**

"Martin Luther King, Jr." Encyclopedia Britannica Great Americans series, 1982

"Biography - Martin Luther King, Jr.," A&E channel

"Our Friend, Martin"

"Eyes on the Prize"

"Selma, Lord, Selma"

# One-Day Youth Training for Teaching Dr. King's Message

## Introductory Notes

- This program is provided through a Martin Luther King Day grant from the Corporation for National Service in the US Department of Health and Human Services.
- The training day involved African American students from Cardinal Ritter College Prep and white students from St. Louis University High School, both in St. Louis, MO.
- For more information, contact Dr. McGinnis at 314-918-2630 or [jimppjn@aol.com](mailto:jimppjn@aol.com).

## 8:30-9:00: Arrival, gathering activity, goals for the day

- Have students share in teams something good that has happened in their lives recently.
- Sing "We Shall Overcome" in sign language and with a video rendition to introduce it.
- Outline the goals for the day and point out an enlarged "Yes We Can, Yes We Will Help the Dream Come True" poster (with a picture of Dr. King on it) on which to place the action decisions the youth will make near the end of the program.

## 9:00-9:15: Video presentation of Dr. King

- Play "I Still Have a Dream" (from A TRUMPET OF CONSCIENCE). See p. 39 for a written version that could be dramatically read; or a portion of his "I Have a Dream" speech (8/28/63; on MPL Homevideo MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR - "I Have a Dream")
- Have students share one thing that touched them as they listened - in teams or pairs.

## 9:20-9:45: Adult testimonies

- Several adults give short testimonies on the impact of Dr. King on our lives
- If time, a few student questions of the adults
- Have students reflect in pairs/teams on the impact of Dr. King on their lives.

## 9:45-10:05: Dr. King's Eulogy (p. 23)

- Have one person read aloud Dr. King's own eulogy - "Drum Major for Justice - perhaps wearing an enlarged photo of Dr. King (with string around the neck)
- Have 6 students hold posters, each with one of the 6 key phrases and have the whole group read these phrases aloud.
- Have students write their answer to Q #2 - what part(s) of King's eulogy do you see as part of your own purpose or in life? - and then share in pairs/teams.

## 10:05-10:15: Short break

## **Theme #1 - Nonviolent Conflict Resolution**

Presented in a way to hold students interest - by engaging their hands, hearts, heads and eyes (see the attached sheet)

### **10:15-10:30: Dr. King on nonviolent conflict resolution**

- Read (with posters) Principle #3 on Worksheet; reread it as a whole group.
- Use Case Study #1 as an example - how can you apply this principle when someone gets really angry with you for losing their CD, starting with the first question about suffering the anger of the opponent.
- Do additional questions as time permits starting with Q #2 (individually for a moment and then solicit options).

### **10:30-10:45: Brainstorming how to handle conflict situations (Worksheet, p.15)**

- Do example #1 as a whole group
- Have students do the second example as teams at tables, challenging them to find as many possible responses as they can.
- Use a personal example as a transition to the next step - describe a situation you're in and have students identify as many options as they can for your response and what would be closest to how they/you think Dr. King would respond. If appropriate, roleplay these options.

### **10:45-11:00: Applying King's principles to our own conflict situations (Worksheet, p.16)**

- Have students do individual examples on their worksheet of a recent or current conflict, suggesting categories to consider (at home, school, work, neighborhood, etc).
- Find a volunteer to have their situation roleplayed with the whole group. Use a "TV remote control" as a way to "pause" - freezing the action to consider options; then "play" to pursue one of the options; then "rewind" to try a better way; etc.

### **11:00-11:40: Creating, rehearsing, & evaluating roleplays for their individual classes**

- Working as teams at each table (5 tables; 2 teams per table), have each team identify a conflict situation to roleplay that is appropriate for their grade level where they can use some of the available props
- Take turns presenting their roleplay to each other (in 5 different spaces) and give each other feedback.
- As a whole group, get feedback on how the team roleplays went and questions they raised.
- Do one or two roleplays for the whole group to evaluate and suggest improvements.

### **11:40-11:45: Review the "Sample Lesson Plan" (pp. 17-18)**

### **11:45-12:30: Lunch**

## **Theme #2 - Speaking Out Courageously**

### **12:30-1:00: Models for presenting Dr. King speaking out against injustice**

- Dr. King's fears with the threatening phone call (p. 25). Perhaps use a phone and table as props and pacing back and forth to further dramatize this statement
- Show video of King speaking during the civil rights efforts (from "Speeches of Dr. King")
- Show the video of his challenging the Vietnam War (also on the "Speeches" video)
- Reading excerpts from "When Silence Is Betrayal" (pp. 37-38), with posters for the key phrases - "But we must move on" and "But we must speak")

### **1:00-1:30: Personal reflection and decisions**

- Find/make a quiet space where students can spread out without disturbing one another.
- Read aloud King's statement on "the appalling silence of good people" (p. 41) and have students write their answers to Question #2 about their own "appalling silence."
- Have students identify what it is that they want to speak out for or against. If they're not sure, have them read some of Dr. King's reflections on materialism, racism, and militarism (Worksheets, pp. 8-15). Then have them answer Question #3 and write their decision on a "postem" to be placed on a poster during the closing ceremony.
- Have students choose one sentence, phrase, or paragraph of Dr. King's statements that has touched their heart and reminds them of what they want to stand for or be in life and write that in Question #4.

### **1:30-1:50: Preparation of statements**

- Have each team meet separately and each team member identify which phrase, sentence or paragraph of Dr. King's has touched them
- Have each team decide which of these statements they want to use as their example of speaking out for Dr. King as a group.
- Prepare their statement with photos, posters, etc)

### **1:50-2:30: Presentations**

- Each team makes their dramatic presentation of Dr. King's statement to the whole group, with one team member saying how that statement touched them personally.
- Point out Sample Lesson Plan and "We Will... Wheel" and worksheets (pp. 43-45)

### **2:30-2:45: Concluding prayer in the chapel**

- Use one of King's reflections, perhaps one from the videos, to replay
- Group prayer
- Youth place their "postem" with their decision on a "Yes We Can, Yes We Will ... Help the Dream Come True" poster.
- Conferring the Dr. King buttons or some other symbol of commitment

# Youth Pledge of Nonviolence

Making peace must start within ourselves and in our school.  
Each of us, members of \_\_\_\_\_ school,  
commit ourselves as best we can to become nonviolent and peaceable people:

## **To Respect Self and Others**

To respect myself, to affirm others and to avoid uncaring criticism, hateful words, physical or emotional attacks, negative peer pressure, and self-destructive behavior, including abuse of alcohol and drugs.

## **To Communicate Better**

To share my feelings honestly, to look for safe ways to express my anger and other emotions, to work at solving problems peacefully, and to encourage an open system of communication throughout the school.

## **To Listen**

To listen carefully to others, especially those who disagree with me, and to consider others' feelings and needs as valid as my own.

## **To Forgive**

To apologize and make amends when I have hurt another, to forgive others, and to keep from holding grudges.

## **To Respect Nature**

To treat the environment and all living things with respect and care and to promote environmental concern in our school.

## **To Recreate Nonviolently**

To select activities and entertainment that strengthen my commitment to nonviolence and that promote a less violent society, and to avoid social activities that make violence look exciting, funny or acceptable.

## **To Act Courageously**

To actively challenge violence in all its forms whenever I encounter it, whether at home, at school, at work, or in the community, and to stand with others who are treated unfairly, even if it means standing alone.

**"Eliminating violence, one school at a time, starting with our own."**

Institute for Peace & Justice,  
475 E. Lockwood Ave, St. Louis, MO 63119  
(314) 918-2630 • E-mail: ppjn@aol.com; Web: [www.ipj-ppj.org](http://www.ipj-ppj.org)

# **Dr. King and the Pledge of Nonviolence**

## **A Mini-Unit for Junior/Senior High Students**

### **Introduction**

#### **1. Ice-breaker - "We Shall Overcome"**

- As the students come in, hum, play on a recorder, or show on a video the "We Shall Overcome" song and see if the students can identify it and state the lyrics.
- Teaching them the sign language gestures for the song helps to engage their whole person.

#### **2. Introduce Yourself & the Pledge of Nonviolence**

- Very brief personal history - 3 or 4 short points
- The Pledge of Nonviolence - a tool created in the mid-1990s through the Institute for Peace and Justice, as a way of countering the escalating violence in our nation and world, beginning with the way we live daily. Add a note that while there are 7 components in the Pledge, there is time for only 4 (or 5) of them at this assembly.

#### **3. Personal Connection with Dr. King - testimony of how Dr. King has impacted you.**

For me, it was first as a member of the Tennessee National Guard stationed in Memphis at the time of King's assassination and the racist/hate violence I witnessed and challenged.

#### **4. Dr. King as the Model and Teacher of the Pledge**

- King shows us what it means to be a peacemaker in the US - to work for justice and reconciliation through nonviolence
- King shows us what God wants of us and our nation - God's "prophet" for the US, but wasn't always a prophet. He had to grow into this, as we will now experience.

## **Dr. King's Journey into Prophetic Nonviolence**

#### **1. Rosa Parks & the beginning of the Montgomery Bus Boycott (Dec. 1955)**

Dr. King didn't agree to be the chair of the Montgomery Bus Boycott Association when first asked. He was afraid of what it might cost him. But then he agreed.

#### **2. The telephone threat in early January 1956**

- Introductory note: Dr. King was afraid just like we often are, as he admits in describing a phone call he received just before his 27<sup>th</sup> birthday - written on the wall of the display of Dr. King's kitchen, in the Civil Rights Museum in Atlanta, Georgia.



- Dramatize this statement with a telephone and kitchen table and pace back and forth as Dr. King did, as you read/recite the following account:

Just weeks after agreeing to be the leader of the Montgomery Bus Boycott, I was sitting at his kitchen table when my phone rang. I picked up the phone and heard --

"Listen, nigger, we've taken all we want from you. Before next week you'll be sorry you ever came to Montgomery.' I hung up but I could not sleep... I got out of bed and began to walk the floor. I tried to think of a way to move out of the picture without appearing to be a coward. In this state of exhaustion, when my courage had almost gone, I determined to take my problem to God. My head in my hands, I bowed over the kitchen table and prayed aloud:

"I am here taking a stand for what I believe is right. But now I am afraid. The people are looking to me for leadership, and if I stand before them without strength and courage, they too will falter. I am at the end of my powers. I have nothing left... I can't face it alone.'

"At that moment I experienced the presence of the Divine as I had never before experienced God. It seemed as though I could hear the quiet assurance of an inner voice saying: 'Stand up for righteousness; stand up for truth. God will be at your side forever.' Almost at once my fears began to pass from me. My uncertainty disappeared. I was ready to face anything. The outer situation remained the same, but God had given me inner calm. Three nights later, our home was bombed."

### 3. "I Have a Dream" - The March on Washington, August 28, 1963

Read or use a video recording of the end of Dr. King's famous speech.

(from the MPI Home Video MARTIN LUTHER KING: "I Have a Dream")

**Note:** each time you read a statement of Dr. King, it might be good to hold or wear (with string around your neck) an enlarged photo of Dr. King.

OR

### "I Still Have a Dream" - Final Christmas Sermon, December 24, 1967

Read or use a video recording of the end of Dr. King's famous sermon at Ebenezer Baptist Church, putting the bold phrases on posters to reinforce the message

"So today **I still have a dream** -- that we will rise up and come to see that we are made to **live together as brothers and sisters**. I still have a dream this morning -- that one day every person of color in the world will be judged on the basis of the **content of their character** rather than the color of their skin; that everyone will respect the dignity and worth of human personality; and that brotherhood will be more than a few words at the end of a prayer, but the first order of business on every legislative agenda. I still have a dream today -- that justice will roll down like water and righteousness like a mighty stream. I still have a dream -- that **war will come to an end**, that individuals will beat their swords into plowshares and their spears into pruning hooks, and nations will no longer rise up against nations. Neither will they study war any more. I still have a dream."

#### **4. The March in Memphis and King's Assassination – March 27-April 4, 1968**

- Tell the story of the march on March 27 with the striking sanitation workers and how some high school students disrupted it by breaking store windows and looting. The police ended the march, Dr. King was taken away, and National Guard units came to Memphis from across the state. Then King returned on April 4 for a march the next day.
- Play the video recording of Dr. King's assassination and his final reflection in Memphis on "I've seen the Promised Land" (from the MPI Home Video MARTIN LUTHER KING: "I Have a Dream")

#### **5. Transition to the Pledge of Nonviolence**

Have students stand and sing "We Shall Overcome" with sign language gestures if possible.

### **Dr. King and the Pledge of Nonviolence**

#### **1. "The Pledge of Nonviolence – The Power of Love"**

- Read twice this quotation from STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM, p. 87, as a way of introducing the core of the Pledge of Nonviolence – "the power of love," with a poster reading "The Pledge of Nonviolence – The Power of Love"

"Hate begets hate; violence begets violence;  
toughness begets a greater toughness.  
We must meet the forces of hate with the power of love;  
we must meet physical force with soul force."

- The Pledge is a way of challenging hate, violence, and toughness with the power of love, a way of escalating love in the face of escalating violence.

#### **2. "Respect Self and Others"**

##### **Suggestions from students and teachers**

- Use a colorful poster with these words to introduce this component of the Pledge.
- Using the sign language gestures focuses the students and reinforces the learning.
- Ask students to name 2 to 4 specific ways that adults/teachers can show them respect. Have students stand and/or come to the front to state their idea. Repeat each idea. See if they can identify all the suggestions that were given.
- Ask teachers to name 2 to 4 specific ways that students can show them respect. Have teachers stand and/or come to the front to state their idea. Repeat each idea. See if the students can identify all the suggestions that were given.
- Ask students to name 2 to 4 specific ways that they can show each other respect. Again, have student stand and/or come to the front to state their idea. Repeat each idea. See if the students can identify all the suggestions that were given.

### Dr. King on Respect

- Read the excerpt from King's "I Have a Dream" or "I Still Have a Dream" speeches, putting the bold phrases on posters for students to repeat aloud:

"I still have a dream this morning -  
that one day every person of color in the world will be judged on the basis of  
**the content of their character** rather than **the color of their skin**;

- Ask students to explain what Dr. King means.
- Ask students to identify the different ways in which young people judge one another - looks, clothes, possessions, popularity, physical strength or sports - and what effects these judgments have on others.
- Ask students to decide one way they can put Dr. King's emphasis on "character" into practice in their own life.

### Optional concluding song -

- Play "See Me Beautiful" (from TEACHING PEACE by Red Grammer)
- Ask students to identify what it is that makes a person truly "beautiful"

## 3. "Communicate Better - Talk It Out"

### Suggestions from students and teachers

- Use a colorful poster with these words to introduce this component of the Pledge.
- Use the sign language gestures to visually reinforce the learning.
- Ask students and teachers to identify what they can do when someone is so "in-their-face" angry that talking it out isn't possible right then, something they can do so as not to escalate the situation into a fight. Have students stand and/or come to the front to state their idea. Repeat each idea.
- At the end, see if they can identify all the suggestions that were given.

### Dr. King on meeting anger with calm.

- Read the excerpt from King's STRIDE TOWARD FREEDOM, p. 121, putting the bold phrases on posters for students to repeat aloud:

"You must **not harbor anger**,' I admonished myself.  
'You must be willing to **suffer the anger of the opponent**, and yet not return anger.  
You must **not become bitter**.  
No matter how emotional your opponents are, you must **become calm**."

- Ask students to explain what Dr. King means.
- Ask students to identify some ways of "becoming calm" in the midst of anger. Have students stand and/or come to the front to state their idea. Repeat each idea.
- At the end, see if they can identify all the suggestions that were given.

#### 4. "Listen Carefully" (if time permits)

- Use a colorful poster with these words to introduce this component of the Pledge.
- Use the sign language gestures to visually reinforce the learning.
- Paraphrase the following quotation from Dr. King's *THE TRUMPET OF CONSCIENCE*, p. 29, putting the bold phrases on posters for students to repeat aloud.

"Here is the true meaning of compassion and nonviolence, when they help us to see the enemy's point of view, to hear his questions, to **know his assessment of ourselves**.

For from his view we may indeed see the basic weakness of our condition.

And if **we are mature, we may learn and grow** and profit from the wisdom of those who are called the opposition."

- Give an example from your own life about how hard it was to listen to constructive criticism from someone, but how in the long run it helped you.
- Ask students to give examples of this from their own lives, perhaps starting with a teacher if students are reluctant to share examples.

#### 5. "Forgive"

##### Suggestions from students

- Use a colorful poster with this word to introduce this component of the Pledge.
- Use the sign language gesture to visually reinforce the learning.
- Ask students to identify reasons why it is good, even necessary, to forgive. Have students stand and/or come to the front to state their idea. Repeat each idea.
- In a Christian setting, hold a crucifix silently before the assembly and then ask what the crucifix tells us about forgiveness.
- At the end, see if they can identify all the suggestions that were given.

##### Dr. King on forgiveness

- Read the excerpt from King's *STRENGTH TO LOVE*, pp. 42-43, putting the bold phrase on a poster for students to repeat aloud:

"It is impossible even to begin the act of loving one's enemies without the prior acceptance of the necessity, over and over again, of forgiving those who inflict evil and injury upon us... Forgiveness is a catalyst **creating the atmosphere necessary for a fresh start** and a new beginning... The evil deed is no longer a mental block impeding a new relationship..."

- Ask students to explain what Dr. King means.
- Ask students to think of a situation in their own lives where forgiveness made a fresh start possible. You might give or ask a teacher to give an example, to help students get started.
- Ask one or two students stand and/or come to the front to share their example.

## Alternative or follow-up example - THE STORY OF RUBY BRIDGES

Reading or summarizing THE STORY OF RUBY BRIDGES by Robert Coles is an engaging way of touching students' hearts on the possibility and necessity of forgiveness, using the witness of this 6-year-old African American girl who integrated the New Orleans public schools in 1960. Each day on her way to school she said this prayer of forgiveness for those adults who cursed and threatened her each time she walked into the school building:

"Please, God, try to forgive those people. Because even if they say those bad things, they don't know what they're doing. So You could forgive them, just like You did those folks a long time ago when they said terrible things about You."

### 6. "Be Courageous"

#### Suggestions from students

- Use a colorful poster with this word to introduce this component of the Pledge.
- Use the sign language gesture to visually reinforce the learning.
- Ask students to identify ways that Dr. King was courageous.

#### Dr. King on the courage to speak out

- Read the excerpt from King's "When Silence Is Betrayal" speech (April 4, 1967), putting the bold phrase on a poster for students to repeat aloud (or just use the title of the speech).

"A time comes **when silence is betrayal**... Some of us who have already begun to break the silence of the night have found that the calling to speak is often a vocation of agony, but we must speak. We must speak with all the humility that is appropriate to our limited vision, but **we must speak**. For we are deeply in need of a new way beyond the darkness that seems so close around us.

"**We are called to speak for the weak, for the voiceless**, for the victims of our nation, for those it calls "enemy," for no document from human hands can make these humans any less our brothers. I think of them, too, because it is clear to me that there will be no meaningful solution until some attempt is made to know them and hear their broken cries..."

- Ask students to explain what Dr. King means by "silence is betrayal."
- Ask students to name some of the issues Dr. King spoke out about, especially ones that got him in trouble (racism, materialism/poverty, and the war in Vietnam/militarism)
- Ask students to give examples of situations where they can betray others by their silence, when they didn't defend others who were being put-down or mistreated. You might give or ask a teacher to give an example, to help students get started.
- Ask students why they sometimes hesitate to speak out, what they are afraid of. Using your own example or asking a teacher to share first can often be helpful.

**OPTIONAL: To reinforce Dr. King's concern about silent betrayal -**

Read and discuss this sentence from Dr. King's LETTER FROM A BIRMINGHAM CITY JAIL, perhaps substituting "hateful" for "vitriolic," and make a poster of the bold phrase.

"We will have to repent in this generation not merely for the vitriolic words and actions of the bad people, but for **the appalling silence of the good people.**

Ask students what Dr. King means by "the appalling silence of the good people" and give examples of this from their own lives.

**7. OPTIONAL: Dr. King's Own Eulogy as His Final Challenge to Us**

- Read "Then My Living Will Not Be in Vain," (Ebenezer Baptist Church, February 1968) and put the bold phrases on posters.
- Have six students hold each of the six posters and step forward to have the assembly read those words aloud from their poster as they occur in the eulogy.

"...I'd like somebody to mention that day that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to **give his life serving others.**

I'd like for somebody to say that day that Martin Luther King Jr. tried to **love somebody.**

I want you to say that I tried to **be right on the war question.**

I want you to be able to say that day that I did try in my life to **clothe those who were naked.**

I want you to say on that day that I did try in my life to **visit those who were in prison.**

And I want you to say that I tried to **love and serve humanity...**

And that is all I want to say. If I can help somebody as I pass along; if I can cheer somebody with a song; if I can show somebody he's traveling wrong; then my living will not be in vain..."

**8. Responding to Dr. King's Dream**

- Show the "We Will Help the Dream Come True" poster you have made from the sample on the next page and inform students that their teachers will be inviting them to make action decisions in the days ahead about what each of them can do to help make Dr. King's dream come true.
- Sing "We Shall Overcome" one more time standing and using the sign language gestures.

## Follow-Up Activity Options

### Action Decisions - "Helping the Dream Come True"

- Invite teachers to make their own "Yes We Can, Yes We Will ...Help the Dream Come True" poster as a way of encouraging their students identify specific ways each of them can help make Dr. King's dream come true and express these action decisions publicly.
- Suggest that teachers use strips of colored paper or "postems" for their students to write their action decision on and put those strips or "postems" on the the poster.
- Teachers might use the 4 or 5 components of the Pledge of Nonviolence presented at the assembly, one component at a time, as the focus for these decisions.
- Encourage teachers to repeat this activity weekly for a month or more, each time focusing on one of the components of the Pledge, as a way of deepening the impact of Dr. King's witness and the Pledge of Nonviolence on the students and faculty.

### Teaching Dr. King and the Pledge of Nonviolence to younger students

Another good follow-up activity is to have the older students prepare short presentations on one or more of the components of the Pledge of Nonviolence. These presentations might be done in pairs and include the following:

- An appropriate quotation (or paraphrase of a quotation) from Dr. King on the theme
- An example from each student's own life about how they are trying to live out Dr. King's message and put that component of the Pledge into practice.
- A brainstorming discussion of how the younger students can themselves live out Dr. King's message and put that component of the Pledge into practice.
- Action decisions by the younger students and writing them down on some poster like the "Yes We Can, Yes We Will ... Help the Dream Come True" on which the younger students can place their action decisions.