

LEVELED BOOK • N

# Dr. King's Memorial



**Multi  
level  
H•K•N**

Written by Kira Freed

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## Focus Question

Who was Dr. King, and why is he important?



## Table of Contents

Introduction . . . . .	4
The South . . . . .	6
Dr. King's Work . . . . .	9
New Laws . . . . .	12
Dr. King's Dream . . . . .	14
Glossary . . . . .	16

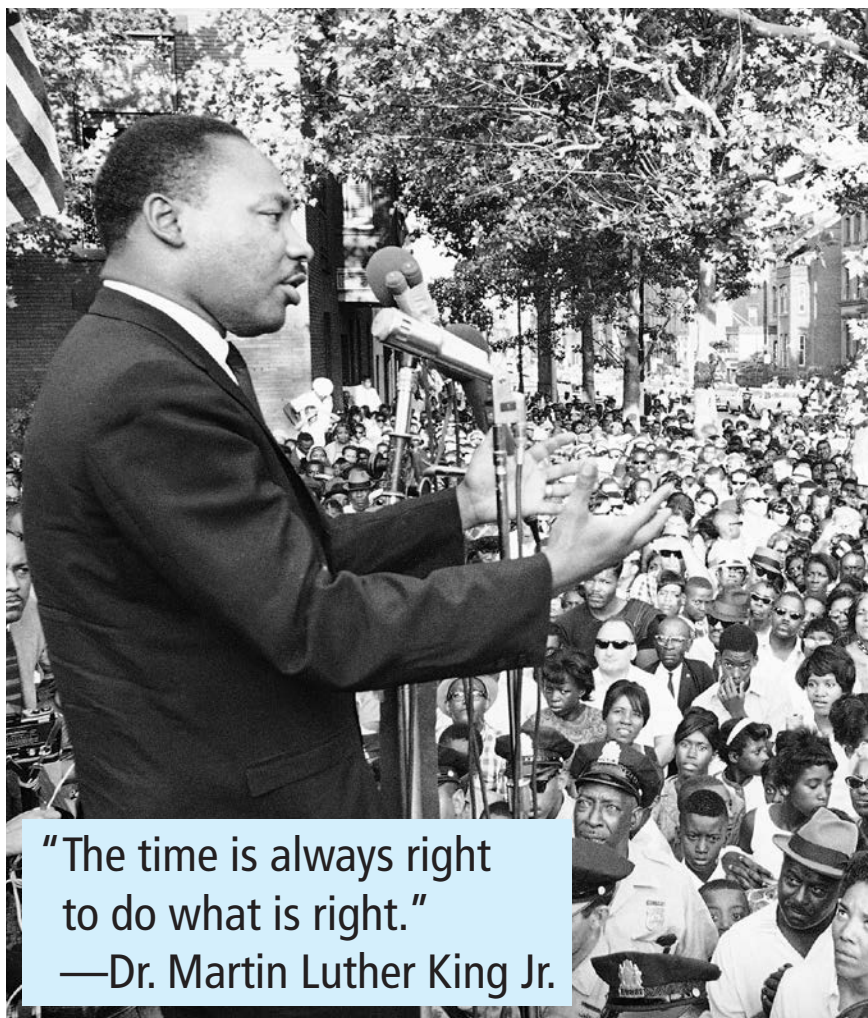


Visitors admire the Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial.

## Introduction

Each year, people of all ages visit the **memorial** that honors Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. in Washington, D.C. A large sculpture of Dr. King and some of his famous words **inspire** visitors.





"The time is always right  
to do what is right."  
—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Many people listen as Dr. King gives a speech about equality.

Who was Dr. King, and why do we remember him? Dr. King was a **civil rights** leader. He worked throughout his lifetime for equal rights for all people.



A young Martin Luther King Jr. (front right) is shown with his family.

## The South

Dr. King grew up in Georgia in the 1930s. During his childhood in the South, he faced **racism** and **laws** that were unfair to black people.



Black people and white people could not drink from the same drinking fountains in the South.

Laws in the United States kept black people and white people **segregated**, or separate, from one another.

Not all states followed these laws.

However, many states in the South **enforced** them.

In the South, black people and white people were not allowed to marry each other. Black children could not attend the same schools as white children. Black people had to use different drinking fountains from white people.



Black people sit at the back of a bus in Dallas, Texas.

Black people had to sit at the backs of city buses. The front seats were reserved only for white people.

Black people were not allowed to ride in the same railroad cars as white people. Black people and white people had to use different public restrooms.

The laws said that everything would be “separate but equal.” However, many facilities for black people were not as nice, clean, or well kept as those for white people.

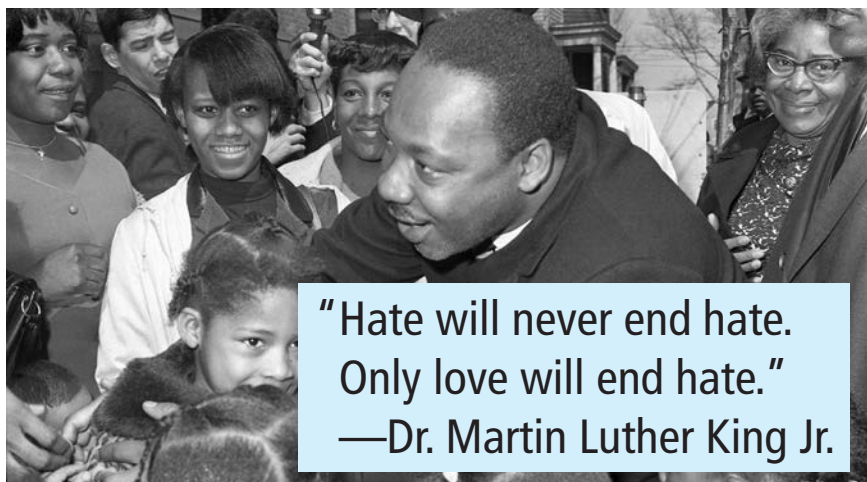




Dr. King talks to people about unfair laws at a news conference in Selma, Alabama, in 1965.

## Dr. King's Work

Dr. King wanted the unfair laws to change and for all races to be treated equally under the law. His dream was that Americans would come together as one people without racism. He gave many speeches and spoke with many people about how to change the laws.



"Hate will never end hate.  
Only love will end hate."  
—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Dr. King wanted to use **peaceful**, or nonviolent, ways to make changes. He said there was already too much hate in the world to use violence to fight racism.

Dr. King and his followers **protested** the unfair laws by refusing to follow them. For example, many black people held sit-ins, during which they sat at whites-only counters in restaurants. They refused to move, and some people, including Dr. King, were arrested.



Dr. King leads a civil rights march in Boston, Massachusetts, in 1965.

Dr. King and his supporters marched with many people as another nonviolent way to protest racism and the segregation laws. They hoped to make people, especially lawmakers, realize that the unfair laws should be changed. After marching in Washington, D.C., Dr. King delivered his famous “I Have a Dream” speech at the Lincoln Memorial in 1963. He affected many people with his powerful words.



Dr. King shakes hands with President Lyndon Johnson in 1964. President Johnson signed a bill that changed the unfair laws.

## New Laws

Because of the work of Dr. King and others, the government changed the segregation laws in 1964. The new laws are much fairer. It is now against the law to treat some people better than other people because of their race.

### Do You Know?

Rosa Parks refused to move from her front seat on a city bus to a back seat in 1955. When she was arrested, many people around the country became angry about her treatment. Her courage helped change the unfair laws.





Two black girls go to a school that used to be for white children only in Baltimore, Maryland.

Black children and white children can go to the same schools. People can sit where they want on buses and trains, and in restaurants. The same water fountains and restrooms can be used by anyone, no matter their race.

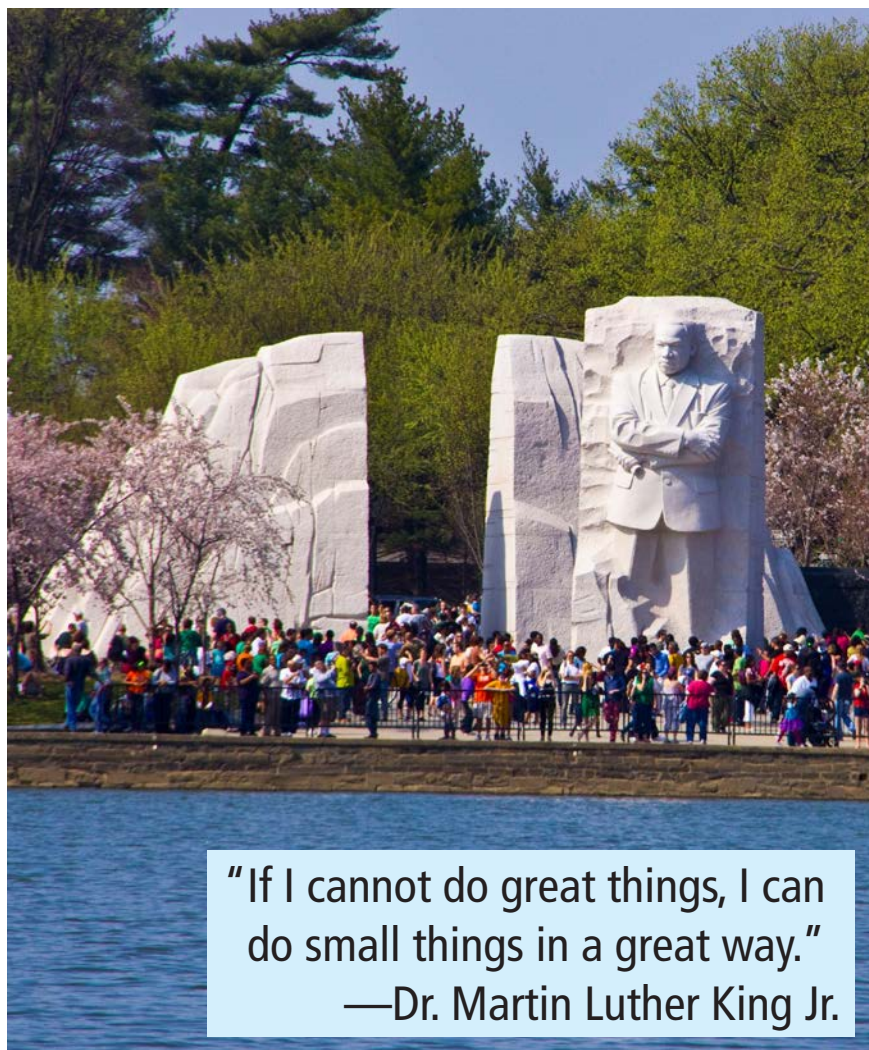




Dr. King waves to the crowd in Washington, D.C., before he gives his "I Have a Dream" speech in 1963.

## **Dr. King's Dream**

Dr. King wanted all people to be free, and he wanted laws that treated everyone fairly. He dreamed that people of every race would get along.



"If I cannot do great things, I can  
do small things in a great way."  
—Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

We remember Dr. King when we  
visit the memorial in Washington,  
D.C. By honoring his dream of fair  
laws and free people, we carry on  
the work that Dr. King began.

## Glossary

<b>civil rights</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	rights that guarantee freedom and equality for all citizens (p. 5)
<b>enforced</b> ( <i>v.</i> )	made sure people obeyed laws or rules (p. 7)
<b>inspire</b> ( <i>v.</i> )	to encourage a person to act (p. 4)
<b>laws</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	rules or sets of rules made by a government (p. 6)
<b>memorial</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	something that represents the memory of a person, place, thing, or event (p. 4)
<b>peaceful</b> ( <i>adj.</i> )	without physical fighting; nonviolent (p. 10)
<b>protested</b> ( <i>v.</i> )	showed strong disagreement (p. 10)
<b>racism</b> ( <i>n.</i> )	the belief that one race is better than another; unequal treatment based on such a belief (p. 6)
<b>segregated</b> ( <i>adj.</i> )	kept apart based on group differences (p. 7)

## Words to Know

civil rights  
enforced  
inspire  
laws  
memorial

peaceful  
protested  
racism  
segregated

**Title page:** Dr. King with his wife and children in 1966

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### Correlation

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# Dr. King's Memorial

*A Reading A-Z Level N Leveled Book*

*Word Count: 548*

## Connections

### Writing and Art

Write a paragraph about why it was important for Dr. King to make changes in a peaceful way.

### Social Studies

Learn more about Dr. King's life. Make a timeline that includes five important events from his life.



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