I Have A Dream: The Life and Times of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

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TEACHER RESOURCES
Grades 3-12
Virginia Rep’s I Have A Dream and this study guide are presented in support of the Virginia Standards of Learning in History and Social Sciences.

ON THE WEB
The King Center
thekingcenter.org/

The Library of Congress: America’s Story - Meet Amazing Americans: Martin Luther King, Jr.
americaslibrary.gov/aa/king/aa__king_subj.html

National Archives and Records Administration: Text of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “I Have a Dream” Speech, 1963
archives.gov/press/exhibits/dream-speech.pdf

National Geographic Kids:
Martin Luther King, Jr.
kids.nationalgeographic.com/explore/history/martin-luther-king-jr/

National Park Service: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site
nps.gov/malu/index.htm

The Nobel Prize - Biography of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1964/king-bio.html

PLAY SYNOPSIS
Virginia Repertory Theatre is proud to present I Have A Dream: The Life and Times of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. This compelling dramatization of the life and times of one of the most influential and charismatic leaders of the “American Century” and the Civil Rights movement will inspire your students as they experience this great leader’s struggle and his dream of lifting “our nation from the quicksand of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood.” The play traces Dr. King’s life from his humble beginnings in Atlanta, Georgia through his extraordinary evolution into one of the 20th century’s foremost figures.
Analyzing Primary Sources: The Text of “I Have A Dream”

A primary source is a document or object written or created during the time under study. Primary sources offer an inside view from the context of a particular time in history. Primary sources can be documents such as diaries, speeches, letters, or interviews, or they can be photographs, music, or artifacts such as pottery, clothing or paintings.

During the August 28, 1963 March on Washington, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. delivered a speech on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial that became known as the “I Have A Dream” speech. Studying the text of the speech, a primary source document, provides us insight into the goals of the marchers, the emotions of that day, and the social climate that precipitated Dr. King’s ideas expressed in the speech.

EXCERPT FROM “I HAVE A DREAM”

I say to you today, my friends, so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out in the true meaning of its creed, “We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal.” I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, sons of former slaves and the sons of former slaveowners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.”

Answer the following questions on a separate sheet of paper:

1. Dr. King says that his dream “is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.” What is the “American dream,” and what do you think Dr. King means by this statement?

2. Dr. King uses Mississippi as an example of “a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression...” What injustices and oppression were occurring in Mississippi (and other places) at this time in history?

3. In your opinion, has Dr. King’s dream come true? Why or why not?

4. Read Dr. King’s full speech at teachingamericanhistory.org/library/document/i-have-a-dream-speech/ What do you think he means when he says in paragraph 7 “We cannot walk alone.”?
Dr. King and his followers used several methods to bring about social change, including those found below. The underpinnings of all these methods was a philosophy of nonviolence.

Draw lines to match each method below with its definition. Then, using social studies resources and the internet, find an example of each nonviolent method and record it. This can be done individually, in small groups, or as a class.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>civil disobedience</th>
<th>boycott</th>
<th>demonstration</th>
<th>negotiation</th>
<th>sit-in</th>
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<tr>
<td>Process of discussing, compromising, and bargaining in good faith to secure a resolution to a conflict</td>
<td>The act of openly disobeying an unjust law and accepting the consequences to protest an injustice</td>
<td>Tactic in which protesters sit down at the site of an injustice and refuse to move for a specified period of time or until goals are achieved</td>
<td>Withdrawal of support from a company, government or institution committing an injustice, such as racial discrimination</td>
<td>Gatherings and protest activities organized to build support for peace, justice or social reform</td>
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Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon, which cuts without wounding and ennobles the man who wields it. It is a sword that heals.

- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

**TIMELINE OF THE CIVIL RIGHTS MOVEMENT**

The following events were pivotal in the Civil Rights Movement in America. Use research tools to put them in order on the timeline below. Draw an arrow from the event to the correct year in timeline.

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Assassinated
- Voting Rights Act
- “I Have A Dream” Speech
- Brown vs. Board of Education
- Montgomery Bus Boycott
- Integration of the US Military
- Birmingham Church Bombing
- Era of Massive Resistance
- Civil Rights Act
- March on Washington

EXTENSION

Mahatma Gandhi served as an inspiration to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. As a pioneer of resistance through mass nonviolent civil disobedience, Gandhi became one of the major political and spiritual leaders of his time. Dr. King said, “Gandhi was the guiding light of our technique for nonviolent social change.” Research three ways that Gandhi enacted social change in India.

1. 
2. 
3. 

MATCHING

Martin Luther King, Jr. was influenced by the teachings of several other prominent men. Read the quotes below and write the correct letter with the appropriate name.

1. Frederick Douglass  
2. W.E.B. du Bois  
3. Martin Luther King, Jr.  
4. Mahatma Gandhi  
5. Henry David Thoreau  

A “Live your beliefs and you can turn the world around.”
B “You are not judged by the height you have risen, but from the depth you have climbed.”
C “There is in this world no such force as the force of a person determined to rise.”
D “When it (violence) appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent.”
E “We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline.”

Answer key: 1 - B; 2 - C; 3 - E; 4 - D; 5 - A

DID YOU KNOW? The name on Martin Luther King, Jr.’s birth certificate is Michael Luther King. Martin’s father wanted to name his son after himself, but Martin’s father went by the nickname “Mike” (even though his name was Martin). So Martin Luther King, Jr. ended up with “Michael” on his birth certificate by mistake! It was later changed to Martin.
Cues at the Theatre

When you are in an audience at *I Have A Dream* or any play, pay attention to the following:

**Cue**
1) Command given by stage management to the technical departments.
2) Any signal (spoken line, action or count) that indicates another action should follow.

**House Lights**
The auditorium lighting, which is commonly faded out when the performance starts.

**Blackout**
The act of turning off (or fading out) stage lighting.

**Curtain Call**
At the end of a performance, the acknowledgment of applause by actors — the bows.

**Build / Check**
Build is a smooth increase in sound or light level; check is the opposite — a smooth diminishment of light or sound.

**Fade**
An increase, decrease, or change in lighting or sound.