

## STUDY GUIDE

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

By Bruce Craig Miller

### 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/](http://thekingcenter.org/)

The Library of Congress: America's Story - Meet Amazing Americans: Martin Luther King, Jr.  
[americaslibrary.gov/aa/king/aa\\_king\\_subj.html](http://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](http://archives.gov/press/exhibits/dream-speech.pdf)

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

National Park Service: Martin Luther King, Jr. National Historic Site  
[nps.gov/malu/index.htm](http://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](http://nobelprize.org/nobel_prizes/peace/laureates/1964/king-bio.html)

# I HAVE A DREAM

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



Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. giving his "I Have a Dream" speech. Washington, D.C., August 28, 1963. Source: National Archives

### 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.



## KNOW YOUR GENRE: BIOGRAPHY

A biography is an account of someone’s life written by someone else. Sometimes, biographies are called a “life story”, “life history” or “memoir”.

### 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/](http://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.”?

# Social Change through Nonviolence

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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.



Nonviolence is a powerful and just weapon, which cuts without wounding and ennobles the man who wields it. It is a sword that heals.

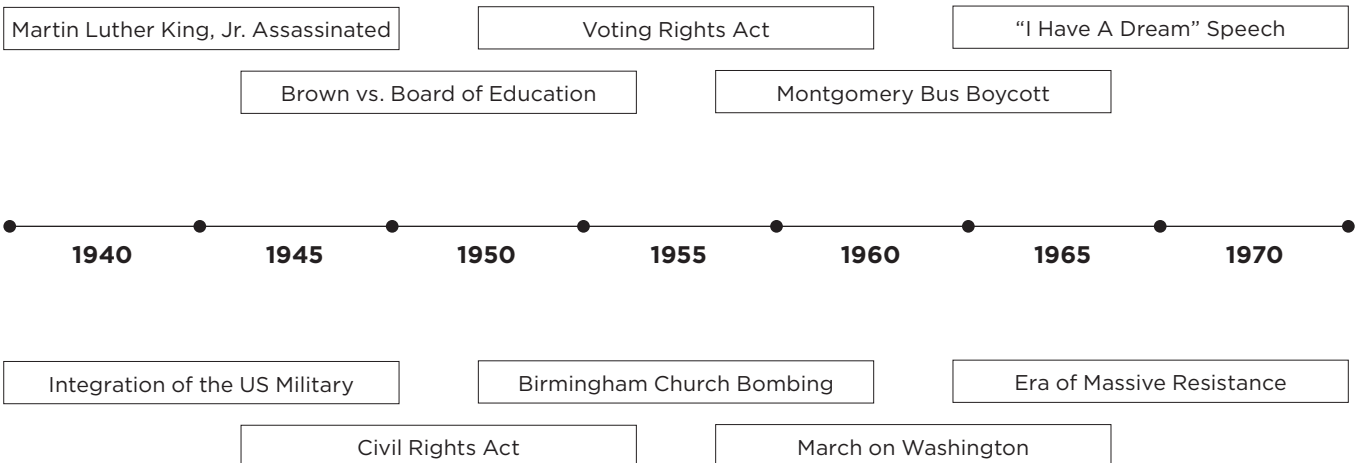
- Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.



civil disobedience	boycott	demonstration	negotiation	sit-in
Process of discussing, compromising, and bargaining in good faith to secure a resolution to a conflict	The act of openly disobeying an unjust law and accepting the consequences to protest an injustice	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	Withdrawal of support from a company, government or institution committing an injustice, such as racial discrimination	Gatherings and protest activities organized to build support for peace, justice or social reform

### 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.



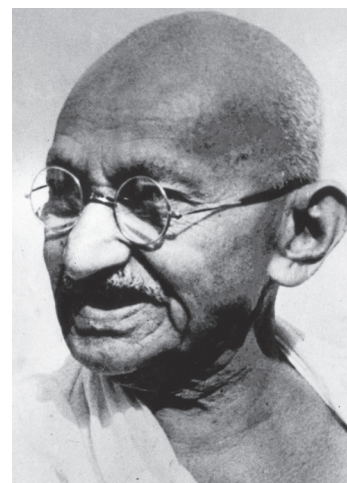
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### EXTENSION

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. \_\_\_\_\_



**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.

### 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      | _____ | <b>A</b> "Live your beliefs and you can turn the world around."  |
| 2. W.E.B. du Bois          | _____ | <b>B</b> "You are not judged by the height you have risen, but from the depth you have climbed."             |
| 3. Martin Luther King, Jr. | _____ | <b>C</b> "There is in this world no such force as the force of a person determined to rise."                 |
| 4. Mahatma Gandhi          | _____ | <b>D</b> "When it (violence) appears to do good, the good is only temporary; the evil it does is permanent." |
| 5. Henry David Thoreau     | _____ | <b>E</b> "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

# Cues at the Theatre

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