

## What was Martin Luther King's Dream?



### Retrieval Practice

1. Rosa Parks didn't give up her seat on the bus because she was tired after a hard day at work.

True / False

2. Which amendment in the United States Constitution guaranteed equal rights for all people?

a. The first amendment

b. The fifth amendment

c. The fourteenth amendment

d. The fortieth amendment

3. In the 1950s, most black and white children attended the same schools.

True / False

4. The laws and etiquette that treated black people differently were known as

J\_\_\_\_\_ C\_\_\_\_\_

5. Name one award that Rosa Parks in recognition of her civil rights work:

Term	Definition
<b>Emancipation Proclamation</b>	The document written by President Abraham Lincoln during the Civil War stating all slaves should be freed.
<b>Manacles</b>	Metal bands used to trap someone, connect by chains
<b>Prosperity</b>	Being wealthy and successful.
<b>Languishing</b>	To fail to make progress or be successful.
<b>Exile</b>	When you are sent away and banned from your community
<b>Promissory</b>	Carrying or implying a promise
<b>Unalienable</b>	Something that cannot be taken away from someone
<b>Gradualism</b>	A slow, gradual reform, instead of a sudden change or revolution
<b>Threshold</b>	The entrance to a building or place
<b>Lodging</b>	A place to sleep and stay temporarily.
<b>Redemptive</b>	Act of saving someone from evil or suffering.
<b>Interposition</b>	The act of placing something between people.
<b>Nullification</b>	Making someone mean nothing, especially from a legal perspective

### Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

By 1963, Dr Martin Luther King Jr had become one of the national leaders in the civil rights movement. He played a pivotal role in the Montgomery Bus Boycott covered last lesson. As a Baptist minister, he organised and led the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, becoming their first president in 1957. In 1963, King helped to organise a huge March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom.

The purpose of the march was to show support and maintain pressure on President John F Kennedy, who had promised more civil rights laws. It was at the end of this march that King gave his historic “I have a dream” speech, which is perhaps the most famous speech of all time.

King continued to lead the Civil Rights Movement following his “I have a Dream” Speech. In 1964 he was awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. The FBI secretly listed him as an enemy of America and “the most dangerous and effective Negro leader in the country”. They spread rumours that he was a communist, and tapped his phone calls to spy on him. In 1968, Martin Luther King was assassinated by James Earl Ray, who shot him with a rifle.

What follows is a slightly shorter version of King's famous speech, which was delivered to 250,000 people at the Lincoln Memorial in Washington DC, the capital of America.

## I Have a Dream (abridged)

By Martin Luther King, 1963

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we have come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

In a sense we have come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.



Over 250,000 people marched to the capital and heard Martin Luther King's speech



During the American Civil War, President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation, freeing all slaves.

This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quick sands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny. They have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied, as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating "For Whites Only". We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters and righteousness like a mighty stream.



I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

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 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 the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners 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.

I have a dream today.



I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of interposition and nullification; one day right there in Alabama, little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.



I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight, and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed, and all flesh shall see it together.

And if America is to be a great nation this must become true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!

Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado!

Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California!

But not only that; let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia!

Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee!

Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, when we allow freedom to ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual, "Free at last! free at last! thank God Almighty, we are free at last!"



1. Read the speech again with your partner, taking it in turns with each paragraph.



2. Martin Luther King mentions three key American documents: The Emancipation Proclamation, the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution of the United States. Why do you think he does this?



3. Which words or phrases does Martin Luther King repeat throughout the speech. Why do you think that he does this?

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