

"I Have a Dream" - Martin Luther King

[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v= IB0i6bJljw](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=IB0i6bJljw)

Martin Luther King Jr. was a preacher, who felt that it was wrong to judge people by the colour of their skin. He believed that people should be judged on their character and not how they looked.

He wrote many speeches to try to persuade powerful people in government to change the laws on how black people were treated. This was called the civil rights movement.



"I Have a Dream" is a public speech, which Martin Luther King Jr. gave on August 28, 1963, in which he called for civil and economic rights and an end to racism in the United States.

The speech is still considered by many to be one of the most important and influential speeches ever given and that it is still as relevant today as it was during the time of civil inequality in the 1960's. As well as referring to the different laws about what people could do, depending upon their colour, the speech also referred to the history of slavery, which we briefly discussed in class when we looked at the chocolate trade. This is something which you will study in greater detail, next year at High School.

As you read the extract from the speech on the next page, please think about the questions below. You do not need to write any answers, just take your time and consider what you would write and, if possible, discuss the speech and your thoughts with an adult.

Questions to consider:

1. MLK keeps repeating two different phrases - what are they and why do you think he uses them?
2. In the section below, what message do you think MLK is trying to send to his followers - how is this relevant today?

'Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred. We must ever 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.'

3. MLK was sadly assassinated in 1968 - how do you think he would feel if he were alive today?

'I Have A Dream' – Extract by Martin Luther King
(28.8.1963)

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour 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; that one day right down 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, and every hill and every mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plains and the crooked places will be made straight and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together.

This is our hope. This is the faith that I will go back to the South with. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope.

With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood.

With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to climb up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the Pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring!"

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. So, let freedom ring from the 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 snow-capped 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 every hill and molehill of Mississippi and every mountainside.

And when this happens, when we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every tenement 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 spiritual, "Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last."