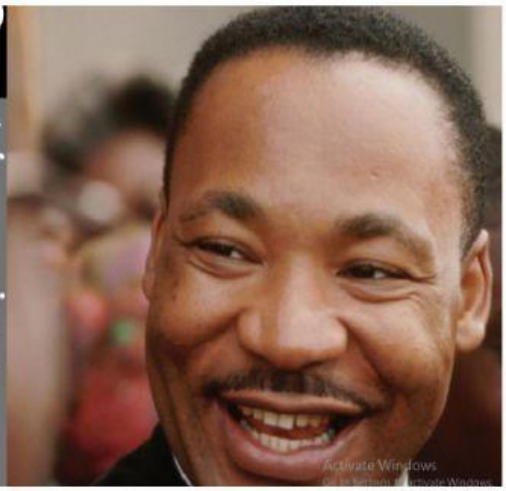
Dr. Martin Luther King Jr:

Who Was He?

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was a Civil Rights activist and minister from Atlanta, Georgia. He led many non-violent protests to spread his message for equality. He is best known for his speech titled "I Have A Dream" in which he expressed his desire for equal rights for all.



DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. WAS A CIVIL RIGHTS _____.

Growing Up

MLK Jr. was born January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. His name was originally Michael King until his father changed it. He has one brother and one sister. He grew up during Segregation, which was a part of everyday life in the Southern United States. There were separate bathrooms, water fountains, entrances to theaters, schools, and among other things for White and Black Americans.

KEEPING PEOPLE APART BECAUSE OF RACE, RELIGION OR GENDER _____.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was only 15 years old when he started college. He graduated from Morehouse College when he was 19. When he was 26, he earned his doctorate degree from Boston University. While in college, he started to lead different churches in Alabama and Georgia.

WHAT COLLEGE DID MARTIN LUTHER KING GRADUATE FROM?

_____?

Dr. Martin Luther King married Coretta Scott King in 1953. They had four children together: Yolanda King, Martin Luther King III, Dexter King and Bernice King. Martin, Dexter and Bernice are still alive today working to keep their father's legacy going.

WHAT WAS DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING'S WIFE'S NAME?

_____

His first major role in the Civil Rights Movement came in 1955, after Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a white man on a bus. MLK Jr. helped to organize a boycott of Montgomery's city's buses. This led him to be recognized as an important leader of the civil rights movement.

WHO WAS ARRESTED FOR REFUSING TO GIVE UP THERE SEAT ON THE BUS _____?

Montgomery Bus Boycott

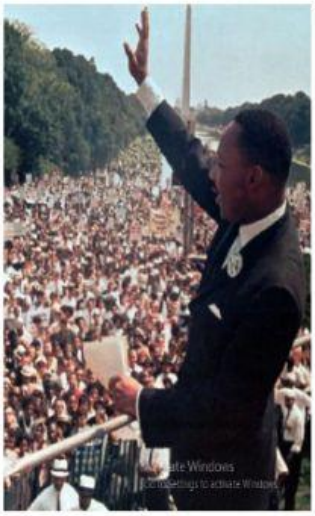
The boycott took place from December 5, 1955, to December 20, 1956. This was a total of 381 days. Over 75% of regular bus riders in Montgomery were Black. Instead of riding busses, people carpooled, walked, or took taxi rides. The boycott ended when a court said segregated buses were against the law.

HOW LONG DID THE BUS BOYCOTT LAST _____DAYS?

Dr. Martin Luther King dedicated his life to fighting for equal rights. Even though he is celebrated today, during his lifetime, he was arrested over 30 times. He spent several days and weeks in jail. Many people threaten to hurt MLK Jr. and his family; they did not want segregation to end.

WHAT DID MARTIN LUTHER KING DEDICATE HIS LIFE TO _____?

I Have a Dream



On August 28, 1963, MLK Jr. gave one of the most iconic speeches in history titled "I Have A Dream." He gave the speech at a famous rally called 'March on Washington.' Over 250,000 people gathered in Washington D.C. to hear him and other activists speak. In his speech, he expressed his dream for America to be a place where people are not judged by their skin but by their character.

Where did Martin Luther King give his famous I have a Dream speech _____?

Civil Rights Act of 1964

After many protests and arrests against segregation, the Civil Rights Act of 1964 was signed by President Lyndon B. Johnson. It made segregation in public places illegal. Even though this law was passed, states in the South refused to follow it.

What year was the Civil Rights Act signed _____?

Selma to Montgomery March

In 1965 from March 21 to March 25th, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. led a 54-mile march from Selma, Alabama to the state's capital of Montgomery. The March was planned to happen earlier in the month but was stopped due to the protesters being attacked. This was a protest against Black people being denied the right to vote in the South. In Selma, less than 2% of Black people there could vote.

Voting Rights Act of 1965

On August 6, 1965, President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act into law. This outlawed Southern states from stopping Black people who wanted to vote. It also outlawed unnecessary things such as forcing Black people to take literacy tests to register to vote. These tests were not given to White people and were often filled with confusing, impossible answers.

The voting rights act allowed black people to _____in the south

A Sad Ending

Sadly, MLK Jr. was assassinated in 1968 in Memphis, Tennessee. He had given a speech the day before. He was standing on the balcony of his hotel when he was shot. A man named James Earl Ray was convicted of MLK's death and spent the rest of his life in prison, even though he said he was innocent. James died in 1998.

Honoring a Hero

One way we remember and celebrate Dr. King is by having a national holiday dedicated to him. President Ronald Reagan signed this holiday into law on November 2, 1983. MLK Jr. day is every 3rd Monday in January. It took many years to get a holiday dedicated to MLK Jr. Even after the holiday became a law, not all states recognized the day until almost 20 years later.

When was a national holiday dedicated to Martin Luther King Jr. _____?