Grades: Kindergarten  
Subjects: Social Studies, English Language Arts, Reading  
Time required: 2 days (30 minutes each day)  
Author: Lakenya Ransom, Robert Churchwell Museum Magnet Elementary (Metro Nashville Public Schools)

OVERVIEW  
Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. is remembered each year on the third Monday in January. This lesson will help students understand why we recognize this day to celebrate Dr. King and his many accomplishments, including his leadership as a civil rights activist, Nobel Peace Prize award, and his notable “I Have a Dream” speech.

UNDERSTANDING GOAL  
Students will identify Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and explain why we celebrate him.

OBJECTIVES  
Upon completion of this lesson, students will participate in shared research about Dr. King by reading books and examining primary sources including excerpts from the “I Have a Dream” speech.

INVESTIGATIVE QUESTION  
Who was Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and why was his dream important to our nation?

MATERIALS AND RESOURCES  
- Martin Luther King, Jr. mobile  
- Crayons  
- Markers  
- Elmo/Smart Board  
- Pencils  
- Happy Birthday Martin Luther King Jr. by Jean Marzollo  
- Video: “I Have a Dream” speech

Library of Congress Materials  
- Blog: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day by Christine Sellars  
- Martin Luther King, Jr., three-quarter-length portrait, standing, facing front, at a press conference [June 8, 1964]  
- Martin Luther King press conference [March 26, 1964]  
- America’s Story from America’s Library: Martin Luther King, Jr.

CURRICULUM STANDARDS  
Kindergarten Reading Standards for Literature  
- K.RL.KID.1 With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.  
- K.RL.KID.2 With prompting and support, orally retell familiar stories, including key details.  
- K.W.RBPK.7 Participate in shared research and writing projects, such as reading a number of books by a favorite author and expressing opinions about them.

Kindergarten History  
- K.20 Identify and discuss the following holidays, and analyze why we celebrate them: Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, Presidents’ Day, Independence Day, Thanksgiving, Veterans Day

Conventions of Standard English  
- K.FL.PC.1 Demonstrate understanding of the organization and basic features of print.
DAY 1

Step 1  The teacher will introduce vocabulary words: participate, research, Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., holidays, justice, fairness, celebrate. Show the students this picture of King from the Library of Congress Web site. Ask students to raise their hand if they know who this man is. What do you know about him?

Ask students the following questions:
- What do you think King was doing in this picture?
- How do you think he felt?
- What do you think about when you see him?

Step 2  Read Happy Birthday Martin Luther King Jr. by Jean Marzollo. After reading this story, ask the following questions:
- What kind of life did King have?
- Can you relate to any parts of his life? Why or Why not?
- Was his life hard or easy? Why did you choose that answer?
- What would you have done if you were he?
- When is King’s birthday?

Based on the material introduced in the previous step, ask the following questions and chart students responses:
- What have you learned about King so far?
- What would you like to learn next about him?

Step 3  After charting responses from Step 2, view this article from America’s Story on the Library of Congress Web site. Allow students time to ask questions and make inquiries about the article.

Day 2

Step 1  Ask students what they have learned about Dr. King. Explain to them that King is known for his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. He had a dream that all people would be treated with fairness and equality. While watching clips from the speech, we will look and listen for clues that will tell us why he had his dream. Show them two shorts excerpt of the “I Have a Dream” speech (12:06 to 13:51 and 15:57 to 17:18). Stop to discuss each clip and be sure that student comprehend what is being said. You may wish to play the clips multiple times.
- What was school like for him?
- What his life was like compared to yours?
- How did King feel when he gave his speech?
- Was he happy or sad? How do you know?
- What was his dream?
- What did he hope to accomplish by giving this speech?
- Who do you think he wanted to hear the speech?

Step 2  Students will be completing the I Have a Dream mobile. Reflect on the dream that King had for his community, country, and world. Ask each student to write or draw his or her own dream for their community and add it to their mobile. Tell students that their dream must be one that can succeed only if people care for one another and work together.
Step 3  

Review the photograph from Step 1 on Day 1. Prompt your students with questions:

- What do we know now about King?
- Did any of your ideas change from before?
- What new questions do you have?
- What did you discover after researching Dr. King?

Remind students that we are celebrating the birthday of Dr. King and the reason it became a national holiday. The teacher can share portions of the Library’s blog on King Day by Christine Sellers.

![Martin Luther King press conference](March 26, 1964)

EVALUATION

Collect students’ mobiles. Students who have filled in all three components with proper responses (illustrations or text) have attained mastery of the material. Students who have not completed all three components have not contained mastery. Students who have only filled in one component, with illustrations or text, will need to review the lesson or need further assistance. Students who have fully participated in class discussion will receive credit.

EXTENSION

To extend the lesson, provide information on the online book so that students can review at home with parents and continue to research: *The King and His Dream*.

Learn more about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. by going to these Web sites:

- National Geographic for Kids
- Picture book of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Puzzles by Primary Games
- Raz Quiz