

A Great Leader

Honoring a Great American

A memorial for Martin Luther King Jr. was built in our nation's capital.



Martin Luther King Jr. was a leader. He lived from 1929 to 1968. Americans honor him in January with a national holiday.

King grew up in the southern part of the United States. At that time, laws treated African American people differently from white people. African Americans were forced to sit in the back of buses. They also had to use separate bathrooms and water fountains.

When King was older, he worked to change those laws. As a result, equal rights laws were passed. Those laws provide the same rights to all Americans.

In Memory of King

King is honored with a **memorial**. A memorial is a statue or a place that honors a person or an event. The King memorial is built on the National Mall. That is a park in Washington, D.C., our nation's capital. Memorials for some U.S. presidents are also on the Mall.

The King memorial opened in August of 2011. It has a 30-foot statue of King. Sentences from some of his speeches are carved into a stone wall.

The cost of the memorial was \$100 million. A concert was held in September 2010 in New York City to raise some of the money. Many famous singers performed. The singers included Aretha Franklin, Stevie Wonder, and Garth Brooks.

The Life of Martin Luther King Jr.

1929: Born in Atlanta, Georgia, on January 15



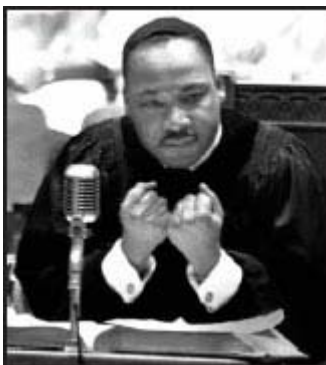
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1953: Marries Coretta Scott in Marion, Alabama



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1954: Becomes pastor of a church in Montgomery, Alabama



Flip Schulke/Corbis

1963: Gives the "I Have a Dream" speech in Washington, D.C.



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1964: Receives the Nobel Peace Prize



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1968: Killed in Memphis, Tennessee



Bettmann/Corbis

Name: _____ Date: _____

1. How do Americans honor Martin Luther King Jr. every January?
 - A) with a national holiday
 - B) by building a memorial
 - C) with a concert

2. Which of these events happened **after** Martin Luther King Jr. gave the "I Have a Dream" speech?
 - A) King became pastor of a church.
 - B) King received the Nobel Peace Prize.
 - C) King married Coretta Scott in Marion, Alabama.

3. Martin Luther King Jr. was recognized for his work towards equal rights. What evidence from the passage supports this conclusion?
 - A) King gave the "I Have a Dream" speech.
 - B) King became pastor of a church.
 - C) King received the Nobel Peace Prize.

4. A memorial in honor of Martin Luther King Jr. was built in 2011. What can you conclude from this information?
 - A) Martin Luther King Jr. was not important.
 - B) Martin Luther King Jr. is respected.
 - C) Martin Luther King Jr. was forgotten.

5. What is this passage mostly about?
 - A) Martin Luther King Jr.'s life
 - B) a memorial for Martin Luther King Jr.
 - C) a concert in memory of Martin Luther King Jr.

6. Read the following sentences: “[King] worked to change those laws. As a result, equal rights laws were passed. Those laws **provide** the same rights to all Americans.”

What does the word “**provide**” mean?

- A) stop
- B) help
- C) give

7. Choose the answer that best completes the sentence below.

Americans celebrate Martin Luther King, Jr. in January _____ he was an important person who fought for civil rights.

- A) but
- B) because
- C) so

8. What city was the Martin Luther King Jr. memorial built in?

9. How were African Americans treated differently? Give two examples from the passage.

10. What was the result of Martin Luther King Jr.’s work to change unfair laws?
