

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. - Reflection essay

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In the year of 1929, the nation's most important leader of civil rights was born and that person was, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. During his early life, Dr. King was the second child of Michael and Alberta Williams King. He grew up in a caring environment along with two siblings, Alfred Daniels Williams King, being the younger brother and Willie Christine, being the older sister. Despite living in a peaceful home, Dr. King encountered the contrary outside of the home when he learned racism in society. Growing up, he was known as a highly intelligent student. He attended Booker T. Washington High School and because he was so academically proficient, he skipped the first and last year of high school and began attending college at the age of 15. His first year of college began at Morehouse College in Atlanta, GA where later he successfully earned a Bachelor of Arts degree in Sociology. Years later, he earned his Bachelor of Divinity in 1951 and then later obtained a Doctorate in Systematic Theology.

During the year of 1955, civil right supporters were arrested due to the violation of the Montgomery bus law. This policy stated that African Americans must surrender their seat to Caucasian passengers whenever needed. In March of 1955, Claudette Colvin was arrested at the age of 15 for refusing to give up her seat, therefore resulting in her imprisonment. Later, in that same year, Rosa Parks was also arrested for refusing to give up her seat to a Caucasian passenger after several demands from the bus driver. These and many other events confirmed that many people were influenced by Dr. King and wanted to see a change.

Following these two events, Dr. King, who had already been an advocate of civil rights, lead the Montgomery bus boycott with other supporters. This boycott, which lasted over a year,

was a necessary movement to take a stance against the ongoing injustices. Although the boycott led to violence, fear, and intimidation towards the African American community, it continued until the City of Montgomery lifted the policy on its public transportation seating. This and many other events continued to motivate Dr. King and other supporters of civil rights to continue to stand up against injustice, even if it meant being arrested.

In 1963, Dr. King, along with other supporters, was arrested and taken into custody after refusing to leave a store while protesting against discrimination and injustice. Afterwards, the nation was alarmed with Dr. King's arrest and because of this news, Presidential candidate, John F. Kennedy spoke on his behalf and this eventually lead to his release from prison.

As Dr. King protested, it angered those who wished to continue segregation and injustices to African Americans; yet it inspired many young people to take on this important fight. Many joined Dr. King and other civil rights supporters in organizing events to promote non-violence throughout the nation. In spite of the violence, threats, and even after an attack on his home, Dr. King's unwavering determination remained. This encouraged and inspired the younger generation to march with him. One of the young people who marched, protested and was even arrested was Elijah Cummings, who is currently a United States Congressman and still plays a prominent role in advocating justice today.

Dr. King and his supporters' stance on civility displayed that he wanted equality for all races despite certain views and policies that were still active at the time. Throughout their incarceration and even after their release, the activists continued to fight for citizens' rights. Through it all, Dr. King's perseverance was outstanding and is considered to be the most important impact on civil rights today. During his imprisonment, Dr. King wrote a letter addressing non-violence and injustice and it is still recognized to this day. After Dr. King and

other supporters were released from prison, there was a remarkable event held at the nation's capital in 1963 where he presented his well-known "I have a dream" speech. With this speech, Dr. King presented outstanding quotes that described how far this movement had come. Dr. King expressed his thoughts and stated that he hoped one day, his own children would not be judged by the color of their skin, but instead be judged by the content of their character. In my opinion, this speech is one of the greatest known speeches to ever be given as it considered that all should be advocates of humanity.

This memorable speech, which is known as the 'March on Washington' affected and captivated many of different races to spread the word on the call for civil and economic rights of African Americans. Over the years following the 'March on Washington', Dr. King and other supporters continued to stand for equality among all races.

In the year of 1968, as the Civil Rights Movement continued to progress, Dr. King presented what was known to be his last speech called, "I've Been to the Mountaintop", before his assassination the very next day, April 4th 1968. Many recall this horrific day as he touched and inspired a countless number of people. One person stated that his death caused the entire nation to mourn while another stated his death made he and others feel more confident that they could conquer the upcoming struggles. The death of Dr. King turned from sadness to outrage and riots erupted in 100 cities across the United States. Although his untimely death saddened many, it did not end the Civil Rights Movement.

After his death, many became supporters from around the world and it caused others, who were biased, to learn of and continue his dream as his life impacted many changed many viewpoints on racial inequality. One particular lesson that can be echoed is how he persisted with integrity despite the many negative objections. Dr. King also displayed integrity by sharing his

beliefs and aspirations of equality for all. In addition, he displayed perseverance by continuing to pursue his goals and vision despite the continuous obstacles that he endured to silence him.

Currently, I am a student who is enrolled in college as a computer science major and I am pursuing my dream to someday be a successful game developer. Although my course in life is very different than Dr. King's, it is because of his persistence, bravery and unrelenting determination, that I am able to pursue my own dream. Dr. King endured many hardships and injustices; nevertheless, he continued to spread his vision of equal rights among all men and women. As I continue to gain knowledge of his life, I feel that I continue to learn something new about Dr. King and it motivates me to work harder and inspires me to achieve all of my dreams. Over time, I will likely face obstacles and I may even have to 'march' as Dr. King did many years ago; but because of his many examples, I realize that having a strong will and determination, is only the beginning to the many great achievements I will have.