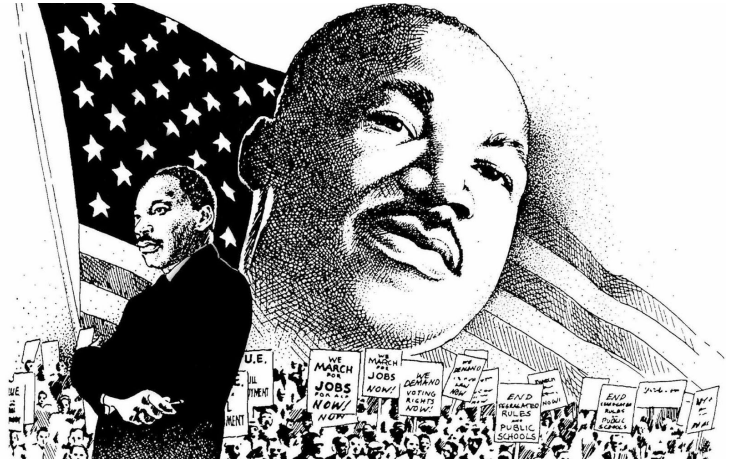


On August 28th, 1963 on a muggy summer day in Washington D.C. thousands of protesters participated in the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. On the steps of the Lincoln memorial, civil rights leader Martin Luther King Jr. delivered a speech known as “I Have A Dream”. Relying heavily on American ideals and language King called for a day when racism would no longer exist in the United States. As you listen to the speech answer the questions presented below.



- 1) Most gifted public speakers use **rhetorical devices** to convey power and meaning in their words and to capture the attention of the audience. What are some **rhetorical devices** used by Martin Luther King Jr. in this speech?
- 2) What event in U.S. history might Dr. King be referring to when he says, “the Negro’s basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one”?
- 3) What are some examples of patriotic or American language used in this speech? Why does King use them?
- 4) In what way is Dr. King’s dream “deeply rooted in the American dream”?

- 5) The spiritual Dr. King refers to at the end of his address “Free At Last” by J.W. Work contains the following stanza:

***“way down yonder in the graveyard walk I thank God I’m free at last Me and Jesus going to meet
and talk I thank God I’m free at last.*”**

How does the speaker achieve her freedom? How does that freedom differ from King’s idea of freedom?

- 6) Time magazine ranked “I have a Dream” as one of the top ten greatest speeches. After listening to the speech do you agree? Why or why not?

- 7) In your opinion why was Martin Luther King such an influential Civil Rights leader?

Answer Key

- 1) **Repetition:** MLK repeats several terms including “I have a dream” to reinforce his desire for an America free of prejudice

Cadence in his voice: A rhetorical tool often used by Southern black ministers used to generate call and response from the congregation. The different modulations of the speaker's voice also allows for easy listening (like a song) and following by those in attendance.

- 2) Answers will vary. Students should at least pick up on the following themes: blacks really didn't achieve freedom after the emancipation. They were discriminated against politically as well as economically after the Civil War causing poverty and second class status (ghetto of the slums compared to ghetto of the plantation/slave quarters)
- 3) He starts off by saying “Five score ago” which is language reminiscent of the Gettysburg Address. He describes the Declaration of Independence and the Constitution as “promissory notes”. He uses terms like ‘justice’ ‘freedom’ and ‘republic’ all critical terms used in American society (like the pledge of allegiance). He identifies several states (red hills of Georgia). He quotes from the DOI “all men are created equal”. MLK uses these terms to both inspire patriotism as well as expose the hypocrisy of the current treatment of blacks in America.
- 4) Answer will vary. Students should pick up on the fact that what Dr. King desires is that same that all Americans do. Freedom to worship, engage in economics and association without prejudice or segregation.
- 5) The author of the spiritual talks about when you die you reach freedom, that you are free from life and pain at last. Dr. King's idea of freedom is that we shouldn't wait to die to have freedom, instead he wanted to have freedom while he was alive.
- 6) Answers will vary
- 7) Answers will vary