



Martin Luther King Jr. Day Secondary Essay Contest

Grades 6–8

Prompt:

After reading Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech, explain how it connects with your own life.

Key Requirements:

- Ability to articulate how King's ideals personally resonate with your own life experiences
- Ability to use evidence from Dr. King's writing and incorporate a passage or two to support your ideas
- Ability to demonstrate proper grammar, usage, and mechanics

**All entries are to
be submitted to
the student's
school office by
Wednesday,
Jan. 17, 2024**

Grades 9–12

Please select one prompt.

Prompt 1:

In an essay of about 500 words, discuss what ideals in Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech resonate within your own life. Consider how the ideals connect to your life personally as well as how they connect to your role as a member of society.

Prompt 2:

In Martin Luther King's "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," he states "Injustice anywhere is a threat to justice everywhere." In an essay of about 500 words, evaluate the meaning of this quote and consider its meaning in a modern context. You can apply this to your personal life as well as connect it to your role as a member of society.

Prompt 3:

Martin Luther King Jr. was known for his courageous leadership during the Civil Rights movement. Read his comments on leadership from his address "Desegregation and the Future." Then, consider the key ideas of this excerpt, and in an essay of about 500 words, discuss what we can learn from MLK Jr.'s leadership. Consider how these ideas connect to your life personally as well as how they can be applied to our current society.

Key Requirements:

- Ability to accurately identify three or more ideals in Dr. King's writings and incorporate passages which accurately articulate those ideals
- Ability to richly articulate how those ideals personally resonate with their own life experiences
- Ability to demonstrate adeptness and precision with English language usage as well as persuasive organization and structure, and accurate grammar and mechanics

Life's most persistent
and urgent question
is, "What are you
doing for others?"

