

Today is MLK, Jr. Day | Lesson Plan

What is the history and significance of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day?

Students will understand the historical significance of the important civil rights leader, Martin Luther King, Jr., and learn about his dream of a colorblind nation.

Learning Objectives:

- Identify the main characters and setting in *Otto's Tales: Today is MLK, Jr. Day*.
- Recognize the sequence of events in the story.
- Understand the historical significance of the work of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Discuss and understand Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s role in the Civil Rights Movement.
- Analyze the concept of equality demonstrated in the story.
- Identify key vocabulary related to *Otto's Tales: Today is MLK, Jr. Day*.

Key Vocabulary:

- **Segregation:** The separation of people based on race, class, or ethnic group, especially as a form of discrimination.
- **Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.:** The American Civil Rights Movement leader during the 1950s and 1960s who fought against discrimination and for equal rights for all.
- **Civil Rights Movement:** A large, organized effort, largely led by black leaders such as Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., to fight for the civil rights of all Americans.
- **March on Washington:** A major event in the history of the Civil Rights Movement when Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. led 250,000 people to demonstrate support for equality in Washington, D.C., and delivered his famous "I Have a Dream" speech.
- **President Johnson/LBJ:** The 36th President of the United States, from 1963 to 1969, who signed the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and the Voting Rights Act of 1965.

Educational Standards: CCRA.R.1, CCRA.SL.1, CCRA.SL.2, CCRA.L.6, CCRA.W.4, CCRA.R.7

Academic Subject Areas: America, Historical Figures, U.S. Holidays

What You'll Need

- Video: *Otto's Tales: Today is MLK, Jr. Day* (Click [Here](#))
- Book (optional): *Otto's Tales: Today is MLK, Jr. Day* (Purchase [Here](#))
- Coloring Page (Click [Here](#))
- Cloud-shaped paper cut-outs, one for each student
- Drawing or writing materials
- Whiteboard or chart paper for vocabulary

Lesson Plan (45 mins.)

Warm-Up: (10 mins.)



1. Begin by asking students to share what they know about dreams and aspirations. Explain that dreams can also mean hopes and wishes for the future, not just what happens when we sleep.
2. Give each student a cut-out cloud or a piece of paper shaped like a cloud with the starter sentence: "My dream is ..." printed inside.
3. Ask them to think about a dream or wish for themselves, their family, or the world (similar to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s famous "I Have a Dream" speech). Give them a few minutes to either write or draw their dream.
4. After they've completed their dream clouds, briefly introduce Martin Luther King, Jr. as someone who had a big dream for the world, which they will learn more about in the video.
5. Explain his dream was for people of all colors to live together peacefully and equally. Take this time to introduce key vocabulary related to Martin Luther King, Jr. and the Civil Rights Movement.

Watch and Complete: (25 mins.)

1. Watch the video as a class.
2. Pause at opportune moments to ask questions and check for understanding of key vocabulary words and their meaning.
3. Encourage students to identify the main characters and the setting and to think about the challenges the characters faced. Focus on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s fight for equality and his role in the Civil Rights Movement.
4. After the video, discuss what the characters learned while visiting Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., focusing on understanding ways to appreciate his peaceful fight for equality.
5. If using the book, guide students through a discussion of the illustrations, asking them to describe and interpret different scenes.

Wrap-Up: (10 mins.)

1. Allow students time to color the *Otto's Tales: Let's Visit MLK, Jr. Coloring Page*.
2. Assess comprehension and encourage storytelling skills by asking students to retell the story in their own words. Use guiding questions that assess recall and understanding of the story's themes, such as the importance of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s work to end segregation and how to apply these lessons.

Don't have time for the complete lesson? Quick Activity (15-20 mins.)

After watching the video, distribute the coloring page and allow students to discuss their favorite character or part of the story.