

# Historian: The Legacy of Martin Luther King

## Adventure Description:

In this adventure, students will think like a historian and create an exhibit about the legacy of Martin Luther King.

## Activity

### Step 1: Building Background Knowledge on Martin Luther King Jr. (15 minutes)

- Watch [Video: Legacy of Martin Luther King](#).
- Discuss the job of a historian. Explain to students that historians study people and events from the past. Some historians teach history classes, some write books, and some work in museums.
- Tell students that today, as historians, they will learn more about the Legacy of Martin Luther King Jr. Explain that a legacy is the lessons we can learn from someones life.
- Give students [Handout: Do You Know MLK?](#) Explain to students that you are going to play a group game to learn interesting and important facts about Martin Luther King, Jr.
- Tell students that you will read the facts on the handout to them. Some of the facts are true and some are false. Students might know the answer from the video, from their prior knowledge, or they will make a guess!
  - Teacher Note: For this time, have a piece of construction paper with a large check on one side and a large X on the other side.
- Read each fact aloud to students as they follow along. Have students think about whether they think the fact is true or false. Have students hold a thumbs up under their chin if they think true and a thumbs down if they think false.
- Reveal the answer by showing the check or the X. Have students circle True or False on their handout with the correct answer.
  - Teacher Note: See [Handout: MLK Teacher Key](#) for answers to the questions.

### Step 2: Activity Set Up- Art Installations (20 minutes)

- Explain to students that today, they will be working in the History Museum of Modern Art. Explain to students that modern art sometimes looks different from typical paintings and sculptures that might be in a regular art museum.
- Tell students that they will first learn about some different types of modern art exhibits called art installations.
- Give each student [Handout: Modern Art Examples](#). Have students look at the different examples as you read the descriptions aloud.
- Discuss how these exhibits are different than what you might normally see in an art museum. Ask students which example is their favorite.
- Explain to students that today, they will create an Art Installation for the History Museum of Modern Art. Their art installation should be an experience for museum guests.
- Tell students their art installation will be to teach others about the legacy of Martin Luther King, Jr.

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- Give students [Handout: Martin Luther King, Jr Primary Sources](#) and explain that these sources show real pictures or words from MLK.
- Tell students they will listen to and study these primary sources and use these as inspiration for their art installation.
- Read the handout as a class. Look at the pictures and ask students what they see and what the images make them think of.
- Give students examples of art installations about MLK (building a jail cell with famous quotes from his speech written on the inside, a large poster with words that relate to MLK such as PEACE and EQUALITY with construction paper hands of different colors glued around the words, a performance of one of MLK's marches using large signs made like the ones in the picture).

## Step 3: Creating an Art Installation (20-30 minutes)

- For this activity, students can work alone, with a partner or in a small group.
- Give students [Handout: Design an Art Installation](#).
- Read Step 1. Have students circle the type of art installation they want to create.
- Read Step 2. Have students sketch their idea for the art installation or write about what they would like to do. During this step, walk around and help students who do not have any ideas.
- Show students building and art materials that they can use for this project. Read Step 3. Have students collect their materials and begin working on their art installation.
- When students are done, have each group choose a spot in the room to set up their art installation.
- Explain that the whole room represents the MLK exhibit with several different art installations that make up the exhibit. Give each student/group [Handout: Museum Plaque](#). Have them fill out the plaque and place it in front of their exhibit.

## Step 4: MLK Exhibit

- If there are any live performances, have them perform first for the class.
- After live performances, allow students to walk around the exhibit to “experience” the different art installations.
- Once students have had a chance to view the different pieces in the exhibit, bring students together for a reflection and discussion.
- Ask students what important things they learned about Martin Luther King, Jr. from the different art installations.

## Materials List

### Provided online:

- Video: Legacy of Martin Luther King
- Handout: Do You Know MLK?
- Handout: MLK Teacher Key
- Handout: Modern Art Examples
- Handout: Martin Luther King, Jr Primary Sources
- Handout: Design an Art Installation
- Handout: Museum Plaque

### Not Provided online (each student or group needs):

- Art and building supplies

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