

LESSON PLANS

MLK DAY THROUGH MUSIC

Lesson Overview:

Over five days, students listen to and reflect on the events of the March on Washington and musical responses to it. Next, they reflect on how those musical responses contributed to the message of Martin Luther King Jr. Day.

Materials (as necessary):

- Paper
- Pencil
- Colored pencils
- Recording materials
- Instruments

Steps:

Together, we will watch Martin Luther King Jr.'s [I Have a Dream speech](#), followed by a group discussion of why we think it is important.

As a large group, we will listen to various pieces of music related to MLK and the March on Washington. These could include:

- [Brother Kirk & Pete Seeger - The Ballad of Martin Luther King](#)
- [The Maccabeats and Naturally 7 - Shed a Light](#)
- [Common ft. will.i.am - A Dream](#)

Students will reflect on and produce a response to one of the pieces presented, or a teacher-approved piece of music or poetry of their choosing. They will have the option to work in groups; group numbers will be limited by the teacher based on class size.

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Grade Level: Fourth

Keywords: Black History Month, MLK, Martin Luther King Jr., songs, protest

Standards addressed:

[2014 Music Standards \(PK-8 General Music\)](#):

- MU:Re7.1.4a Demonstrate and explain how selected music connects to and is influenced by specific interests, experiences, purposes, or contexts.
- MU:Cn10.0.4a Demonstrate how interests, knowledge, and skills relate to personal choices and intent when creating, performing, and responding to music

Learning Goals:

- Using music to gain insight into the culturally important moment of MLK's I Have A Dream speech and the March on Washington.
- Gain insight into how music connects us to important events and movements.

Reflection:

Students will produce a written response to the piece they have selected. A full-group discussion will be held after everyone gets to work on their response.

Assessment:

Write a paragraph on the song you chose! This paragraph should:

- Have 4-6 complete sentences
- Share which song you listened to
- Share what you thought of the song and why
- Share one of your favorite lines in the song and why
- Explain how this song relates to Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech