

# **Eleven Days in the Life of Dr. King**

Hear My Words!



<i>Grades</i>	2 & up
<i>Core Content Area</i>	Language arts, persuasive writing
<i>Themes</i>	Creating change, speaking to others, fighting for a cause
<i>Materials</i>	Paper and pencil

## **Background**

### **Non Violent Protest: The Power of the Written Word**

Dr. King knew change meant taking big risks. He was arrested for leading several peaceful marches in Birmingham, Alabama. His time in a jail cell was hard on him. As he sat in the jail, the local newspaper published a letter from white ministers that criticized Dr. King for making trouble. Dr. King decided to fight back even while he was in a jail cell. He began to write a very long and very important letter on sheets of paper that his friends snuck in to him. In his letter, he said that people could not just keep waiting for segregation to end. He said people have to push their governments to do the right things and that segregation and other forms of racism were terrible and needed to end. This letter was eventually [published](#) and changed many peoples' minds about the power of peaceful protest and the need for change.

## **Lesson Procedure**

### **1.) Write a Persuasive Letter**

Think of a situation that you feel is really unfair in the world. Write a persuasive letter to someone about the issue of importance to you that you feel requires change. Share your information about this topic and explain your passion for the cause in hopes of encouraging the recipient, and others, to join you. Think carefully about an issue that is unfair, not something you simply do not like. In your letter:

- State your issue of concern
- Explain why this is a situation of concern
- Describe how you think things should be different
- Give reasons why someone who disagrees with you should change their mind
- Summarize your argument

### **2.) Extension**

Read your letters out loud in a class discussion