

Eleven Days in the Life of Dr. King

Introduction & Resources

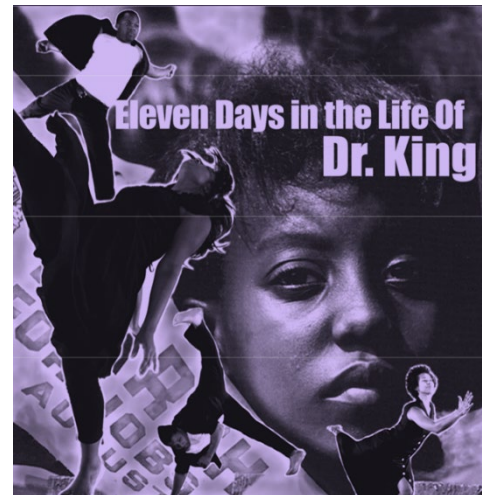


Eleven Days: A Background and How to Use This Curriculum

This curriculum is a tool to use in support of the touring performance: *Eleven Days in the Life of Dr. King*. The work combines original poetry presented as spoken word with new choreography and theater. It is meant to offer a deeper, broader view of the life and legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. within the context of the Civil Rights Movement. In many cases, the legacy of Dr. King has been relegated to his famous “I Have a Dream” speech. However, the movement for peace, justice, and equality through non-violent action includes many dimensions. The poems highlight eleven key days in Dr. King’s life, reflecting major milestones like the Montgomery Bus Boycott, the Freedom Riders’ perilous journey on buses through the segregated south, the March on Washington, Dr. King’s Nobel Peace Prize Award, and the passage of the Voting Rights Act. But, also include private moments such as his family’s celebration of his birth, the day he changed his name, and the day he lost two friendships to racism. Each page includes an exploration of concepts related to civics, social studies, social fairness, peaceful protest, community and change. We invite you to explore these concepts before and after the performance.

Activities

Activities in this guide range from structured discussions to project-based learning. They connect to content in Social Studies (history, civics, community), English Language Arts, Math/Science, and Performing Arts. Selected poems from *Eleven Days in the Life of Dr. King* are included in this guide to support learning and reflection. Some activities prompt students to examine historical events and people while others challenge students to address concepts. Most encourage students to make connections between the past and their own present, or between theoretical concepts and their own lived reality.



A Living Legacy

The Eleventh Day is now. The study of Dr. King is about civics and learning social emotional concepts of fairness and equity – as much as it is about history. Invite your students to think about how they can champion the same ideals Dr. King stood for in their own lives and times. The theatrical production and curriculum are an invitation to advocate for justice today as well as a lesson on the past. Consider how experiencing this program is an invitation for students to take action in their own lives and times.

Acts Big and Small

Every day, students of all ages grapple with concepts of fairness – and by extension, justice. From the ways they navigate communication with their peers or with authority figures, to their encounters with current events, to the impact of social issues on them and their families. Developmentally, for some students the next step after experiencing this program is to observe and discuss acts of fairness and unfairness in their own lives and school experiences. For others, it may be to look more closely at the concept of race – especially if they have not had to think about it before. Other students will be ready to examine patterns of racial injustice in our country, and come to terms with the weight of that legacy. Still others will be ready to begin connecting dots between their lives and larger social issues, drawing parallels between the activism of the past and their own agency as emergent members of our society.

Regardless of where your students land on this spectrum, we hope that you will encourage students to identify connections between Dr. King and his time with their own lives and times. Then take it a step further by making the Eleventh Day their own through acts – both large and small – of compassion, justice and nonviolence.

Online Resources

There is an incredible (almost overwhelming) wealth of online teaching resources relating to the legacy of Dr. King. Some highlights include:

The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research & Education Institute at Stanford University:
<https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/liberation-curriculum/lesson-plans>

The King Center (founded by Coretta Scott King): <http://www.thekingcenter.org/>

PBS Learning Media: <https://www.pbslearningmedia.org>

Edutopia: www.edutopia.org

Teaching Tolerance: www.tolerance.org

Rethinking Schools: <https://rethinkingschools.org>

National Park Service:
<https://www.nps.gov/malu/learn/education/lessonplansandteacherguides.htm>

National Education Association: <http://www.nea.org/tools/lessons/mlk-day.html>

National Archives: Documented Rights:
<https://www.archives.gov/exhibits/documented-rights/exhibit/>

Online Resources for Connecting the MLK Legacy to the Post-2020 World

While Dr. King's legacy may seem historically distant to students today, they are deeply familiar with the issues of racial and economic injustice which MLK addressed during his life time. These resources help students hold the past and present as they grapple with on-going issues, from Black Lives Matter to living wages, policing, prisons, youth activism, activism among communities of faith, voting rights and repressions, school segregation and more. This is a small cross-section. Additional resources for connecting the present day can be found at many of the resources above as well.

Confronting Anti-Black Racism collection on PBS Learning Media (*this collection includes history, current events and civic engagement/student voice resources from various PBS and public media sources*) <https://kcts9.pbslearningmedia.org/collection/confronting-anti-black-racism/>

Black America Since MLK: And Still I Rise (*produced by Henry Louis Gates, Jr. in 2016, this documentary series looks at what has changed and what has not for Black America since 1968. It does cover the initial days of Black Lives Matter, setting the scene for 2020 and beyond, but not covering it.*) <http://www.pbs.org/weta/black-america-since-mlk-and-still-i-rise/>

From MLK to Black Lives Matter: A conversation with Rev. Lawrence Turner of the Mississippi Boulevard Christian Church in Memphis, TN (*PBS NewsHour's Hari Sreenivasan discusses post 2020 issues, events, and youth activism through the lens of MLK's work on racial and economic justice with a community leader*)
<https://www.pbs.org/newshour/show/from-mlk-jr-to-black-lives-matter-americas-racial-reckoning>

Select Bibliography

FOR EARLY READERS:

My Brother Martin:

A Sister Remembers Growing Up with the Rev. Martin Luther King

By Christine King Farris. Illustrated by Chris Soentpiet.

Aladdin Paperbacks a Division of Simon and Schuster, New York

© 2008

(Child Magazine Best Book of the Year)

Martin's Big Words

By Doreen Rappaport. Illustrated by Bryan Collier. Hyperion Books for Children © 2001

FOR MIDDLE SCHOOL AND HIGH SCHOOL READERS:

Martin Luther King Jr. (Ten Days That Shook Your World)

By David Colbert

Simon and Schuster Publishing, © 2008

Martin Luther King Jr.

By Adam Fairclough

University of Georgia Press © 1995

381 Days: The Montgomery Bus Boycott Story

Written by Jeff Sapp and modified by Magda Nieves

FOR ADVANCED READERS:

Parting the Waters: America in the King Years 1954-63

By Taylor Branch

Simon and Schuster Publishing, © 1988

(This Book was the Winner of the Pulitzer Prize)

Acknowledgements

Eleven Days in the Life of Dr. King was developed for Tacoma Arts Live when it was Broadway Center for the Performing Arts and originally toured in January/February 2011. Original production credits are as follows:

- Created by Lucas Smiraldo and co-written with Charhys Bailey and Antonio Edwards
- Original direction by Katie (Stricker) Lappier, Broadway Center Education Manager
- Original choreography by Franchessa Berry and Erricka Turner Davis
- Sound Score by Gabe McPherson
- Project Advisor: Dr. Dexter Gordon
- Original performing ensemble included Angelica Barksdale, LaNita Hudson, April Nyquist and Charles Simmons. The inaugural tour reached over thirty schools and 17,000 youth in five weeks
- Graphic Design by Michael Hoover
- Education Guide content by Lucas Smiraldo, with revisions by Katie Lappier, Marsha Walner and Antonio Gómez