

# Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Read for Peace Pre-Visit Lesson Guide

## 3rd & 4th Grade

Thank you for choosing to participate in Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day Read for Peace 2022. We are excited to get our students across the state of Montana engaged in conversation and activities about the life and work of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

This year our program looks a little different. We want to encourage a more full length and impactful lesson on Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. that spans more than one hour on one day. Besides the Read for Peace Day, we encourage both pre-visit and post-visit lessons and discussions. This document is catered toward 3rd and 4th grade classrooms on how to begin the conversation about MLK Day and its significance. Feel free to cater the lessons to your classroom and to how they fit your students' needs. If you have previous resources you are more than welcome to use those as well.

### **Lesson: BrainPop**

<https://blog.brainpop.com/antiracist-education-free-resources-kids/?fbclid=IwAR2kWchBUUdUCOWdjsTE-sdUVNBwBzUXJPFUW6UjdaaME9S7ddEtii42BIE#kindergarten-grade-3>

- Link to a variety of Black History Icons that would be appropriate to initiate discussion and thoughts of the Civil Rights Movement
- BrainPop has lesson ideas, quizzes, and activities that go along with each video

### **Lesson: The Power of “Fences”**

The Other Side, by Jacqueline Woodson. G.P. Putnam’s Sons, 2002.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=hPiaGDbvUPs>

1. Teacher connects back to The Other Side and the fence, using the fence as a metaphor for the Jim Crow laws, defining the laws as laws in the South that kept Blacks and Whites separated, explaining that these fences or separations were the barriers to freedom for Blacks.
2. Teacher uses a transparency of [“cluster/word web”](#) and hands out paper copies to students. Together, teacher and students brainstorm and organize thoughts about freedom, identifying four different freedoms that were denied [e.g., freedom to eat at a restaurant of choice] and two ways the freedom would be blocked [how would it look? Eg. white/black only signs].

## Lesson: Ruby Bridges and the Civil Rights Movement

Scholastic SlideShow:

<https://www.scholastic.com/teachers/slideshows/teaching-content/ruby-bridges-and-the-civil-rights-movement-slide-show-for-kinder/>

SlideShow Notes:

### Slide 1: Ruby Bridges: A Simple Act of Courage



On November 14, 1960, six-year-old Ruby Bridges started first grade at William Frantz Public School in New Orleans. She made history on that day. Ruby and three other girls were the first African American students to go to all-white schools in New Orleans. Ruby was the only African American student who went to William Frantz Public School.

Ruby's world was quite different from the world we live in today. In the South, African American students and white students went to **separate** schools because the law said they shouldn't be together. This was called **segregation**.

At the time, there were many laws that treated African Americans differently than whites. Many people knew this was **unfair**. They were part of the **civil rights movement** in the 1950s and 1960s. The civil rights **activists** said that all people were **equal**. They believed everyone should be treated the same.

Ruby became an important part of the civil rights movement when she **integrated** her school.

*Photo Credit: Bettmann/Corbis*



### Slide 2: What Was Segregation?

Separating people based on the color of their skin is called segregation. In the United States, many Southern states had this type of law. These laws were unfair and **racist**.

*Photo Credit: Bettmann/Corbis*

### Slides 3 and 4: Life During Segregation



Because of segregation, African Americans and white people had to use different water fountains and bathrooms. They sat in separate parts of buses and trains. Baseball teams were either all African American or all white. People didn't play together. Segregation made it seem like African Americans and whites were different. It made it seem like people of other races were **inferior** to whites.

*Photo Credits: Top Left: Esther Bubley/The Granger Collection, NYC; Top Right: Ted Russell/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images; Bottom Left: Bettmann/Corbis; Bottom Right: Bettmann/Corbis*



### Slide 5: Separate but Equal?

The Supreme Court, which is the most important court in the United States, said in 1896 that segregation was **legal** in the United States. The court said people could be “**separate but equal.**”

But some people knew this was wrong. People were not being treated equally.

In the South in the 1950s, African American and white children went to different schools. The schools were not equal. White schools had more money than African-American schools. White schools had newer books and bigger classrooms. Teachers in white schools were paid more. African American schools were often crowded and needed fixing up.

*Photo Credit: Robert W. Kelley/Time Life Pictures/Getty Images*



### Slide 6: *Brown v. Board of Education*

In 1954, the Supreme Court made a new decision. The court said that the separate schools were not fair. They were not equal.

Because of what the Supreme Court decided, schools would have to change. Children of all races would go to school together.

Thurgood Marshall was the **attorney** who showed the court why “separate but equal” was unfair. He later became the first African American to be a judge on the Supreme Court.

*Photo Credit: Bettmann/Corbis*



### Slide 7: The Civil Rights Movement

At the same time that the Supreme Court made its decision, the civil rights movement was happening all over the country. Thousands of people were taking part in it. Civil rights activists wanted everyone, especially African Americans, to be treated equally. They were fighting against **discrimination** and **racism**.

*Photo Credits (left to right): National Archive/Newsmakers/Getty Images; Keystone-France/Gamma-Keystone/Getty Images*

### Slide 8: Why Ruby?



In the late 1950s, most African American and white students were still in separate schools in New Orleans. The state of Louisiana wasn't listening to the Supreme Court's decision. Many white people there did not want integration. Finally, a federal court said that New Orleans schools would have to integrate by 1960.

In kindergarten, Ruby had attended an all African American school. She had many friends and an African American teacher. She loved school.

Then Ruby passed a test to be allowed to go to the all-white school. Ruby's father wasn't sure his daughter should go to the all-white school for first grade. He wanted to protect Ruby from angry people who didn't want African American children at white schools. Ruby's mother, Lucille, however, wanted her daughter to go the better school. She thought that if Ruby went to the white school, it would help all African American children. Eventually, Ruby's parents decided together that she would go to William Frantz Elementary.

In November 1960, Ruby and six other students integrated New Orleans elementary schools. Ruby was the only African American student at William Frantz Elementary School.

*Photo Credit: AP Images*

### Slide 9: November, 1960: Ruby Goes to School



People in the city of New Orleans were angry that schools were being forced to integrate. Judge J. Skelly Wright, the judge who ordered the schools to integrate, was worried for the students' safety. He asked the United States government for **marshals** to protect the students. Marshals are policemen who work for the United States, not any one state. On her first day of school, the marshals escorted Ruby into William Frantz Elementary.

*Photo Credit: Frank Methe/The Times-Picayune/Landov*

### Slides 10 and 11: Jeers and Taunts



Protestors lined up at Ruby's school. The police kept them behind **barricades**. Ruby remembers, in her book *Through My Eyes*, that they were very loud, like the city was during Mardi Gras.

The protests continued into the spring. Marshals went with Ruby to school every day.

*Photo Credits (left to right): Bettmann/Corbis; Bettmann/Corbis*

### Slide 12: Mrs. Henry and Ruby



Ruby's teacher, Barbara Henry, was young, white, and from Boston. Ruby had never spent much time with a white person before. Ruby was in a classroom by herself, because white parents didn't want their children in class with an African American student. Ruby spent all her time with Mrs. Henry. They became very close.

In the second grade, Ruby was in a classroom with other students, including white children. Ruby graduated from William Frantz Elementary School and, later, high school in New Orleans. Today, she gives speeches about her experience during the civil rights movement.

*Photo Credit: From the collection of Barbara Henry*

### Slide 13: The Civil Rights Movement Continued



Schools were desegregating, but there was still work to do for civil rights leaders. Martin Luther King Jr., was the most famous civil rights leader. He worked for years for equality between all races and all people. He gave his most famous speech about racial equality, "I Have a Dream," in Washington, D.C. in 1963. Thousands of people heard his speech.

*Photo Credit: AP Images*

### Slide 14: Civil Rights Became Law



President Lyndon B. Johnson signed the Civil Rights Act in 1964. This was a law that tried to fix the problems of inequality in the United States. The law said everyone should have equal voting rights and that segregation and discrimination in public places would not be allowed. In 1965, President Johnson signed the Voting Rights Act. This law said that everyone with the vote should have equal opportunity to vote. It protected the rights of minorities. These important laws continue to protect equality today.