

2024

# DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. BIRTHDAY CELEBRATION

## STUDY GUIDE FOR STUDENTS & EDUCATORS



Artwork by Rinlane Xiong, 2024 contest winner

MARCUS  
PERFORMING ARTS  
CENTER

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## ABOUT THE PROGRAM

The Marcus Performing Arts Center in Milwaukee has celebrated Dr. King's birthday annually since 1984. The Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration programming highlights the youth in our community who every year interpret Dr. King's words through art, speech, and writing contests. Dr. King was an activist committed to peace, justice, and equality. His essential thoughts on nonviolence, social policy, integration, black nationalism, the ethics of love and hope, and his many testimonies have resonated over the past 40 years through the voices of our youth. As a visionary leader of the civil rights movement, Dr. King fought for racial and economic justice for the oppressed. His driving forces were nonviolence, love, the importance of family, and self-respect.



**2024**  
CONTEST  
THEME

# What Are You Doing For Others?

"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

**Question posed to an audience in Montgomery, Alabama**  
(1957)

# Contest Information: ART



## ELIGIBILITY:

The contest is open to all students in grades K-12.

### Grade Categories:

- Grades K-2: individual entries, any artistic medium
- Grades 3-5: individual entries, any artistic medium
- Grades 6-8: individual entries, any artistic medium
- Grades 9-12: individual entries, any artistic medium

## JUDGING GUIDELINES

The entries will be judged on a point system, with the following criteria considered:

- Entries should clearly express creative ideas representing the contest theme.
- Entries must not be a photocopy or tracing of an existing photo of Dr. King.
- Entries should showcase student's ability level.

In judging entries, emphasis will be placed on clarity, creativity, and originality. Teachers are encouraged to help students understand the historical context of Dr. King's words and actions, see the relevance of these words and actions in their artwork, and become familiar with Dr. King's life and values. We recommend utilizing the resources of MPS school libraries and the Milwaukee Public Libraries.

**How to Enter:** To facilitate anonymity in judging, the following information must be clearly printed on the back of each entry: Student's full name, Student's grade level, Student's email, Student's phone number, Student's address, School's name, Teacher's name

Submissions should be submitted via this form:

<https://forms.gle/pVGJrhZ94KNJa4gj9>

or delivered/mailed to: Elm Creative Arts Elementary School at  
900 W Walnut St, Milwaukee, WI 53205

### Deadline to Enter:

Friday, November 22, 2024

### Contact:

Dr. Deborah Bowling

[westfad@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:westfad@milwaukee.k12.wi.us)

# Contest Information: SPEECH



**Deadline to Enter:**  
Friday, November 22, 2024

**Contacts:**  
Nuntiata Portis-Buck  
[bucknp@milwaukee.k12.wi.us](mailto:bucknp@milwaukee.k12.wi.us)

Karen Ryan  
[karen.ryan@wecenergygroup.com](mailto:karen.ryan@wecenergygroup.com)

## ELIGIBILITY:

The contest is open to all students in grades K-12.

### Grade Categories:

- Grades K-2, individual entries
  - Grades 3-4, individual entries
  - Grades 5-6, individual entries
  - Grades 7-8, individual entries
  - Grades 9-10, individual entries
  - Grades 11-12 individual entries
- Speeches must be written and delivered by students.
  - Length: Four (4) minutes, maximum.
  - Schools may send only one student per grade category to preliminaries.
  - Schools are encouraged to conduct competitions to select a representative for each grade category.

## JUDGING GUIDELINES

As students prepare their empowering yet eloquent speeches, have them reflect on how it relates to themselves or others in their families, schools, neighborhoods, or world. Speeches are judged using a 5-point system with 8 key areas outlined below, designed to strengthen students' reading, writing, and public speaking skills while encouraging them to learn about and support the dreams of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

**SPEECH DEVELOPMENT:** structure and transitions, opening, body, closing organization.

**ANALYSIS/REASONING:** worthwhile use of support material such as examples, experiences, facts, and expert opinions.

**SPEECH VALUE:** ideas, originality of thought and material, accurate information.

**APPROPRIATENESS:** to speech purpose and audience, reflecting good taste

**VOICE:** flexibility, emphasis, variety of volume, pitch, rate, and voice quality

**PHYSICAL:** appearance, body language including facial expression, eye contact, gestures and stance.

**MANNER:** directness, assurance, enthusiasm, and poise.

**CORRECTNESS/LANGUAGE SKILLS:** grammar, pronunciation, word selection.

**How to Enter:** Extended judging criteria and application is available at:  
<https://www.we-energies.com/partners/educators/mlk-contest>

Virtual Preliminaries: December 3, 2024

In-Person Finals: December 7, 2024 at We Energies Public Service Building,  
231 W. Michigan Street, Milwaukee

# Contest Information: WRITING



**Deadline to Enter:**  
Friday, November 22, 2024

**Contact:**  
Donelle Johnson  
[donellejohnson@aol.com](mailto:donellejohnson@aol.com)  
(414) 445-5635

## ELIGIBILITY:

The contest is open to all students in grades K-12.

### Grade Categories:

- K-1: group project only (no individual essays), reflecting children's work and ideas
- Grades 2-3: individual entries, maximum length 250 words
- Grades 4-5: individual entries, maximum length 350 words
- Grade 6: individual entries, maximum length 400 words
- Grades 7-8: individual entries, maximum length 450 words
- Grades 9-10: individual entries, maximum length 500 words
- Grades 11-12: individual entries, maximum length 550 words

## JUDGING GUIDELINES

The entries will be judged on a point system, with the following criteria considered:

- Entries must address the theme.
- Entries should relate the student's own personal ideas, work, and experiences to the topic and show an understanding of Dr. King's ideals.
- Entries must not be a biographical sketch of Dr. King.
- Entries will be judged on the basis of clearly expressed creative ideas and ability level. In judging entries, emphasis will be placed on clarity, creativity, and originality. Correct usage of basic grammar and writing skills will also be considered.

Teachers are encouraged to help students understand the historical context of Dr. King's words and actions, see the relevance of these words and actions in their world today, and become familiar with Dr. King's life and values. We recommend utilizing the resources of MPS school libraries and the Milwaukee Public Libraries.

**How to Enter:** To facilitate anonymity in judging, the following information must be clearly printed on the back of each entry: Student's full name, Student's grade level, Student's email, Student's phone number, Student's address, School's name, Teacher's name.

All entries must be received by 5pm on Nov. 22 at one of the following sites:

- The children's librarian at any Milwaukee Public Library
- The Milwaukee Teachers' Education Association at 5130 W. Vliet St. Milwaukee
- Electronically via this google form:

<https://forms.gle/w3h6r8cxpgEv1eAD8>

## PRIZES & CELEBRATION EVENT

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Prizes for the Student Contest winners in each category will be available for pickup at the 2025 Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Birthday Celebration at the Marcus Performing Arts Center on Monday, January 20, 2025.

The event will highlight the winners of the Art, Speech, and Writing contests, as well as feature talented local performing artists to celebrate the life and legacy of Dr. King.

The Marcus Center is located at 929 N. Water Street, Milwaukee, WI, 53202.

Parking for the event will be free and is available in the attached parking structure on State Street.

For more information, please visit:

[MarcusCenter.org/mlk](https://www.MarcusCenter.org/mlk)



# DR. KING'S NONVIOLENT PHILOSOPHY



## Six Principles of Nonviolence

**PRINCIPLE ONE:** Nonviolence Is a Way of Life for Courageous People.

**PRINCIPLE TWO:** Nonviolence Seeks to Win Friendship and Understanding.

**PRINCIPLE THREE:** Nonviolence Seeks to Defeat Injustice, or Evil, Not People.

**PRINCIPLE FOUR:** Nonviolence Holds That Unearned, Voluntary Suffering for a Just Cause Can Educate and Transform People and Societies.

**PRINCIPLE FIVE:** Nonviolence Chooses Love Instead of Hate.

**PRINCIPLE SIX:** Nonviolence Believes That the Universe Is on the Side of Justice.

## Six Steps of Nonviolent Social Change

### **INFORMATION GATHERING**

To understand and articulate an issue, problem, or injustice facing a person, community, or institution you must do research. You must investigate and gather all vital information from all sides of the argument or issue so as to increase your understanding of the problem. You must become an expert on your opponent's position.

### **EDUCATION**

It is essential to inform others, including your opposition, about your issue. This minimizes misunderstandings and gains you support and sympathy.

### **PERSONAL COMMITMENT**

Daily check and affirm your faith in the philosophy and methods of nonviolence. Eliminate hidden motives and prepare yourself to accept suffering, if necessary, in your work for justice.

### **NEGOTIATION**

Using grace, humor, and intelligence, confront the other party with a list of injustices and a plan for addressing and resolving these injustices. Look for what is positive in every action and statement the opposition makes. Do not seek to humiliate the opponent but to call forth the good in the opponent.

### **DIRECT ACTION**

These are actions taken when the opponent is unwilling to enter into, or remain in, discussion/negotiation. These actions impose a "creative tension" into the conflict, supplying moral pressure on your opponent to work with you in resolving the injustice.

### **RECONCILIATION**

Nonviolence seeks friendship and understanding with the opponent. Nonviolence does not seek to defeat the opponent. Nonviolence is directed against evil systems, forces, oppressive policies, unjust acts, but not against persons. Through reasoned compromise, both sides resolve the injustice with a plan of action. Each act of reconciliation is one step close to the 'Beloved Community.'

**Reference:** [The King Center](#)

# CLASSROOM RESOURCES FOR EDUCATORS

This extensive compilation from the National Education Association includes lesson plan ideas for grades K-5, 6-8, and 9-12, as well as interactive activities and printables like coloring pages and crosswords.

## Learning and Living the Legacy of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

<https://www.nea.org/professional-excellence/student-engagement/tools-tips/learning-and-living-legacy-martin-luther-king-jr>

## THE DO'S AND DON'TS OF CELEBRATING MLK DAY

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Day is an ideal time to reflect on the life and legacy of this great leader, but it's important to do it with care and nuance—and to keep the conversation going beyond January 20.

<https://www.learningforjustice.org/magazine/dos-and-donts-of-celebrating-mlk-day>

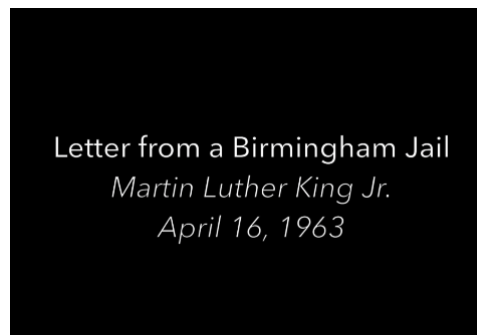
## ONLINE RESOURCES:

- [The King Center](#)
- [Library of Congress: Civil Rights History Project](#)
- [Constitutional Rights Foundation: Martin Luther King and the Philosophy of Nonviolence](#)
- [Civil Rights Teaching: Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.](#)

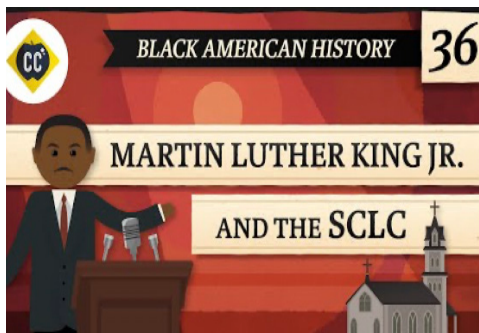
## VIDEOS:



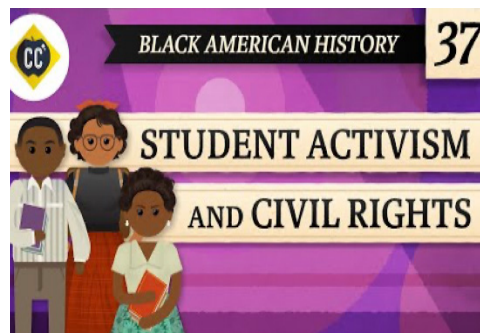
1. [50 years on, Martin Luther King, Jr.'s legacy lives out loud](#)



2. [Letter from a Birmingham Jail - Martin Luther King, Jr.](#)



3. [Martin Luther King, Jr: Crash Course Black American History #36](#)



4. [Student Civil Rights Activism: Crash Course Black American History #37](#)



5. [The 1960s in America: Crash Course US History #40](#)



## THEME CONCEPTS TO EXPLORE

Andrew Young  
Black Nationalism  
Boycott  
Brotherhood  
Bullying  
Civil Disobedience  
Civil Rights Act  
Civil Rights Activists  
Civil Rights Movement  
Community  
Conflict Resolution  
Constitutional Rights  
Demonstration  
Direct Action  
Equality  
Family  
Freedom  
Freedom Rides  
Friendship  
Homelessness  
Human Rights  
Integration  
Jim Crow  
James M. Lawson  
John Lewis  
Colin Kaepernick  
Magazines  
Mahatma Gandhi  
March on Washington  
Materialism  
Ministers of Chicago  
Minority  
Montgomery Bus Boycott  
NAACP  
Nonviolence  
Oppression  
Peace  
Population  
Poverty  
Protest  
Racial Equality  
Racism  
Resilience  
SCLC (Southern Christian Leadership Conference)  
Segregation  
Selective Buying  
SNCC (Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee)  
Social Change  
Social Justice  
Sports  
Student Sit-ins  
Unemployment  
Voting Rights Act

## BOOKS

*Dark Ghetto: Dilemmas of Social Power* by Kenneth Clark

*Stride Toward Freedom* by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

*Memphis, Martin, and the Mountaintop* by Alice Faye Duncan

*It Starts with Me!* by Dr. Bernice A. King

*My Life, My Love, My Legacy* by Coretta Scott King

*A Time to Break Silence (The Essential Works of Martin Luther King Jr., For Students)* by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Milwaukee Public Library booklist link:

[https://www.mpl.org/kids/?booklists\\_kids\(6-9\)](https://www.mpl.org/kids/?booklists_kids(6-9))

## THANK YOU TO THIS YEAR'S CONTEST SPONSORS!

Art



Speech



**MILWAUKEE  
PUBLIC SCHOOLS**

Writing



**Milwaukee Teachers'  
Education Association**