

# Martin Luther King Jr.

Martin Luther King Jr. was African-American and was born in the USA on January 15th 1929. As a child, he enjoyed playing sports, playing the piano and going to school. Sadly, life was often hard. Some people treated him differently because of the colour of his skin.

Times were hard for African-Americans living in the USA. There were separate areas for African-Americans and white people on public transport, parks, restaurants and even in toilets.

African-American children were not allowed to go to school with white children. They had to go to separate schools that didn't have many resources to help with their learning.

Martin Luther King Jr. was a Christian who wanted to make sure that all Americans had the same rights regardless of their race. He became a civil rights activist. This means that he campaigned for improved rights for people.

In 1963, Martin Luther King Jr. led a huge march in Washington DC, the US capital. In front of the enormous crowd, Martin Luther King Jr. made his famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Here is a short piece of that speech:

"I have a dream that one day little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as brothers and sisters."

It is because of Martin Luther King Jr., and others like him, that the law was changed to state that everyone in America had the same rights regardless of their skin colour. The law was also changed so that everyone could vote.

In 1964, he received the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to end racial prejudice in the United States.

Every January, there is an American national holiday to celebrate his birthday.

## Did You Know?

Martin Luther King Jr. was only 39 years old when he died. Many thousands of people went to his funeral.



# Questions

1. Where was Martin Luther King Jr. born and raised? Tick one.

- Australia                       Africa                       America

2. What did Martin Luther King Jr. become? Tick one.

- a bus driver                       a civil rights activist                       a musician

3. Match up the sentences.

Martin Luther King Jr. fought for

African Americans and white people.

Some people treated him differently

equal rights for all.

There were separate areas for

because of the colour of his skin.

4. Which faith did Martin Luther King Jr. follow? Tick one.

- Buddhism                       Hinduism                       Christianity

5. What was the name of the famous speech Martin Luther King Jr. made in 1963?

\_\_\_\_\_

6. Complete the sentence by filling in the missing words.

Martin Luther King Jr. was awarded the \_\_\_\_\_ in 1964.

7. In which month is there an annual American national holiday to celebrate Martin Luther King Jr.'s birthday? Tick one.

- January                       June                       July

8. How would you describe Martin Luther King Jr. in two words?

Give reasons for your choices.

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