



Martin Luther King Jr.
speaking at a news conference in Selma, Alabama,
1965

Martin Luther King Jr.: I Have a Dream

(excerpt) 1963

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. (1929-1968) was a priest, a civil rights activist and the leader of the NAACP (National Association for the Advancement of Colored People). He is famous for his "I Have a Dream" speech of August 28, 1963, which is considered by many to be among the most powerful speeches in American history.

King was born in Georgia as the son of a pastor and had a religious upbringing. He graduated with a degree in religious studies. Later on, he married and had four children.

King led the Montgomery Bus Boycott of 1955 (see p. 97) and was a leading figure in the non-violent protest to end racial segregation and inequality in 1963. Under King's charismatic leadership civil rights were put on the national political agenda.

Martin Luther King Jr. has become an icon for civil rights and racial equality, and he was, at the time, the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize in 1964 for his tireless work to end segregation. He was assassinated in Tennessee in 1968.

PRE-READING

1. Watch and listen to Martin Luther King's speech "I Have a Dream" on YouTube.

Afterwards, in pairs/small groups, discuss the following:

- In what way does Martin Luther King speak?
- Who were present in the audience?
- Are you moved by his speech? Why/why not?

2. Match the words from the "I Have a Dream" speech in the left column with their synonyms in the right column.

1	unite (vb.)	A	racism (sb.)
2	protests (sb.)	B	obvious (adj.)
3	discrimination (sb.)	C	undervalue (vb.)
4	segregation (sb.)	D	join (vb.)
5	underestimate (vb.)	E	rise up (vb.)
6	struggle (sb.)	F	separation (sb.)
7	score (sb.)	G	demonstrations (sb.)
8	manacles (sb.)	H	twenty (num.)
9	emerge (vb.)	I	battle (sb.)
10	self-evident (adj.)	J	shackles (sb.)

I Have a Dream

score (sb.) snes, tyve
stykker
Emancipation Proclamation bekendtgørelse om
ophævelse af slaveri
decree dekret, forordning
beacon (of) light ledestjerne
sear brændemærke
withering visne/falme
captivity fangenskab
crippled invalideret, gjort
til krøbling
manacle lænke
segregation raceadskillelse
midst midt i
vast umådelig, enorm
prosperity fremgang,
velstand
languish vantrives,
henslæbe sit liv
exile (sb.) person der lever
i eksil
condition tilstand
capital hovedstad
cash a check indløse en
check
Constitution den amerikanske
forfatning
Declaration of Independence den amerikanske
frihedserklæring
promissory note gælds-
brev
fall heir arve
unalienable umistelig
pursuit stræben efter
default forsømme,
misligholde (en låneaf tale)
sacred hellig
obligation forpligtelse
insufficient funds util-
strækkelige midler
devotee tilhænger
fatigue træthed
gain opnå, vinde
lodging logi
mobility mobilitet, bevæ-
gelighed
stripped afklædt
dignity værdighed
righteousness retskaf-
fenhed
wallow svælge i
despair fortvivlelse

I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation. Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous
5 decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles
10 of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize
15 a shameful condition.

In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check. When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was
20 a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the "unalienable Rights" of "Life, Liberty and the pursuit of Happiness". It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note, insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people
25 a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds".

...

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, "When will you be satisfied?" We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never
30 be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities. We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their self-hood and robbed of their
35 dignity by signs stating: "For Whites Only." We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote. No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until "justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream."

40 ...

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends.



Martin Luther King Jr.
Washington

creed tro
self-evident
swelter y
varme, s
oppression
vicious o
interposit
indgribe
nullificati
ophævel



Martin Luther King Jr. waves to the 250,000 civil rights supporters from the steps of the Lincoln Memorial in Washington after his famous speech "I Have a Dream", 1963

creed trosbekendelse
self-evident selvindlysende
swelter ved at gå til af
 varme, smelte
oppression undertrykkelse
vicious ondskabsfuld
interposition intervention,
 indgriben
nullification annullering,
 ophævelse

And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream.

I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal."

I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood.

I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice.

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" – one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

exalted ophøjet
crooked krum, skæv

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together."

...

FURTHER ANALYSIS

Rhetorical pentagon

1. In pairs, fill in the corners of the rhetorical pentagon. (See the rhetorical pentagon box on p. 50).
2. Who are the recipients of "I Have a Dream"? Is there more than one?
3. Afterwards, compare your findings with another pair from the class. Do you agree?

Rhetoric (see the rhetorical analysis box on p. 51)

1. Find information about Martin Luther King in the introduction and account for his ethos in relation to this speech.
2. Point out at least three sentences that appeal to pathos. Explain the purpose of pathos in this speech.
3. Find some examples of logos in the speech and explain the idea behind using them.
4. What exactly makes this speech unforgettable? Point out a quote from the speech that you think made it unforgettable in 1963 – and point out one that makes it unforgettable in our time.

Language

1. Comment on the following quotes from Martin Luther King's speech. You can find help in the box about metaphors p. 81:
 - "... the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity." (p. 120, ll. 11-12)
 - "... America has given the Negro people a bad check which has come back marked 'insufficient funds'." (p. 120, ll. 24-25)
2. Comment on the concept of light in the following quotations from Martin Luther King's speech:
 - "This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice." (p. 120, ll. 4-6)
 - "It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity." (p. 120, ll. 6-7)
3. Comment on the anaphoras listed below and explain the purpose of them. (See the information box on p. 123.)
 - one hundred years later (p. 120)
 - we can never be satisfied (p. 120)
 - I have a dream (p. 121)

A	We
B	And
C	One
D	We
E	You
F	It is this
G	We mot
H	"We

Anaphora

Anaphora comes from Greek and means "bring back". It is a rhetorical device that involves the repetition of a word or a group of words in successive clauses. It is often used in ballads, songs, speeches and sermons and creates a certain rhythm to the text due to the repetitions.

An example of an anaphora could be from Charles Dickens's *A Tale of Two Cities*: "It was the best of times, it was the worst of times, it was the age of wisdom, it was the age of foolishness, it was the epoch of belief, it was the epoch of incredulity ..."

INTRODUCTORY WORK

Martin Luther King's dream

1. What exactly is Martin Luther King's dream?
2. Martin Luther King mentions that his dream is "deeply rooted in the American dream" (p. 121, l. 2) – explain how.

The Past

1. Martin Luther King mentions "a great American" (p. 120, l. 3). Who is he referring to? Why?
2. Why does Martin Luther King mention the Emancipation Proclamation and the Constitution?
3. What quotes does Martin Luther King mention from the Declaration of Independence? Why?

PAIR-WORK

Pair up the following parts of phrases from "I Have a Dream" and read aloud the correct sentences to a partner.

A	We can never be satisfied at long as the Negro ...	1	... heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and hotels of the cities.
B	And so we've come here to dramatize ...	2	... the veterans of creative suffering.
C	One hundred years later, the Negro is languished ...	3	... insofar as her citizens of color are concerned.
D	We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, ...	4	... a shameful condition.
E	You have been ...	5	... is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality.
F	It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note, ...	6	... is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one.
G	We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility ...	7	... that all men are created equal."
H	"We hold these truths to be self-evident, ...	8	... in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land.

POST-READING

In pairs/small groups, find Stevie Wonder's song "Happy Birthday" from 1980 online. You and your group must choose one of the following tasks:

1. Give a presentation to the class on Stevie Wonder's understanding of Martin Luther King and discuss why he has written the song.
2. Make a podcast in which you imagine doing an interview with Stevie Wonder. One of the group members plays Stevie Wonder and the rest of the group participates in doing an interview with him. In the interview, ask Stevie Wonder the following and think of more questions yourselves:
 - A. What has inspired Stevie Wonder to write the song?
 - B. What is Stevie Wonder's message to the world with this song?
 - C. Which is Stevie Wonder's favorite stanza? Why?

racial equ
alle race
black sup
overherr
anti-Semi
mitisme,
jøder
white sup
mennesk
stand til
grupper,
sorte

PRE-REA



Malcolm X: The Ballot or the Bullet

(excerpt) 1964

racial equality lighed for

alle racer

black supremacy sort

overherredømme

anti-Semitism anti-se-

mitisme, afstandtagen til

jøder

white supremacists hvide

mennesker der tager af-

stand til andre befolknings-

grupper, i dette tilfælde

sorte

Malcolm X (1925-1965): Although he was given the name Malcolm Little by his parents, he took on the name Malcolm X. He wanted the "X" to represent his unknown African name as a symbol of the heritage that had been stolen from him and his slave ancestors. Malcolm X also adopted the name El-Hajj Malik El-Shabazz. He was a Muslim minister and a human rights activist. He believed in racial equality, black supremacy and anti-Semitism. During his childhood, his father was killed by white supremacists, his mother had a nervous breakdown and was placed in a mental institution, and so the family fell apart.

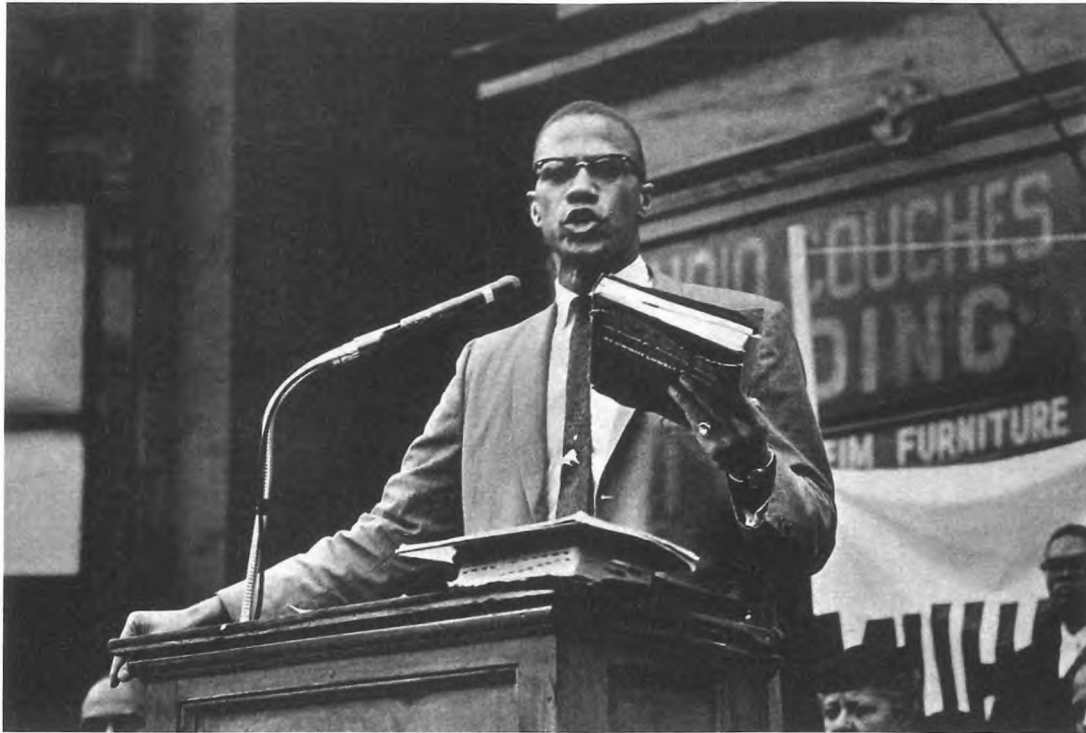
In 1946 Malcolm X was imprisoned for burglary. In prison he became a member of the political group Nation of Islam, which worked for improving conditions for African Americans. Malcolm X favoured violence in the struggle for black equality – and perhaps even supremacy – as he distrusted ideas about racial integration.

Malcolm X and the Nation of Islam stood out from the rest of the civil rights movement by preaching black supremacy and arguing for the complete separation of white and black Americans. However, he changed his opinion over time and developed a more accepting attitude towards the mainstream civil rights movement. He was shot and killed by members of the political group he himself had belonged to, the Nation of Islam, in Harlem, New York in 1965.

PRE-READING 1

1. In pairs or small groups, look up information about Malcolm X online in order to answer the questions below:
 - A. Did Malcolm X and Martin Luther King know each other?
 - B. Did Malcolm X and Martin Luther King agree on how to fight racial segregation? Why/why not?
 - C. Debate whether it is relevant to compare Malcolm X to Martin Luther King and to discuss their political beliefs.
2. In pairs/groups debate:
 - A. What does the title of the speech "The Ballot or the Bullet" mean? What do you expect the speech to be about?
 - B. Before a presidential election, how can a civil rights activist influence future politics?

Malcolm X gave his speech "The Ballot or the Bullet" on April 3, 1964 in Cory Methodist Church in Ohio. The following is an excerpt from the speech.



Malcolm X giving a speech

ballot stemmeseddel
community samfund,
 befolkningsgruppe
jive tale uforståeligt til en,
 drive gæk med en
crook skurk
letdown skuffelse
trickery fusk, svindel
treachery forræderi,
 løftebrud
intend have til hensigt
nourish give næring til
dissatisfaction utilfreds-
 hed
Brother Lomax Louis
 Lomax (1922-70), en
 afrikansk-amerikansk jour-
 nalist blandt tilhørerne

The Ballot or the Bullet

...
 1964 threatens to be the most explosive year America has ever witnes-
 sed. The most explosive year. Why? It's also a political year. It's the year
 when all of the white politicians will be back in the so-called Negro
 community jiving you and me for some votes. The year when all of the
 5 white political crooks will be right back in your and my community
 with their false promises, building up our hopes for a letdown, with
 their trickery and their treachery, with their false promises which they
 don't intend to keep. As they nourish these dissatisfactions, it can only
 lead to one thing, an explosion; and now we have the type of black man
 10 on the scene in America today – I'm sorry, Brother Lomax – who just
 doesn't intend to turn the other cheek any longer.

delude vild-
 lyset
 diner midd-
 legislation
 amendment
 fatningsæn
 til forfatnin
 filibuster fo
 gelse af en
 lange taler
 pass vedtag
 Polack pola
 (nedsætt
 disguised f
 hypocrisy h
 flag-saluter
 hylder flag
 flag-waver
 vifter med

INTRODU
 WORK