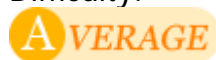


Obama Helps Dedicate New King Memorial

Difficulty:



Date of release:

Friday 21st October 2011

Discussion activities to be done after completing this EA lesson

Today's report is about a new memorial in Washington, D.C. Who does the memorial honor? Who was present at the dedication ceremony? What did President Obama say when he addressed the crowd?

Extension discussion topics

A. Talking about and going over the specific topic / idea / issue in listening text

Introduction = The hero, the memorial and the dedication ceremony.

1. What do we learn about Martin Luther King, Jr., in the report?
 - He believed in non-violent protest.
 - He was a leader in the 1960s civil rights movement.
 - He gave his "I have a dream" speech in 1963.
 - He was assassinated. (This happened in 1968, although this is not mentioned in the report.)
2. Whose voices do we hear in the report? What is each person's main message?
 - Dr. King (1963): This day will go down in history. (The beginning of his "I Have a Dream" speech.)
 - Rev. Jesse Jackson: We must keep asking questions about economic justice.
 - Dr. Christine King Farris: My brother became a hero to humanity.
 - President Barack Obama: Dr. King gave people hope, and caused hearts and minds to change, which opened doors to a new generation.
 - Joyce Hayward: She wanted to celebrate the person who helped her be free.
 - Jeanine Hill: This is an important day for African Americans, and she is glad to be a part of history.
3. What details do you remember about the memorial and the dedication?
 - The statue of Dr. King is 10 meters tall.
 - Tommy Hilfiger was also in attendance and supplied white baseball caps for everyone.
 - The dedication took place on the National Mall in Washington, D.C.
 - Thousands of people were in attendance.
 - Stevie Wonder sang.

Would you have liked to attend the dedication ceremony? Why or why not?

B. Expanding on (one of) the topics / ideas / issues in listening text

Topic = Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

1. What do you know about Martin Luther King, Jr., and his work in the civil rights movement? (See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther_King,_Jr.)
Is Dr. King well-known in your country? If so, what do people generally think of him?
2. Dr. King's Wikipedia page lists the following people as being influential in Dr. King's work: Jesus, Abraham Lincoln, Mahatma Gandhi, Benjamin Mays, Hosea Williams, Bayard Rustin, Henry David Thoreau, Howard Thurman, Leo Tolstoy. Do you know some of these people? How do you think their work might have influenced Dr. King? Are any of these influences surprising to you?
3. Dr. King's "I Have a Dream" speech was given as a part of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom, on August 28, 1963, when thousands of (mainly African American) protesters came to Washington, D.C., to insist up on economic justice for all Americans. The "I Have a Dream" speech is very well-known in the U.S., and is considered to be one of the finest speeches given in the U.S. Have you ever heard the speech? (You can listen to it here: <http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smEqnklfYs>)
Why do you think this speech is so highly considered? What is moving about it?
4. The following quote is attributed to Dr. King: "All I'm saying is simply this, that all life is interrelated, that somehow we're caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly. For some strange reason, I can never be what I ought to be until you are what you ought to be. You can never be what you ought to be until I am what I ought to be. This is the interrelated structure of reality."
Do you agree with this quote? Can you think of examples or counter-examples? (examples: family members fighting each other; divisions in society; neighboring nations causing conflict. Counter examples: people rising up from a difficult background to succeed in life; leaders not allowing opposing parties to lower their aspirations Mahatma Gandhi, Nelson Mandela. Others?)
Why would a quote like this be appealing to people in difficult situations? How could it appeal to people in positions of privilege?

OR, Topic = King and his work.

Find out all you can about Dr. King and give an oral presentation of your findings to a partner or to your teacher. (See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Martin_Luther_King,_Jr.)

C. Extending discussion of (one of) the topics / ideas / issues in listening text

Topic = Important gatherings, demonstrations, and iconic places for them.

1. The new memorial for Martin Luther King, Jr., was built on the National Mall, in Washington, D.C., where the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom took place in 1963. Many other important protests have been held on the National Mall. Why do you think protest organizers choose to demonstrate there? What other protests do you know about that took place there? (See http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/National_Mall_-_Protests_and_rallies)

2. Is there a main square or other place in your city or country where many protests are held? What protests do you know of that have been held there? Why do you think that place has become a place of protest? Have there been violent protests there?
3. The National Mall is a large, open-air park that is part of the National Parks Service. When there are no protesters, it has many other functions, including presidential inaugurations (swearing-in ceremonies), Earth Day celebrations, a kite festival, concerts, etc. If your country has a place that is known for protests, does it also have other functions the rest of the time? If so, what are those functions?

Audioscript

[“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.”]

Renowned civil rights leader Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr., galvanized the U.S. civil rights movement with his “I Have a Dream” speech in 1963, his non-violent message calling for an end to racial segregation.

[“I still have a dream.”]

Almost half a century later, thousands convened on Washington’s National Mall to give his new memorial a proper dedication.

Joyce Hayward flew from the island of Bermuda to be here. “I wanted to be part of the celebration of the person who helped me be free.”

For Jeanine Hill, it was a long bus ride from Ohio. “This is a special day because African Americans, we need something like this, and especially for an election year... this is a very, very important endeavor, and I’m proud, very proud to be a part of history.”

Revered civil rights leader Reverend Jesse Jackson greeted reporters before his formal remarks, saying King’s fight must go on. “We have some obligation not just to glow in this but to keep raising the challenging and disturbing moral questions of economic justice and fairness.”

Stevie Wonder added to the chorus with his song, and members of King’s family orated.

(REV. KING’S SISTER, DR. CHRISTINE KING FARRIS) “I witnessed a baby become a great hero to humanity, who provides hope and inspiration for freedom-loving people everywhere.”

Designer Tommy Hilfiger, who supplied an ocean of white baseball caps to the crowd, was swarmed by journalists before speaking.

But the day’s big speaker was no doubt U.S. President Barack Obama, the nation’s first black president, who was just six years old when King was assassinated. “Because of that hopeful vision, because of Dr. King’s moral imagination, barricades began to fall and bigotry began to fade. New doors of opportunity swung open for an entire generation. Yes, laws changed, but hearts and minds changed as well.”

The 10-meter-tall statue of Dr. King reminds the world of his fight for equality and his ultimate belief that great dreams can come true.

Laurel Bowman, VOA News, Washington.