



Martin Luther King, Jr. / Day of Service Teacher Resource Guide

Martin Luther King Day is the only federal holiday specifically tied to calling on people to volunteer to improve their community. “The Martin Luther King Jr. Day of Service is a defining moment each year when Americans across the country step up to make our communities more equitable and take action to create the Beloved Community of Dr. King’s dream. While Dr. King believed the Beloved Community was possible, he acknowledged and fought for systemic change. His example is our call to action.” ([AmeriCorps](#))

The resources listed below are designed to help educators create lessons about Dr. King, his legacy, and his call to service that can be incorporated into the curriculum throughout the year. The second section of resources is designed to help teachers support their students participating in service.

Teaching About Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and Civil Rights

Resource	Grade Levels	Brief Description
Learning for Justice	PK-12	<p>Helpful “Do’s and Don’ts” for teaching about MLK throughout the year organized around three parts of the school: displays, curriculum and discussions.</p> <p>Lesson plans for grades K-12 includes information about voting rights and other topics central to the Civil Rights Movement and ongoing social justice issues.</p> <p>Ideas for how to approach the day with your students and wider school community.</p>
King Institute at Stanford University	PK-20	<p>Numerous resources for students of all age groups.</p> <p>For younger students, there are book recommendations and animation to go along with the audio of Dr. King giving his famous “I Have a Dream” speech.</p> <p>College, and perhaps high school students, might find the research section of the website helpful, with access to much of King’s work. The website also includes a resource page for students and teachers.</p>

New York Times Resource List	Any	Although not full lesson plans, this site provides six ideas and corresponding background information for teaching about Dr. King. In addition to more traditional lesson ideas, this site includes resources to teach about Black Lives Matter and protests as a part of MLK Day lessons.
National Park Service	PK-12	An overview of Dr King’s life and the Civil Rights Movement, background about the Martin Luther King, Jr. Memorial in Washington, DC, and links to several other key historic sites. This could be excellent source material for a virtual field trip.
Teach For America - One Day	PK-12	Includes both teaching resources and service opportunities. Teaching resources focus on the King family’s call to focus on voting rights. The site also has a link to King’s lesser known speeches and to book recommendations about Dr. King.
Smithsonian Magazine	PK-12	In this article, three museum educators write about how to “expand upon what traditional textbooks and mainstream media might share about King to build a more contextualized, nuanced understanding” of the man and his contributions. Find links to primary source materials including art, photographs, speeches, and a learning laboratory.
American Association of State Colleges and Universities	Higher education	This resource explains the federal holiday and why it is linked to service and has the motto “make it a day on not a day off”. It also links to numerous national organizations that support MLK Day Activities, including AmeriCorps and the King Center as well as numerous calls to action for college and university students.

Finding Service Opportunities and Making Service-Learning Connections

Resource	Grade Levels	Brief Description
AmeriCorps MLK Day of Service	PK-20	Search for volunteer opportunities in your area by zip code. You can sort for virtual opportunities and also for types of service or skills the opportunity uses. Communication Resources include service project ideas sorted by focus and an MLK Day toolkit .
Youth Service America Day of Service	PK-20	YSA provides resources for planning service projects including tool kits for youth ages 5-12 and 13-25 and for getting youth engaged in service and volunteering.
Various Maryland Agencies and Networks	PK-20	Various local and state organizations offer links to databases people can search to find a service opportunity --- any day of

<p>Governor's Office on Service and Volunteerism</p> <p>Montgomery County Volunteer Center</p> <p>University of Maryland Office of Community Engagement and UMD Services 24/7 link to numerous projects and nonprofits in Prince George's County)</p> <p>Also see Volunteer Match and enter your county or zip code</p>	<p>the year. Most sites include filters to help users sort by the age of the volunteer, location, indoor/outdoor, one-day projects or sustained opportunities, topic or need being addressed, etc.</p>
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