

University of Virginia Center for Politics



Lesson Plan 3: What Does a Democracy Demand of Its Citizens?

Purpose: Students identify diverse models of civic engagement as they examine the impact that activists, artists, writers and local citizens have on public policy.

Materials:

- Student Guide 1: *“Paul Revere’s Ride”*
- Student Guide 2A: *Artist*
- Student Guide 2B: *Mother/Author Sarah Patton Boyle Letter (Pocket Insert)*
- Student Guide 2C: *University of Virginia Professor Emeritus: Paul M. Gaston*
- Student Guide 2D: *Activist: Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.*

Central Questions:

What does a democracy demand of its citizens?

What motivates a person to become involved in government?

Does everyone have a responsibility to be involved in government?

How can I use my talents to impact public policy?

Procedure:

1. Warm Up - Read the poem “Paul Revere’s Ride” by Henry Wadsworth Longfellow.
2. After reading, ask students to rewrite the last stanza as if Paul Revere were an apathetic citizen who decided to sleep instead of participate in the American Revolution. Share original stanzas and then ask students to consider the question, “What motivates a person to become involved in government?” Explain that the goal for this lesson is to examine how people influence public policy and why they choose to get involved.
3. Divide the class into five groups and give each group one of the student guides listed below.
 - Ask students to read the instructions on the guide and answer questions as a team.
 - Student Guide 2A: Artist
 - Student Guide 2B: Mother/Author J Boyle Letter (Pocket Insert)
 - Student Guide 2C: Professor
 - Student Guide 2D: Activist

Differentiation

Student guides may be distributed to teams based on skill levels, background knowledge or interest.



4. After students complete the questions on the student guide, bring them together as a whole class to share their ideas and deliberate.

5. Deliberate

Ask teams to discuss the contributions made by each individual and then to determine which of the five had the greatest impact on his or her community? Why?

Tip

Teachers may use the General Deliberation Rubric located on the Democracy Corps page to assess student participation in this discussion.

Paul Revere's Ride

By Henry Wadsworth Longfellow

Listen, my children and you shall hear
Of the midnight ride of Paul Revere,
On the eighteenth of April, in Seventy-five;
Hardly a man is now alive
Who remembers that famous day and year.

He said to his friend, "If the British march
By land or sea from the town to-night,
Hang a lantern aloft in the belfry arch
Of the North Church tower as a signal light -
One, if by land, and two, if by sea;
And I on the opposite shore will be,
Ready to ride and spread the alarm
Through every Middlesex village and farm,
For the country folk to be up and to arm."

A hurry of hoofs in the village street,
A shape in the moonlight, a bulk in the dark,
And beneath, from the pebbles, in passing, a spark
Struck out by a steed flying fearless and fleet;
That was all! And yet, through the gloom and the light,
The fate of a nation was riding that night;
And the spark struck out by that steed, in his flight,
Kindled the land into flame with its heat.

So through the night rode Paul Revere;
And so through the night went his cry of alarm
To every Middlesex village and farm,
A cry of defiance and not of fear,
A voice in the darkness, a knock at the door,
And a word that shall echo forevermore!
For, borne on the night-wind of the past,
Through all our history, to the last,
In the hour of darkness and peril and need,
The people will waken and listen to hear
The hurrying hoof-beats of that steed,
And the midnight message of Paul Revere.



Artist

What Does a Democracy Demand of Its Citizens?

Artist: Norman Rockwell

Step One

Read the background information, review the artwork and then answer the questions that follow.

Background Information

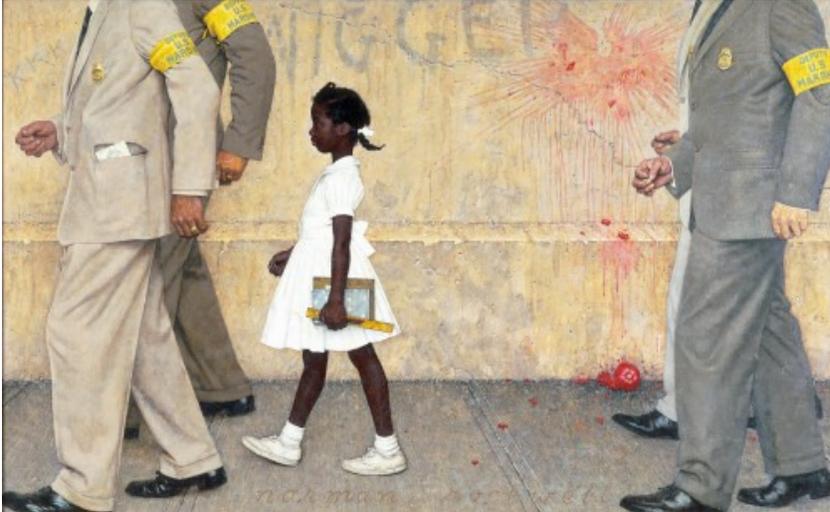
Norman Rockwell was a master at his craft, who was as much at ease painting kings, statesmen, presidents and movie stars as he was at painting freckled-faced boys, pigtailed girls, kindly old folks, and loveable dogs.

Born February 3, 1894, Rockwell sold his first cover to the Curtis Publishing Company in 1916, which began a career spanning almost 60 years. The pale, lean-limbed pipe smoking illustrator worked seven days a week, with only a half-day off for Christmas, to produce canvas images of the nation he loved.

No one captured America like Rockwell. "I paint life as I would like it to be," he once said. "If there was sadness in this creative world of mine, it was a pleasant sadness. If there were problems, they were humorous problems.

(www.nrm.org, The Norman Rockwell Museum at Stockbridge) ©1960 SEPS: Licensed by Curtis Publishing, Indianapolis, IN

The Problem We All Live With



www.nrm.org,
The Norman Rockwell
Museum at Stockbridge

Questions

1. Describe what is happening in the painting The Problem We All Live With.

2. What message do you think Norman Rockwell is trying to convey in the painting?

3. Could Norman Rockwell's art impact public policy? If yes, how?

4. Would you describe Norman Rockwell as a responsible citizen based on this painting? Why or why not?

5. What do you think motivates a person to be a responsible citizen?

6. Is anyone exempt from being involved in a democracy? Why or why not?



Lesson Plan 3
Student Guide 2B, Mother/Author

What Does a Democracy Demand of Its Citizens?

Mother and Author: Sarah Patton Boyle

Step One

Read the background information on mother and author Sarah Patton Boyle and then read her letter to Martin Luther King, Jr. Answer the questions that follow.

Background Information

By 1962 Sarah Patton Boyle had become the most outspoken white integrationist in Virginia. In addition to writing, speaking, and organizing for the NAACP and other groups, she gained national attention when an article she had originally titled “We’re Readier Than We Think” appeared in the Saturday Evening Post under the inflammatory title “Southerners Will Like Integration.” A wave of hostile reactions from across the country included crosses burned on her lawn. (University of Virginia Archives in the Albert and Shirley Small Special Collections Library, www.lib.virginia.edu/speccol)



March 21, 1964

Dr. Martin Luther King
Atlanta, Ga.

Dear Dr. King,

This is to thank you and to ask your advice.

I wish to thank you for your endorsement of my new book FOR HUMAN BEINGS ONLY. I value it with the deepest gratitude.

I wish to ask your advice about joining demonstrations--specifically in Danville, should they invite me.

I am well aware, as I fear not enough whites are anywhere (and certainly not enough in the South), that the opportunity for white leadership has long passed in the civil rights struggle, and that if they wish to be useful, white citizens must fall in behind colored Christians and merely support their leadership in a strictly subordinate way.

It is therefore ~~as a~~ supporter, not as a leader, that I offer my services. But what I do not know is whether they would be of any real use. I am willing, even eager, to demonstrate as a witness of my whole person to the rightness of the best Negro American leadership. I am willing, even eager, to make this with total by going to jail and refusing bail-- if it would help.

I truly by God's grace fear nothing but the loss of God, and am not troubled at the thought of any abuse from man whether physical or psychological or social. I was raised to believe that the only thing which really matters in anyone's life is his consistent choice of right over wrong, and I am fully and calmly prepared to live by this truth, or to die by it. By God's grace I do not fear death, but only fear that I may by accident or error do less than my full duty in this crisis.

But I know the dangers of human pride, and how easily we slip into taking pride in our virtue and courage, and then acting on pride, rather than on the need for our services. Therefore I seek your advice. Please answer three questions for me.

1. Would my support in demonstrations and in going to jail encourage colored Americans on the whole and reduce their hostility toward the white group? (I believe that it would encourage some other whites to follow suit, while of course infuriating others.)
2. ~~Now~~ If so, would my support be more welcome if I simply appeared in trouble areas and joined demonstrators without asking, or should I offer my witness in advance by letter and not go unless invited?
3. If the latter, should I write your office first for your opinion? I imagine that you at times consider some demonstrations ill-timed and would not wish them encouraged.
4. I said three questions, but I think I shall add a fourth. Would

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you like to put me on a list of persons to be called on to appear and witness with my person, or do you prefer that each person take the responsibility for his actions and decisions himself?

I hate to burden you with questions, but I am fearful of the growing tension among colored Americans and dread the possibility that they may be pressed beyond the point where they are able longer to pursue their high course. If any act of my mine, if any sacrifice of mine (no matter how great), right in your judgment prolong their period of endurance until the slowly awakening conscience of the nation recognizes and gives redress for their most just grievances, I wish without delay to perform this act and offer this sacrifice.

I speak entirely in terms of the affect on Negro Americans of anything I might do because, as I said above, this has become the most important factor in the situation. As you well know, white America is beginning to awaken to this issue, and I think that my witness might speed this awakening a little. But all people, I fear, awaken from deep sleep slowly. The real key to the situation therefore--is it not?--is whether the hope and faith, above all, the love, of colored Americans can endure until this awakening?

Thus any action to be effective must be directed in two quarters: it must speed the awakening of white Americans, and must strengthen the hope of colored Americans. Isn't it so?

Therefore I place myself at your disposal. What you tell me, I will do. I hope that my conciliatory writings will have some effect on both groups. But the effect of direct action is quicker than the effect of the written word. The pea may be mightier than the sword, but it is slower. And we don't have any time left to wait for the effect of words, do we?

I look to you to tell me what I should do. And when you have told me, I shall do it.

In gratitude for your wisdom and dedication,



Sincerely,

→ "sword" of action.

Sarah Patton Boyle
Box 3183, Uni. Sta.
Charlottesville, Va., 22903

Department, UNIVERSITY OF VIRGINIA LIBRARY.

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Lesson Plan 3
Student Guide 2B, Mother/Author

Questions based on Sarah Patton Boyle letter

1. What is Sarah Patton Boyle's goal in writing this letter?

2. If she accomplishes her goal, will she impact public policy? If yes, what personal strengths or talents did she use?



3. Based on this letter, would you describe Sarah Patton Boyle as an involved citizen?

4. What do you think motivates a person to become involved in civic issues?

5. Is anyone exempt from being involved in a democracy? Why or why not?

Lesson Plan 3
Student Guide 2C, Professor

What Does a Democracy Demand of Its Citizens?

University of Virginia Professor Emeritus: Paul M. Gaston

Step One

Read the background information on Professor Paul M. Gaston along with his memoirs and then answer the questions that follow.

Background Information

U.Va. History Professor Emeritus Paul Gaston instilled in his students not only an interest in studying Southern history, but also a real-life example of how to live one's life according to the tenet of promoting positive social change.

Gaston grew up in the Fairhope Single Tax Colony in Alabama, founded by his grandfather, E.B. Gaston. The elder Gaston was dissatisfied with the social problems of his time, including poverty and labor, and after meeting and discussing his ideas for an ideal community with like-minded



friends, they founded Fairhope in 1894. Fairhope, a seductively beautiful place on the eastern shore of Mobile Bay with a “fair hope” of succeeding, offered democratic, annual elections and equal communal land to everyone for an annual rental fee which went back into the colony’s treasury. “The idea was that nobody would profit and no one would be poor,” Gaston said.

In this atmosphere of idealism, Gaston received a unique education from the Marietta Johnson School of Organic Education. Johnson, the school’s founder, was interested in a holistic education that incorporated the whole child. Students were required to take classes in folk dancing, arts and crafts, and received no grades or special honors. The school attracted national attention and visits from scholars and writers including John Dewey, Upton Sinclair, Clarence Darrow and Sinclair Lewis.

Gaston drew from these experiences as he left Fairhope, served in the Army and earned his B.A. from Swarthmore College in 1952. “I never had a moment, like many white Southerners, where I thought, ‘What we’re doing is awful,’ but my experience was more evolutionary,” Gaston says. “When I was in the Army, I wrote a lot about my ideas on race.”

After Swarthmore, Gaston studied history as a Fulbright Scholar in Copenhagen. He was interested in Southern history because of its intrinsic drama in regard to the Civil War and its apparent drastic dichotomies. “I could see that big changes were coming to the South around 1952-53,” he says. “I wanted to play a part ‘But what part?’”

University of Virginia Archives, www.virginia.edu

Lesson Plan 3
Student Guide 2C, Professor

“SITTING IN” IN THE ’SIXTIES **Excerpt from An Historian’s Memoir By Paul M. Gaston**

I’m going to begin with the memory of a day, much nicer than this one, in May of 1963. There was a picnic at a law professor’s home. It was the end of the season for the Virginia Council on Human Relations and some of the people in the local branch of the NAACP. We were a group—the two groups meeting together—who had spent the year, as we had spent many previous years, talking to local restaurant owners, motel operators, theater owners, employers, asking them if they wouldn’t open up Charlottesville a little bit. We’d spent a lot of time negotiating with them, patiently talking, appealing to reason.

And at the end of each year, we got together to pat ourselves on the back, to enjoy some fun and fellowship, and to discuss what we had done in the year past and what we were going to do in the year ahead.



This picnic had a sort of unusual turn to it. Late in the afternoon, a young black minister named Floyd Johnson got up on a table and called us all over and said, “We’re going to have some sit-ins.”...

Well, uneasy glances were exchanged as Floyd asked us to join in a sit-in. Now what was the context? What were these sit-ins? I know some of you know. Several of you here have doubtless experienced them. Some of you here lived through the Sixties. Most of you here didn’t. I’m speaking to you students who were, in fact, born after this picnic took place.

The modern movement of sit-ins had begun on February 1, 1960, in Greensboro, North Carolina, when Ezell Blair, David Richmond, Joseph McNeill, and Franklin McCain, four black freshmen at the North Carolina Agricultural & Technical School at Greensboro had been fed up with what was happening to them, and with the pace of change in the South. It had been six years since the Brown decision had called for an end to segregation elsewhere, and it seemed that massive resistance in the South was holding that movement for change back.

So these four youngsters decided they would do something. They sat up in a dorm room and came up with a plan. They went to the Woolworth’s store the next day. First they made some purchases, making the point that the store was open to the public; then they sat down at the lunch counter and ordered a cup of coffee, whereupon they were told, as students would be told so many times in the future, “We don’t serve Negroes here.” There would be times in the future when the students would joke about this, and reply, “That’s all right, we don’t eat Negroes,” and ask for something else.

There were these four students that day who sat until the place closed. The next day they were joined by four black women from Bennett College, and by twenty-three of their fellow male students at A & T. There were sixty-three of them on the third day. On the fourth day, there were three hundred, and Saturday night they had a mass rally of some sixteen hundred people.

This Greensboro coffee party sparked a movement that spread like brush fire across the South. In many southern cities, but not in Charlottesville, young students began presenting themselves at lunch counters, making an order, and not leaving when they were asked to. They were subject to abuse; they were subject to violence; they were subject to torment. But they stayed, and the movement spread all over the region. They were young people; they were urban; they were middle class, in aspiration if not in status. And by April they had created for themselves an organization, the Student Nonviolent Coordinating Committee, which is called familiarly SNCC (“Snick”), which became the sort of shock troop movement of the young students.

By September of 1961, according to a Southern Regional Council estimate, 70,000 blacks and whites had actively participated in sit-ins. A new method of changing the social structure had been discovered, and it was a method that was not limited to the lunch counters. Pretty soon one found that it was a method which was suitable for all kinds of public places where blacks were either segregated or excluded, so that there were kneel-ins at the churches, sleep-ins at the motel lobbies, swim-ins at the segregated pools, wade-ins at the segregated beaches, read-ins at the segregated libraries, play-ins at the segregated parks, and watch-ins at the segregated movies. And everywhere there were jail-ins.



The movement was based on the idea of nonviolent civil disobedience. Students would offer themselves nonviolently in a particular situation. They would not resist when tormented, nor would they resist when arrested.

This captured the attention of the nation. One of the great Southern university presidents and United States Senators, who was hounded out of office because of his greatness, Frank Porter Graham of the University of North Carolina, said of these students that they were “renewing springs of American democracy; in sitting down, they are standing up for the American dream.”...

But the south, in May of 1963 when we had our picnic, was still a closed society. The results of the sit-ins, the Freedom Rides, and other forms of nonviolent civil disobedience were not such as to match the sacrifice that had been made. Public accommodations remained segregated in all Southern states, and in most places still in 1963. School desegregation in the ninth year after the Brown decision had hardly begun. Fewer than one-half of one percent of the black children in the South went to desegregated schools, and there still was no desegregation in my home state of Alabama. The right to vote was still denied to 75% of the adult blacks in the South, and those 25% who by now were voting didn't really have a whole lot to vote for.

All of this was resonating on the day of our picnic. Some of us - not many, some - after having exchanged nervous glances, showed up at the church a few nights later to receive our marching instructions. History, it seemed, was now catching up with Charlottesville. Charlottesville was going to have its sit-in. It was going to be part of the great drama that was unfolding in the South. Some of us were terribly naive. Floyd read from a book about what you do in a sit-in, explaining how women protect themselves when they're going to be kicked, how men protect themselves, how you must be certain to be nonviolent, and what sort of movements you use to avoid appearing to be violent. Some of us laughed, and said, “ Well, you know, this in not Birmingham, there's not going to be any violence in Charlottesville; what a silly idea.”

Well innocence was not to last long for some of us. We divided into two teams that evening. One group, team one, went to a restaurant on Emmett Street, just across from U-Hall. I was in team two. We went, a large group, to a restaurant, which was called “Buddy's Restaurant, Just a Nice Place to Eat.”

We went there, sat down, and filled up the place, men and women, black and white, at the various tables. Tension mounted in that restaurant all through the evening. We were not welcome. Nobody said, “What will you have?” Instead, they apparently went by the motto that was on the place mats that said, “Don't let our waitresses rush you.”. .

Well, the sit-in focused the community's attention, as I have said. A pattern was established, of a line of people standing as though they were walking toward the restaurant. And, there would be hecklers, observers, and the newspaper reporting on what was happening. On Memorial Day, I went down to the line to see if Pastor Johnson needed anything. I said, “Do you need anything, Floyd?” He said, “ I'm hungry.” And I said, “Why don't you go into this restaurant here. I here they have good food in there.” He said, “That's what I've been standing here three days for, and they won't let me in. Go get somebody to take my place so I can go get a meal.” So I went back home, and I got on the telephone and I called some of the black leaders, and they were either out or busy. So I went back to report this news to him, and those of you who

are historians are now going to hear about the accidents of history, about how things happen, just purely by accident.

I went back and I said, “Floyd, I’m sorry, I can’t get anybody.” And he said, “Well, I’m hungry; you be the leader.” And I said, “Why, no, I haven’t even got a sun tan; I can’t be the leader.” And he said, “No, you be the leader; it’s time some of your kind took over for a while.” So I said, “Well, all right.”

So I stood at the front of the line while he went off to get something to eat. He hadn’t been gone for five minutes before a group of Memorial Day celebrants arrived in their car. They walked up to the line. They were aware of our presence, and indicated to us their displeasure with the undertaking we were involved in. They indicated it verbally, and they began to indicate it physically, at which time I started to tremble, thinking, “What’s a leader supposed to do in such a situation?” Fortunately, their thirst overcame them, and they went on into the tavern, and I breathed a sigh of relief. They came back out in a few moments - ten, fifteen minutes maybe, and once again indicated their displeasure with our presence, this time pushing and shoving. This time I knew that whoever was the leader ought to do something, and then I recalled Floyd’s command, “You’re the leader.”

What to do? Well, usually when you’re in trouble, you call the constabulary. So, right across the street was one of these outside phone booths, with glass all around it. So I walked across the street and into the phone booth to call the police. Well, I’d never called the police before, and I really hadn’t used a pay phone. I reached in my pocket to see if I had any money, and then I got the phone book out to see what the number of the police was. I had just put my hand on the phone book when a rather large man, who was one of our adversaries, put his hands gently on my shoulders and lifted me up, and turned me around, and he said “You ain’t gonna call no police.” And I looked at him. (I learned later that he’d been a ex-professional prize fighter.) He was well over there hundred pounds and he was considerably taller than I was, and I was six-foot-one, and I thought, “You know, you’re absolutely right.”

I remembered all of my instructions in nonviolence, and I certainly was not going to be violent, not with this gentleman or indeed with his confederate. It was a very interesting experience. I learned a lot very quickly. His confederate was much smaller, one hundred thirty-five pounds, maybe one-forty, and wiry. And, I discovered later when we were sequestered in the witness room for the trial, he was a person who engaged in fisticuffs fairly regularly on Saturday nights. And so he hit me once hard across the face, and then again pretty hard; and then the third time not so hard, and a fourth time he just sort of grazed me. You know, it was as though someone who’d been out with Newton one day threw an apple up, and it just kept going. Because he had never had this experience before, of just hitting. Because usually when you hit someone, he hits you back. And so the laws of his universe seemed to have been violated. He had troubled eyes. They took me back to the line. There was a moment when I thought they might have pushed me in front of the traffic, at which point I would have abandoned my passive strategy in order to get out of the way of the car.

We got back to the line. I heaved a sigh of relief; it was all over, they had left. Lord, I didn’t want to have any more to do with it. Students who were there said, “Now you’ve got to swear out a warrant for their arrest.” And I said, “Do I?” Can’t we just forget about it?” “No,” they said, “you can’t do that, we’ve already called the police.” . . .



Paul M. Gaston is Professor Emeritus of History at the University of Virginia. He joined the faculty in 1957, retiring in 1997. This is a lightly edited transcript of a speech delivered to the University Union in October 1985 in a series on Life in the 1960s.

Lesson Plan 3

Student Guide 2C, Professor

Questions based on memoirs of Professor Paul M. Gaston

1. Describe Professor Gaston's experiences with the civil rights movement.

2. How did the professor's actions impact public policy?



3. Would you describe Professor Paul Gaston as an involved citizen based on his memoirs? If yes, what strengths or talents did he use to impact public policy?

4. What do you think motivates a person to become involved in civic issues?

5. Is anyone exempt from being an involved citizen in a democracy?

Lesson Plan 3
Student Guide 2D, Activist

What Does a Democracy Demand of Its Citizens?

Activist: Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

Step One

Read the background information on Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr. and his speech, “I Have A Dream.” Answer the questions that follow.

Background Information

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. was a vital figure of the modern era. His lectures and dialogues stirred the concern and sparked the conscience of a generation. The movements and marches he led brought significant changes in the fabric of American life through his courage and selfless devotion. This devotion gave direction to thirteen years of civil rights activities. His charismatic leadership inspired men and women, young and old, in this nation and around the world.



Dr. King's concept of "somebodiness," which symbolized the celebration of human worth and the conquest of subjugation, gave black and poor people hope and a sense of dignity. His philosophy of nonviolent direct action, and his strategies for rational and non-destructive social change, galvanized the conscience of this nation and reordered its priorities. His wisdom, his words, his actions, his commitment, and his dream for a new way of life are intertwined with the American experience. (The King Center <http://thekingcenter.com/mlk/bio.html>)

(The King Center <http://thekingcenter.com/DrMLKingJr/Biography.aspx>)

Lesson Plan 3
Student Guide 2D, Activist

I Have a Dream
Excerpt by Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. 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. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of captivity.

But one hundred years later, we must face the tragic fact that the Negro is still languishing in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. So we have come here today to dramatize an appalling condition.

In a sense we have 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 a



promise that all 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 a bad check, a check which has come back marked "insufficient funds." But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt. We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. So we have come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice. We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism. Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to open the doors of opportunity to all of God's children. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quick sands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment and to underestimate the determination of the Negro. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundation of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plain of dignity and discipline. Again and again we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny and their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone.

And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall march ahead. We cannot turn back. 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 unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never 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 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.



I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive.

Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed. Let us not wallow in the valley of despair. I say to you today, my friends, that in spite of the difficulties and frustrations of the moment 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 desert state sweltering with the heat of injustice and 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 the state of Alabama, whose governor's lips are presently dripping with the words of interposition and nullification, will be transformed into a situation where little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today.

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

This is our hope. This is the faith with which I return to the south. With this faith we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with a new meaning "My country 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrim's pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring."

And if America is to be a great nation this must come true. So let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New



York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. . .
. . .Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let
freedom ring.

When we let freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every
state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, black men
and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing
in the words of the old Negro spiritual, Free at last! Free at last! Thank God Almighty, we are
free at last!

Lesson Plan 3
Student Guide 2D, Activist

Questions based on speech by Reverend Martin Luther King, Jr.

1. Describe Dr. King's experiences with the civil rights movement.

2. What was his purpose for writing the speech, "I Have a Dream"?



3. How did Reverend King's actions impact public policy?

4. What personal strengths did Martin Luther King, Jr. use to impact change?

5. What do you think motivates a person to become involved in civic issues?

6. Is anyone exempt from being an involved citizen in a democracy?
