

Martin's Big Words

The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

by Doreen Rappaport

Before Reading:

Ask: I wonder what big words the author is referring to? Do you think they are long words or important words?

Check in periodically while reading.

Why do you think the title is on the back cover instead of the front cover?

What is a leader? What makes someone a good leader?

During Reading:

What does "segregation" mean? What does "White only" mean?

The author said, "Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. cared about all Americans." What evidence does she provide in the text to defend her opinion?

What sentence is repeated three times? Why do you think so?

What do you think is meant by the last sentence, "His big words are alive for us today?" Do you agree? Why or why not?

The quotes on the pages are things that Martin Luther King, Jr. actually said. Which one is your favorite? Why?

After reading:

Has anyone ever judged you before they got to know you? How did that make you feel? Have you ever judged someone before you really got to know them?

What did you learn about Martin Luther King Jr.? Have you ever done something nice or something that helped someone without being asked? How did that make you feel? How did the other person respond?

Refer back to the before reading question #1. Ask: What were some of Martin's Big Words? What made them "big"?

Why is it important to learn about Dr. King? What can we learn from him? Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

Projects for after reading:

The illustrations were made in a collage form. Why do you think the author chose to do represent pictures that way? Create a collage around an important word using magazine pictures.

Write a letter to Dr. King.

Use technology to research another person or event from the Civil Rights Movement. Create a visual representation and prepare a presentation.

Help someone or do a kind deed without being asked. Write about what you did and how it made you feel.

There is a timeline of Martin's life at the end of the book. Create a timeline of your life or of someone else's.

Read and watch (on youtube) Dr. King's famous "I Have a Dream" speech. Discuss it's message and impact. Create a poster to represent your thoughts using evidence from the speech.

Watch the movie "Our Friend, Martin". Do you agree with the author's message? Why or why not? Use evidence to defend your answer.