

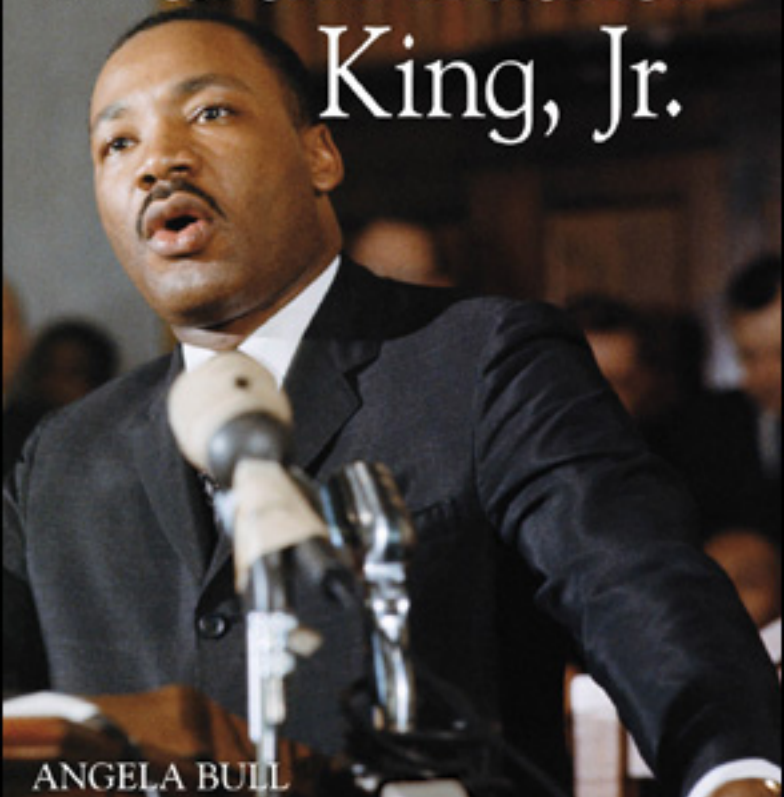
DK READERS



FREE AT LAST!

The Story of

Martin Luther King, Jr.



ANGELA BULL



READERS

Level 3

Shark Attack!
Titanic
Invaders from Outer Space
Movie Magic
Time Traveler
Bermuda Triangle
Tiger Tales
Zeppelin: The Age of the Airship
Spies
Terror on the Amazon
Disasters at Sea
The Story of Anne Frank
Abraham Lincoln: Lawyer, Leader, Legend
George Washington: Soldier, Hero, President
Extreme Sports
Spiders' Secrets
The Big Dinosaur Dig
Space Heroes: Amazing Astronauts
The Story of Chocolate
School Days Around the World
Polar Bear Alert!
Welcome to China
My First Ballet Show
Ape Adventures

Greek Myths
MLB: Home Run Heroes: Big Mac, Sammy, and Junior
MLB: World Series Heroes
MLB: Record Breakers
MLB: Down to the Wire: Baseball's Great Pennant Races
Star Wars: Star Pilot
Star Wars: I Want to Be a Jedi
Star Wars: The Story of Darth Vader
Star Wars: Yoda in Action
Star Wars: Forces of Darkness
Marvel Heroes: Amazing Powers
The X-Men School
Abraham Lincoln: Abogado, Líder, Leyenda *en español*
Al Espacio: La Carrera a la Luna *en español*
Fantastic Four: The World's Greatest Superteam
Pokemon: Become a Pokemon Trainer
Wolverine: Awesome Powers
Iron Man: Friends and Enemies

Level 4

Volcanoes and Other Natural Disasters
Pirates! Raiders of the High Seas
Micromonsters
Going for Gold!
Extreme Machines
Flying Ace: The Story of Amelia Earhart
Black Beauty
Free at Last! The Story of
 Martin Luther King, Jr.
Joan of Arc
Spooky Spinechillers
Welcome to The Globe! The Story of
 Shakespeare's Theater
Space Station: Accident on Mir
Atlantis: The Lost City?
Dinosaur Detectives
Danger on the Mountain: Scaling
 the World's Highest Peaks
Crime Busters
The Story of Muhammad Ali
First Flight: The Story of the
 Wright Brothers
D-Day Landings: The Story of
 the Allied Invasion
Solo Sailing
Thomas Edison: The Great Inventor
Dinosaurs! Battle of the Bones
Skate!
MLB: Strikeout Kings
MLB: Super Shortstops: Jeter, Nomar,
 and A-Rod
MLB: The Story of the New York Yankees
MLB: The World of Baseball
MLB: October Magic: All the Best
 World Series!
JLA: Batman's Guide to Crime and Detection

JLA: Superman's Guide to the Universe
JLA: Aquaman's Guide to the Oceans
JLA: Wonder Woman's Book of Myths
JLA: Flash's Book of Speed
JLA: Green Lantern's Book of Inventions
The Story of the X-Men: How it all Began
Creating the X-Men: How Comic Books
 Come to Life
Spider-Man's Amazing Powers
The Story of Spider-Man
The Incredible Hulk's Book of Strength
The Story of the Incredible Hulk
Transformers: The Awakening
Transformers: The Quest
Transformers: The Unicron Battles
Transformers: The Uprising
Transformers: Megatron Returns
Transformers: Terrorcon Attack
Star Wars: Galactic Crisis!
Star Wars: Beware the Dark Side
Star Wars: Epic Battles
Star Wars: Jedi Adventures
Marvel Heroes: Greatest Battles
Fantastic Four: Evil Adversaries
Graphic Readers: The Price of Victory
Graphic Readers: The Terror Trail
Graphic Readers: Curse of the Crocodile God
Graphic Readers: Instruments of Death
Graphic Readers: The Spy-Catcher Gang
Graphic Readers: Wagon Train Adventure
Los Asombrosos Poderes de Spider-Man
 en español
La Historia de Spider-Man *en español*
Wolverine: The Story of Wolverine
The Rise of Iron Man

A Note to Parents

DK READERS is a compelling program for beginning readers, designed in conjunction with leading literacy experts, including Dr. Linda Gambrell, Distinguished Professor of Education at Clemson University. Dr. Gambrell has served as President of the National Reading Conference, the College Reading Association, and the International Reading Association.

Beautiful illustrations and superb full-color photographs combine with engaging, easy-to-read stories to offer a fresh approach to each subject in the series. Each DK READER is guaranteed to capture a child's interest while developing his or her reading skills, general knowledge, and love of reading.

The five levels of DK READERS are aimed at different reading abilities, enabling you to choose the books that are exactly right for your child:

- Pre-level 1:** Learning to read
- Level 1:** Beginning to read
- Level 2:** Beginning to read alone
- Level 3:** Reading alone
- Level 4:** Proficient readers

The “normal” age at which a child begins to read can be anywhere from three to eight years old. Adult participation through the lower levels is very helpful for providing encouragement, discussing storylines, and sounding out unfamiliar words.

No matter which level you select, you can be sure that you are helping your child learn to read, then read to learn!





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Project Editor Penny Smith
Art Editors Jane Horne and Susan Calver
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Picture Researcher Liz Moore
Jacket Designer Natalie Godwin
Illustrator Chris Forsey
Art Director Rachael Foster
Publishing Manager Bridget Giles
Reading Consultant
Linda B. Gambrell, Ph.D.

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READERS



Free at Last!

Written by Angela Bull



DK Publishing



Family home
Although his grandparents had been farm slaves, Martin grew up in a comfortable house in the state of Georgia.



Christian hero
Martin Luther was a German monk who thought people had forgotten the true teaching of Jesus. He formed a new church called the Lutherans.

Black in a white world

The small black boy looked at himself in the mirror and smiled a big smile.

“I’ve got a new name now!” he marveled.

Yesterday he had been plain Michael King. But today was a very special day. This morning his father, the pastor, had baptized him in church and announced his new name to the whole congregation. He was now called Martin Luther King, Jr. Junior because Martin Luther was his father’s name, too. The name came from a great hero of the Christian faith.

“I’m Martin Luther King, Jr., now!” the boy thought.

His new name sounded good, and he was pleased. He grinned again. Five-year-old Martin could not guess that, one day, the whole world would know his name.



Slave ships

Many slaves did not survive the journey to America. They were chained and packed below deck.



For sale

Slaves were sold at markets. Whole families were separated when members were sold to different owners.



Martin was born in Atlanta, Georgia, on January 15, 1929. It was difficult being a black person in America then, especially in the southern states where Martin lived. Black people were considered inferior to whites, and laws kept them apart. They were not allowed to play in the same parks or eat in the same restaurants.

Only seventy years earlier there were slaves in the south. These were black people whose ancestors had been snatched from Africa to work on farms run by white people. Slaves had no rights. They were bought and sold like animals.

When Martin was a toddler, his best friend was a white boy. Martin was not allowed to go to the same school as his friend. Martin's father was a well-respected preacher, but Martin still had to take the worst seats on buses and at the movies.



The southern states of the U.S. are shown in dark green. Some people in the bordering states, such as Virginia, also supported slavery. This map also shows places of importance in Martin's life.

Although slavery was abolished in the southern states in 1865, the memory lingered on. Many white people still considered themselves superior. They did not want black people to swim in the same pools or sit in the same train cars.

“Whites only” signs kept black people out of many shops and even churches. This was what life was like in Martin's home town. It seemed it would be like that forever.

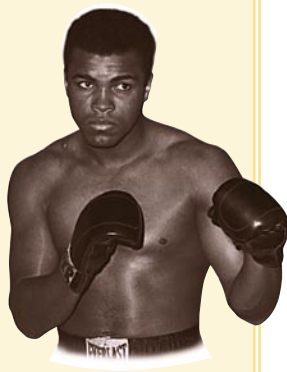
Freedom for all
President Abraham Lincoln signed the Emancipation Proclamation in 1863. This led to the abolition of slavery in the U.S.





Church leader

Martin's father was the pastor of the Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta. More black Americans belong to the Baptist Church than any other.



Top fighter

One of the most famous black boxers of all time was heavyweight champion of the world Cassius Clay. He changed his name to Muhammad Ali.

When Martin was young, only a handful of black people had the chance to be leaders. As a church minister, Martin's father was one of the few. Martin wanted to be a leader too, but he was not sure how.

Maybe Martin could lead at school. He worked hard and usually got good marks. Or maybe he could make it to the top by fighting. He was small, but strong enough to wrestle other boys to the ground. Black men could become successful by being boxers.

Martin was also very good at speaking. He had a strong voice and a commanding way of talking. When he was 15 he entered a public speaking competition. He spoke so powerfully about "the Negro and the Constitution" that he won first prize. After the competition, Martin flung himself happily down on a seat in the bus going home.



As the bus went along, it filled up. Soon there were no spare seats. Glancing around, the white driver saw the black boy and his teacher and ordered them to stand. At first, Martin refused, but the teacher whispered a reminder of the rule, “whites before blacks.” Martin got up.

“That night I was the angriest I’ve ever been in my life!” Martin said years later.

Second best Black people had to stand aside for whites throughout life. Paul Robeson was a lawyer but his color lost him work. He became an actor instead.



Christianity

All Christians believe in the teachings of Jesus Christ. But there are different types of Christianity. About 25% are Protestants. The Baptists are one of many Protestant groups.

Some universities accepted black and white students.

Martin continued to wonder what career he would follow. He was athletic, clever, and a good speaker. He wanted to aim high in life. But what should he do? And in particular, what could he do to help black people?

Martin had a strong Christian faith, so he decided to follow his father and become a Baptist pastor. In 1948 he began training at Crozer College near Chester in Pennsylvania.



It was not always easy being a black student in a mainly white college. Martin worked extra hard to gain the respect of his fellow students. Soon he was doing well and making friends. But there was still prejudice to face, and Martin faced it with a new calmness.

Martin was studying the Indian politician Mahatma Gandhi. He was beginning to see a way to tackle the problem of discrimination – the way blacks were treated differently from whites. Gandhi had led the struggle for Indian independence from Britain by using nonviolent methods. And they had worked.

Do not fight back, Gandhi had urged. Respond peacefully to your enemies. These ideas impressed Martin. Gentleness and peace, it seemed, could overcome prejudice. Once this was defeated, other barriers would fall.



*Mahatma Gandhi
(Mahatma means
"Great Soul")*

Independent

The flag of India features a spinning wheel. This symbolizes Gandhi's great wish that the people should be self-sufficient.



Coretta Scott

This country girl from Alabama was training to be a singer when she met Martin.



Family life

Martin and Coretta married in 1953. After the wedding they stayed with an undertaker friend because hotels did not take black couples. They were married for 15 years and had four children.

Bus ride to fame

Martin finished at Crozer College at the top of his class, and by 1955 he was pastor of a church in Montgomery, Alabama. By now he had a wife, Coretta, and a baby daughter named Yolanda.

He was a happy family man. He loved preaching to his black congregation and he was good at it. His sermons were

full of knowledge and passion as he described how life might be in a more equal world.

But the world was not equal and trouble was brewing. Gangs of white men had attacked black people at random all over the south that summer, and black people were growing angry. Their anger focused finally on the case of Rosa Parks.

Rosa Parks was a black seamstress. One evening after work she sank down, tired out, on a bus. Then white people got on, and the driver ordered her to give up her seat. Rosa refused. Her feet ached too much to stand.

The driver called the police, and Rosa was charged with breaking the town's "whites first" bus laws.

Rosa Parks

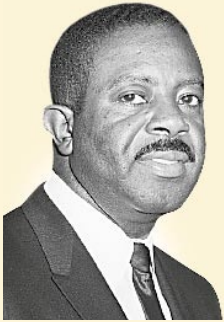


The charge
Rosa's charge of breaking "whites first" bus laws gave black leaders a specific case to fight. "Disorderly conduct" was the usual charge when black people stayed seated.



On the buses

Before the boycott, 70% of bus passengers were black, but there were no black bus drivers.



Men at the top

The Civil Rights Movement had other leaders who worked alongside Martin. These included the Reverend Ralph Abernathy, Martin's chief supporter and friend.

The story of Rosa Parks reminded Martin of how a bus driver had forced him to stand the night he won his speaking prize. Burning with anger and sympathy, he called a meeting at his church.

A huge crowd turned out. Resentment was growing over the treatment of black people and they were demanding action. Already some black people were collecting weapons to fight against whites.

Martin spoke powerfully. People must reject violence, he said. Instead, they should boycott the bus company – simply refuse to use the buses. If the bus company lost money, it would rethink its “whites first” attitude.

Martin and others distributed thousands of leaflets urging the boycott. They organized a pool of cars with black drivers to provide rides for black passengers.

On the first day of the boycott Martin went nervously out into the street. He saw a few cars, then a bus roared along. It was empty; so was the next – and the next. He watched the buses all morning. Hardly any black passengers rode on them.

The boycott was working well. But true success would only come when the first passengers on a bus, black or white, could keep their seats.

At church Martin said they should continue the boycott. “If we protest courageously, with dignity and Christian love, we shall win,” he said.



Car ownership

In the 1800s a person carrying a red flag had to walk in front of a car. This warned of an unsafe vehicle on the road. But speed and safety improved and by 1955 three quarters of American families owned their own cars.



Hatemail

People who send hate mail sometimes cut out letters from newspapers and stick them down so they cannot be identified as the sender.

Under arrest

Martin was arrested a total of 16 times for his protests.

Days passed and the boycott held strong. But Martin began to get hate mail from angry whites. Some letters contained death threats.

Then one evening when Martin was out, Coretta went to get baby Yolanda, who had been sleeping at the back of the house. At that moment there was a loud boom!

The house filled with smoke as a bomb exploded at the front. It was a miracle no one was hurt.

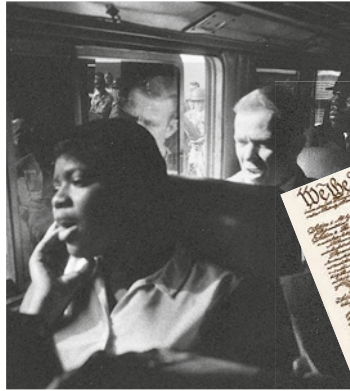
Two months after the boycott began the city authorities discovered an obscure law that banned boycotts. Martin was arrested and fined.



But black people were not willing to give in, so the boycott continued.

Then the car-pooling system was declared illegal. The police arrested Martin again for helping to organize it. As Martin's trial began, a reporter rushed in with dramatic news. The

Supreme Court had declared that the bus segregation that kept black and white people

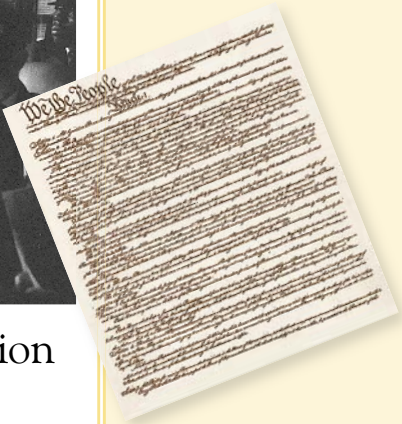


apart went against the Constitution of the United States. This meant that black and white people now had equal rights on the local buses. The boycott was no longer necessary and Martin's trial was stopped. His peaceful campaign had succeeded.

Next day, in a mood of celebration, Martin and his friends boarded their first integrated bus!

Supreme Court

This is the highest court in the United States. It has a chief justice and eight associate judges. They make the final decision on certain law cases.



Fair ways

The U.S. Constitution was drawn up in 1787 and went into effect in 1789. The Constitution set out ideas for a fair and free country outside British rule.

Book writer

Stride Towards Freedom: The Montgomery Story was Martin's first book. He wrote five others.

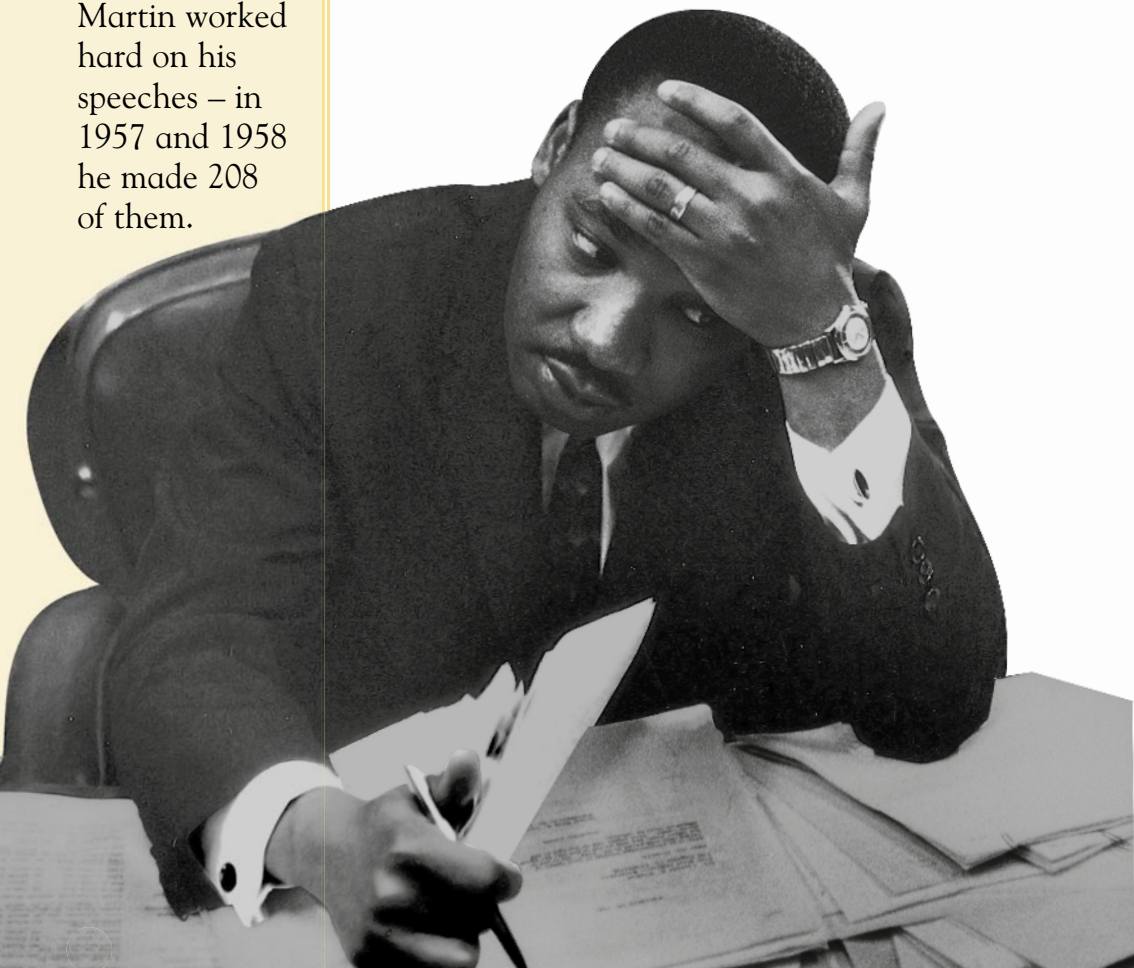


Speech writer

Martin worked hard on his speeches – in 1957 and 1958 he made 208 of them.

Land of the free

Black people could now keep their seats on Montgomery buses. But other laws stopped them from being treated the same as white people. Martin wanted all America to hear his side of the story so he wrote a book called *Stride Towards Freedom: the Montgomery Story*.



He told of the bus boycott and pleaded for equal rights.

The book sold well. Martin spoke about it on TV and autographed copies in bookstores. But some – even a few black people – did not want change. As he signed books in New York, a black woman approached.

“Are you Martin Luther King?” she asked.

Martin said that he was. Suddenly the woman raised her fist. There was a letter knife in it! She plunged it down into Martin’s chest.

Martin stayed calm as he was rushed to the hospital. The knife was so close to the main artery of his heart that any sudden movement, even a sneeze, could have killed him.

As he recovered, a white girl sent him a letter. “I’m writing to say I’m so happy you didn’t sneeze,” she said.



Home viewing
TV was first demonstrated in 1926 by John Logie Baird. By the 1950s most families had a black and white set. Television helped to spread news about the Civil Rights Movement.

Attacker
Isola Curry, the woman who stabbed Martin, was found to be insane. She was sent to a hospital for criminally insane people.



Places to eat

Sit-ins occurred in places such as Woolworth's five-and-tens and local restaurants that served lunch to workers. Fast food was just being introduced in the U.S.

After Martin recovered from the attack, he decided to give up his church ministry and move back to Atlanta. Here he devoted his time to campaigning for equal rights.

Lunch counters with “whites only” notices were the first target. Groups of black people were already “sitting in” at these counters, waiting peacefully to be served, and refusing to leave.

Many students took part in the sit-ins. They followed nonviolent rules, were polite, and did not strike back if they were abused.



At these demonstrations the students sang the hymn of the movement: “We shall overcome! We shall overcome one day!”

As the sit-ins began to work, Martin’s followers tried a new kind of protest. They wanted black people to have equal rights on buses that traveled across states. So they organized the Freedom Rides.

Black and sympathetic white people ignored “whites only” signs as they traveled from state to state. In some places buses were burned and Freedom Riders were beaten.

Eventually the Supreme Court said that segregation on buses was illegal. The Civil Rights Movement had won another battle!

Famous song
Laws against black people were called Jim Crow laws after an old minstrel song.



No ride
Martin was on probation when the Freedom Rides took place and would not risk a jail sentence by joining them. This caused resentment among some of the riders.

White violence

The Ku Klux Klan is a secret organization operating in many U.S. states. It aims to stop black people from having power, sometimes by violent means.



Burning cross
Ku Klux Klan members dress in white robes and pointed hoods. At their meetings they put up crosses and set them on fire.

Martin's campaign moved to Birmingham, Alabama. This was the most segregated city in the United States, with "whites only" restaurants, libraries, and parks. Even a storybook about a white rabbit marrying a black rabbit was banned!

As black people protested, white groups reacted violently. They beat and stabbed black protesters and blew up a black church.

By now black children wanted to help. Martin agreed to let them join the marches. So children and students filled the street and moved peacefully forward.

"Stop!" the police ordered.

But the marchers continued.

Then firemen unwound their powerful hoses and pointed them at the children. Water blasted out, soaking the young protesters and knocking them to the ground.

Then snapping, snarling police dogs were released on the wet and frightened children.

The children's ill treatment made many adults join in demonstrations. Eventually the Alabama Supreme Court made a ruling. The city must remove its "whites only" signs.

"Birmingham will never be the same again," Martin declared.



Dog's life

Police dogs are used in crowd control and to sniff out drugs. Most police dogs are German shepherds, which are clever and easy to train.



Protesters being hosed in Birmingham, Alabama, in 1963.

U.S. Congress

The people who make laws and fix taxes are members of Congress. This has two separate houses. The upper house is the Senate, with two senators from each state. The lower is the House of Representatives.



Lower House

The House of Representatives has 435 members from across the U.S. The number from each state depends on the population in that state.

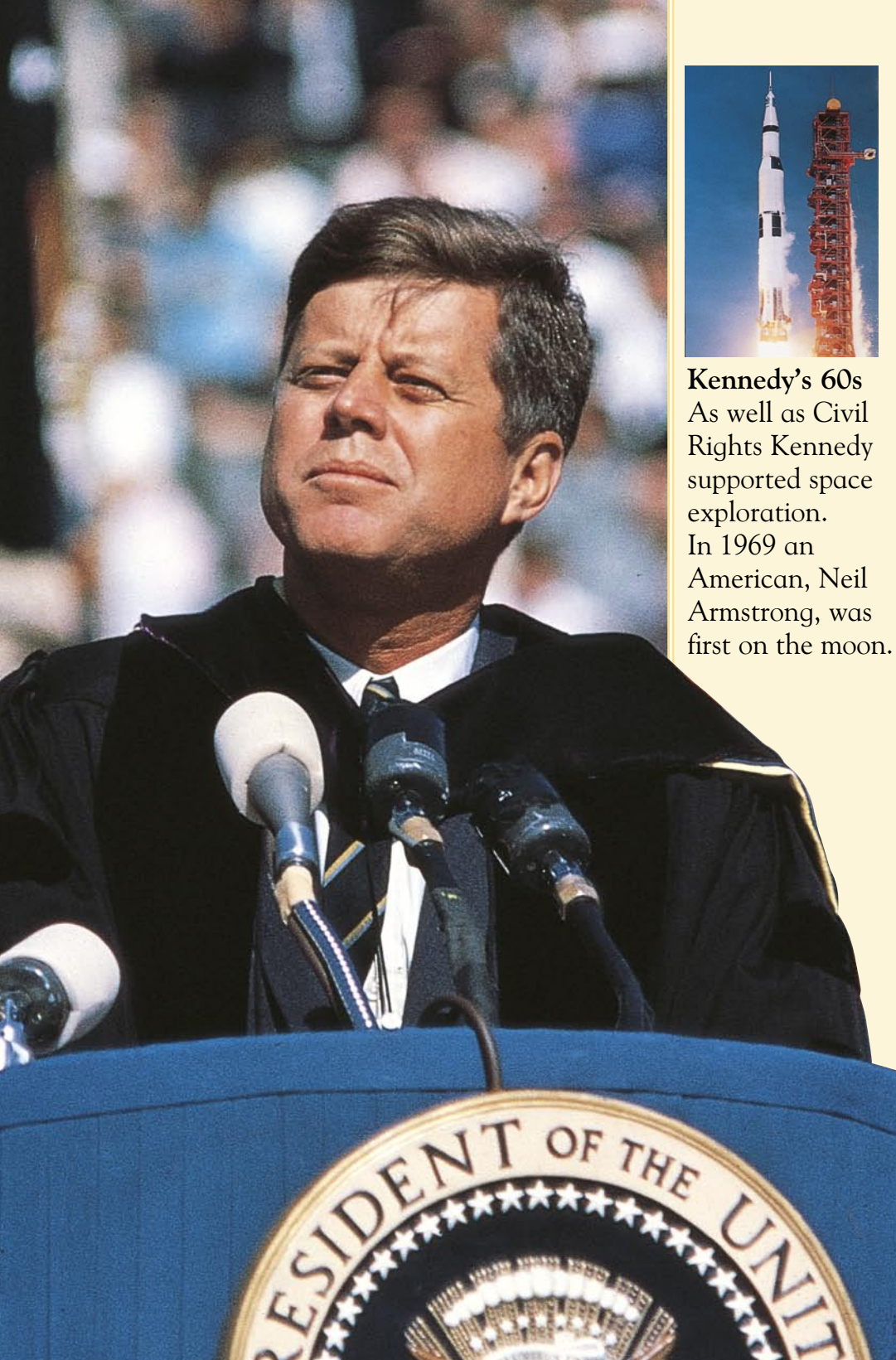
Martin's message was being noticed across America, and in the highest places too.

On June 11, 1963, President John F. Kennedy made a speech on national television. The president called for equality. He wanted all American citizens to be treated the same, no matter what their color.

Soon afterward President Kennedy submitted a Civil Rights Bill to Congress. The bill outlawed every kind of segregation and promised

funding to enforce the law.

Martin was delighted. This was just what he wanted. A great wave of support grew for Martin's non-violent ideals. "Whites only" notices were torn down in dozens of hotels and schools across the country.



Kennedy's 60s
As well as Civil Rights Kennedy supported space exploration. In 1969 an American, Neil Armstrong, was first on the moon.



The Lincoln Memorial in Washington, D.C.

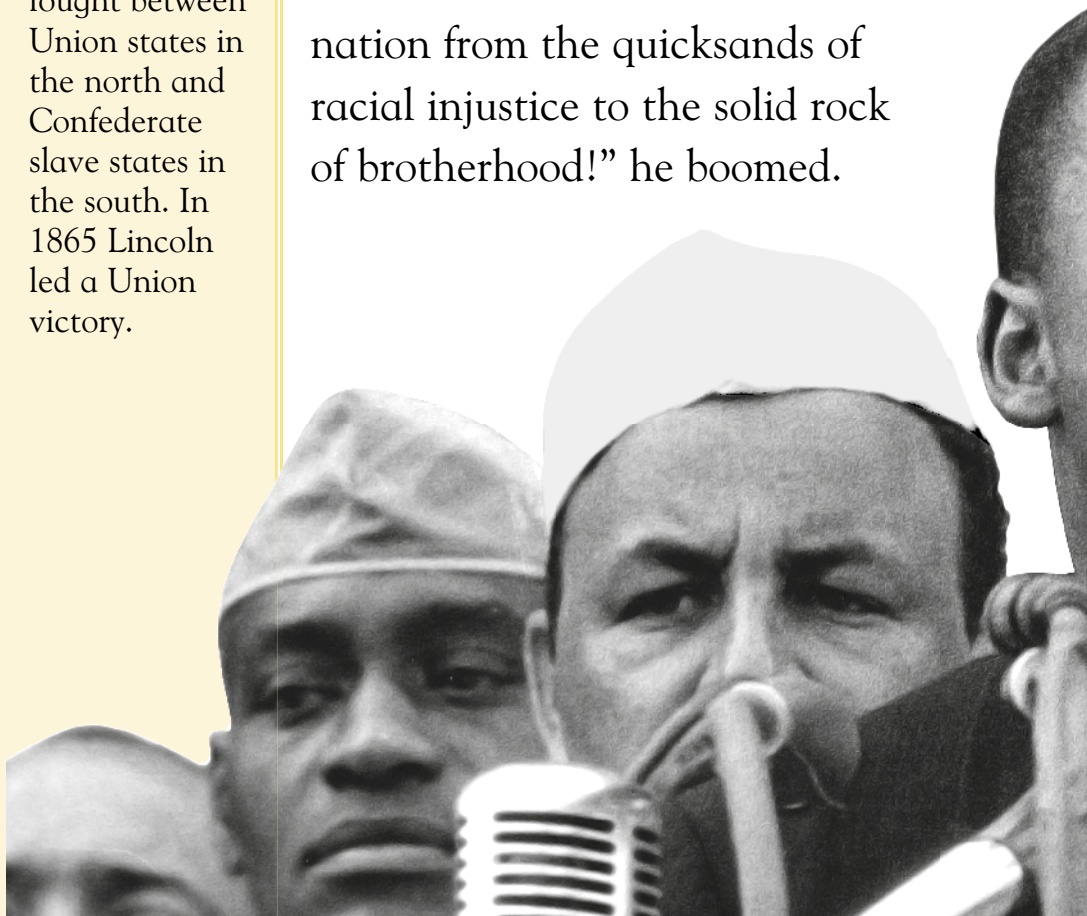
War leader

Abraham Lincoln was president during the Civil War fought between Union states in the north and Confederate slave states in the south. In 1865 Lincoln led a Union victory.

A hundred years had passed since slavery was abolished. Martin wanted to mark this. So he called for people to gather in Washington, D.C.

On August 28, 1963, a quarter of a million marchers gathered by the Lincoln Memorial. They burst into loud applause when Martin stood up to speak. It was the biggest occasion in Martin's life and he rose to it.

“Now is the time to lift our nation from the quicksands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood!” he boomed.



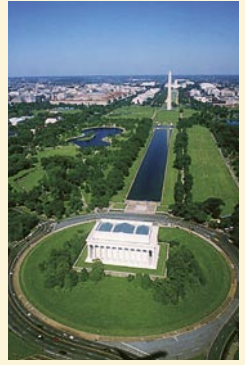
The cheers rose louder as Martin described his vision of the future.

“I have a dream today!” he thundered. He told them that he dreamed that the sons of slaves and the sons of slave owners would one day sit together as brothers.

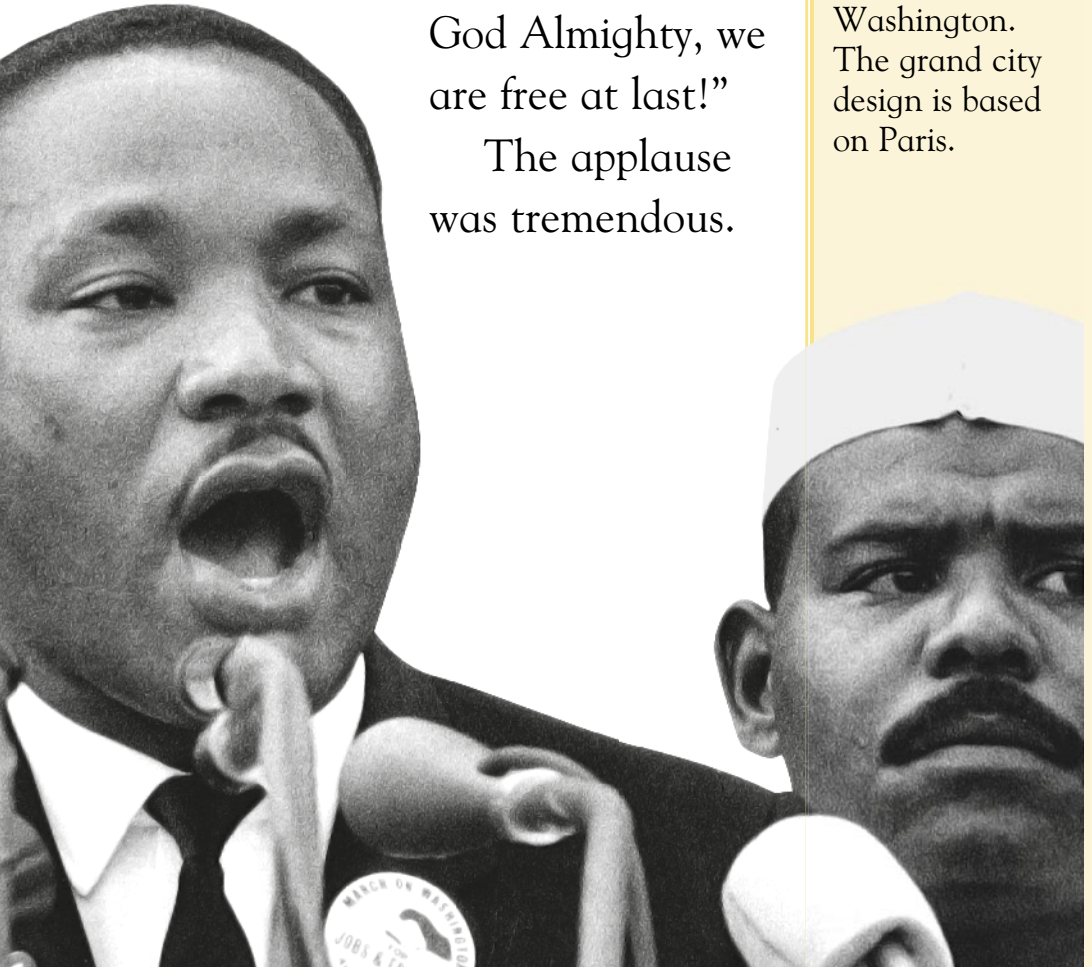
He called for the day when all God’s children would join hands and sing, “Free at last, free at last. Thank

God Almighty, we are free at last!”

The applause was tremendous.



U.S. capital
Washington, D.C., was named after the first president of the United States, George Washington. The grand city design is based on Paris.

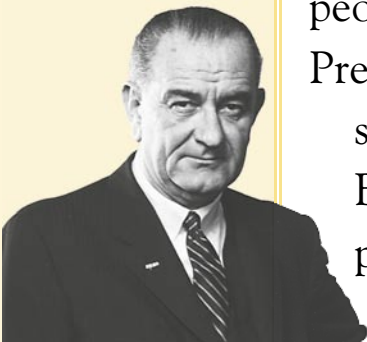


The last ride

President John Kennedy was riding through Dallas, Texas, when he was shot in the head. The killer was thought to be Lee Harvey Oswald.



Taking over
Lyndon B. Johnson was Kennedy's vice-president. When Kennedy died Johnson was sworn in as president.



For a brief time Martin's vision of freedom and equality swept America. Black people could go to more of the places that used to be reserved for whites. Martin was named *Time Magazine's* Man of 1963.

But the good times did not last.

On November 22, 1963, Martin was watching television when a news announcer interrupted with

dramatic news. President Kennedy had been shot and killed.

People across America mourned the president. And with his death, the Civil Rights Movement suffered a serious setback. Many white people liked the old ways. Although President Johnson, Kennedy's successor, signed the Civil Rights Bill, the bill did not tackle all the problems black people faced.



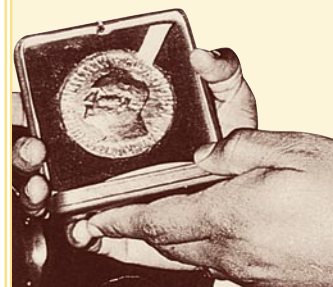
Martin receives the Nobel Peace Prize

Then the following October, Martin received the immense honor of the Nobel Peace Prize. This prize is given to people who had worked hard in the cause of peace. Martin was only 35 years old, the youngest person ever to win the prize.

As the chairman of the Norwegian Parliament presented it, he called Martin “the first person in the western world to show that a struggle can be waged without violence.”

War and peace
Alfred Nobel invented dynamite. Money from this invention is given every year in Nobel prizes.

The Nobel Peace Prize medal





Right to vote

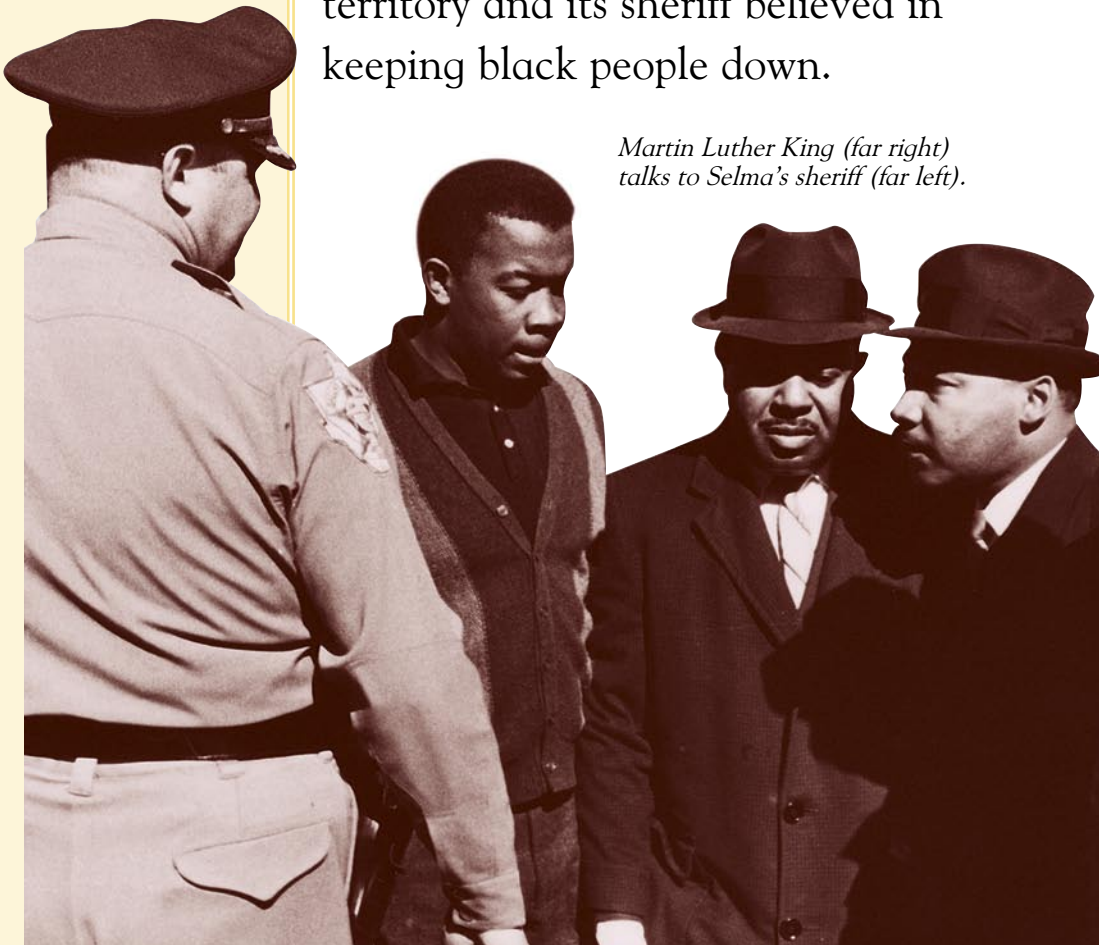
In Selma there were 15,000 black people but only 150 were registered to vote.

The right to vote

By Christmas 1964, Martin had chosen a new goal – to uphold the right of black people to vote. The Civil Rights Bill guaranteed this right, but many southern towns refused to register black voters.

One such town was Selma, Alabama. The town was in old slave territory and its sheriff believed in keeping black people down.

Martin Luther King (far right) talks to Selma's sheriff (far left).



Selma's sheriff was not alone in thinking Martin a troublemaker. Some members of Washington's central government felt the same way, and the FBI had already begun to monitor his phone calls.

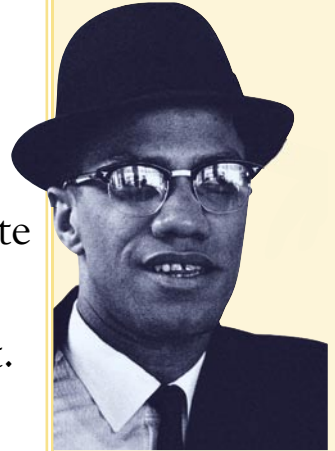
When Martin visited Selma and spoke there, the Alabama state police looked on and took notes. Martin promised the disgruntled black community a mass march from Selma to Montgomery, the state capital, to demand voting rights.

Planning the march was difficult. And matters became even worse when black people began to join a new militant movement called Black Power.

Since Martin had so many opponents, the sheriff felt safe in banning the march. But Martin would not be stopped. As he led a line of marchers through Selma, he was arrested and jailed again.



Law enforcers
The Federal Bureau of Investigation, or FBI for short, has files of over 250 million sets of fingerprints.



Black Power
Originally called Malcolm Little, Malcolm X was a Black Power leader. He thought black people should live in their own communities without white interference.

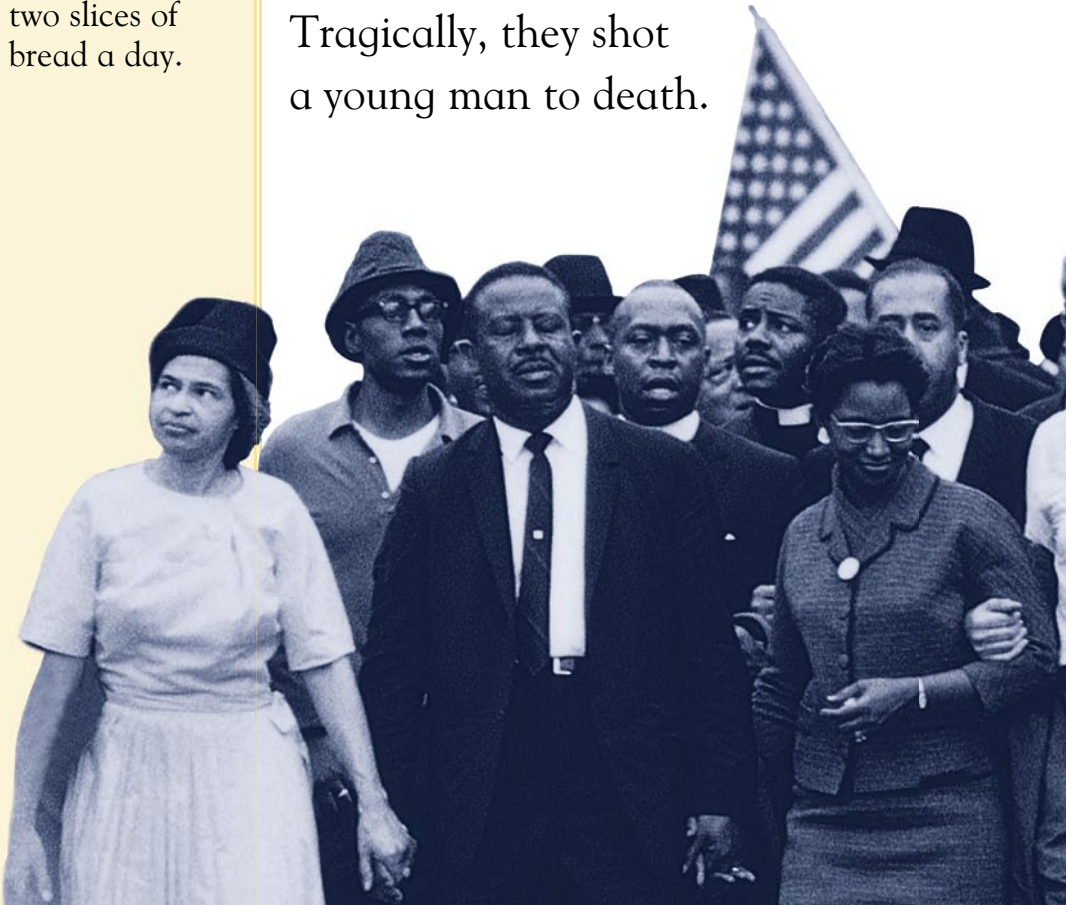


Go to jail

Prisoners were often crammed into dirty cells infested with cockroaches. At night they slept on filthy mattresses. The food could be as little as two cups of black-eyed peas and two slices of bread a day.

Martin's arrest made the headlines. From prison, he sent a letter to the *New York Times*. "There are more negroes in jail with me," he wrote, "than there are on the voting rolls."

Released on bail, Martin planned a new march from Selma to Montgomery. This time state police attacked the marchers with whips and batons wrapped in barbed wire. Tragically, they shot a young man to death.



Still Martin would not give up. Suddenly he received unexpected help from President Johnson, who had been shocked by news stories of the violence. He announced new laws to enforce the right to vote.

When an Alabama judge approved a new march, a crowd of black marchers triumphantly crossed the state. Martin's feet hurt, but he did not mind. "We are on the move," he declared, "and no wave of racism can stop us."

Bad news

Newspapers and TV showed the world what was happening to Martin Luther King's peaceful movement. Ill treatment of black people by white police encouraged broad-minded white people to join the Civil Rights Movement.



Nickname

Chicago is known as the “windy city.” Local historians say this has nothing to do with the weather. It is because a 19th-century journalist used the name to describe local people boasting about their city.

War in Vietnam

By 1966 Martin had shown how effective determination and peace could be. Nonviolence had succeeded in Montgomery, Birmingham, and Selma. Now he decided to head north to Chicago, where many black people lived in slums. He planned to campaign for decent houses and peaceful streets.



Chicago is the birthplace of the skyscraper.

But there was a new and complicating situation – the Vietnam War, which had begun in 1965. American soldiers were fighting against communism in a country far from home, and Martin did not like it.

He was publicly opposed to violence and had even won the Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent views. He hated war, and did not hesitate to let President Johnson know his feelings. A gap opened between the two men, who had been so close on civil rights.

When Martin wanted President Johnson's support for his Chicago campaign the president refused it. Martin had criticized the government and spoken out in public against the Vietnam War. Many called him a communist.



Vietnam War (1965–75)

America supported South Vietnam against the communist Vietcong who ruled the north.

Communism

Communists believe people should share all things equally. In communist countries the communist party has total control.





Taking a stand

The Black Power salute was first seen at the 1968 Mexico Olympics. When medals were presented to winning black athletes they raised clenched fists in gestures of defiance.

Door fame

Martin's action mirrored that of his namesake's, Martin Luther, who nailed a protest to a church door.

Martin also faced another problem. To his dismay, the Black Power Movement was growing. Many young black people thought that peaceful means had not achieved enough. They wanted direct, violent action – like the war

they were watching on TV every night. When Martin spoke at a meeting, explaining his ideas, Black Power members booed him.

Despite his problems, Martin moved into a slum area of Chicago and went ahead with his campaign. He asked for better housing for black people and an end to police brutality and mass unemployment.

When he stuck his demands on the door of City Hall, Chicago's Mayor Daley was scornful. He said that these demands were unnecessary. Chicago already had a massive social program.

This northern city was not responding as the southern cities had done. Martin felt out of touch with its politics and its people. He saw black people rioting against the police, and he was horrified by their guns and the hatred in their faces. During one march, a brick was thrown at him. Baffled and depressed, Martin finally left Chicago.



Northern life

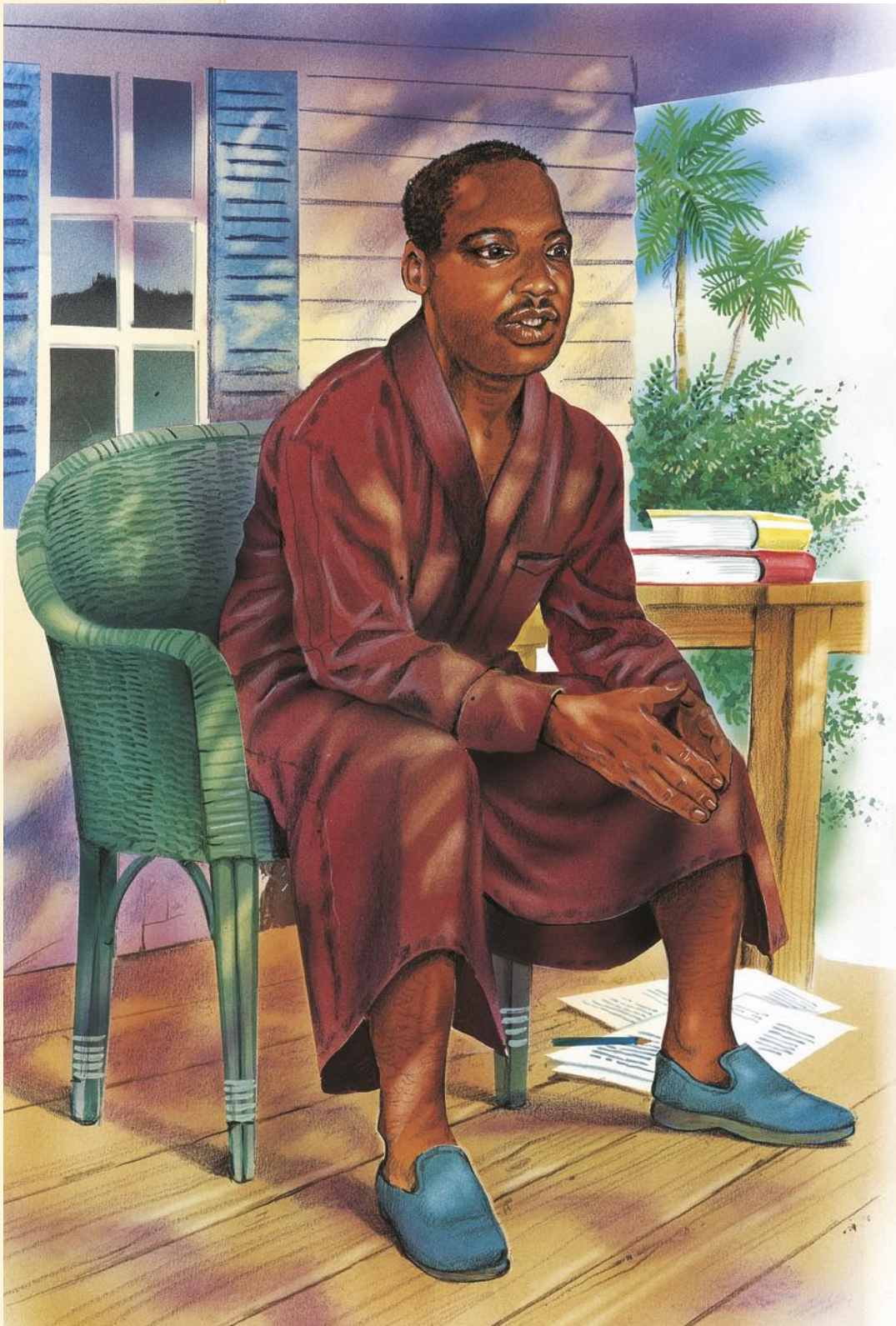
Although black people could mix freely with white people, they still had a lower standard of living.

Gun point

The U.S. Constitution says all citizens have the right to carry arms to defend themselves.

Martin leads a march in Chicago, August 1966





Martin was exhausted by years of campaigning. He needed a vacation. He chose a house on Jamaica, where there was no telephone and nobody to interrupt him.

As he sat gazing over the sea, Martin thought about the Civil Rights Movement and achievements of individual black people. He thought about Black Power. And he thought about the Vietnam War. He decided to write a book to clarify his ideas. It was called *Where Do We Go from Here?*

Martin was still thinking about the Vietnam War when he returned from Jamaica. The huge sums spent on the war gobbled up the money that black people needed. He wanted an anti-war rally to take place in New York. But the government brushed Martin's views aside. Martin started to be known as "Martin Loser King."

Vacation spot

Jamaica is a large island in the Caribbean. Its beautiful mountains, forests, and sandy beaches make it a popular vacation destination.



Bad language

In *Where Do We Go from Here?* Martin talked about how the word "black" also meant dirty or bad, while "white" meant clean or good. He said that language had to change to stop black children from feeling bad about themselves.

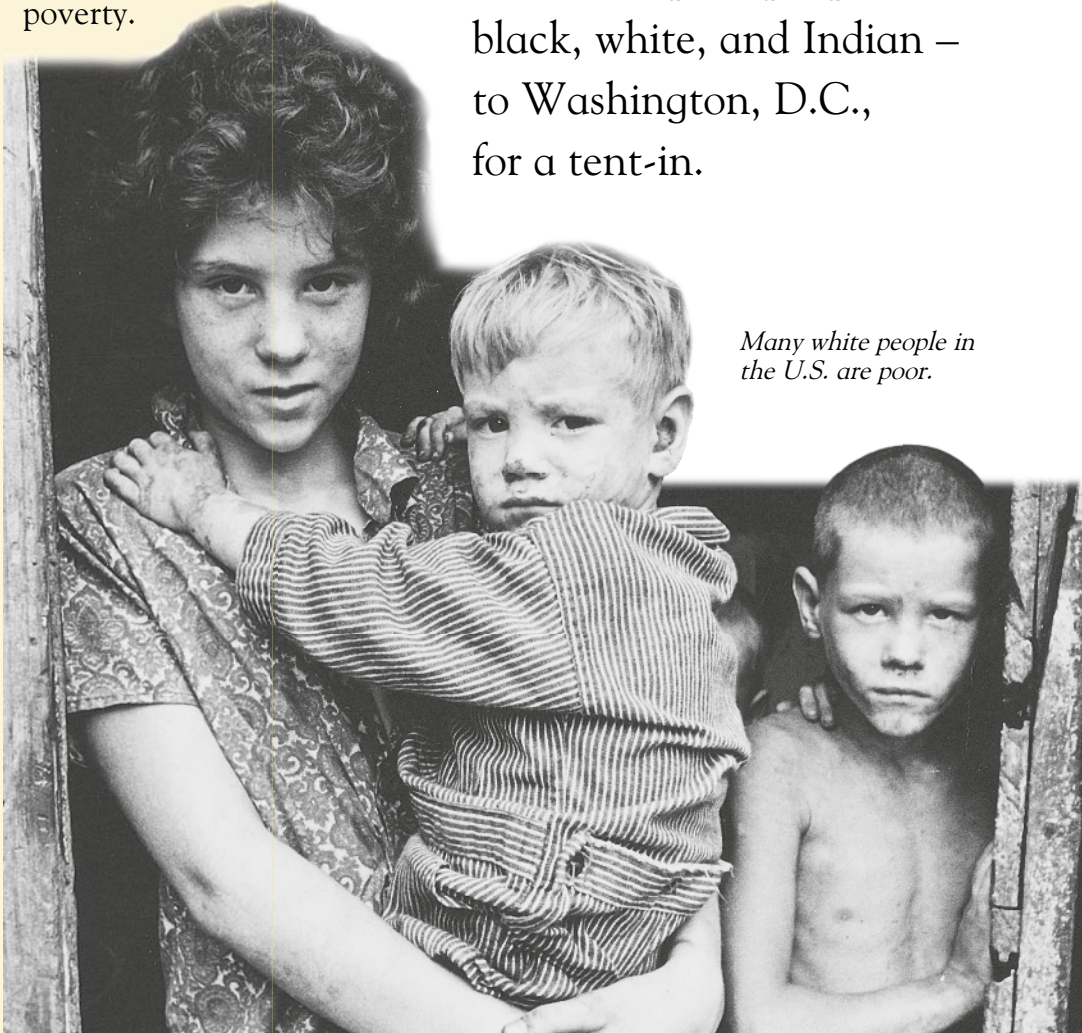
Poverty trap

Martin felt that being poor took away people's right to "the pursuit of happiness" because poor education, bad housing, and limited job opportunities kept them trapped in poverty.

The last crusade

Angered by the failure of his anti-war rally, Martin began to plan something even bigger and bolder. He had come to realize that black people were not the only ones suffering. He dreamed of bringing together representatives of America's 35 million poor people – black, white, and Indian – to Washington, D.C., for a tent-in.

Many white people in the U.S. are poor.





They would camp peacefully opposite the White House until the government promised them the fair treatment they deserved.

Martin's friends opposed this extravagant crusade. But the more they tried to stop Martin, the more determined he grew. There must be a total reconstruction of society for the benefit of everyone, he argued, and the whole system of government must be disrupted to bring this about.

Ideal home
The White House is the home of the U.S. President. It takes its name from its white-painted walls. Besides offices and rooms for the president's family to live in, it contains a movie theater, gym, swimming pool, and solarium.

Camping out
A year after Martin planned his great "tent-in," 400,000 people gathered at Woodstock for the world's biggest outdoor music festival. Its theme was love and peace.



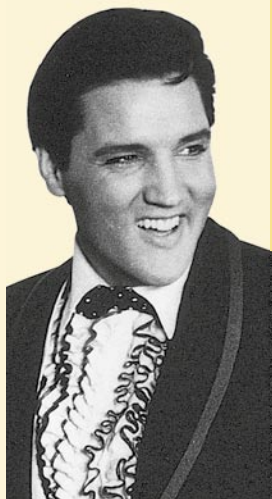


Memphis

Standing on the Mississippi River, Memphis is named after an ancient Egyptian city on the Nile River.

Memphis man

Elvis Presley made his first recording in Memphis.



Meanwhile, back south in Memphis, Tennessee, trouble was brewing. Some black sanitation workers had gone on strike. They

wanted to earn the same money as white people doing the same job.

Although Martin was busy with his Washington campaign, he accepted an invitation to lead a peaceful protest march. He flew into Memphis on March 28, 1968.

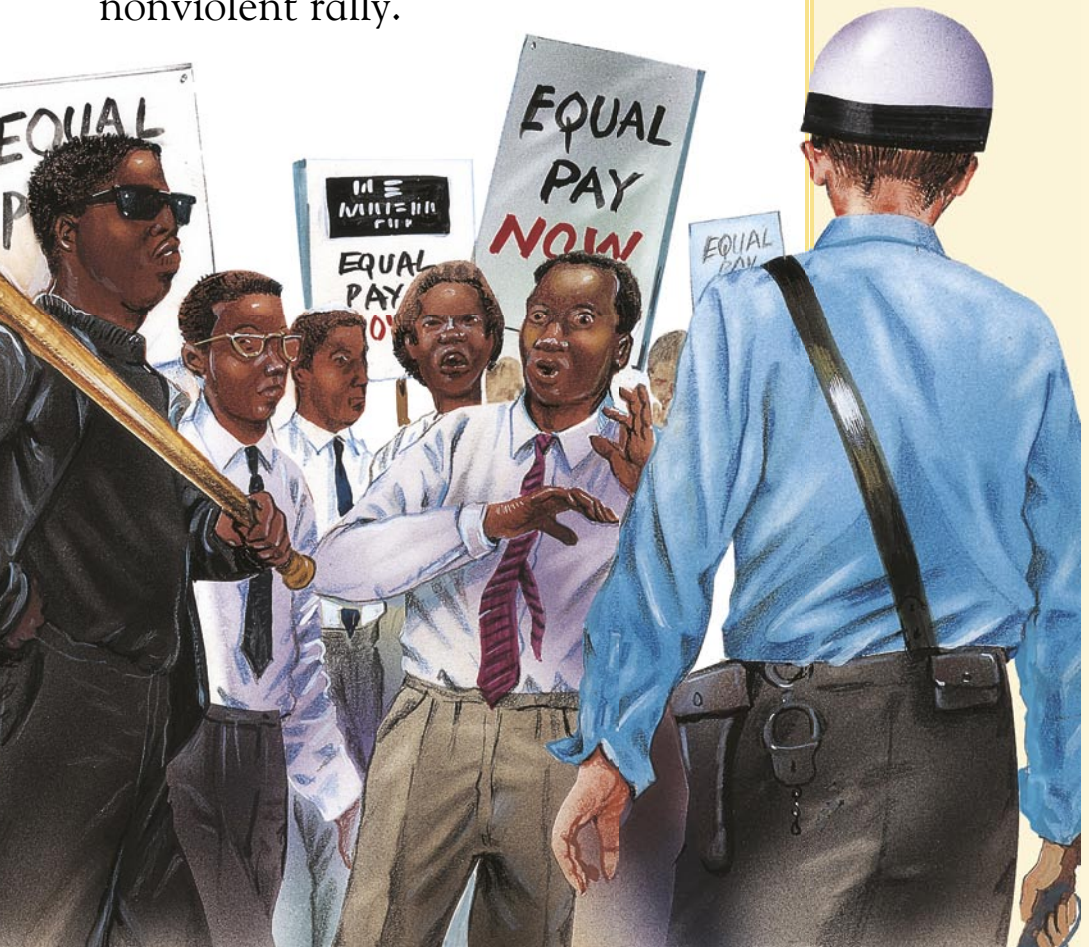
Nobody told him that there was a Black Power base in Memphis. He only realized this when the march deteriorated into savage fighting. Black Power marchers swung clubs, police fired, protesters were injured, and one boy was killed.



Martin was devastated. When he later watched television clips of the march, they showed black teenagers starting the violence. Martin knew then that the whole concept of nonviolent protest was on trial, and himself with it.

He left Memphis, promising to be back in a week to lead a massive, nonviolent rally.

Not safe
Martin's supporters feared for his safety when he promised to return to Memphis. They had no strong base in the city and so could not make the usual security arrangements.



Lorraine Motel

Martin stayed at the Lorraine Motel for black people. He had a room on the second floor, overlooking the carpark and swimming pool. The motel is now a Martin Luther King museum.

James Earl Ray

Ray belonged to a political party that hated black people. One party member had offered a reward of \$30,000 to anyone who killed Martin.



Martin was as good as his word. He returned to Memphis on April 3 and checked into a motel.

Yet something was making him nervous. Suddenly he did not want to address a rally that evening. Only his friends' pleas changed his mind.

So he addressed the crowd. He reminded them of how close to death he had sometimes been. But his own life did not matter, he said. God had shown him the Promised Land – freedom and justice lay ahead for black people.

The cheers were as enthusiastic as Martin could have wished. Encouraged, he returned to his motel.

But there was another newcomer in Memphis that night – an escaped convict named James Earl Ray. He had studied newspapers that criticized Martin for stirring up violence. Ray hated black people. And he had a gun.





*Simulated telescopic
gunsight showing
scene of Martin's
assassination*

Life for killer

James Earl Ray fled to England but was brought back to the U.S. to stand trial. He pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 99 years in prison. He was still in custody when he died in 1998 aged 70.



Martin spent April 4, 1968, quietly in his Memphis motel, making plans for the forthcoming march. In the evening he dressed to go out to dinner with friends.

James Earl Ray had booked into a rooming house and requested a room at the back. It overlooked the Lorraine Motel where Martin was staying. Ray had a pair of binoculars and a high-powered rifle.

At about six o'clock Martin stepped out onto his balcony. Friends were joking in the parking lot below. Martin called down to them, leaning on the balcony rail. Suddenly a gun blazed. Martin crashed to the floor.

“Oh, my God! Martin's been shot!” a friend screamed.

People rushed forward to give first aid and call an ambulance. But it was no use. Martin died as soon as he reached the hospital.



The whole world was shocked. Many people wanted to say how much they had admired this passionate, peaceful campaigner.

Thousands of people attended his funeral in Atlanta, with millions more watching on television. At the funeral people sang the words Martin had quoted in his great “dream speech”: “Free at last, free at last. Thank God Almighty, we are free at last!”

In memory
The third Monday in January is now a national holiday in Martin’s memory. His birthplace and grave are both national historic sites.



Glossary

Assassination

The murder of a well-known person.

Baptize

To name someone in a religious ceremony. The person is sprinkled or dipped in water.

Black Power

An organization that tries to gain influence for black people.

Boycott

An organized action in which people refuse to use or buy something until their demands are met.

Car pools

Groups of people who “pool” together and travel in one car.

Civil Rights

The rights to equal opportunities in all things including jobs, education, and housing.

Communism

A way of life in which there is no private property. Everything is owned by everyone.

Congregation

People who gather together to attend a church service.

Congress

The national governing body of the United States. Men and women are elected to Congress.

Constitution

The written set of rules that describes how the government works and the rights of individual people in the U.S.

Discrimination

When people are treated unfairly because of their race, religion, or gender.

FBI

Federal Bureau of Investigation, a U.S. law-enforcement organization.

Freedom Riders

Black and white people who traveled across the United States on buses to protest segregation.

Hate mail

Letters and parcels sent to threaten or frighten the receiver.

Integrate

When different races mix together freely.

Jim Crow

Racial discrimination against black people. It is named after a minstrel song.

Ku Klux Klan

An organization of white people who believe the white race is better than all others. The Ku Klux Klan tries to prevent black people from having any power.

Minister

Someone who works for the church. A minister gives help and advice and performs religious ceremonies.

Prejudice

An unreasonable low opinion of something or someone.

Racism

Disliking someone because of his or her race or color.

Rally

A mass meeting of people for a common cause.

Segregation

Separating groups of people such as black and white people.

Sit-ins

The occupation of all or part of a building by people protesting about an injustice.

Slavery

When men and women are owned by other people. Slaves have no rights to anything.

Social program

A plan to improve the living and working conditions of disadvantaged people.

Supreme Court

The highest court in the U.S. It makes the final judgment on certain law cases.