I Have a Dream, Too

Grade level: 6-8

Overview
How might the world look if Dr. King hadn’t fought so vehemently for the civil rights of African Americans? In this activity, students will listen to either parts of, or the entirety of, Dr. King’s “I Have a Dream Speech.” Each student should also be provided with a printed copy of the speech to refer back to. After studying Dr. King’s speech, the student should write a one page essay describing what their dreams for the future are and how those dreams might be limited or different if Dr. King hadn’t fought for civil rights. For example, would a student who wants to be a pilot be easily accepted into an aviation program she joins of dreaming?

Lesson Goals
Students should:

1. Listen to Dr. Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech.        Martin Luther King Jr.
2. Refer to the printed copy of the speech as needed.
3. Brainstorm about what dreams students have now or for the future.
4. Discuss how those dreams might not have been possible if Dr. King hadn’t fought for equal rights for all.
5. Write one-page essays outlining their dreams and why those dreams might not have been possible without Dr. King and people like him.

Materials
Printed copies of King’s “I Have a Dream” speech.
Access to a video of the live speech (either via YouTube or in a documentary).

Teaching the Lesson
Either pull up a YouTube video or play a recording of “I Have a Dream.” You will find resources for this below in the resource section or your school may have a recording on file. If you do not have the technology to play the speech, use the printed copies and have students take turns reading the speech out loud as a class.

Next, start a discussion with the students by asking:

- What are some of your dreams?
- What do you dream about for your future?
- Do you think those dreams would be possible if Dr. King hadn’t fought for civil rights for all?

After the discussion, have students work on one-page essays. Explain that they will choose one of their dreams to write about and will discuss not only the dream but whether that dream would even be possible were it not for Dr. King and people like him. At the end of class, students should turn in their essays.
Grade the essays on their understanding of King’s role in changing society. Their dreams can be as wild as they want as long as they connect the idea that Dr. King forever changed America’s landscape and what was possible.

**Lesson Resources**

**Websites**

- http://youtube.com (there are several snippets of the speech or the complete speech available on YouTube)

Some textbooks also contain parts of Dr. King’s speech.

**Concluding Activity**

This lesson culminates in the student turning in a one-page description of what he dreams about and why this dream is achievable today. The overall concept should look at how things might be different for the student if Martin Luther King, Jr. had not fought for civil rights.

Photo: Dr Martin Luther King, Jr., half-length portrait, facing front

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Source: http://hdl.loc.gov/loc.pnp/cph.3c26559