



Analyzing the "I Have A Dream" Speech

Civil Rights Movement: Martin Luther King



Susan McHale, Becky Hilton

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Grade Level	9th – 12th Grade	Time Frame	2 class period(s)
Subject	Social Studies	Duration	100 minutes
Course	U.S. History		

Essential Question

What was Dr. King's intention when he delivered the I Have a Dream speech? Has the vision of Dr. King's dream for race relations been realized?

Summary

Students will compare and discuss the text of the I Have a Dream Speech with the video of Dr. King speaking. Students will summarize the intent of the speech. Students will also write an essay to determine if Dr. King's dream has been realized. They will use content from the speech and current events to support their claim.

Snapshot

Engage

Students compare paragraphs of the "I Have a Dream" speech with the video of Dr. King speaking his message. How does his passion and delivery play a part in making the message meaningful?

Explore

Through an annotating activity, students explore the text in partners and look for central ideas that identify the intent of the speech.

Explain

With their annotated text, students in teams create summary statements about the speech using the GIST method.

Extend

Students write a 4 to 5 paragraph essay with a claim statement and supporting evidence (Claim, Evidence, Reasoning) for the question: "Has the vision of Dr. King's dream for race relations been realized?"

Evaluate

The summary statements and the essay will serve as the assessments.

Standards

Oklahoma Academic Standards (Social Studies: United States History (9th through 12th grade))

USH.7.1C: Compare the viewpoints and the contributions of civil rights leaders and organizations linking them to events of the movement, including Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. and his "I Have a Dream" speech, the leadership of Malcolm X, the role of organizations such as the Black Panthers; describe the tactics used at different times including civil disobedience, non-violent resistance, sit-ins, boycotts, marches, and voter registration drives.

Attachments

- [CER Rubric—Analyzing the I Have a Dream Speech - Spanish.docx](#)
- [CER Rubric—Analyzing the I Have a Dream Speech - Spanish.pdf](#)
- [CER Rubric—Analyzing the I Have a Dream Speech.docx](#)
- [CER Rubric—Analyzing the I Have a Dream Speech.pdf](#)

Materials

- Text of the "I Have a Dream" Speech (attached)
- YouTube video of the "I Have a Dream" Speech
- Internet and computer access for students
- Rubric for student essay (attached)

Engage

Teacher's Note: Lesson Preparation

Before beginning the lesson, access the [text](#) of the "I Have a Dream" speech from Teaching Tennessee History. Print enough copies for each student or provide a digital copy.

Have students read the first three paragraphs of Dr. King's speech silently. When all students have finished reading, show the same segment of the speech given by Dr. King on [video](#).

Embedded video

<https://youtube.com/watch?v=smEqnnklfYs>

Ask students to find a partner and discuss these questions:

- Which would have the greater impact on you?
- How do they differ in the delivery?
- How would you compare the two versions? Explain your reasoning.

Students may want to comment on Dr. King's passion and how he strongly delivered his message. They may wish to comment on whether seeing and listening to the speech would be more powerful than reading it. You may wish to have students discuss what it might have been like to be part of the crowd at the Lincoln Memorial.

Allow time for partners to share their responses with the class.

Explore

Have students complete a text annotation activity with their partner using the rest of the "I Have a Dream" speech text. (Each student should keep their own annotated text copy because they will need their notes later.)

With their annotation notes, students should:

- Circle the central ideas of Dr. King's speech.
- Underline details that support the central ideas they circled.
- Make a list of vocabulary or phrases they do not understand and place that on the board as they read.
- Place a question mark by ideas or information that seems confusing.

As you see students writing vocabulary on the board or putting question marks by sentences, stop and have a question and answer time where these terms are made clear. This may be when most students are nearly finished with annotation. Or you can circulate around the room and answer question marks with the student partners.

Optional Content

If time or reading is a challenge, break the speech up into multiple paragraphs, number these sections, and have student partners annotate the section that they are assigned. Then, have the students do the Explain summaries for their section as you work through the text and share with the class.

Explain

After students complete their annotations, and misconceptions and vocabulary have been discussed, have them create a 25-word Gist statement (a summary of what Dr. King meant and his purpose for this speech).

Have student partners share their summaries with the class.

Extend

Explain the rubric that is provided for students to write their essay. Students will individually write a 4-to-5 paragraph essay answering the question, "Has the vision of Dr. King's dream for race relations been realized?"

Share the attached rubric with students so that they know the expectation for the essay.

Students should create a claim statement and support their claim with details and evidence from Dr. King's speech and from current events about race relations or race issues. (Students will need internet access to support their claim in order to cite current race relations or race issues.)

Optional Content

Once a rough draft has been written, student partners could serve as peer editors to help develop the essay by "pre-grading" and providing feedback, using the rubric.

Evaluate

The summaries and the essay will serve as the assessments. A rubric has been provided to assess the essays.

Resources

- SullenToys.com. (2011, January 20). *Martin Luther King - I Have A Dream Speech - August 28, 1963* [Video]. YouTube. <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=smEqnnklfYs>
- East Tennessee Historical Society. Martin Luther King's "I Have a Dream" speech. Teach Tennessee History. <https://teachtnhistory.org/file/I%20Have%20A%20Dream%20Speech.pdf>