

Name _____ **Biographies**

Martin Luther King, Jr.



Martin Luther King Jr. was a Baptist minister and one of the leading figures of the American civil rights movement. The child of a minister from a middle class family, he attended a segregated school, where his earliest memory of racism was that once they reached school age, children who had previously been his friends were no longer allowed to play with him.

King's first major civil rights action was the Montgomery Bus Boycott, which he organized after Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on the bus to a white man. During the boycott, which lasted for over a year, King was arrested and his house was bombed. However, the boycott ultimately ended segregation on Montgomery buses and launched King's career as an activist.

In 1963, he helped to organize the "March on Washington". The march, intended to call attention to civil rights legislation, attracted over 250,000 people. Its organizers hoped it would help bring an end to segregation in public schools, protect minorities from police abuse, and promote the passage of laws to prevent employment discrimination. At this event, King gave what has become one of the most famous speeches in history, known as his "I Have a Dream" speech. In 1964, the United States passed the Civil Rights Act. That same year, King became the youngest person to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize.

On April 4th, 1968, Martin Luther King, Jr. was shot in Memphis, TN by James Earl Ray. Today, his life and work is commemorated by Martin Luther King, Jr. Day, a federal holiday.

1. Who was Martin Luther King, Jr.?
2. What two notable events was he involved in?

