

## Teacher's Guide: Remembering Dr. King Activity

This is a powerful activity that gives students an opportunity to reflect on a man of great importance while also reflecting on how they would want to be remembered, themselves, for contributing to people's lives.

Helping students strengthen their core purpose has been shown in control group studies to measurably increase student achievement and persistence. This activity can be used to compliment students' work on their core purpose in EduGuide's online program, or to introduce new students to thinking about their own sense of purpose.

The activity is also a chance to engage with one of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King's most cited works. "The Drum Major Instinct" speech provides a window into the many facets of Dr. King's life: a pastor, philosopher and social change agent. In the speech, he addresses issues ranging from personal finance to international relations. And, most remarkably, he talks about how he would like people to remember him at his funeral, only a few months before his life was tragically cut short. The message was delivered to people who had known him his whole life at the church with which he grew up, where he started preaching while still a teenager.

As a call for people to be great at serving others, the Drum Major Instinct also provides an excellent introduction to why Dr. King's holiday is celebrated as the National Day of Service. This activity can be a catalyst for service by inviting students to reflect on how they would like to serve others and how they would like to add to their education so that they have more to contribute.

Text and audio for The Drum Major Instinct is available online (link below). The audio is 39 minutes long. For a shorter version, begin at 26:49 "But let me rush on to my conclusion..." which leads into Dr. King's main point and how he wanted to be remembered.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mefbog-b4-4>

### Options to get the most out of this activity:

- Most importantly, encourage students to spend time answering the questions, especially the third question about how they would like others to remember their impact.
- After initial writing, consider engaging students further in discussion about their answers.
- Students can brainstorm acts of service for their school, home and community.
- To help students reflect on the relevance of their education, discuss how the things they are learning will enable them to solve problems and contribute more to their community.

## Activity: Remembering Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Delivered February 4, 1968, Dr. King's sermon "The Drum Major Instinct" foreshadowed his assassination by just a few months. In it, he reflected on how he would like to be remembered after he died. It was read again at his funeral and is among his most cited works. Review the text or audio of the speech, available online (<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Mefbog-b4-4>) and then answer the questions posed by his message.

1. Dr. King described the distortion of the Drum Major Instinct, the drive to be seen as better than others, as the source of many ills. How have you seen it hurt people?
2. Dr. King addressed a wide range of social problems that he saw around him, including poverty, elitism, racism and war. Think about your own school and community today. What specific issues do you think are most important to address?
3. Dr. King reflected on his determination to leave a legacy of serving others. How about you? How would you like to be remembered for making a difference in other people's lives? What would you like others to be able to say about how you helped people? Take some time to reflect on and write about this, using the back of the page if needed.
4. What's a specific step you could take today or this week to start living that out?
5. Dr. King was a hard working student who made learning a priority in his own life and called others to do the same. What kind of education and skills would you like to learn so that you can contribute more to people's lives?