

## Martin Luther King Day Activities

**I Have a Dream** Create an interactive display in a common area in your community. On a bulletin board or butcher paper, create the headline, “I have a dream....” Provide markers and invite residents, staff, and visitors to add their dreams and goals to the display.

**Book Club** Choose a book about the life and teachings of Martin Luther King Jr. Suggestions include *Why We Can't Wait*, *The Trumpet of Conscience*, *A Time to Break Silence*, *Martin Luther King Jr.: A Life*. Form a book club to read and discuss the book and its message.

**MLK Film Fest** Invite residents and family members to an MLK movie night. Don't forget to provide popular movie snacks, like popcorn, candy, and soft drinks. Movie suggestions include *Boycott*, *I Am Martin Luther King Jr.*, *King in the Wilderness*, *The Boy King*, *Selma*, *Betty and Coretta*. (Be sure to screen the movies prior to showing.)

**Speech** Most people are familiar with Martin Luther King Jr.'s famous *I Have a Dream* speech. Re-enact the speech with your residents. Provide residents with a printed copy of the speech. Assign each person a small portion of the speech to read aloud in a round robin.

**Mix It Up Meal** During lunch or another meal, ask your residents to step out of their comfort zone and eat with people with whom they don't usually interact. It might be helpful to provide ice-breaking questions to help initiate conversations.

**Read Aloud/Buddy Read** Martin Luther King Day offers an excellent opportunity for an intergenerational activity. Have residents read children's books to or with young visitors. Popular titles include *The Crayon Box that Talked*, *The Sneetches (and other stories)*, *Martin Luther King, Jr. (National Geographic Readers)*, *A Picture Book of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, *Martin's Dream*, *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Martin Luther King, Jr.*, *Martin Luther King Jr. Day*, *I am Martin Luther King Jr. (Ordinary People Change the World)*.

**Discussion/Reminisce** Most of your residents were probably alive and living in the United States during the civil rights movement and the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. Gather a group together for a discussion of the turbulent times. What part of the country did you live in? What are your memories of the time? Did you participate in any protests or demonstrations? This is a great activity to include teens and young adults as part of an intergenerational learning experience.

**Poetry** Do you think you might have some undiscovered poets living in your community? Using MLK Day as inspiration, encourage residents to write poems using different forms poetry, such as [haiku](#), [acrostic poem](#), [cinquain](#), [couplet](#), [free form](#).

**Kindness Rocks** Encourage your residents to spread the message of kindness and encouragement through colorful painted rocks. Provide residents with smooth rocks and acrylic paint. Paint the rocks with cheerful and encouraging messages such as “you are lovely,” “blessed,” “love,” “shine,” “hello,” etc. Place the rocks in residents’ rooms or in various locations around your community.

**Virtual Museum** Take your residents on a virtual field trip to the [National Civil Rights Museum](#). The museum is built around the former Lorraine Motel, which was the site of the assassination of Martin Luther King Jr. in 1968.

**Community Service** Invite residents to participate in community service events in your community on Martin Luther King Jr. Day. Here are some ideas:

- Make Blankets – Take a trip to your local fabric store to purchase fleece and other supplies for residents to make a variety of [no-sew blankets](#) that can be donated to a local charity.
- Host a Coat Drive – Invite residents to assist you with decorating cardboard boxes to use as collection bins during a facility-wide coat drive. Encourage residents, staff members, and visiting family members to drop off their unused coats to be donated to a local homeless shelter.
- Assemble Care Packages – Gather small bins for residents to fill with toiletries, like toothpaste, deodorant, and soap, to create care packages for our troops overseas.

**Host a Birthday Party** Everyone loves a party. Ask your residents to plan a birthday party for MLK Day. Allow the residents to decide on decorations, cake, food, and activities.

**Peace March** A peace march is a form of nonviolent action where a group marches to raise awareness for particular issues important to the walkers. Organize a mini march for peace in or around your community. Have the residents make their own hand made sign with meaningful slogans.

**Community Events** Check your town for organized MLK Day events that your residents might enjoy participating in or volunteering for. Some towns organize parades, festivals, and community service events.

**MLK Day Crafts:**

[MLK Collage](#)

[Dream Collage](#)

[Kirigami Peace Circle](#)

[How to Draw MLK](#)