

# REFLECTING ON DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR'S SPEECH

## in 5th Grade

At our school, we believe in fostering perseverance, collaboration, integrity, critical thinking, and a growth mindset—values that empower our students to reach their full potential. Recently, our fifth graders embarked on a transformative journey inspired by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech, "What Is Your Life's Blueprint?" Through thoughtful analysis, deep discussions, and personal reflections, students explored how King's timeless words can serve as a guide for building meaningful and purposeful lives.

### Engaging with Dr. King's Words

The project began with students receiving a copy of King's speech, delivered to junior high students in 1967. In our first reading, we focused on collaboration, as students listened and shared their initial reactions. They filled out reflection pages, considering how King's message applied to their own lives.

For the second reading, students worked in pairs, strengthening their critical thinking skills by discussing key themes and responding to thought-provoking questions.

Fiske, Amy  
Mrs. Lopez  
Fifth Grade  
22 January 2025

#### My Blueprint

In "What is Your Life's blueprint?" Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Now each of you is in the process of building the structure of your lives, and the question is whether you have a proper, solid, and sound blueprint." You need a blueprint for your life, and your life's blueprint is essential. You can't just do something without a plan. Your life's blueprint is a plan for what you will do. My life's blueprint includes my dreams, the steps I will take, the challenges I'll overcome, and the people who will support me.

The first part of my blueprint is setting reasonable goals for what I will do in the future. I want to become an author or play soccer in the NWSL (National Women's Soccer League) when I grow up. I love reading and writing a lot. I also love making people happy, and if anyone reads the books I might write, they might love them and make them smile. I kick all the balls I see, shoot goals, dribble, and practice being a goalie. So, you can tell that I love playing soccer, too. Both of those jobs would be great for me. Those are my dreams for my future.

If I want to do those things, I need to have a plan to follow. To be an author, I need to practice writing, go to school, get good grades on my writing assignments, and read a lot. For soccer, I need to practice every day and be on a club team that will help me get better. I also need to

#### Student examples

graduate from a good college so that an NWSL team will choose me. Right now, I am doing those things. I will work hard and do my best. So, I need a plan to become what I want to become.

Every blueprint needs a way to overcome challenges. Being an author and playing soccer, I might think that I sometimes can't do a good job or that people won't like what I do. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "Be the best of whatever you are." I will keep doing my best, just like he said. I will also stay positive and encourage myself to keep going, one step at a time. I will persevere even if I do something wrong the first time. That is what I will do if that happens.

I also need some people to help me. My teachers help me improve my writing at school. My soccer coach helps me get much better at soccer. My dad and my goalie training coach helped me become a better goalie. They always encourage me and help me. One quote by Dustin Lynch that motivates me: "Hard work always pays off, whatever you do." I will do my best, and with the help of some people, I will get better. Hard work always pays off.

My blueprint includes my dreams, the steps I will take, the challenges I'll overcome, and the people who will support me. My blueprint is essential because it is the plan for my future. Without a plan, everything will be a big mess. That's why I have a blueprint. With my blueprint, I can't wait to see what my future holds for me!

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As a class, we explored the importance of revisiting texts multiple times—discovering new insights with each reading and making deeper connections to the ideas presented.

During the third reading, students took ownership of King's words, reading sections aloud and analyzing the speech's structure, message, and rhetorical techniques. In small groups, they collaborated to break down the meaning of King's ideas, demonstrating both integrity and respect as they listened to and built upon each other's perspectives.

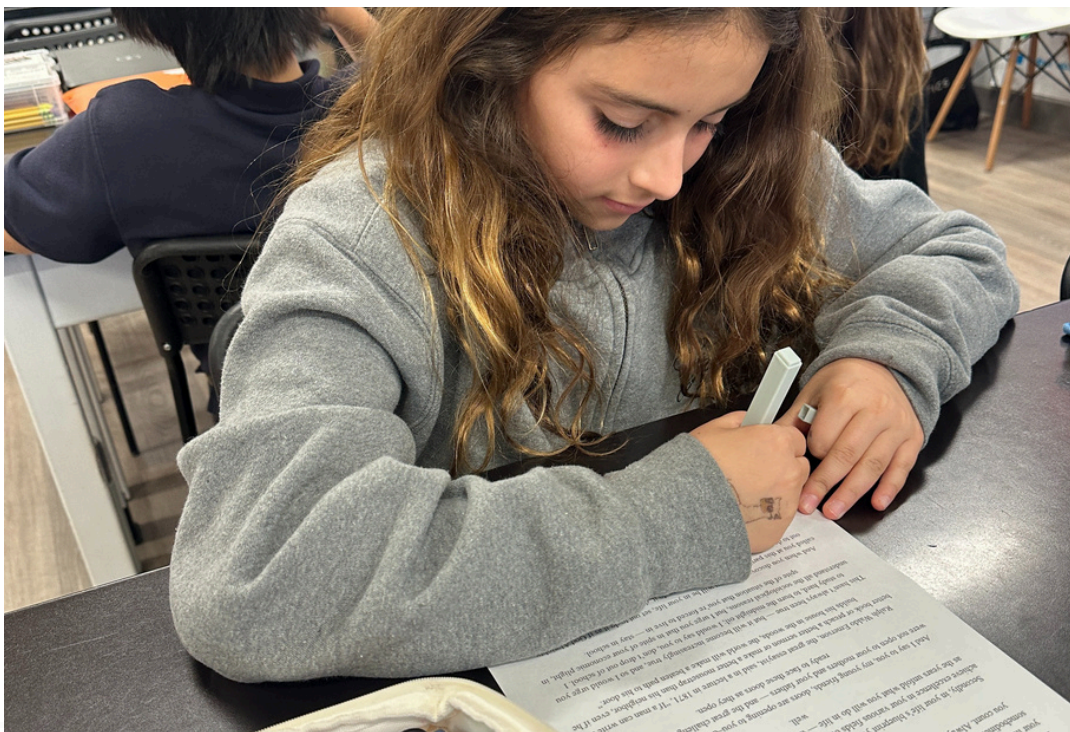
Inspired by King's challenge to create a strong blueprint for life, students reflected on their own growth mindsets, setting personal goals and identifying the steps they need to take to achieve them.

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Their essays outlined:

- **Dreams and Goals:** Students shared their aspirations—from becoming scientists and educators to artists and community leaders—demonstrating perseverance in their ambitions.
- **Steps to Achieve Their Goals:** They mapped out practical steps, such as studying hard, developing new skills, and seeking guidance from mentors, showing a clear growth mindset in their approach to success.
- **Overcoming Challenges:** Recognizing that obstacles are inevitable, students explored strategies for resilience, learning from failure, and staying committed to their goals—embodying perseverance in the face of setbacks.
- **Sources of Inspiration and Support:** Whether it was family, teachers, historical figures, or meaningful quotes, students acknowledged the people and principles that encourage them to stay motivated and act with integrity.





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This project was more than just an academic exercise; it was a chance for students to reflect on who they are, who they want to become, and how they plan to get there. By engaging deeply with King's words and applying them to their own lives, students demonstrated critical thinking and self-awareness, strengthening not just their writing and analysis skills but also their personal values.

Dr. King believed that every person has the power to shape their own future. Through this experience, our students have taken their first steps in constructing blueprints built on perseverance, collaboration, integrity, critical thinking, and a growth mindset—qualities that will guide them long after they leave our classroom.

We are so proud of their hard work, and we look forward to seeing the bright futures they build!

Cabrera, Jayla

Mrs. Lopez

Fifth Grade

22 January 2025

### My Blueprint

Imagine working hard and staying diligent all your life to accomplish the dreams and hopes you've had since you were little. Imagine the day you finally achieved your dreams and heard your name with the greats. Your name is next to Leonardo Davinchi, Beethoven, Micheal Jackson, Marie Curie, Amelia Earhart, and Maya Angelou. Your name is considered a world-changing name and will be known forever. However, what steps did you take to get there? What steps will you take to get there? Whether you want to be a famous NBA player, an artist, or a teacher, you need a solid, thorough blueprint for your life. If you want to accomplish something outstanding and be one of the best, how will you do it? What is your plan to succeed in the goals you have set for yourself? My life's blueprint includes my dreams, the steps I will take, the challenges I'll overcome, and the people who will support me.

The first step in my life's blueprint is to set clear goals and dreams for my future. My dream for life is to become a teacher and teach at a Christian school. Being a teacher is essential to me because I want to use my God-given skills of having a strong voice to help mold other's lives in the right way. I want

Wolpe, Benjamin

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Fifth Grade

22 January 2025

### My Blueprint

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. once said, "What is your life's blueprint?" My life's blueprint lays out my plan for what I will do when I grow up. It includes my dreams, the steps I will take, the challenges I will overcome, and the people who will support me.

The first part of my blueprint is trying hard in school and getting good grades. As Dr. King once said, I plan to do this by studying to the best of my ability, even if it means "burning the midnight oil." I plan on becoming an AI engineer to change how people think. These dreams are important to me, and I have a path to get there. I am very inspired by my dad, who is already an engineer. If I follow my dreams and goals, my dream will come true.

The first step is to enroll in a good school and start taking classes that will help me reach my goal of becoming an AI engineer. I will begin by taking classes in computer science and continue in college, where I will get a bachelor's degree. Then, I will have to get an internship with companies in the IT field. I know that I