

Martin Luther King Jr. was born in 1929. He attended segregated public schools in Georgia and then went to Boston University where he graduated in 1955. In Boston he also married and started a family.

In 1954, Martin Luther King became a pastor in the Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. He worked to get civil rights for black people and he was a member of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People. In 1955, he led the first great black non violent demonstration in the United States. This was the **bus boycott** when black people stopped for 382 days - using segregated buses in Montgomery following an incident, when a black woman called Rosa Parks refused to move to another part of the bus to let a white man sit down. During the boycott, King was arrested and his home was bombed.

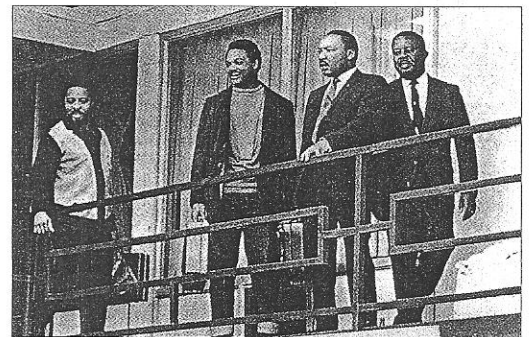
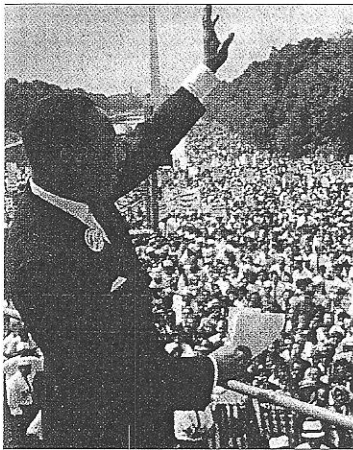
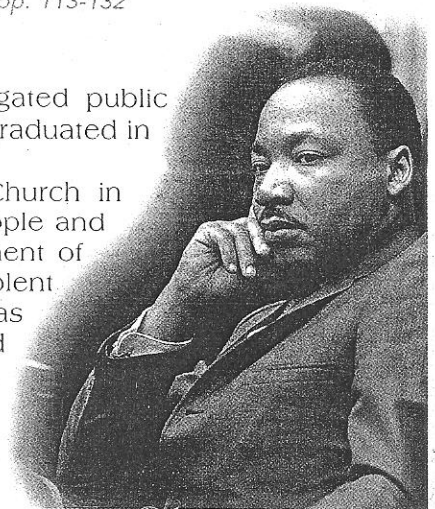
In December 1956, the Supreme Court of the United States declared segregation on buses unconstitutional and blacks and whites could sit in buses as equals.

In 1957, MLK was elected president of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, a new civil rights movement. He was inspired by the Indian leader Gandhi who had advocated non violent protest. In April 1963, he led a very big peaceful protest against segregation in Birmingham, Alabama.

After the protest he was arrested and while he was in prison he wrote a letter known as the "Letter from a Birmingham Jail". This letter became a manifesto of the Negro Revolution. On August 28th, 1963 he organized the peaceful march on Washington, D.C. when 250,000 people listened to his famous speech, "I Have a Dream". In this speech he talked about his hopes for the future when blacks and whites could be brothers. In the same year he was named "Man of the Year" by *Time* magazine and became not only the symbolic leader of American blacks but also a world figure.

The next year, at the age of thirty-five, Martin Luther King became the youngest man to receive the Nobel Peace Prize. He gave the prize money of \$ 54,123 to the civil rights movement.

On the evening of April 4th, 1968 he was standing on the balcony of his motel room in Memphis, Tennessee when he was assassinated. The next day he was going to lead a protest march in sympathy with striking garbage workers of that city.



1. What did Martin Luther King fight for?
2. Which other great leader from another country inspired him? In what way?
3. Write a timeline:

1929:

1954:

1955:

1956:

1957:

1963:

1964:

1968:

10. Choose the most important events in Martin Luther King's life and write a summary.