First Name _____

Last Name _____

Class _____

Date _____

Martin Luther King Jr.

A Life of Learning, Collective Action, and Expanding Justice

Research Simulation Task

How did King’s experiences and the work of communities shape his changing strategies for justice?

Five lessons connect Social Studies, English Language Arts, Mathematics, and Science. Core instruction is accessible to grades 6 to 8, with extensions for grades 9 to 12 in the teacher guide.

Learning Goals

Chronicle King’s life accurately, beginning with his birth name, Michael King Jr.

Explain how local organizers, court decisions, and collective action shaped change.

Read maps and quantitative models, evaluate evidence, and write a supported argument.

Using This Packet

Read the daily text, then complete its notebook. Complete the geography, mathematics, and science activities before the assessment. The final student task is the RACE response.

Print edition. Write on the ruled lines. Use both final response pages for your RACE argument.

Day 1 From Michael King Jr. to Scholar and Minister

1929 to 1955 | Original instructional reading

A1 Michael King Jr. was born on January 15, 1929, in Atlanta, Georgia. He later became known as Martin Luther King Jr. His parents were Alberta Williams King and the minister Martin Luther King Sr., who had also been named Michael. The family belonged to a tradition of Black church leadership and civic action. His father challenged racial discrimination, giving the younger King an example of resistance within everyday life. [S1, S2]

A2 King entered Morehouse College in 1944 at age 15. He studied sociology, participated in campus organizations, and developed his public speaking. College president Benjamin Mays helped him connect religious thought with social responsibility. His education was a process of growth, rather than a sign that he had always possessed every skill he would later need. [S3, S9]

A3 After graduating from Morehouse in 1948, King studied at Crozer Theological Seminary in Pennsylvania. He graduated in 1951 and continued his studies at Boston University, earning a doctorate in systematic theology in 1955. Study, discussion, and preaching helped shape his ideas about human dignity and social change. [S4, S5]

A4 King met Coretta Scott while studying in Boston. They married on June 18, 1953, and eventually had four children. Coretta was an educated musician and an activist with her own commitments to justice. In 1954, King became pastor of Dexter Avenue Baptist Church in Montgomery, Alabama. His family life, education, and ministry all preceded his national fame. [S6, S1]

Vocabulary

Sociology means the study of society. Theology means the study of religious beliefs. Civic action means participation intended to improve public life.