

“Martin’s Big Words”

DAY
01

“Martin’s Big Words”

Virtue

- *Teacher action: introduce virtue and its definition to students.*
- INTEGRITY: Integrity is personal consistency in moral goodness.
Optional PK-1: Integrity is choosing to do what is good and right.



Big Question

- *Teacher action: write Big Question on whiteboard and point to words as students read aloud; then ask: “How can you use something you like about yourself to do good for others?”*
- How can you use something you like about yourself to do good for others?

Historical Background

- This story, centering on Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., is set in the segregated southern United States in the mid-twentieth century. At the time, signs like “Whites Only” were prevalent, preventing African-American citizens from exercising their inherent rights. Several historical events are referenced in the story, such as Rosa Parks’ arrest; the Birmingham Bus Boycott; the peaceful demonstrations, sit-ins, and marches done by African Americans throughout the United States; and King’s “I Have a Dream” speech.

Required Text: “Martin’s Big Words” by Doreen Rappaport- <http://a.co/bbRwqGF>

The narrative begins when Martin Luther King Jr. is a small boy, seeking to understand who he is and what his purpose is. It begins by expressing Martin’s feelings about the “white only” signs he sees everywhere, and the bad feelings about himself that these cause him to have. The story then has his mother telling Martin: “You are as good as anyone.” These words drive the rest of the story, giving Martin inspiration to discover his talents and to do good for other people. With large illustrations by Bryan Collier that capture emotion and feeling, as well as illustrate the brief but meaningful words that accompany them, this narrative is accessible to young children, yet also engages the adult reader.

Standards

- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.1: With prompting and support, ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.2: With prompting and support, retell familiar stories, including key details.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.K.3: With prompting and support, identify characters, settings, and major events in a story.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.1: Ask and answer questions about key details in a text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.2: Identify the main topic and retell key details of a text.
- CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RL.1.3: Describe the connection between two individuals, events, ideas, or pieces of information in a text.



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Objectives

- Students will be able to tell what the word “integrity” means.
- Students will be able to think of ways to choose to do what is right.
- Students will be able to think of a time when they demonstrated integrity in their own lives.
- Students will be able to ask and answer questions about key details in a text.



EXPERIENCE IT!

In this section, focus on getting familiar with the story and standing in the shoes of the protagonist. What were they feeling in that moment in time that led to character growth?

Teacher action: Read the required reading listed above with your students. If you would like to supplement the reading with a video, watch these with your class: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Rc39Ka8ut6k> (Reading of the story).

Teacher asks students:

Q: Pretend that it is a very hot day in the middle of the summer, and you want to go swimming with your friends at a big pool that has water slides. You can already feel the cool water covering your body, you can smell the chlorine, and you can hear splashing and laughter. As you and your friends enter the pool area, you see a sign that says No Red Swimming Suits in the Pool. Oh no, your suit is red! All of your friends have blue suits, so they can go swimming, but you can’t. What are you feeling?

Hint: Angry, sad, I’m thinking that the rule is stupid, I feel picked on.

Q: Would you complain about the rule and try to get into the pool? Why? Why not?

Hint: Answers will vary.

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If there has been some time since covering the last section, review what you covered in section one with your students.



INTERNALIZE IT!



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In this section, focus on discovering the identity, purpose, and actions of the protagonist and then relating it to self (or your students)!

Teacher asks the following questions:

Q: Why did Martin feel bad about himself when he saw “white only” signs?

Hint: He knew he there were things he couldn’t have or do because his skin was black.



Q: When you think about you, what comes to mind? Of what are you proud? What do you want to change? Why?

Hint: Answers will vary.

IDENTITY
Who am I?

Q: Martin was always thinking about who he was and who he could become. He was always thinking of “big words” that would help people because he knew that he could do it. What is something you know about yourself that you could use to help others?

Hint: Answers will vary.



PURPOSE
Why am I?

Q: Why do you think Martin wanted to only use words and no fighting when he was protesting for his rights?

Hint: He knew his purpose was to achieve equality for his people without resorting to violence.

Q: Martin knew that he could one day say “big words.” What are big words? Why would Martin want to say big words?

Hint: Big words are words that impact people and make them think. He wanted to change how his people were treated by making everyone think about how discrimination was wrong.

Q: When Martin’s mother said, “You are as good as anyone,” why did that help him?

Hint: Because it made him believe he could accomplish whatever he set out to do and that he was equal to everyone.



Q: Describe a time when you did good, not for yourself, but for someone else.

Hint: Answers will vary.

ACTION
How shall I live?

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03

“Martin’s Big Words”

Review

If there has been some time since covering the last section, review what you covered in section one with your students.



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ACTIVATE IT!

Spent some time creating next steps with your students. What will everyone do now that we have learned from this moment in time?

Teacher asks the following questions:

Q: How can you respond to bad words like “hate” with good words?

Hint: Answers will vary. Replace hate with love, replace angry with happy.

WORLDVIEW

- Teacher action: Ask “What would happen in your class if none of you did what was right?” Hint: Answers will vary. We might get hurt, we wouldn’t learn anything, we might hurt each other’s feelings.
- Discuss answers with the class.

DAY FOUR PREPARATION

- Teacher action: Tell the class, “Tomorrow we’ll be working on projects to show that we understand how to be respectful as we work to accomplish our Greater Purpose.”
- Teacher action: Choose one or more of the activities below to use with students.

DAY
04

“Martin’s Big Words”

Please use the activities below to wrap up the week. Choose the service or enrichment activity that best meets your needs!

Academic Activities

Read Aloud: *Martin’s Big Words*

Materials Needed: “Martin’s Big Words” by Doreen Rappaport

- Read and Discuss
 - Read Martin’s Big Words orally to the class.
 - After reading 2 or 3 pages, close the book, and have students attempt to tell back, in proper sequence, what they heard in the text.
 - If a student recalls something incorrectly, the other students may correct the mistake.
 - Allow students time to carefully examine each illustration, and discuss how each illustration relates to the text.
 - Continue this retelling activity until the story has been completed.



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- After the read aloud and retelling activity, ask the students to answer the following questions to assess both comprehension of the text and the relationship that the illustrations have with the text:
 - What did Martin’s mother say that helped him when he felt bad about himself? Why did it help him feel better?
 - How did church make Martin feel?
 - When others said “hate,” what did Martin say?
 - What did Martin think was the key to the problems of the world? What was Martin’s dream for the world?

Character Activities

“Our Good Words”

Materials Needed: Large piece of butcher paper; Assortment of crayons or markers

- Teacher says: “Let’s make a list of words that are good words. Good words make people happy not sad. Good words make people smile and laugh. Raise your hand when you have thought of a good word, and I will write your word on this big piece of paper that is hanging on the wall.”
- Allow students to suggest “good” words like love, laughing, hope, joy, puppies, friends etc. (Be open to suggestions of things, people not just emotions.)
- When you have finished making the list, ask students the following question:
 - How can the words we use help or hurt other people? (Focus on the power of words to help or harm)

Big Question Activity:

Teacher says: “Think of one thing you do very well. Now think about how you could help someone using that thing. Find a partner and share your idea.”

Writing Prompt

Draw a picture of a time when you helped someone else without being told to do so.

