Teacher Share

LANGUAGE ARTS, SOCIAL STUDIES

Take the Pledge!

The celebration of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day on the third Monday in January is not just a celebration of the man himself, but of the values he held and inspired. Give children the opportunity to demonstrate and notice those values daily by taking a pledge. You can write the pledge yourself or have children help you create it. An example might be: "I promise to do my best to be fair and kind, to share equally, and to treat others as I would like to be treated." Write the pledge on sentence strips and tack it to the top of a bulletin board. Write children's names on sentence strips, and add them to the display along with their photos. Have children stand in front of the board, raise their right hands, and take the pledge!

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TIP

Cut stars out of construction paper. Place the stars in a basket near the bulletin board, and invite children to write things they notice classmates doing that are in line with the pledge—for example, "Jose helped me clean up even though he didn't make the mess." Place the stars next to the appropriate children's names or pictures.

SOCIAL STUDIES, ART

Get on the Bus

Explain to children that in certain parts of the country in the time of Martin Luther King, Jr., African American people were made to sit in the back when they rode a bus. Only those with white skin could sit in front. But Martin Luther King, Jr. and his supporters, including Rosa Parks, helped to change all that. Today, everyone can sit on the bus together, no matter what their differences.

Discuss the concept of fairness, then give each child a copy of the bus template on page 10. Let children cut the window flaps on three sides as indicated, and fold them back. Next, have them glue a piece of paper to the back of the bus, making sure it covers the window openings. Let children place people of all colors, sizes, and shapes in the windows. They can cut out faces of people from magazines or draw them. Have children cut out and display their buses. Children can lift the flaps and see who's on the bus!

TIP

If children are drawing their pictures, you may want to provide multicultural crayons (available at art and school-supply stores). These crayons come in a range of skin colors to represent diversity.

SOCIAL STUDIES

Peaceful Solutions

Martin Luther King, Jr. believed that problems in the world, such as prejudice, could be solved without violence. Have chart paper and a marker ready, and ask children to think of conflicts that may occur in their lives—for example, an argument over the rules of a game, a problem on the playground, trouble sharing a toy, and so on. Record suggestions on chart paper. Let children take turns role-playing the situations to show how conflicts can be resolved peacefully.

LANGUAGE ARTS

"I Have a Dream" Collaborative Banner

One of Martin Luther King, Jr.'s most famous speeches is known as the "I Have a Dream" speech. His dream was that people of all races and cultures would learn to respect and get along with one another. Talk with children about *dreams*: a dream can be a hope, a wish, or a goal you would like to reach.

Make copies of the dream cloud activity sheet on page 11. Ask children to tell you about Dr. King's dream. Record their ideas in a dream cloud. Copy a picture of Dr. King and tape it in the space provided. Now let children fill out their own dream sheets. Display a sheet of craft paper, trimmed to 12 inches high, and long enough to accommodate a banner page for each child plus a few extra. Glue Dr. King's dream cloud to the craft paper, then have children add theirs. Soon you will have a Martin Luther King, Jr. "I Have a Dream" banner circling your classroom for discussion and inspiration.

I have a dream. My dream is:
to have world peace
I can help my dream come true by:
helping my family and my friends
Name Kamil

TIP

To encourage children to think more deeply (and to gently steer them away from more "material" dreams, such as a new bicycle), you may want to use question prompts—for example, *What would you change in our neighborhood to make it a better place to live? What are some things you'd like to do for others? Is there anything you'd like to learn, or learn to do better, in the future?*

Book Break

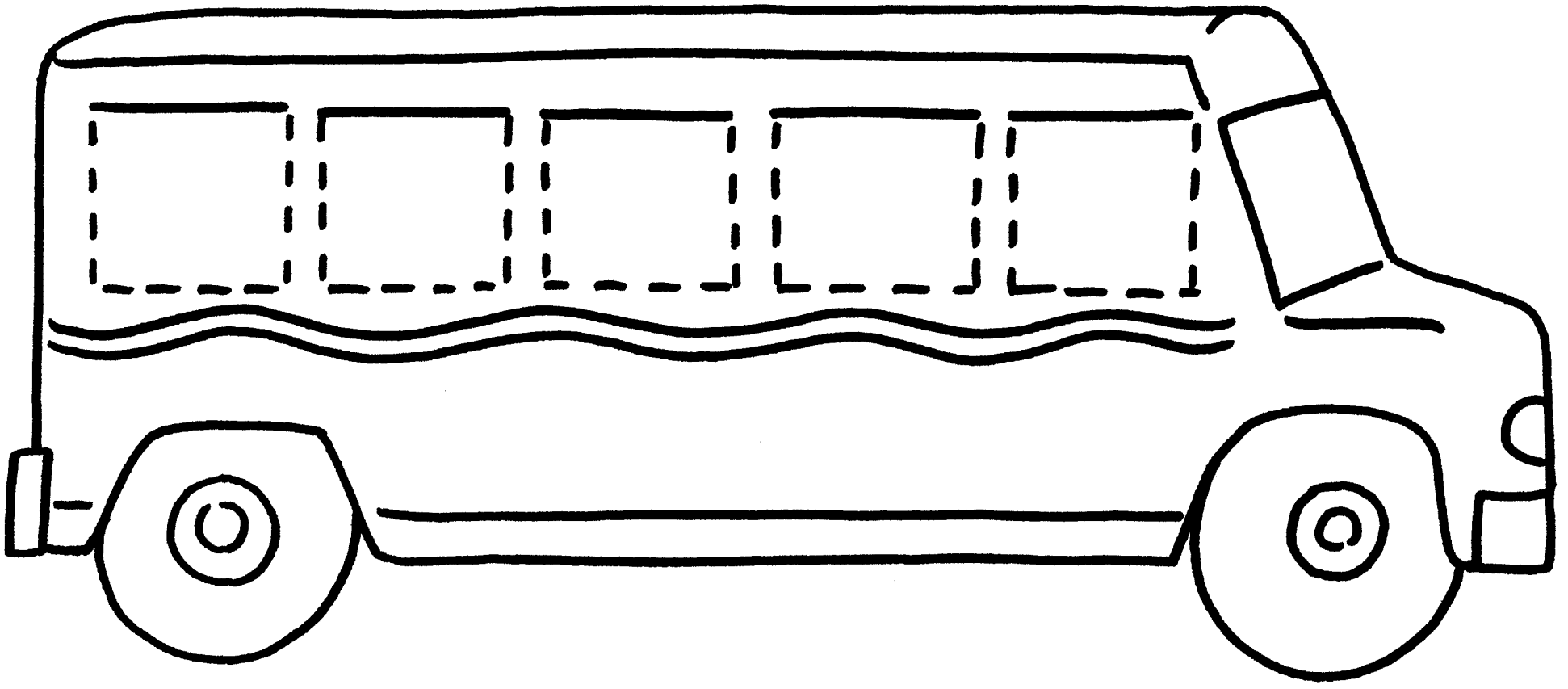
Happy Birthday, Martin Luther King

by Jean Marzollo (Scholastic, 1993)

The beautiful illustrations and simple text in this book make it ideal for teaching young children Martin Luther King's life story and the Civil Rights Movement. After reading the book, ask: *What would you give Martin Luther King for his birthday? What would you thank him for?*

Activity Page

Get on the Bus



Name _____

Activity Page

"I Have a Dream" Collaborative Banner

I have a dream. My dream is:

_____

_____

I can help my dream come true by:

_____

_____

Name _____

Draw a picture of yourself. Glue it here.