Martin Luther King, Jr.

Pre-reading

Questions:
- What do you know about Martin Luther King, Jr.?

Definitions:
- Content – something that is inside
- Character – what a person is really like as shown through his/her thoughts, words, and actions
- Creed – a set of beliefs held by a person or group, often religious in nature
- Civil rights – the rights of a citizen

Reading

I Have a Dream

I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a Nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin, But by the content of their character.

I have a dream today!

I have a dream that one day… little black boys and girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a dream today!

The dream of most Americans is a good education for their children. People with a good education get better jobs and earn more money. They have more opportunities to be successful.

There are laws in the United States that promise an equal education for all children. These laws are for children of all colors, creeds, and cultures. Children of both rich and poor families are to be given equal educational opportunities.

People like Martin Luther King, Jr. fought for such laws. In the 1960’s Dr. King and other civil rights leaders saw that poor black children were not receiving a good education. Their schools were separate.

Black children attended one school, while white children attended a different school.

The black children’s schools were inferior to the white children’s schools. The “white only” schools had more money, more educational materials, and better facilities. White children had a better chance of getting a good education.

This segregation was also happening in other public places. Black people had to drink out of different water fountains than white people. Black people also had to sit in separate areas from white people on city buses. Black people were told to sit at the back of the bus, while white people sat toward the front. Some restaurants would not even serve black people a meal.

Dr. King and other civil rights leaders worked extremely hard to change these conditions. Through the efforts of many people, change did happen. New laws were passed creating greater equality for all.

However, many parents throughout the country still think their children are not receiving an equal education. The struggle for racial equality continues.
Understanding

1. How many years ago did Martin Luther King, Jr. deliver his “I Have a Dream” speech? __________
   ________________________________________________________________________________

2. What is segregation? ________________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________

3. Why do parents want a good education for their children? _________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________

4. What are two examples of segregation found in the reading? _________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________

5. What is an opportunity? ________________________________________________________________________________

6. What was the peak decade of the civil rights movement? _________________________________

7. What does the word inferior mean? ________________________________________________________________________________

8. What was Martin Luther King, Jr.’s dream? _____________________________________________
   ________________________________________________________________________________
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Writing

Option A: What did you learn about the civil rights work of Martin Luther King, Jr.?

Option B: In your opinion, how much has the United States grown in the area of racial equality?

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