

MARTIN LUTHER KING JR DAY

Who's Martin Luther King Jr? | MLK Day Historical Facts | Why do we celebrate it?

Who is Martin Luther King Jr?

Martin Luther King Jr. was an important civil rights activist. He was a leader in the movement to end racial segregation in the United States. His most famous address was the "I Have A Dream" speech. He was an advocate of non-violent protest and became the youngest man to be awarded the Nobel Peace Prize. He was assassinated in 1968.



MLK Day Historical Facts:

Of the ten federal holidays, only three recognize an individual person (Washington, Columbus, and Dr. King). While Martin Luther King Jr Day, was signed into law in 1983, the holiday would not be officially observed in all 50 states until the year 2000.



Why do we celebrate it?

Simply put, the holiday is an observance of the achievements of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Undoubtedly, Americans know the name, and should be familiar with at least a few lines of the legendary "I Have a Dream" speech. Some people believe it's just a bank holiday, but there is so much more to observe on this day, especially in 2021.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr's peaceful civil rights movement lead the way to the Civil Rights Act of 1964, and the Voting Rights Act of 1965, and his actions led to the Fair Housing Act of April 11th, 1968, which was signed into law just a week after Dr. King's assassination. Keep in mind these were laws asking for desegregation, fair treatment, inclusion, recognition, and for people of all races to be treated like citizens.

Dr. King may have helped change our laws and improve civil rights, but people as a whole are slow to change. Prejudice, racism, and inequality are still infused in our culture and are still acted upon, whether directly, or habitually.

On Martin Luther King Jr. Day this year, let's take a moment to be thankful for how far we've come, acknowledge we still have a long way to go before we can make his Dream a reality, and ask yourself, "...what is it America has failed to hear?"

