



DR. MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. DAY

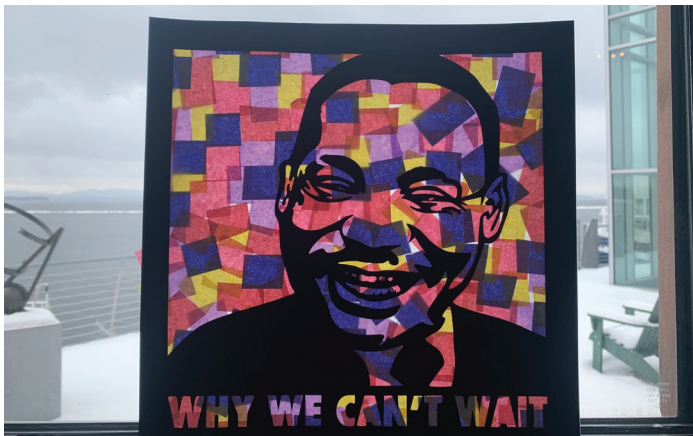
Activity & Discussion Guide



Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Cultural Mosaic Art Activity

Activity Instructions:

1. Cut or tear your tissue paper into smaller pieces.
2. Use the glue stick to glue your tissue paper to a piece of wax paper. Try creating a mosaic or stained glass pattern.
3. Glue the second piece of wax paper on top of the first piece, sandwiching the tissue paper in between.
4. Glue the Martin Luther King Jr. silhouette on top of the wax paper. Fun fact: The words below MLK's silhouette are titles of his books.
5. Hang your art in a window.
6. Take a pic of your creation, and share the image with your local and national community by using these tags:
#1000MLKProject
#ECHOvt
#MartinLutherKing
#MLKDay





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Introduction:

The United States is a diverse country. We come in all races, colors, and creeds. Collectively, we speak over 350 languages. Our remarkable diversity is largely due to immigration. Other than Native Americans, we are all immigrants, the descendents of immigrants, or the descendents of forced migrants, or enslaved people. As such, we each have inherited our own unique cultural traditions, beliefs, foods, and languages. Historically, people described America as a “melting pot.” Today, many people believe America should be more like a “mosaic.” Use the definitions and discussion guide below to share what you think?

Melting Pot: Implies that immigrants and Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) should change, or assimilate, to fit a singular American culture, a dominant culture. In this metaphor, immigrants and BIPOC people give up their cultural identities, such as the food they eat, the traditions they practice, and their social structures, in order to “melt” into the dominant idea of American culture.

Mosaic: Implies that immigrants and BIPOC people retain their cultural identity in America. In this metaphor, multiple cultures coexist within America, creating a diverse, multicultural society.

Discussion Guide:

Younger Students

- Have you ever been made fun of because of a cultural trait, such as your home language or traditional clothing or food? Describe the experience.
- Have you ever made fun of someone—or witnessed others doing so—because of a cultural trait? Describe the experience.
- What situations can you think of that force or encourage people to give up parts of their identity? Explain.
- What are some cultural traditions, foods, or languages that you have experienced traveling around Burlington? What would it mean for these cultures to have to “melt” into another, dominant culture?
- Do you think it’s important for people to be able to speak their home language and practice the cultural traditions passed down through their family? Why?



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Teens & Adults

- The idea of a mosaic is intended to champion the belief that a nation becomes stronger through cultural diversity. The melting pot forwards the idea that immigrants should assimilate and that there should be a singular, dominant American culture. Which metaphor do you think is most accurate right now?

It is common in schools and other settings for members of a shared racial, gender, sexual orientation, or cultural group to gather in affinity groups, such as Black Student Unions and Queer Alliances.

- Why might it be important to members of a given racial, gender, sexual orientation, or ethnic group to gather around their shared identity separate from other people?
- How do such affinity groups differ from the institutional segregation that Martin Luther King Jr. fought against?
- What role do affinity groups play in a mosaic society?



PHOTOS FROM LOVEBURLINGTON.ORG/BIPOC

Going Further:

Explore the diversity of Black, Indigenous, and People of Color-owned businesses around Burlington

<https://loveburlington.org/bipoc>

Explore this poetic data visualization of historical immigration to the United States.

<https://vimeo.com/276140430>

Watch Michael Rain's TED Talk on "What it's like to be a child of immigrants"

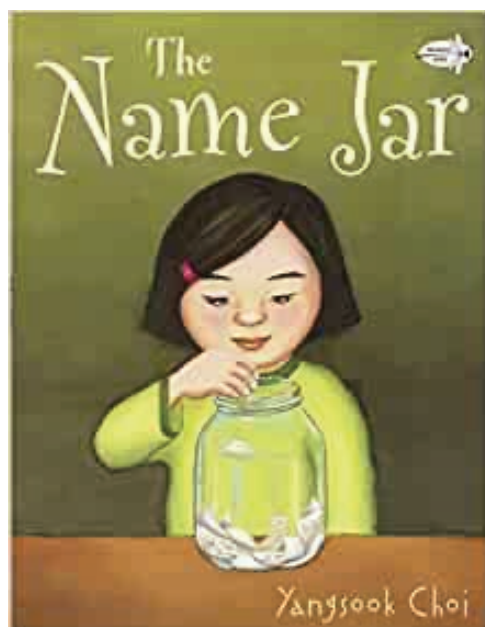
https://www.ted.com/talks/michael_rain_what_it_s_like_to_be_the_child_of_immigrants

Visit echovt.org/mlkday to learn about other MLK Jr. events happening in Vermont.



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The Name Jar Book Discussion

The Name Jar explores questions about difference, identity, and cultural assimilation. When Unhei, a young Korean girl, moves to America with her family and arrives at a new school, she begins to wonder if she should also choose a new name. Her classmates suggest Daisy, Miranda, Lex, and more, but nothing seems to fit. Does she need an American name? How will she choose? And what should she do about her Korean name?

Watch a Read Aloud of The Name Jar Here:

<https://www.youtube.com/embed/MSMRSOJWOFA> or by searching "Interactive Read Aloud Kids' Book: The Name Jar"

On the bus, none of the children are able to pronounce Unhei's name.

Do you think that the children on the bus could have responded to Unhei's name in a different way? What could they have done, and how would that have made a difference?

What should we do when we have difficulty pronouncing other people's names? Is it important that we say them correctly? Why or why not?

When her new class asks for her name, Unhei replies, "Um, I haven't picked one yet." When she goes home, she tells her mother, "I think I would like my own American name."

How does Unhei explain her wish for an American name to her mother? How does her mother respond? Do you agree with Unhei's mother, that being different is a good thing? Why or why not? What makes a name an American name? Why? What kind of name is your name?



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Unhei spends a lot of time thinking about a new name, during which time she visits Mr. Kim's shop, shows Joey her name stamp, and receives a letter from her grandma.

What does her grandma's letter make Unhei think about? How is Unhei's name connected to her grandma? Is your name connected to your family? How?

What is the purpose of names? Why do we have them? Does your name help to make you who you are? Why or why not?

After the weekend, Unhei is ready to introduce herself to the class. "'I liked the beautiful names and funny names you thought of for me,' she told the class. 'But I realized that I liked my name best, so I chose it again.'"

Why does Unhei choose her own name at the end? What were some of the experiences that helped her to decide this? Do you think this was the right choice? Why or why not?

Could Unhei still have been Unhei if she had picked a different name? Why or why not?

Original questions and guidelines for philosophical discussion by Sarah Hopson. Edited June 2020 by The Janet Prindle Institute for Ethics.

