

Read the passage.

Dreams of a Better Future

Jamal gazed into the reflecting pool near the Lincoln Memorial. The water looked refreshing on this hot August day in 1963. Shimmering on the surface was his own face, staring back at him. It was a cute face, according to his parents, but he knew that some white people saw it as inferior. Those people weren't in the March on Washington crowd today. They were in his hometown, though. He had seen their cruel stares and heard the mean names they called him. Once, someone even threw a piece of garbage at him. So he was quiet around most white people, scared to say the wrong thing.

Jamal's best friend, Todd, was white, but Todd and his family were different from most. Jamal knew that he could always go next door and count on Todd to be there. On long summer days, the two boys would spend hours together. Usually they played baseball or went swimming in the pond. At other times, they just sat around and read comic books or watched their favorite show on television.

The boys' families were incredibly close. Their fathers even worked at the same plant doing the same job. But of course, Jamal's father made less money than Todd's father even though the only difference between the two men was the color of their skin.

This type of injustice was exactly why people had decided to have the March on Washington. The unfair conditions had gone on too long, and many people—both black and white—had grown tired of it.

Jamal and Todd were excited to be part of the tremendous crowd that had gathered for the march. They cheered, clapped, and sang along with choirs.

Then Todd's father told them that a very important man was about to speak.

"President Kennedy?" asked Todd.

"No, the president is not here. But I am sure that he will hear what this man, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr., has to say," his father replied.

Dr. King strode to the podium. He spoke of Lincoln freeing the slaves and the lack of progress since then. He spoke of a check given to African Americans but returned for insufficient funds. Jamal felt as though he were in school, learning history or economics. But then Dr. King shared his dream for the future of the country, and suddenly he had Jamal's full attention.

"I have a dream," he said, "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."

As these words rang out over the crowd, goose bumps sprang up on Jamal's arms. He, too, dreamed of a time when his inside would matter more than what was seen on his outside. Dr. King finished his speech to thunderous applause. Standing there surrounded by the throngs of people, Jamal closed his eyes and wished that Dr. King's dream would one day come true.

Answer the following questions.

- 1 What genre is the passage?
- A. biography
 - B. realistic fiction
 - C. historical fiction
 - D. newspaper article

Hint Think about the features of fiction and nonfiction, including the different genres within each. What elements of fiction and nonfiction texts does this story include?

2 Read the excerpt from the passage.

This type of injustice was exactly why people had decided to have the Match on Washington.

Which of the following is a synonym for the word injustice?

- A. unfairness
- B. situation
- C. equality
- D. progress

Hint Use context clues to help you determine the meaning of injustice. Remember that synonyms are words that have similar meanings.

3 Read the excerpt from the passage.

"No, the president is not here. But I am sure that he will hear what this man, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. has to say," his father replied.

Which of the following **best** explains why Todd's father makes this statement?

- A. The march is going to move from the Lincoln Memorial to the White House.
- B. Todd's father plans on telling President Kennedy about the speech.
- C. Dr. King spoke so loudly that the president was likely to hear him from a distance.
- D. Todd's father believes that Dr. King's speech will be so important that President Kennedy will certainly hear about it.

Hint Think about the use of the word hear. Does Todd's father suggest that Kennedy will actually hear Dr. King's speech as he gives it? Or is he implying something else?

- 4 This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

Read the following excerpt from the passage.

Jamal gazed into the reflecting pool near the Lincoln Memorial. The water looked refreshing on this hot August day in 1963.

What does the author establish in these two sentences?

- A. theme
- B. setting
- C. author's purpose
- D. conflict

Part Two

Which excerpt from the passage supports the answer in Part One? Choose **one** answer.

- A. It was a cute face, according to his parents, but he knew that some white people saw it as inferior.
- B. The boys' families were incredibly close.
- C. This type of injustice was exactly why people had decided to have the March on Washington.
- D. Then Todd's father told them that a very important man was about to speak.

Hint For One, think about what you learn from the excerpt. Do you learn what the story is about, where and when it takes place, why the author wrote the story, or what the problem is? For Two, look for a sentence that gives you similar information.

Use the Reading Guide to help you understand the passage.

Reading Guide

Notice how this passage is set up. What clues show you that this article is an informational text?

What is the author's purpose for writing this article?

Why did people organize the March on Washington in 1963?

Remembering King's Dream

WASHINGTON, D.C.—Thousands gathered today to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom. That 1963 event, which drew a crowd of over two hundred thousand people, was a turning point in American history. At the height of the civil rights movement, tensions were high. African Americans were being discriminated against at work, on public buses, and at voting booths. Their basic rights were being denied.

Even though people in power were trying to address these problems, too little was actually being done. A law called the Civil Rights Act had been developed to address discrimination, but Congress had not passed it yet. People of all races were tired of the injustices that were occurring. They wanted African Americans to have the same opportunities as other American citizens. So, they decided to make their voices heard.

August 28, 1963

The March on Washington was expected to draw at least a hundred thousand people. Some people, including President Kennedy, were unsure that the march would have any impact. But their doubts were dismissed when they saw the passion displayed at the march.

People of all ages, races, and backgrounds rallied as one. Locking hands, they marched together and chanted. They held signs with slogans such as “We Demand Voting Rights Now.” The turnout was more than double what had been expected.



Writing Guide

How did Martin Luther King Jr. work to help the civil rights' movement?

How did Martin Luther King Jr. feel about nonviolent protests? Use the information from King's quote to help you understand his feelings.

Throughout the day, people listened to performances and speeches. Famous singers, such as Josephine Baker and Bob Dylan, sang to the crowd. Civil rights leaders and politicians gave moving speeches about the need for change. The most memorable and celebrated speech of the day was given by Reverend Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

A Voice for Civil Rights

Growing up in Georgia, King watched his father fight against discrimination. His father believed it was wrong to mistreat people of a different race or class. His example had a major impact on King.

After graduating from Crozer Theological Seminary, King earned his doctorate from Boston University in 1955. At the time, he was only twenty-five years old. Later that year, King took on his first major role in the civil rights movement. Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a public bus. King led a bus boycott in protest, and the boycott received much attention. In the years after this, King traveled across America and gave speeches about civil rights issues.

He became known for his eloquent speech as well as for his nonviolent means of protest. Despite the countless threats targeted at him, King refused to respond with violence. After being wrongly arrested during a protest, King commented on his approach from jail. He said that nonviolent action aims to “foster such a tension that a community . . . is forced to confront the issue.”



Writing Guide

What did King talk about in his "I Have a Dream" speech?

According to the author, what do people today think of King's speech?

Why do you think the author mentions that there is now a Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial in Washington, D.C.?

A Speech to Remember

Soon, these words would come true. For after the March on Washington, the issue of civil rights could no longer be ignored. King's speech on that day was the highlight of the event. He began the speech by reminding people of the past. It had been one hundred years since President Lincoln had signed the Emancipation Proclamation. And yet, African Americans were still not equal citizens. The founding fathers had written a check to all Americans when they wrote the Constitution and Declaration of Independence. The check was for "rights of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." But the check the African Americans received had been returned for lack of funds.

However, King and other civil rights leaders still had hope for change. Most famously, King claimed, "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." He imagined a day when children of all backgrounds could hold hands and join together as sisters and brothers.

The speech became known as the "I Have a Dream" speech. Fifty years later, it is still considered one of the most powerful speeches of all time. People at today's anniversary event quoted and recited parts of the speech. Many of them were not even alive when King gave his speech. Yet, as they walked past the Martin Luther King Jr. Memorial that now stands in the city, they said thank you to King for sharing his dream with America.

Answer the following questions.

- 1** How do you know this passage is a work of nonfiction?
- A. The author's purpose is to persuade the reader.
 - B. The author presents facts about a real event.
 - C. The events take place in the future.
 - D. The characters are made up by the author.
- 2** This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

Read the following excerpt from the passage.

People of all ages, races, and backgrounds rallied as one.

Which word is a synonym for the word rallied? Choose **all** that apply.

- A. joined
- B. separated
- C. sang
- D. walked

Part Two

Which excerpt from the passage supports the answer in Part One? Choose **one** answer.

- A. People of all races were tired of the injustices that were occurring.
- B. Locking hands, they marched together and chanted.
- C. Rosa Parks was arrested for refusing to give up her seat on a public bus.
- D. However, King and other civil rights' leaders still had hope for change.

Answer the following questions about both passages.

- 3** Read the excerpt from “Dreams of a Better Future” below.

Standing there surrounded by the throngs of people, Jamal closed his eyes and wished that Dr. King’s dream would one day come true.

What detail from “Remembering King’s Dream” adds to your understanding of how people responded to the “I Have a Dream” speech?

- A. Throughout the day, people listened to performances and speeches.
 - B. Civil rights leaders and politicians gave moving speeches about the need for change.
 - C. The speech became known as the “I Have a Dream” speech.
 - D. Fifty years later, it is still considered one of the most powerful speeches of all time.
- 4** What conclusion can you make based on your reading of “Dreams of a Better Future” and “Remembering King’s Dream”?
- A. Jamal returned to Washington to celebrate the fiftieth anniversary of the March on Washington.
 - B. Martin Luther King Jr. was viewed as an important leader of the civil rights movement.
 - C. Martin Luther King Jr. did not influence the civil rights movement.
 - D. The Civil Rights Act was passed by Congress.

- 5 This item has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

Based on the passages, what was the **main** reason why people organized the March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom?

- A. African Americans wanted to boycott buses.
- B. Americans were unhappy with President Kennedy.
- C. People of all races wanted to protest discrimination against African Americans.
- D. Dr. King thought a violent protest would get the government's attention.

Part Two

Which details from the passages support the answer in Part One? Choose **two** answers.

- A. African Americans were denied basic rights, such as the right to vote.
- B. Rosa Parks refused to give up her seat on a public bus.
- C. President Kennedy did not attend the March on Washington and was unsure that the march would have an impact.
- D. African Americans, such as Jamal's dad, were paid less to do the same jobs as white people.

TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS

- 6 Both “Dreams of a Better Future” and “Remembering King’s Dream” provide information about The March on Washington for Jobs and Freedom that took place on August 28, 1963. What events led up to the march? How did the march and the speech by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. affect the people there? Use information from **both** passages to support your response.

Writer’s Checklist

PLAN before you write

- Make sure you read the prompt carefully.
- Make sure you have read both passages carefully.
- Think about how the prompt relates to the passages.
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your response.

FOCUS while you write

- Analyze the information from the passages as you write your response.
- Make sure you use evidence from the passages to support your response.
- Use precise language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions.
- Organize your response with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write

- I stayed focused on answering the prompt.
- I used evidence from the passages to support my response.
- I corrected any errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

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