

# Martin Luther King

## 1 Leggi il testo.

Martin Luther King Jr (MLK) was born in Georgia in 1929. His father was a clergyman and he became a pastor, too, when he was 25 years old. He got married in 1953 and had four children. After studying sociology and theology, he graduated in 1955.

At the beginning of his career he was inspired by Indian leader Gandhi's non-violent resistance and he became a non-violent activist in the struggle for America's civil rights for black people.

In 1955, MLK led the 385 day long Montgomery Bus Boycott, the first great black demonstration, during which he was arrested and his house was bombed. At the end of the demonstration, segregation on buses was declared unconstitutional and from that moment on, black and white people were able to sit in buses as equals.

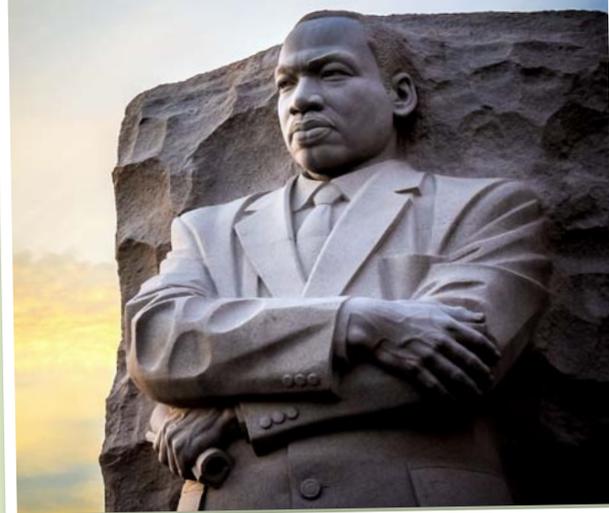
Two years later he and other civil rights activists founded the Southern Christian Leadership Conference, an organisation of black churches whose aim was to control and organise non-violent protests for the civil rights reform. MLK became its leader and organised marches for some of the basic civil rights for black people. Consequently he became a human rights icon.

In 1963 he was involved in the Birmingham campaign that used sit-ins and marches to end segregation in Alabama. In the same year he was one of the leaders of the march in Washington against the desperate conditions of the blacks in the South. More than a quarter of a million people of all races attended this march, during which he addressed them with the famous 'I Have a Dream' speech, in which he expressed his hope that one day black and white people could be brothers.

In 1964, at the age of 35, he became the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize for his commitment against racial segregation and discrimination.

On April 4th 1968, while he was standing on the balcony of a motel, he was assassinated. At his funeral, King's last sermon at Ebenezer Baptist Church (two months prior to his assassination) was played. In that sermon, King made a request that at his own funeral he wanted to be remembered for his attempt to 'love and serve humanity'.

Martin Luther King Memorial, West Potomac Park, Washington D.C.



### Glossary

clergyman *uomo di chiesa*  
struggle *lotta*

## 2 KEY Read the text again and choose the correct option (A, B or C).

- Martin Luther King was a...
  - priest like his father.
  - politician like his father.
  - priest but his father was not.
- Which of these is NOT true for MLK?
  - He was inspired by Indian leader Gandhi.
  - He believed in violent resistance.
  - He was involved in civil rights for black people.
- The Montgomery Bus Boycott lasted for...
  - more than one year.
  - exactly one year.
  - less than one year.
- The Southern Christian Leadership Conference was...
  - a media organisation.
  - a church organisation.
  - a human rights icon.
- When and where was the famous 'I Have a Dream' speech?
  - in 1964 in Birmingham
  - in 1963 in Washington
  - in 1964 in the South
- At the age of 35 MLK became...
  - the youngest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.
  - the first black person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.
  - the oldest person to receive the Nobel Peace Prize.