



Module 2, Unit 1, Lesson Plan 1

Principle 1 - Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people (Grades 6-12)

Learning Targets/Objectives:

- Describe Martin Luther King, Jr.'s Nonviolence365 Principle No. 1
- Evaluate the degree to which Mahatma Gandhi and Henry David Thoreau influenced King

Success Criteria:

- Create a graphic organizer that compares King, Thoreau and Gandhi

Anchor Text:

- The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute. "Chapter 2: Morehouse College." Retrieved from <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/publications/autobiography-martin-luther-king-jr-contents/chapter-2-morehouse-college>

Supplemental Resources:

- The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute. "Mohandas K. Gandhi." Retrieved from <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/encyclopedia/gandhi-mohandas-k>

Lesson Content Overview:

Many critics think of nonviolence as a coward's way out of a situation. Under King's philosophical framework, nonviolence is not cowardice; it's courageousness. If one lets people take advantage of them and do nothing about it, that is not nonviolence. King's nonviolence empowers people to resist aggressively without fighting, cursing, or demeaning the aggressor. The victim would not run away but actively engage the aggressor to persuade them of one's position. It is not retaliation; it is active nonviolent resistance.

While it is easy to give into a rage by lashing out at others, active nonviolent resistance takes courage to resist without hurting others or being concerned about how others view you. It takes courage to say no to violence without becoming violent. King said nonviolence is:

It is active nonviolent resistance to evil.

It is aggressive spiritually, mentally, and emotionally.

It is always trying to persuade the opponent of the righteousness of the cause.¹

Instructional Sequence:

Opener:

Using the Lesson Content Overview and content discussed in Module 1, the teacher should discuss King's active nonviolent resistance.

- **SEL Connection:** Give an example of a courageous position you have taken. Identify an injustice and describe what action you can take to resist the immoral or unjust act without becoming violent. What methods or tactics will you use to persuade others who become confrontational?

Small Group Collaboration:

In small groups of three to four, students will read an excerpt of Martin Luther King's autobiography "[Morehouse College](#)," which he remarks about Henry David Thoreau's civil disobedience. Once they've completed the reading, students will discuss how King's words about Thoreau are reflected in "Principle 1: Nonviolence is a way of life for courageous people."

Individual Reading

Students will read The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute's biography of [Mahatma Gandhi](#). They should take notes as they read.

Formative Assessment:

- Working alone or in small groups, students will complete a Graphic Organizer comparing MLK, Thoreau, and Gandhi.

Adaptations for Student Needs

IEP:

- Sizes of student groups range
- Students team up with a peer partner, while others would prefer to work individually.
- There is a variety of small-group work
- Chunking information
- Visual cues and wait time
- Visual supports (maps, images, PowerPoint slides, handouts)
- Assessments will be modified, and students given extra time

¹ Martin Luther King, Jr. quoted in The Martin Luther King, Jr. Center for Nonviolent Social Change. "The King Philosophy - Nonviolence365." Retrieved from <https://thekingcenter.org/about-tkc/the-king-philosophy/>

ELD

- Modified/simplified reading material
- Content-related lists/handouts of key terms
- Text is supported by visuals and connected to real-life experiences