



Module 3, Unit 1, Lesson Plan 1

The Triple Evils (Grades 6-12)

Learning Targets/Objectives:

- Discuss the meaning of Martin Luther King's Triple Evils.

Success Criteria:

- Evaluate the school or local community to see how the triple evils impact the community.

Anchor Text:

- King, Martin Luther, Jr. "Where do we go from here?" Atlanta, GA. August 16, 1967. [HERE](#)

Lesson Content Overview:

In Dr. King's last presidential address, "Where do we go from here?" to the SCLC, August 15, 1967, he discussed the effects of the triple evils: poverty, racism, and war. Each evil is explained in greater detail below:

POVERTY- materialism, unemployment, homelessness, hunger, malnutrition, illiteracy, infant mortality, and slums

RACISM- prejudice, apartheid, anti-Semitism, sexism, colonialism, homophobia, ageism, discrimination, stereotypes

WAR- militarism, imperialism, domestic violence, rape, terrorism, media violence, drugs, child abuse

According to Dr. King, the triple evils of poverty, racism, and war are forms of violence that exist in a vicious cycle and work against the realization of the "Beloved Community." The triple evils tend to be "self-centered" behaviors and thoughts acted out by "self-centered" people. Dr. King recognized the dilemma faced by many hard working, dedicated, and committed people who were caught in the vicious web of "not enough" food and finances as a result of the triple evils. "I have the audacity to believe that people everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality, and freedom for their spirits. I believe that what self-centered men have torn down, other centered men can build up."¹

¹ Martin Luther King, Jr. "Nobel Prize Acceptance Speech." Oslo, Norway. December 10, 1964.

The entire vision of the "Beloved Community" is based on the fundamental principle that in every arena of human relationships, unconditional love based on the philosophy of nonviolence and reconciliation, can and will overcome conflict and evil.

Instructional Sequence:

Opener:

Students will write a reflection responding to this question: Can you think of any ways the six steps of nonviolence can be used to fight against the triple evils?

Independent Read, Comprehension:

Give students 20 minutes to read through King's last speech to the SCLC, "[Where do we go from here?](#)" They should pay close attention to the excerpt below:

What I'm saying to you this morning is communism forgets that life is individual. (Yes) Capitalism forgets that life is social. (Yes, Go ahead) And the kingdom of brotherhood is found neither in the thesis of communism nor the antithesis of capitalism, but in a higher synthesis. (Speak) [applause] It is found in a higher synthesis (Come on) that combines the truths of both. (Yes) Now, when I say questioning the whole society, it means ultimately coming to see that the problem of racism, the problem of economic exploitation, and the problem of war are all tied together. (All right) These are the triple evils that are interrelated.²

According to King, what do "we the people" have to commit to if we want to witness and end the triple evils?

Formative Assessment:

- Spend some time examining your school or local community to see if there are any ways in which the triple evils impact how people live and think. What is the impact on you as a young person today?

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

ELD

- Modified/simplified reading material

² Martin Luther King, Jr. "Where do we go from here?" *A Call to Conscience: The Landmark Speeches of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.* New York: Hachette Book Group, 2021.

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