



Living Your Life's Blueprint

Learning Targets/Objectives:

- Understand how King inspired young people to think about their future

Success Criteria:

- Use what King said to create a Vision Board.

Lesson Content Overview:

Six months before Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated, he spoke to a group of students at Barratt Junior High School in Philadelphia. This is an excerpt of his speech October 26, 1967.

I want to ask you a question, and that is: What Is Your Life 's Blueprint? Whenever a building is constructed, you usually have an architect who draws a blueprint, and that blueprint serves as the pattern, as the guide and as the model for those who are to build the building, and a building is not well erected without a good, solid blueprint.

Now each of you is in the process of building the structure of your lives, and the question is whether you have a proper, a solid and a sound blueprint.

I want to suggest some of the things that should be in your life 's blueprint. Number one in your life's blueprint should be a deep belief in your own dignity, your worth and your own somebodiness. Don 't allow anybody to make you feel that you 're nobody. Always feel that you count. Always feel that you have worth, and always feel that your life has ultimate significance. Secondly, in your life 's blueprint you must have as the basic principle the determination to achieve excellence in your various fields of endeavor. You're going to be deciding as the days, as the years unfold what you will do in life-what your life 's work will be. Set out to do it well.

And I say to you, my young friends, that doors are opening to your doors are opening to you doors of opportunities that were not open to your mothers and your fathers and the great challenge facing you is to be ready to face these doors as they open.

Ralph Waldo Emerson, the great essayist, said in a lecture in 1871, "If a man can write a better book or preach a better sermon or make a better mousetrap than his neighbor, even if he builds his house in the woods, the world will make a beaten path to his door. "

This hasn't always been true but it will become increasingly true, and so I would urge you to study hard, to burn the midnight oil; I would say to you, don't drop out of school. I understand all the sociological reasons, but I urge you that in spite of your economic plight, in spite of the situation that you 're forced to live in, stay in school. And when you discover what you will be in your life, set out to do it as if God Almighty called you at this particular moment in history to do it.

Don 't just set out to do a good job. Set out to do such a good job that the living, the dead or the unborn couldn't do it any better. If it falls your lot to be a street sweeper, sweep streets like



Michelangelo painted pictures, sweep streets like Beethoven composed music, sweep streets like Leontyne Price sings before the Metropolitan Opera. Sweep streets like Shakespeare wrote poetry. Sweep streets so well that all the hosts of heaven and earth will have to pause and say: Here lives a great street sweeper who swept his job well.

If you can't be a pine at the top of the hill, be a shrub in the valley. But be the best little shrub on the side of the hill. Be a bush if you can't be a tree. If you can't be a highway, just be a trail. If you can't be a sun, be a star. For it isn't by size that you win or fail. Be the best of whatever you are.

SEL Opener:

- OPTION 1: Show a picture of your neighborhood high school.
 - **Discussion Questions:** *How would you feel/react if Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. came to your high school to speak to students? Why do you think Dr. King did that in Philadelphia?*
- OPTION 2: Show the blueprint of your school or a familiar building.
 - **Discussion Questions:** *What is a blueprint? Who uses blueprints? Why do we/they need blueprints?*

Instructional Activities:

- Activity 1: Read Dr. King's quote from his "What Is Your Life's Blueprint?" speech.
 - Complete the [Dr. King Run Walk Reflection Worksheet](#).
- Activity 2: Watch the "[What Is Your Life's Blueprint?](#)" speech.
 - Discuss the lines that stood out to them.
- Activity 3: Have the students sketch a 3D house similar to the paper houses within this [resource](#).
 - Create the 3D paper house based on the sketch.
 - Alternative: Sketch the 3D blueprint and build the house out of craft materials.
- Activity 4: Read "[Mother to Son](#)" by Langston Hughes.
 - **Discussion:** Why do you think Dr. King added this poem to his speech? What can we learn from this poem?
- Activity 5: The teacher should share three steps they took to accomplish one of their personal goals (use the template as a model for the students).
 - Have the students complete the [You Can Be Somebody Planning Worksheet](#).



Assessments:

- Create a Vision Board based on your life goals. Brainstorm on the [Life's Footprint Vision Board template](#).

Adaptations for Student Needs

IEP/504:

- 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/ELL/ESL:

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