



The Drum Major Instinct

Learning Targets/Objectives:

- Use King's words to discuss service for the wellbeing of others.

Success Criteria:

- Find ways to serve the school community and the outside community.

Lesson Content Overview:

Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. gave this sermon at Ebenezer Baptist Church Atlanta, Georgia, February 4, 1968, two months before his assassination.

Every now and then I guess we all think realistically about the day when we will be victimized with what is life 's final common denominator-that something we call death. We all think about it. And every now and then I think about my own death, and I think about my own funeral. And I don 't think of it in a morbid sense. Every now and then I ask myself, "What is it that I would want said? " And I leave the word to you this morning.

If any of you are around when I have to meet my day, I don't want a long funeral. And if you get somebody to deliver my eulogy, tell them not to talk too long. Every now and then I wonder what I want them to say. Tell them not to mention that I have a Nobel Peace Prize, that isn't important. Tell them not to mention that I have three or four hundred other awards, that's not important. Tell him not to mention where I went to school.

I'd like somebody to mention that day, that Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to give his life serving others. I'd like for somebody to say that day, that Martin Luther King, Jr. tried to love somebody. I want you to say that day, that I tried to be right on the war question. I want you to be able to say that day, that I did try, to feed the hungry. And I want you to be able to say, that day, that I did try, in my life, to clothe those who were naked. I want you to say, on that day that I did try, in my life to visit those who were in prison. I want you to say that I tried to love and serve humanity.

Yes, if you want to say that I was a drum major, say that I was a drum major for justice: say that I was drum major for peace; I was a drum major for righteousness. And all of the shallow things will not matter. I won't have any money to leave behind. I won't have the fine and luxurious things of life to leave behind. But I just want to leave a committed life behind.

And that's all I want to say ... If I can help somebody as I pass along, if I can cheer somebody with a word or song, if I can show somebody he's traveling wrong, then my living will not be in vain. If I can do my duty, as a Christian ought, if I can bring salvation to a world once wrought, if I can spread the message as the master taught then my living will not be in vain.

Yes, Jesus, I want to be on your right side or your left side, not for any selfish reason. I want to be on your right or your best side, not in terms of some political kingdom or ambition, but I just want to be



there in love and in justice and in truth and in commitment to others, so that we can make of this old world a new world.

SEL Opener:

- **OPTION 1:** Show a picture of a drum major leading a parade or a video of a HBCU drum major.
 - **Discussion Questions:** *What is the drum major doing? Why is the drum major doing this? What impact does the drum major make/what tone does the drum major set?*

- **OPTION 2:** Show a footprint.
 - **Discussion Questions:** *What is a footprint? Do we all have the same footprint? When have you taken the first step and/or was the first one to be first? How did that make you feel? When did you see someone else go first? How did that make you feel?*

Instructional Activities:

- Activity 1: Complete the [MLK Drum Major Worksheet](#). Discuss the images and responses as a class.

- Activity 2: Watch the [“The Drum Major Instinct”](#) speech.
 - Discuss the lines that stood out to them.

- Activity 3: Write a [“thank you” letter](#) to someone who helped you.

- Activity 4: Play “Remember Me” from the movie, “Coco”. Have the students think about their achievements.
 - Have the students complete the [Remember Me worksheet](#).

- Activity 5: Discuss the benefits of leading like a drum major and the benefits of following like the band.
 - Complete the [Drum Major vs. The Band Worksheet](#)

Assessments:

- Think about how you can help your school and/or community. Complete the [Service Plan Worksheet](#).



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