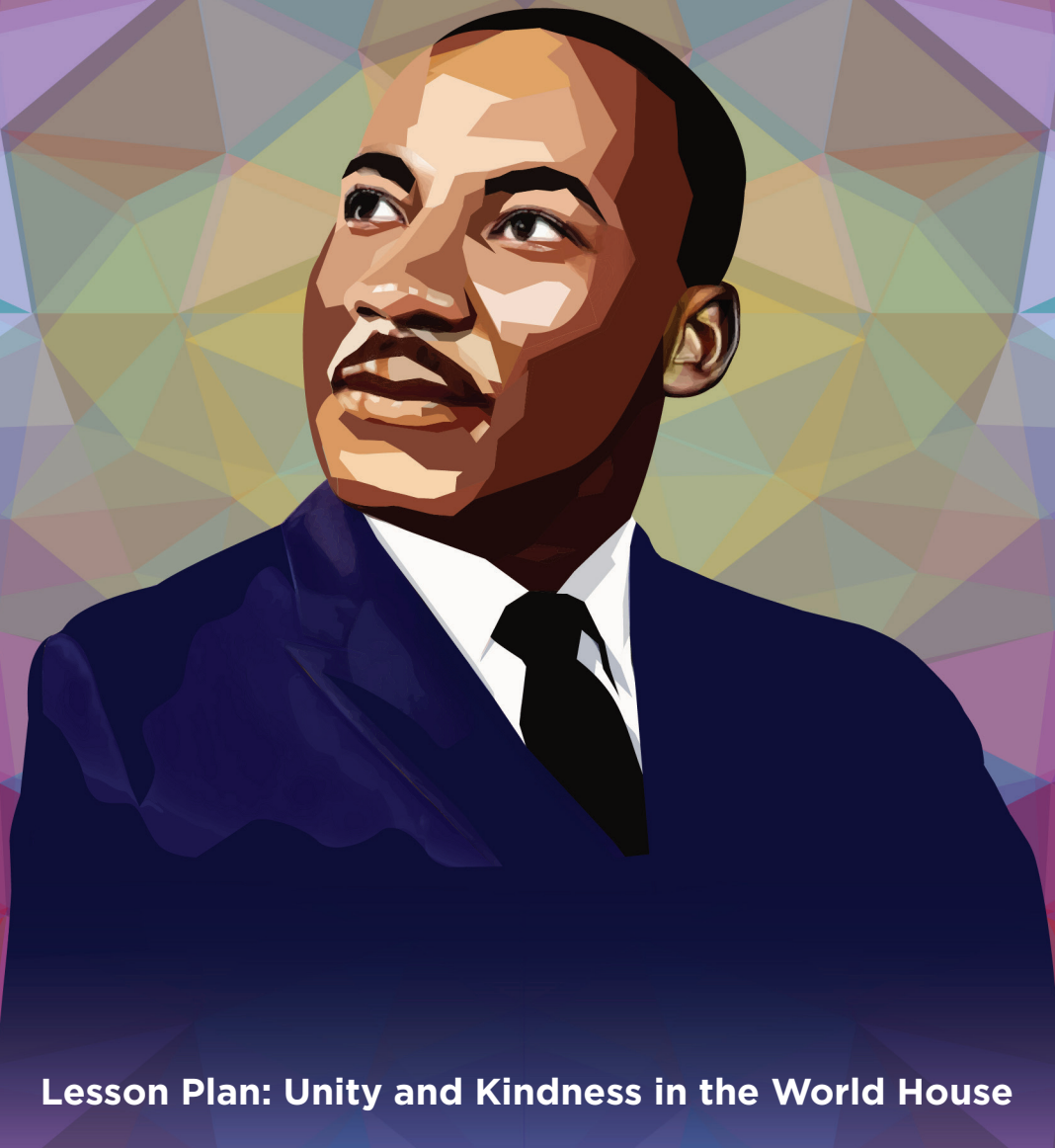




THE MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. CENTER
FOR NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE, INC.

BELOVED COMMUNITY TEACH-IN FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATORS



Lesson Plan: Unity and Kindness in the World House

GRADE LEVEL: 9-12

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Curriculum Connections: Social-Emotional Learning (SEL), English/Language Arts, Social Studies, Art and Creativity, Character Education

Thematic Focus: Kindness and Respect, Unity, Imagination, and Creativity, Empathy and Understanding, Global Citizenship

Lesson Duration: 45 minutes

Learning Objectives:

1. Conceptual Understanding:

- Students will analyze Martin Luther King Jr.'s vision of a "world house" and its relevance to contemporary society.
- Students will identify key principles of unity, kindness, and respect as advocated by Martin Luther King Jr.

2. Application of Principles:

- Students will demonstrate an understanding of how individual actions contribute to building a harmonious community.
- Students will articulate personal strategies for promoting kindness and respect in their daily lives.

Success Criteria:

1. Knowledge and Analysis:

- Students can articulate the concept of a "world house" and its components.
- Students can identify and discuss at least three values advocated by Martin Luther King Jr. related to unity, kindness, and respect.

2. Application and Reflection:

- Students actively participate in a role-playing activity, demonstrating the application of kindness and respect in various scenarios.
- Students contribute to a reflective discussion on the significance of their actions in fostering unity within the "world house."

Activity 1: Reflecting on the "World House"

1. Opener Reflective Writing (10 minutes): either project using multimedia or print out copies of this Martin Luther King Jr. quote about the "world house" found in his book *Where Do We Go From Here: Chaos or Community?*

Some years ago a famous novelist died. Among his papers was found a list of suggested plots for future stories, the most prominently underscored being this one: "A widely separated family inherits a house in which they have to live together." This is the great new problem of mankind. We have inherited a large house, a great "world house" in which we have to live together-- black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Muslim and Hindu-- a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.

Have students complete a reflection on a writing prompt that challenges them to consider the following: "How does the metaphor of 'world house' resonate with the diversity you encounter in your own life and in the broader global context?" And, "As future leaders, what responsibilities do you believe come with living in a 'world house'?"

2. Socratic Seminar (15 minutes): facilitate a Socratic seminar-style discussion where students explore and share their reflections. Then pose open-ended questions to encourage critical thinking and deep analysis of the concept. Some questions to consider are:
 - How do you interpret the metaphor of the “world house” in the context of today’s global society, and what challenges do you see in living together in this metaphorical house?
 - In the context of the “world house,” how might diverse perspectives and backgrounds contribute to the strength and resilience of the global community?
 - Consider the metaphor, what responsibilities do you believe individuals and nations have in fostering unity and understanding within the “world house”?
 - Can you identify any real-world examples of the “Beloved Community,” and what lessons can we draw from these examples? Do you see this occurring in your school?
 - Considering the importance of Martin Luther King Jr. Holiday, how can we use this occasion to inspire acts of kindness and unity within our own community?

Learning Through Play – Kindness Challenge (20 minutes)

1. Divide the class into small groups and present a “World House” challenge where each group must brainstorm and create a project that would promote kindness in the school community. Have students come up with their own ideas, then take a class vote for the class project. On a separate day, implement the class project. Here are some suggestions.

Suggestions:

- Compliment Cards – create compliment cards and distribute them to teachers with positive messages.
- Classroom Cleanup – surprise a teacher by organizing a quick classroom cleanup at the end of the day.
- Artistic Acts – create and display uplifting artwork around the school.
- Tech Help Desk – offer tech support to students or teachers who may be struggling with technology.
- Peer Recognition Awards – create informal awards for positive qualities and distribute them among peers.
- Environmental Acts – participate in activities like planting flowers or cleaning up outdoor space.
- Book Appreciation Day – create bookmarks with positive messages and leave them in the library for students to have.
- Library Cleanup Crew – Help tidy up the library shelves and reading areas.
- Book Recommendation Wall – set up a space where students can recommend their favorite books.
- Principal Gratitude Board – decorate a bulletin board with thank-you notes and positive messages for principals and office staff.
- Athletic Office Appreciation – Acknowledge the hard work of the athletic office with a thank-you event.
- Inclusive Games Day – organize games that are inclusive and accessible for students with disabilities.

Extension Activity: Shared Reading or Literature Circle: Read a larger excerpt of King’s “world house” essay. The teacher may choose to read the text aloud while the students follow or place students into small groups. When finished, students will create a visual representation, such as a mind map, illustrating the key ideas presented by Martin Luther King Jr. in the passage. Include quotes, symbols, and images that capture the essence of the “world house” concept.

(See Excerpt for the Extension Activity)

TEACHING RESOURCES**Excerpt for the Extension Activity**

Martin Luther King Jr. "World House," *Where Do We Go From Here: Community or Chaos?*

Some years ago a famous novelist died. Among his papers was found a list of suggested plots for future stories, the most prominently underscored being this one: "A widely separated family inherits a house in which they have to live together." This is the great new problem of mankind. We have inherited a large house, a great "world house" in which we have to live together-- black and white, Easterner and Westerner, Gentile and Jew, Catholic and Protestant, Muslim and Hindu-- a family unduly separated in ideas, culture and interest, who, because we can never again live apart, must learn somehow to live with each other in peace.

However deeply American Negroes are caught in the struggle to be at last at home in our homeland of the United States, we cannot ignore the larger world house in which we are also dwellers. Equality with whites will not solve the problems of either whites or Negroes if it means equality in a world society stricken by poverty and in a universe doomed to extinction by war.

All inhabitants of the globe are now neighbors. This worldwide neighborhood has been brought into being largely as a result of the modern scientific and technological revolutions. The world of today is vastly different from the world of just one hundred years ago. A century ago Thomas Edison had not yet invented the incandescent lamp to bring light to many dark places of the earth. The Wright brothers had not yet invented that fascinating mechanical bird that would spread its gigantic wings across the skies and soon dwarf distance and place time in the service of man. Einstein had not yet challenged an axiom and the theory of relativity had not yet been posited.

Human beings, searching a century ago as now for better understanding, had no television, no radios, no telephones and no motion pictures through which to communicate. Medical science had not yet discovered the wonder drugs to end many dread plagues and diseases. One hundred years ago military men had not yet developed the terrifying weapons of warfare that we know today-- not the bomber, an airborne fortress raining down death; nor napalm, that burner of all things and flesh in its path. A century ago there were no sky-scraping buildings to kiss the stars and no gargantuan bridges to span the waters. ...

One of the great liabilities of history is that all too many people fail to remain awake through great periods of social change. Every society has its protectors of the status quo and its fraternities of the indifferent who are notorious for sleeping through revolutions. But today our very survival depends on our ability to stay awake, to adjust to new ideas, to remain vigilant and to face the challenge of change. The large house in which we live demands that we transform this worldwide neighborhood into a worldwide brotherhood. Together we must learn to live as brothers or together we will be forced to perish as fools.

We must work passionately and indefatigably to bridge the gulf between our scientific progress and our moral progress. One of the great problems of mankind is that we suffer from a poverty of the spirit which stands in glaring contrast to our scientific and technological abundance. The richer we have become materially, the poorer we have become morally and spiritually. Every man lives in two realms, the internal and the external. The internal is that realm of spiritual ends expressed in art, literature, morals and religion. The external is that complex of devices, techniques, mechanisms and instrumentalities by means of which we live. Our problem today is that we have allowed the internal to become lost in the external. We have allowed the means by which we live to outdistance the ends for which we live. So much of modern life can be summarized in that suggestive phrase of Thoreau: "Improved means to an unimproved end." This is the serious predicament, the deep and haunting problem, confronting modern man. Enlarged material powers spell enlarged peril if there is not proportionate growth of the soul. When the external of man's nature subjugates the internal, dark storm clouds begin to form.

This does not mean that we must turn back the clock of scientific progress. No one can overlook the wonders that science has wrought for our lives. The automobile will not abdicate in favor of the horse and buggy, or the train in favor of the stagecoach, or the tractor in favor of the hand plow, or the scientific method in favor of ignorance and superstition. But our moral and spiritual “lag” must be redeemed. When scientific power outruns moral power, we end up with guided missiles and misguided men. When we foolishly minimize the internal of our lives and maximize the external, we sign the warrant for our own day of doom.

Our hope for creative living in this world house that we have inherited lies in our ability to reestablish the moral ends of our lives in personal character and social justice. Without this spiritual and moral reawakening we shall destroy ourselves in the misuse of our own instruments.

Excerpt of Martin Luther King, Jr.’s “A Birth of a New Age” speech

“The Birth of a New Age,” Address Delivered on 11 August 1956 at the Fiftieth Anniversary of Alpha Phi Alpha in Buffalo | The Martin Luther King, Jr. Research and Education Institute (stanford.edu): <https://kinginstitute.stanford.edu/king-papers/documents/birth-new-age-address-delivered-11-august-1956-fiftieth-anniversary-alpha-phi>

Excerpt From *My Life, My Love, My Legacy* by Coretta Scott King

“I began to dream of a world in which all kinds of people would be welcome and could live in peace and harmony. Years later, a label would be attached to this vision: the Beloved Community, where love and trust triumph over fear and hatred.”

“To me, the Beloved Community is a spiritual bond that claims the energies and commitment of a diverse group of people who desire to serve a cause larger than themselves. The Beloved Community is fueled by unconditional love, feels like family, and transcends race, religion, and class.”

“Again, by the Beloved Community, I am not talking about a utopian dream of a perfect society in which everyone lives together without conflict. Many artists have produced lovely, bucolic renditions of the “peaceable kingdom,” with lions and lambs lying down together and everyone having his or her own vine and fig tree. That is more like heaven than the Beloved Community on earth, which is not a perfect society.

To me, the Beloved Community is a realistic vision of an achievable society, one in which problems and conflict exist, but are resolved peacefully and without bitterness. In the Beloved Community, caring and compassion drive political policies that support the worldwide elimination of poverty and hunger and all forms of bigotry and violence. The Beloved Community is a state of heart and mind, a spirit of hope and goodwill that transcends all boundaries and barriers and embraces all creation. At its core, the Beloved Community is an engine of reconciliation. This way of living seems a long way from the kind of world we have now, but I do believe it is a goal that can be accomplished through courage and determination, and through education and training, if enough people are willing to make the necessary commitment.”

Videos

- Martin Luther King Jr. For Kids: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xAUvvAbzkUk>
- Martin Luther King, Jr., “What Is Your Life’s Blueprint?” <https://youtu.be/ZmtOGXreTOU?si=atc8kd3k7aTf4pyu>
- Martin Luther King, Jr. “I Have a Dream:” <https://youtu.be/n82rgdbM9G4?si=UPsgtofran0roW3j>

Clarification of Concepts: Nonviolence, World House, and Beloved Community

Nonviolence

Nonviolence is a love-centered way of thinking, speaking, acting, and engaging that leads to personal, cultural, and societal transformation. Review the Kingian philosophy of nonviolence: <https://thekingcenter.org/about-tkc/the-king-philosophy/>

World House

Metaphor: The “world house” is a metaphor used by Martin Luther King Jr. to describe the interconnectedness of humanity on a global scale. It emphasizes that, just like a family living together in one house, people of diverse backgrounds, races, religions, and cultures share the same planet and must learn to coexist.

Inclusivity: The concept of the world house highlights the necessity for people to recognize and appreciate their shared humanity. It calls for unity, understanding, and cooperation among individuals and nations despite their differences.

Responsibilities: Living in the “world house” implies a responsibility to address the challenges of coexistence. King argues that, as inhabitants of this shared world, individuals and nations must learn to live with one another in peace and work together for the common good.

Beloved Community

Definition: The term “Beloved Community” refers to a society characterized by justice, equality, and brotherhood. It is a society based on love, compassion, and mutual respect among its members. King often used this term to describe his vision of an ideal and morally upright society.

Spiritual Bond: The Beloved Community is not merely a physical or geographical concept; it represents a spiritual bond among individuals who are committed to serving a cause larger than themselves. It transcends race, religion, and class.

Nonviolence Leads to the Creation of the Beloved Community: The way of nonviolence leads to the creation of the Beloved Community. The Beloved Community is fueled by unconditional love, care, and goodwill. It promotes values that go beyond superficial differences. The Triple Evils of poverty, racism, and militarism are forms of violence that exist in a vicious cycle. They stand as barriers to our living in the Beloved Community. When we work to remedy one evil, we affect all evils. To work against the Triple Evils, we must develop a nonviolent frame of mind as described in the “Six Principles of Nonviolence” and use the Kingian model for social action outlined in the “Six Steps of Nonviolence.”

Scope of Concepts

The “World House” primarily focuses on the global interconnectedness of all people and nations, emphasizing the need for unity on a planetary scale.

The “Beloved Community” is more focused on describing a society characterized by moral and spiritual principles, reflecting the quality of relationships and interactions within a community.

Geographical vs. Societal

The “World House” is a metaphorical representation of the shared Earth, emphasizing the physical space and cohabitation of diverse people on the planet.

The “Beloved Community” is a realistic vision of an achievable society, emphasizing the qualities of relationships and the moral and spiritual principles that should guide interactions among community members.

Unity and Uplift

The “World House” stresses the necessity for unity and cooperation among diverse individuals and nations for the sake of peaceful coexistence.

The “Beloved Community” emphasizes the transformative power of love and justice in creating a society where individuals uplift one another and work collectively toward a higher moral and spiritual ideal.

Want to learn more?

To learn more about nonviolence and how to apply it for personal, cultural, and societal transformation, check out The King Center’s online course, **Nonviolence365® Online:** <https://thekingcenterinstitute.org/>