



MLA Citation for this book excerpt:

Wood, Jaime R. Living Voices: Multicultural Poetry in the Middle School Classroom. Urbana: NCTE, 2006. 73–74.

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I Have a Dream		
<p><i>Directions:</i> Use the space below to write your section of the speech. This will help you become more familiar with the speech and will make the speech easily accessible while you define the words and phrases from your section.</p>		
<p>I am happy to join with you today in what will go down in history as the greatest demonstration for freedom in the history of our nation.</p> <p>Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of captivity. But one hundred years later, we must face the tragic fact that the Negro is still not free.</p> <p>One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination.</p>		
<p><i>Directions:</i> Use the space below to record information about the words and/or phrases from your section of the speech. List the words and/or phrases in the left column, record the meanings you found through research in the middle column, and explain what the words and/or phrases mean in the context of Martin Luther King Jr.'s speech in the right column.</p>		
Word/Phrase from Speech	Definition	Meaning in Context
Score	twenty years	Dr. King is explaining that the Emancipation Proclamation was signed 100 years ago.
a great American	Abraham Lincoln	He is the President who signed the Emancipation Proclamation.
Emancipation Proclamation	the document that freed the slaves in 1862	Dr. King opens his speech by mentioning the Emancipation Proclamation to show that, even though "Negroes" are no longer slaves, they are still not free.
decree	a lawful order	Dr. King is saying that the Emancipation Proclamation gave hope to slaves by making slavery illegal.
seared in the flames of withering injustice	burning in a fire caused by injustice	Dr. King is saying that slavery has hurt African American people and
<i>continued on next page</i>		

Figure 4.1. Example.

Figure 4.1. continued

		that the justice or fairness got smaller and smaller in America during slavery.
manacles	something that confines or binds, especially the hands	Dr. King is using the analogy of binding the hands of “Negroes” to describe how segregation affects them.
<p><i>Directions:</i> Use the space below to write a paragraph explaining what your section of the speech is saying. Explain it so that your classmates will have a clearer idea of what the speech means when you share your paragraph.</p>		
<p>Dr. King is welcoming his audience and acknowledging the fact that the March on Washington was to go down in history as a great demonstration of freedom. He is talking about how things such as the Emancipation Proclamation, signed by Abraham Lincoln, that were supposed to create freedom and equality for African Americans haven’t worked as well as they should have. The Emancipation Proclamation ended slavery but did not end segregation and discrimination.</p>		