

Martin Luther King, Jr. Choral Reading

All: Thousands strong, we came together. Martin Luther king, Jr., spoke to us, saying, "I have a dream."

All girls: We listened, remembering our Dreams.

All boys: Bad dreams.

All: Nightmares. Martin Luther King spoke,

Boy: "I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed:

All boys: We hold these truths to be Self-evident; all men are created Equal."

All: We listened, remembering.

Girl: I remember a hot summer day and a swimming pool. Laughing children splashed in the cool water. I pointed to the sign by the gate and asked, "What does that say?"

All girls: WHITES ONLY!

Girl: Learning those words was easy. They were all over town - in store windows

All girls: WHITES ONLY!

Girl: In city parks

All girls: WHITES ONLY

All: Martin Luther king spoke,

Girl: "I have a dream that one day... sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood."

All: We listened, remembering.

Boy: I remember going to the movies. Black people couldn't enter the front door or sit downstairs like white people did. Black people had a special side door that led to the back balcony- the "colored" section.

Boy: On buses, the first rows were for white people. If those seats were empty and the rest of the bus was full, black people had to stand. If the first rows were full and more people got on the bus, blacks had to get up so whites could sit.

All: Martin Luther King spoke, "I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character."

All: We listened, remembering.

Girl: I remember my friend, Nancy. Together, we searched for caterpillars, looked at picture books, and dressed our dolls. Giggled. One day they told us, "You can't play together anymore. Black children and white children can't be friends."

All: Martin Luther King spoke,

Boy: "I have a dream that one day little black boys and little black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls and walk together as brothers and sisters. I have a dream today."

All: Dr. King led the Montgomery Bus boycott.

Girl: One day, Mrs. Rosa Parks boarded a city bus in Montgomery, Alabama. She was tired. She sat down.

Boy: "Get up," the bus driver said. "Give this white man a seat."

Girl: Mrs. Parks said,

All: "No!"

Boy: When Mrs. Parks was arrested, Dr King told the people of Montgomery that if blacks couldn't ride the buses with freedom and dignity, they shouldn't ride at all.

All: And so they walked. Men and women, boys and girls. Through rain and cold, for months and months, for miles and miles, they walked.

Girl: The boycott was a success. Now blacks and whites ride the buses together, as equals.

All: Martin Luther King, Jr., led the Birmingham marches. After the adults were put in jail, he called upon the children.

Girl: The children marched. A thousand strong. Some were only six years old. Police arrested them. School buses carried them to jail. A policeman looked down at one small girl and asked, "What do you want?" She looked at him and said,

All girls: "Freedom."

Girl: Nothing could stop those children. On the way to jail they chanted,

All: We want freedom! We want freedom! We want freedom!

Boy: The children marched. They prayed. They wouldn't turn back. The police, the firemen stood waiting. Orders were given: "Stop those children any way you can." But the police, the firemen fell back. And the children marched through. No one stopped them. No one hurt them. The children sang,

All: "I got freedom." Martin Luther King spoke. And we listened, for he was saying what we needed to hear.

All boys: "Let freedom ring!"

All girls: From the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire.

All boys: Let freedom ring!

All girls: From the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania!

All boys: Let freedom ring!

All girls: From the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado.

All boys: Let freedom ring!

All girls: From the curvaceous slopes of California.

Boy: And when we allow freedom to ring. When we let it ring from every village and hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all God's children, black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of that old Negro spiritual,

All: "Free at last! Free at last! Thank God almighty, we are free at last.