



THE STORY OF MARTIN LUTHER KING, JR.

· January 15th is a national holiday in the United States. It is Martin Luther King Day.

· Up until the 1960s, African-Americans (like Barack Obama) in many states of the United States could not vote in elections.

· There were separate sections for African-Americans in public transportation, in parks, and in restaurants; they even had separate toilets. In some states, African-American children were denied an education or had to go to separate schools from their white friends.

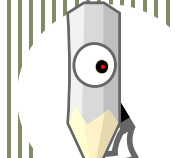
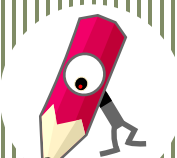
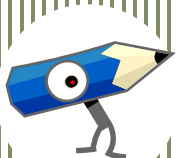
· Martin Luther King, Jr. was a Baptist pastor who was determined to make sure that all Americans had the same rights, regardless of their race.

· One day Rosa Parks, an African-American woman, was arrested after refusing to give up her seat on a bus to a white man. Dr. King called on African-Americans everywhere to protest by boycotting the buses in the city.

· When the protest ended successfully, and after a new ban on separate seating for whites and African-Americans, Dr. King organised more non-violent demonstrations against the unfair treatment of African-Americans.

· In 1963, in Washington D.C. (the U.S. capital), Dr. King made his famous speech "I have a dream", in front of a crowd of 250,000 people! Here is a short extract:

"I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the colour of their skin, but by the content of their character."



- In 1964 Dr. King received the Nobel Peace Prize for his efforts to end racial prejudice in the United States.
- The US Government passed laws to ensure equal rights for all US citizens and to give everybody the right to vote.
- Tragically, Dr. King was murdered in 1968.
- It is because of Martin Luther King, Jr., and others like him, that people in the United States have equal rights today.

