



MLK Essay Contest (Grades 6-8) – 1st Place Winner

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"I live my life as a reflection of Dr. King's dream by..."

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December 7, 2021

"I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: 'We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men were created equal.'" Those words were some of the most important words ever spoken by Dr. King. I hope that I can live up to his dream. I believe that I live my life as a reflection of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.'s dream by how I display friendship, pride, and equality.

I live my life as a reflection of Dr. King's dream by not discriminating who I'm friends with because of their race. In Dr. King's speech, he states: "...one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with the little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers." My friends are White, Black, Hispanic, Native American, and multiracial. They are all my friends because of how they treat me and how they treat others. I believe that my friend group is a good reflection of Dr. King's dream.

I live my life as a reflection of Dr. King's dream by being proud of my heritage. Dr. King says in his speech: "...Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice." I interpret that as his way of telling people of all races to stop feeling ashamed of themselves and to get up and fight to be treated equally. I am Cherokee, and I participate in different Native American holidays and traditions each year. I feel like that lives up to Dr. King's dream that everyone should be proud of who they are.

I live my life as a reflection of Dr. King's dream by trying to give everyone equal opportunities. As Dr. King said in his speech: "This note was a promise that all men, yes, black men as well as white men, would be guaranteed the 'unalienable Rights' of 'Life, Liberty, and the pursuit of Happiness.'" Everyone gets to have those rights. I try to give everyone an equal opportunity when I'm put in charge of a team. I assign roles and responsibilities based on talent, ability, and commitment – not based on race or culture. I think my generation and I are good reflections of some of the changes that have happened in America since Dr. King's speech.

I live my life as a reflection of Dr. King's dream by being me. I believe I reflect his dream by being accepting, by showing pride in my heritage, and by treating everyone equally. I hope I live up to not just his dream, but his legacy as well.