**Jennifer Legat**

**Lesson Title: Found Poetry with Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.**

**Subject Area and Grade Level: 5th Grade Art & Social Science**

**Approximate time/length of lesson: 1.5 hours**

**Part 1**

**State Content Standards**:

Art: Historical and Cultural Perspectives

AR.05.HC.02 Identify and relate common and unique characteristics in works of art that reflect social, historical, and cultural contexts.

Social Science: Civics and Government:

5.16. Describe how national government affects local and state government.

Social Science: Social Science Analysis:

5.22. Identify characteristics of an event, issue, or problem, suggesting possible causes and results.

**Assessments:** They will create a found poem from words from King's obituary and present their poems to the class. They will also write a reflection essay describing the influence that King's actions have had on them. They will receive a participation grade for their involvement in discussions.

**Selection of Instructional Strategies:** Discussion; Reflection; Creating Art

**Modification/Adaptations:** Some students may need additional time to create their poems. Some may need help with reading to understand. If students have a hard time holding still for this long, a couple of "get up and move" type breaks would be necessary.

**Part 2**

**Your lesson should include the following elements:**

1. **Housekeeping/Material Details**:

Before the lesson, have students complete the knowledge quiz about MLK online.

Students will need:

* a pencil
* a highlighter
* a copy of MLK's obituary
* a piece of lined paper

1. **Focus & Purpose:** This lesson will help students explore the historical impact of Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. by examining his importance as made evidence by his obituary and creating a found poem using these words.
2. **Objectives:**

* The students will discover information about the life of Martin Luther King Jr. by reading and discussing "Martin's Big Words" and his obituary.
* The students will show their understanding of his historical importance by using words from King's obituary to create a found poem.
* The students will address King's importance in their own lives by writing a one page reflection paper.

1. **Procedure**: Describe the **OPEN, BODY and CLOSE** of the lesson.

Anticipatory Set: 10 minutes

* Have one of King's speeches playing on the speakers when the kids come in or when it is time to transition to this lesson to show the power of his presence and words.

Open: 10 min

* Start by reading the class "Martin's Big Words."

Body: 60 min

* Take turns reading the obituary. \*Note that the word negro is used frequently and a short discussion of the appropriateness of this word needs to happen.
* Have a discussion about the information they just read.

a. What was the end goal of the civil rights movement? What statements did Dr. King make concerning those goals?  
b. What was Martin Luther King Jr.’s role in that effort? What statements did he make concerning his role in the movement?  
c. What was the essential premise of Dr. King’s efforts? What statements did he make concerning the purpose of nonviolent resistance?  
d. The writer states that, “at the root of [Dr. King's] civil rights convictions was an even more profound faith in the basic goodness of man and the great potential of American democracy.” How was this belief reflected in his actions?  
e. How was this belief reflected in his reaction to the war in Vietnam? What statements did he make to that effect?  
f. Who were his opponents and how did they respond to his efforts at nonviolent resistance? What statements did Dr. King make in response to his opponents?  
g. Why did his beliefs and activities stir up conflict among his supporters?  
h. In what way was Dr. King between extremes? Explain your answer.

* Introduce students to the idea of a found poem. Explain to them that they will be using the obituary of Martin Luther King Jr. to gain a better understanding of this life and his contributions and create a found poem from the words in the obituary.
* After their poems are created, allow time for students who would like to come up and share have that opportunity.

Close: 10 min

Have a short discussion asking students what they feel were the most valuable contributions of King. Assign their follow-up homework assignment to write a minimum one page reflection paper on how they feel about Dr. King and how this information and this man have affected their own lives. If no affect, how has it affected their neighborhood, etc. Have each reflection include a King quotation that they really related to or particularly liked.

**Part 3 Resources:**

* "Martin's Big Words" by Doreen Rappaport
* Quiz-[www.nytimes.com/learning/students/quiz/mlkquiz.html](http://www.nytimes.com/learning/students/quiz/mlkquiz.html)
* Obituary-[www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/featured\_articles/20080118friday.html](http://www.nytimes.com/learning/teachers/featured_articles/20080118friday.html)
* This lesson was adapted from the lesson found at <http://learning.blogs.nytimes.com/2008/01/18/the-dream-continued/>