

MY RENAISSANCE JOURNEY

Facet: The Arts

Principle: A Renaissance of the SOUL

Topic: The Artist in You

Goals:

- To help students develop an appreciation for literary, visual, cultural, and performing arts that have African roots and heritage.
- To help students interpret and express through language their understanding of what the art means and how it impacts them.

AFRICAN AMERICAN LEADERS MAKE THEIR CONTRIBUTION THROUGH ART

If you were to develop a research paper about the relationship between African American leaders and whether they had artistic talents and/or interests, you would probably find out that most if not all had interests within the arts spectrum. Within each of you, there is a creative brain that blossoms as you begin to imagine and hope. Art can be the catalyst for this awakening. Regardless of what you want to become or what you are destined to achieve, everybody has imagination and the ability to positively express emotions. These are important life skills and, in the big picture, art through writing, drawing, painting, music or dancing plays a part in developing and shaping the leader you are and can be.

Take time to think about what you want for your life and how what happens everyday can shape your dream and make it a reality. All of the great leaders, past and present, have faced injustices/barriers and worked to overcome those obstacles with resolve and determination. Life is an awesome gift and you can define your role through thinking about the question that is so common for us all-“Who Am I?”

As you participate in the exercises, think about what you do everyday to influence others to make right choices. Think about your interests and what you can do to further develop your artistic side. Those skills, talents and interests are the result of things that take place everyday at home, school and church. Look around and ask yourself what do I see and how can it be better. There is very little difference between you and the many leaders who have shaped and continue to shape our world. YOU make the difference!



African American leaders have historically helped to shape our world through the arts. You can trace as far back as the late 18th century when [Phillis Wheatley](#), first published her collection of poetry, (*Various Subjects, Religious and Moral*). Ms. Wheatley was a native of Gambia, Africa, but was forced into slavery in Boston at the age of seven. Her slave masters, the Wheatley family, taught her to read and write, and helped encourage her poetry which was later praised by President George Washington. It was Phillis Wheatley's literary work that helped pave the way for African American artist to have the freedom to express their creativity.

The Phillis Wheatley illustration by Scipio Moorhead in the Frontispiece to her book *Poems on Various Subjects*.

As you read about the countless contributions of African American artists in this chapter, you will find that their work grew out of the many experiences of Black people. They each had a deep need to tell a story and that need was expressed through one or more artist genres.

Genre
(jăn-rə)
A category of artistic, musical, or literary composition characterized by a particular style, form, or content.
<i>Merriam-Webster Dictionary</i>

Here are the most common artistic genres:

- **Musical and Oral Expression** (*Negro spirituals, sermons, spoken word, rap, gospel music, blues, jazz, R&B*);
- **Literature** (*poetry, playwright, novels, non-fiction, essays, magazine publication*);
- **Visual Art** (*quilting, tapestries, wood carvings, basket weaving, pottery, drawings, paintings, sculptures, film making, and photography*); and
- **Performing Art** (*dance, theatrical and comedic performances*);

From Phillis Wheatley to Tupac Shakur, social issues impacting African Americans have been among the common themes shaping these art forms. This includes Black culture, faith and religion, racism, slavery, and equality.



Harriet Powers, *Bible quilt*, Mixed Media. 1898

LITERARY AUTHORS AND PLAYWRIGHTS



For decades, African-American writers/playwrights have produced theatrical performances that depict the true condition of African American life. This may have been in response to mainstream America's racist portrayal of the Black condition which included "coon songs" and painted Black faces as seen in the sheet music to "Coon Coon Coon," which bills itself as "The Most Successful Song Hit of 1901." with an insert photo of a minstrel show star in painted blackface (*Wikipedia*).

In 1898, the first African American musical "*A Trip to Coontown*" debuted on Broadway. This was the first full-length New York musical comedy performed exclusively by blacks. It was also written

and produced by [Bob Cole](#) and [Billy Johnson](#), both African Americans.

Years later, in 1935, an entire cast of African American blues, jazz, and opera singers dared to take center stage in the premiere of the opera *Porgy and Bess*. Though this landmark performance helped break color-barriers for African American artist, it was not widely accepted in the United States as a "legitimate" opera performance until 1976.

Slavery was the focus of most literary works prior to the American Civil War. At the start of the 20th century, authors like [W.E.B. DuBois](#) and [Booker T. Washington](#) debated the best way to address racist attitudes in the United States. [Zora Neale Hurston](#), a Harlem Renaissance folklore author, poet, and playwright challenged the U.S. government's inconsistency in moral standards and behavior.

Noted playwright, Lorraine Hansberry's wrote the now, Broadway sensation "*A Raisin in the Sun*", in 1959. It was titled after an image in a Langston Hughes poem. The play illustrated the frustration of young African-Americans, torn between following the wisdom and advice of the older generation and the desire to take advantage of a capitalist economy. Her play won the New York Drama Critics' Circle Award. You may recall Sean "Diddy" Combs (rapper/entrepreneur), Sanaa Lathan (movie actress, *Love*

The cast of *Porgy and Bess* photographed by [Richard Tucker](#) (1935)



and Basketball), and Phylicia Rashad (Cosby Show) in the 2008 made for television movie directed by fame Broadway director, [Kenny Leon](#).

In more recent years, the leading African-American playwright who paved the way for noted writers like [Pearl Cleage](#) and [Tyler Perry](#) has been identified as [August Wilson](#). Mr. Wilson's work chronicled the African-American family and the struggles and challenges it faced in the twentieth century.

Today, African American literature and theatrical works have been generally accepted into mainstream American Literature. Several of them have crossed artistic genres and received national praise. Here are just a few:

- **Roots: The Saga of an American Family** by Alex Haley produced into a book and movie
- **Beloved** by [Toni Morrison](#) produced into a best-selling book and movie
- **The Color Purple** by [Alice Walker](#) produced into a book, Broadway play by Oprah Winfrey, and movie by Steven Spielberg
- **The Cheetah Girls** by Deborah Gregory (16-books, Disney movies, Disney music, Disney videos, Disney clothing line, toys)
<http://www.cheetahrama.com/press.htm>

To learn more about films and books authored by African America literaries, visit the web links below.

LEARN MORE
Black Film Festivals
Pan African Film Festival
http://www.paff.org/home/
National Black Film Festival
www.nbaf.org

LEARN MORE
Black Book List
Click here to view a list of recommended books authored by African Americans.
INSERT COMPILED LIST
INSERT NBAF LIST

LEARN MORE

Teen Author

Sharon G. Flake is an African American author who writes books for teens. This link will take you to give you a list of recommended teen books

http://www.sharongflake.com/readinglist/?toolmaker_session=3562b5ccb7e952fa6

THE GREAT POETS

Much like the Negro spirituals that encoded messages guiding runaway slaves to the north on the Underground Railroad, poetry reading has served as a means of educating African Americans and others about cultural and social differences.

Legendary Harlem Renaissance poets [Langston Hughes](#), who was also a playwright and novelist, used his poetry to express concerns about the quality of life for poorer blacks and the "black-against-black" divisions and prejudices based on skin color. Mr. Hughes stressed how important it is to be conscious of racial differences and pushed for unity and pride among Africans and descendants of Africa (African-Americans).



Langston Hughes
photographed by
[Carl Van Vechten](#) 1936

POETRY WRITING ACTIVITY

Langston Hughes

READ POETRY: Read the following poem by Langston Hughes.

JOURNAL ENTRY: Interpret what Langston Hughes was trying to communicate to the reader. Why do you think people defer their dreams? What dreams do you have for your life? What can you do to realize your vision?

Dream Deferred

by Langston Hughes

What happens to a dream deferred?

Does it dry up
Like a raisin in the sun?

Or fester like a sore--
And then run?

Does it stink like rotten meat?
Or crust and sugar over--
like a syrupy sweet?

Maybe it just sags
like a heavy load.

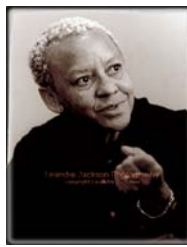
Or does it explode?

In the 60's and 70's, African American poetry performances during the height of the civil rights movement, helped challenge racial segregation, spurred political activism and ultimately inspired black people to establish their own publishing houses, literary journals, art institutions, and magazines. It was during this period that we began to see the creation of African American Studies programs within universities. Some of the more well-known poets and magazines of this era include [Gwendolyn Brooks](#), [Nikki Giovanni](#), [Sonia Sanchez](#), [Maya Angelou](#), Ebony Magazine, Jet Magazine, ESSENCE Magazine and Black Enterprise Magazine.

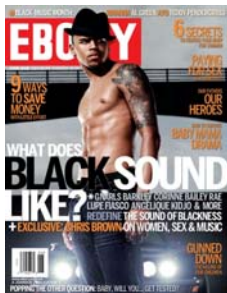
Maya Angelou



Nikki Giovanni



Sonia Sanchez



Maya Angelou's Photo Credit	http://www.mayaangelou.com/
Nikki Giovanni's Photo Credit	http://leandrejackson.com/images/Editorial/Giovanni_Nikki.htm
Sonia Sanchez Photo Credit	www.math.buffalo.edu/~sanchez_sonja.html
EBONY Magazine Photo Credit	www.ebonyjet.com
Jet Magazine Photo Credit	www.ebonyjet.com
Black Enterprise Magazine Photo Credit	www.blackenterprise.com
ESSENCE Magazine Photo Credit	www.essence.com

SPEAKING YOUR PEACE

DID YOU KNOW?

Griot

A "griot" is a West African poet, praise singer, and wandering musician, considered a storehouse of oral tradition.

Spoken Word

Since the beginning of civilization, spoken word has been used in many native villages in West Africa, including Mali, the Gambia, Guinea, Western Sahara and Senegal. "Griots" (the poets/musician) used spoken word as a way of telling folktales and historical poems as a form of entertainment. In the United States, we have only recently begun to accept this artistic performance as "art". Poets and musicians speak lyrics, poetry, or stories rather than sing. Although spoken word poetry is often done with a musical background, emphasis is placed on the speaker.

In the late 1980s and early 1990s, spoken word gained notoriety because of events called "poetry slams". Artist would come together in a social setting and compete in a duel or battle. There are two very common styles of spoken word: *spoken word performance* and *spoken word commentary*.

- ***Spoken Word Performance*** is where the artist recites previously-published poems, or poems specifically written to be performed aloud.
- ***Spoken Word Commentary*** focuses on political and social commentary but is not a speech

In the mid '90s, MTV saw the potential of spoken word entertainment and created a show called "*Spoken Word Unplugged*" to showcase major talents of the movement. Notable poets such as Maggie Estep, Reg E. Gaines, Henry Rollins, John S. Hall and Dana Bryant each gained temporary acclaim in the industry but the craze faded out and many of the artist expanded into other areas of the arts.

Personally Expressive Narrative

JOURNAL WRITING: Write a personally expressive narrative about a time when you had to make a decision between doing what was right v. what was wrong.

SELECT MUSIC: Select a sampling music to play in the background. Be sure you only use music that has appropriate messaging in its lyrics. You can use the link below to access free music via AOL.

Recite: Practice saying your narrative while the music is playing. Recite it to a friend or teacher with the music.

<http://music.aol.com/artist/>

SOOTHING THE SOUL THROUGH MUSIC

Music is said to be soothing to the soul. **Black music** includes a wide range of musical genres (variations or types) that were developed out of both African and African American culture. The African ancestors that were forced into slavery and brought to North America originated from hundreds of ethnic groups across West and sub-Saharan Africa. Enslaved descendants mixed multiple rhythms from their homelands to make new and innovative sounds. They created a wide variety of **Negro Spirituals** encoded with messages of rebellion against slave owners and signals to escape.

The **Fisk Jubilee Singers**, a choir of African American singers from Fisk University, was first organized in 1871. They were originally formed as a fund raiser to support the school. Early on, their primary selection of music focused on spirituals. [Fisk University](#) is a [historically black university](#) in Nashville, Tennessee. *In May 16, 2008 NPR reported "It's been more than a century since the Fisk University Jubilee singers started performing Negro spirituals and slave songs. Today, the Fisk singers are still spreading the songs of enslaved Africans nationwide. And they're celebrated in a new show called Sing Jubilee! The Story of the Fisk Jubilee Singers."*

LISTEN

Click the link to listen to Negro Spirituals

<http://www.africanamericanspirituals.com/song1.htm>

READ & BLOG

READ: Read the words to this Negro Spiritual.

BLOG: Blog about how you feel about freedom. Click this link.

- What does it mean to be free?
- Is it important to you? Why or why not?
- What does it mean to be physically free but mentally a slave?

Oh Freedom

Oh Freedom! Oh freedom! Oh freedom over me

And before I 'll be a slave I'll be buried in my grave

And go home to my Lord and be f ree.

No mo' moanin'

No mo' weepin'

There'll be singin'

There'll be shoutin'

There'll be prayin'

And before I be a slave I'll be buried in my grave

And go home to my Lord and be free.

Music Credit: <http://www.africanamericanspirituals.com/song11.htm>

CLICK HERE TO BLOG

By the end of the 19th century, African American music became a part of mainstream American culture with the creation of **ragtime music** during the Harlem Renaissance period. Performers like [Scott Joplin](#) were extremely popular. **Blues and jazz music** drew wide-spread popularity in the early part of the 20th century and by 1940's rhythm and blues singers had become popular. **Rhythm and blues** (also known as **R&B**) is a combining of jazz, gospel, and blues music.

DO YOU KNOW

TEST YOUR KNOWLEDGE: Are you ready to join a band? Take the quiz and see how much you really know about musical terminology.

http://pbskids.org/jazz/join_the_jazz_band.html

CREATIVE EXPRESSION ACTIVITY

Be a Band Leader

By clicking the link below you can create and lead your own jazz band. Let's hear your sweet music.

<http://pbskids.org/jazz/bandleader.html>

The late 1950's brought about a shift in thinking when it came to gospel music which had traditionally been limited to performances in church. Pioneers like [Ben E. King](#) and [Sam Cooke](#) led the crusade to create what we now know as **soul music** (combining rhythm and blues and gospel music). This gave way to the birth of all girl groups and later, the birth of well-known soul divas like [Diana Ross & the Supremes](#) and [Aretha Franklin](#) who were able to crossover to entertain white audiences in the 60s. Soul music took on two primary forms among Blacks which were very popular - funk and early heavy metal. Funk is associated with the [James Brown](#), the "Godfather of Soul" and early heavy metal is linked to [Jimi Hendrix](#) and his electric guitar.

The 1970s was a time when Civil Rights was at the forefront of American culture. Artists like [Marvin Gaye](#) focused on singing lyrics that were intelligent and socially conscious. His song, "*What's Going On*" is perhaps the best-remembered of this field. This was also one of the greatest decades for the development of black bands and melody-oriented music recorded on record albums. During this period, despite some cross-over appeal and the contributions Black musicians made to the invention of **rock and roll** and **disco**, generally they received little acknowledgment in mainstream America.

LISTEN & THINK ABOUT

Watch and listen to Marvin Gaye perform "*What's Going On*" on **YouTube**.

What social issues was he most concerned about? Are those issues still in existence today?

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Y9KC7uhMY9s>

By the 1980's, black pop music artists like [Michael Jackson](#) (who experienced a level of black stardom never seen before), [Lionel Richie](#), [Whitney Houston](#), and [Prince](#), who sang a type of pop dance-soul gained the attention of not only white America but international appeal. These artists are the most successful of the era.

At the end of the 20th Century and the beginning of the 21st, Hip Hop, Rap, and R&B became the most popular genre of African American music. All male groups took the lead in popularity from the 1970's through the 1990's. Some of those groups included [The Temptations](#), [The O'Jays](#), [New Edition](#), and [Boyz II Men](#), which ended up being the highest selling R&B male group of all time (*Wikipedia*). [TLC](#), [Destiny's Child](#), and [SWV](#) were the most popular girl groups and [Destiny's Child](#) would go on to be the highest selling female vocal group of all time (*Wikipedia*).

A fusion blend known as **hip-hop soul** became popular because of artists like [Mary J. Blige](#), Faith Evans and [BLACKstreet](#) and neo soul grew in the late 1990s/early 2000s influenced by artists such as [Lauryn Hill](#), [Erykah Badu](#), [India.Arie](#), [Alicia Keys](#), and [Musiq](#). Today, much like the African slaves who blurred the rhythms of their native countries, producers such as [Timbaland](#) and [Lil Jon](#), and artists such as [Nelly](#) and [OutKast](#) helped combine hip-hop and R&B to create [Southern hip hop](#) music.

LISTEN & BLOG

Watch and listen to India.Arie and Akon perform "I Am Not My Hair" on YouTube.

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bZd1KeZhjU>

- How do you feel about the message "I am not my hair"?
- What social prejudices have you experienced? How did it make you feel?
- Do you judge others by how they look?

CLICK HERE TO BLOG

"Urban music" and "urban radio" now crosses all races, countries, and economic levels. In fact, the blend of hip hop and R&B has given birth to an entire culture called "**the hip hop culture**". It is a multi-billion dollar a year business and includes music, clothing, dance, and language.

LEARN MORE

The Roots of Hip Hop

["THE ROOTS OF HIP HOP" - RM HIP HOP MAGAZINE 1986](#)

LEARN MORE

You Tube – Hip Hop Review: *Who's Responsible?*

[YouTube - Hip Hop in Review: Part IV Who's Responsible?](#)

Rap

Hip hop music is also known as **rap music**. The roots of hip hop are found in African American and West African music. Rappers are similar to “griots” - traveling singers and poets. This musical genre usually consists of a rhythmic vocal style called rap which is laid down with background beats. Rap music is part of hip hop culture, which began in the Bronx, in New York City in the 1970s at local block parties. Although there were many early MCs that recorded solo projects like [Kurtis Blow](#) and [LL Cool J](#), most early hip hop music was performed by groups like [Grandmaster Flash](#) & the Furious Five and [The Sugarhill Gang](#).

The 1980's brought about a transition in hip hop and many thought that it was simply a “fad” that would soon die out. This was a common sentiment for at least the next fifteen years. This era was also known as Hip Hop's golden age. Notable artists of the time included [Rakim](#) from the hip hop duo [Eric B. & Rakim](#), [Biz Markie](#), [Big Daddy Kane](#), [Salt-N-Pepa](#), and [Roxanne Shante](#), [Run-D.M.C.](#) and the legendary [KRS-ONE](#). Rakim is highly regarded as Hip Hop's greatest emcee with his fast lyrical flow.

Socially conscious lyrics were common among some rappers like [Public Enemy](#) while West Coast hip hop group [N.W.A.](#)'s candid lyrics describing the lives of their members based in Compton, California as being violent. Members of N.W.A., [Eazy-E](#), [Dr. Dre](#), and [Ice Cube](#) would go on to become platinum-selling artists. This style of lyrics later become known as **gangsta rap** and it reached mainstream America around 1992, with the release of [Dr. Dre's "The Chronic"](#).

One of the most creative artists of this genre is [Tupac Shakur](#) (a.k.a. 2Pac). Tupac's lyrics focused on his childhood years where he grew up around violence and hardship in ghettos, racism, problems in society and conflicts with other rappers. He was known for advocating political, economic, social and racial equality. Tupac Shakur began his rapping career in 1991 and dominated the charts becoming the highest selling rapper ever with over 75,000,000 albums (*Wikipedia*). He was killed in a drive by shooting in 1996.

LISTEN AND BLOG

Read along and listen to the lyrics of Tupac Shakur's "African Queen."

<http://www.metrolyrics.com/african-queen-lyrics-2pac.html>

- What message was he sending to listeners?
- How did it make you feel?
- Why do you think people see Tupac Shakur as a rapper, poet, and spoken word artist?

CLICK HERE TO BLOG

During the 90's as hip hop made its way around the world, it was infused with influences from other African-oriented countries. Jamaican hip hop brought on hip hop artists such as [De La Soul](#) and [Black Star](#). International hip hop artist gained prominence and gradually began to create their own fusion of rap like [Tanzanian Bongo Flava](#).

In the year 2000, the United States also saw the groups like [The Roots](#), [A Tribe Called Quest](#), and [Mos Def](#) achieve unheard-of success for combining hip hop and jazz. This genre of music is called **alternative hip hop**. The lyrical content is often intellectual, socio-political or Afrocentric.

WRITING ACTIVITY

Lyrical Poetry

LISTEN: Listen to and interpret a song (Lyrical Poetry) by Common, Tupac Shakur, Kanye West, or Outkast. The link below will get you to AOL's music page to access free music.

JOURNAL WRITING: Write your own lyrical poem (RAP OR SONG) focused on a social issue you are concerned about (ex. racism, poverty, quality of education, the economy, equal access to health care, gangs, peer pressure, drugs, violence).

http://music.aol.com/artist/genre/r_n_b

EXPRESSING OURSELVES THROUGH DANCE

Dance

There are three different categories of African American dance - social dance, concert dance, and theatre dance. **Social dances** usually refers to those dances that engage a partner or group of people such as (slow dancing, night club dancing, two-step, the Hustle, salsa dancing, the Mambo, the Tango, the Cha Cha, street dancing, break dancing, and line dancing).

Concert dance is performed for an audience but the audience does not participate. During the second half of the 20th Century, concert dance grew in popularity due in part to the King of Pop, [Michael Jackson](#).

'**Dance Theatre**' dance-drama, and theatre-dance all have the same meaning - dances performed before an audience at the theatre. Ballet and modern dance are good examples of theatre dance. In both cases - concert and theatre dance - the performance is normally choreographed to music and performed as a solo or with a group of dancers.



Photo Credit: Basil Childers



Photo Credit: Juliet A. Cervantes

[Katherine Dunham](#) is considered the Queen Mother of Black Dance. She had one of the most successful dance careers in American and European theater of the 20th century and went on to establish the *Ballet Negre* in 1936 and the Katherine Dunham Dance Company based in Chicago, Illinois. There are a number of other notable African American **modern dance** companies but none more celebrated than the [Alvin Ailey American Dance Theater](#) and [Dance Theatre of Harlem](#). Both companies are known for what is called 'African American vernacular dance'. This means the dances were developed within the African American communities and originated as an expression of cultural life for African slaves.

In many ways, dance played a more significant role than literacy (especially during slavery). African descendants could communicate from one generation to the other, their history, traditions, and culture. This is similar to the West African “griot” who was an oral translator.

WORKSHEET ACTIVITY
Interpretive Writing
<p>Dance Fever</p> <p>A photograph or photo is a picture taken with a camera. It can speak with out saying a word.</p> <p>EXAMINE: Examine the two photos of modern dancers above.</p> <p>JOURNAL WRITING: What do you think the dancers are saying in these two photos?</p> <p>THINK ABOUT: Two of the most common dances among teens today are the <i>Crump</i> or <i>Twerp'n</i>. Perhaps you and your friends have performed the dance at home or at a school dance.</p> <p>JOURNAL WRITE: Write a narrative interpreting the message the dancer sends when performing this dance. Is that the appropriate message? Why or Why not.</p>

LEARN MORE	
African American Dance	
Era	Dance
The 20s, 1930s and 1940s <i>(The Swing Era)</i>	- lindy hop , Charleston , Texas Tommy
The 1950s	- Washington Hand Dancing , Mashed Potato
The 1960s	- Northern Soul , Motown
The 1970s	funk , disco

The 1980s	Hip Hop , break dancing , popping , locking , voguing , cabbage patch
The 1990s and 2000s	Krumping , Hyphy , Snap dance , Cha Cha Slide , Line Dance (Booty Call) , Lean wit It , Rock wit It , Walk It Out , footworking , Chicken Noodle Soup , Crip Walk , Gangsta Walk , Tootsee Roll , The Roosevelt , Getting Lite Poole Palace , Butterfly Dance , Jocin , Toe Wop , Crank Dat Soulja Boy , A-Town Stomp , Harlem Shake, Aunt Jackie

PICTURES TELL OUR STORY

Photography is an art form all its own. It is the process of recording picture images by means of capturing light on film or in digital format. The pictures tell the story of what is happening in that moment. A carefully crafted photograph can stir up feelings and thoughts about a particular scene. Pictures can often stand on their own where words are NOT needed.



Photo Credits: Gallery Administrator <http://www.katrinadestruction.com/images/v/hurricane/>

REFLECT AND BLOG

REFLECT: Observe the photos above of New Orleans during the aftermath of Hurricane Katrina.

BLOG:

- How do these pictures make you feel?
- What do you think the survivors must have felt at that moment.
- How would you have felt if you had to live through this tragedy?
- What are your thoughts about how the U.S. government responded to the needs of the people?

[CLICK HERE TO BLOG](#)

[Gordon Parks](#) was one of the most well-known African American photographers of his time. He was a groundbreaking journalist and film director who is most noted for his photo essays for *Life* magazine and as the director of the 1971 movie *Shaft*. Gordon Parks was a gifted artist who created several films for television and composed a ballet tribute to Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. called "*Martin*". It premiered in 1989 in Washington, DC and was later shown on television on Dr. King's birthday (1990).



Photo Credit:
Wikipedia/from a U.S.
government source

Writing Activity

What Story Do You See in the Photographs?
Handouts MLK 1 & MLK 2

READ: Read Dr. Martin Luther King's philosophy

EXAMINE: Examine the photographs illustrating conflict during the Civil Rights Movement. Use Handouts MLK 1 & MLK 2.

CREATE: Create a poem that reflects upon Dr. King's leadership and contribution to society.

We hope that you have learned how important it is to know your history while becoming an active participant in creating your future. This final exercise will give you and your family an opportunity to create your own personal art exhibit by creating a **Family History Portfolio**. Each day we are making history and everyone contributes to the story – even you! The only way African Americans can preserve our “treasured” heritage is by documenting our experiences.

Take this opportunity to write down your history. You can tell a funny story using a folktale or poem, draw or paint portraits of an elder, video your grandparents dancing, tape record your uncles or aunts playing an instrument, or take a photograph of the entire family. Go back to the autobiography you wrote in the lesson on leadership. Incorporate this document into your portfolio. This can be a fun and enriching activity for the whole family – so enjoy!!!

CREATIVE EXPRESSION PROJECT <i>Save Our African American Treasures</i>
Family History Portfolio
To complete this project, follow the instructions listed in the WORKSHEET Record Your family History.
CLICK THIS LINK TO ACCESS THE WORKSHEET

