



THE MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. CENTER  
FOR NONVIOLENT SOCIAL CHANGE, INC.

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# BELOVED COMMUNITY TEACH-IN FOR SCHOOLS AND EDUCATORS

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**GRADE LEVEL: 3-5**



## Lesson Title: It Starts with Me From A-Z

**Grade Level: 3-5**

**Curriculum Connections:** Social and Emotional Learning, English/Language Arts, Character Traits

**Thematic Focus:** Positive Self-Talk, Caring, Listening Skills, World House, Beloved Community

**Duration:** 45 - 60 minutes (or may be delivered over several class periods)

**Materials:** Attached Handout

**Learning Objectives:**

- Students will be introduced to Dr. King's concept of the World House
- Students will learn creative ways to engage in community connections
- Student will learn the characteristics of a beloved community

**Lesson Goals:**

The goal of this lesson/activity is to encourage learners to think about the power of positive words and interactions. When students begin to understand that listening and using positive words can help set the dynamics for a productive setting, they will begin to understand how much power their words can have.

Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s quote driving this activity: "We are caught in an inescapable network of mutuality tied in a single garment of destiny. Whatever affects one directly affects all indirectly." (See, Martin Luther King, Jr. In *A Single Garment of Destiny: A Global Vision of Justice*, Beacon Press, 2013)

**Teacher Notes:** Often students do not understand the power of positive thinking and reinforcement. When we help students understand how their words have power and that they can encourage others to be more motivated and focused on positive interactions, the better our chances are of creating a Beloved Community within the educational setting!



**Activity:** This activity will challenge students to work in pairs and brainstorm 3-6 word phrases that would serve as motivation for them personally or someone else.

**Example:** A - Always work hard. B - Believe in what you can do.

Once the pairs have completed the handout, they must team up with another pair and see if any of their phrases match or if any of their phrases are close in meaning. The goal is to encourage students to know that we are more alike than we are different. We all have different points of view, but we also have similarities that connect us!

### Activity Sheet

It Starts With Me

A	_____
B	_____
C	_____
D	_____
E	_____
F	_____
G	_____
H	_____
I	_____
J	_____
K	_____
L	_____
M	_____
N	_____
O	_____
P	_____
Q	_____
R	_____
S	_____
T	_____
U	_____
V	_____
W	_____
X	_____
Y	_____
Z	_____



## Extension Lesson: Grades 3-5

### EXCUSE ME BUT...

#### Grade Level: 3-5

**Curriculum Connections:** Social and Emotional Learning, English/Language Arts, Character Traits

**Thematic Focus:** Critical-Thinking, Problem-Solving, Listening Skills, World House, Beloved Community

**Duration:** 45 - 60 minutes (or may be delivered over several class periods)

**Materials:** Attached Handout

#### Learning Objectives:

- Students will be introduced to Dr. King's concept of the Beloved Community
- Students will learn creative ways to engage in community connections
- Students will learn the characteristics of a beloved community and what cause and effect can create.

#### Lesson Goals:

The goal of this lesson/activity is to encourage learners to think about the power of problem solving, critical thinking, and cause and effect. When students begin to understand that listening and using positive words can help set the dynamics for a productive setting, they will begin to understand how much power their words can have.

#### Teacher Notes:

In this fun activity students will read the first part of each statement and then they will say, excuse me but... Students must support their premise with evidence or notes you have gathered. In other words, their goal is to debunk any information that may not support the idea of justice and equity. This activity will require some research on the part of the students. Sometimes people are often introduced to information that may not be accurate. Because of the lack of information gathering and education, people may sometimes operate on misinformation. Help students understand that they must do their homework and speak up!

#### Review these important quotes:

“The ultimate measure of a man is not where he stands in moments of comfort and convenience,  
but where he stands at times of challenge and controversy”

- Martin Luther King, Jr. Strength to Love, 1963

**Example of a scenario:** “Men deserve to make more money because they can lift more.”

A student would interrupt injustice by saying: “excuse me but...women are just as capable as men.” (Then, the student must provide examples as to how they know this statement is true).



Some below examples of statements that students may respond to:

1. I don't have to respect other religions...
2. They are discriminating against them not me...
3. It is okay to judge others for their opinions...
4. We don't have to stand up for unjust system if it doesn't impact us...

Ask students to try to find a quote by Martin Luther King Jr. that supports their decision for the above statements.

**Post Instruction Survey for Educators**

**Please complete the post instruction survey here:**

[https://tkc.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV\\_bdynw3qdAob0cR0](https://tkc.qualtrics.com/jfe/form/SV_bdynw3qdAob0cR0)

**Want to learn more about Dr. King's Philosophy of Nonviolence?**

Check out The King Center's new self-paced online course: Nonviolence365 Online. Learn more here: <https://thekingcenterinstitute.org/>

See trailer for the course here: <https://youtu.be/Vvt9E3JI7jE>