



FOUNDATION
AGAINST
INTOLERANCE
& RACISM

Lesson Title: What Does It Mean to Defeat Injustice, Not People? (Part Two)

Recommended Grade Levels: 9-10

Recommended Pacing: 60-75 minute class

FAIR Standards and Objectives:

HM.9-12.1: I respect people's freedom to develop and enact their character because it is essential to their quality of life.

HM.9-12.2: I can explain how specific moral and ethical truths exist across otherwise different cultures and recognize those truths within my own culture.

HM. 9-12.4: I can explain how specific Americans, including Martin Luther King, Jr., have interpreted that American political principles should apply to humanity rather than only to people of one skin color or ethnicity.

Theme(s): Character Strengths

Era(s): Current

Areas of Focus: Civil Rights, Tolerance, Forgiveness

Teacher Instructions:

Background

This lesson draws on the previous lesson and continues to deepen students' understanding of varying viewpoints related to the question: "What does it mean to defeat injustice, not people?" In particular, this lesson will ask students to think about the different ways one may approach the question by digging into the similarities/differences between the approaches of MLK and Malcolm X to the civil rights movement. Similar to previous lessons, this lesson will ask students to write in their Identity Journal as they consider and interact with these ideas and continue to explore [FAIR's Principles of Peaceful Change](#). As with previous lessons, students will continually reflect on the ways that they can work with and learn to value people with diverse backgrounds, beliefs, and perspectives.

Opening

- The teacher asks students to get out their Identity Journals and respond to the following prompt:
 - In your Identity Journal rewrite each quotation. Underneath each quote, explain how much you agree or disagree with the thought. Explain your thoughts thoroughly.
 - “Love is the only force capable of transforming an enemy into a friend.” - Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - “A man who stands for nothing will fall for anything.” -Malcolm X
 - “Darkness cannot drive out darkness, only light can do that. Hate cannot drive out hate, only love can do that.” -Martin Luther King, Jr.
 - “Concerning nonviolence, it is criminal to teach a man not to defend himself when he is the constant victim of brutal attacks.” -Malcolm X
- Before class, the teacher should place the quotations from Malcolm X on one side of the room and the quotations from MLK on the opposite side of the room. After responding in their identity journals, the teacher should ask students to stand on the side of the room with the quotes that they “mostly” agreed with. When students have formed two groups, each group should be given a large sticky note or sheet of butcher paper and a marker. On that piece of paper, each group should work to list out 10 reasons why they agreed with (or liked) these quotations more than the other quotations. After 5 minutes, each group’s speaker will share the reasons generated by their group. Following the opening activity, the teacher should post the two lists (from the Malcolm X and MLK groups) on the board--these lists can be referred to in subsequent activities.

Guided Practice

- Teacher asks students to read [“The Unfinished Dialogue of Martin Luther King Jr. and Malcolm X.”](#) Students may read this independently or in small groups. While reading, students should record similarities/differences about Malcolm X and MLK in a table such as the one below. It would be useful for students to complete this table in their Identity Journals.

Malcolm X	Both Malcolm and MLK	Martin Luther King Jr.
- Born in Omaha, Nebraska	- Son of Baptist Preacher	- Born in Atlanta, Georgia

- After reading the article and filling in their tables, the teacher should ask students to share the similarities/differences they found as a class. As students share, the teacher records student thoughts on the board.

- Following this activity, students should journal in response to this prompt: How did Malcolm X and Martin Luther King Jr. believe it was best to fight injustice? How were their ideas similar and/or different? In what ways? Overall, do you think Malcolm X and MLK were working toward the same goal or different goals? Explain your thoughts.

Independent and/or Group Work

- Watch the video: [“Martin Luther King or Malcolm X? Rationality & Anger.”](#) While watching, ask students to complete [the guided notes](#) to help them comprehend and process the content. The following prompts are included in the guided notes:
 1. “During the Civil Rights Movement, Martin Luther King and Malcolm X were often thought of as having _____.”
 2. W.E.B. Dubois said: “It is a peculiar sensation this double _____, this sense of always looking at one’s self through the _____ of others, of measuring one’s soul by the tape of a world that looks on with amused _____ and _____. One ever feels his two-ness-- an American, a Negro; two _____, two _____, two unreconciled _____.”
 3. We see in Dubois two sides: thoughtful/rational and emotive/angry. How are they personified in the figures of MLK and Malcolm X 70 years later? Explain below.
 4. “Martin Luther King is most recognized as the leader of the _____ struggle...Malcolm X, on the other hand is usually cited as the leader of those who wanted freedom by _____.”
 5. The narrator says that we see in the figures of MLK and Malcolm X “a common assumption that rationality and emotion are opposed to each other.” What do you think about this?
 6. Was Martin Luther King Jr. seen as more emotional or rational in the ways he approached defeating injustice through the Civil Rights movement?
 7. Was Malcolm X seen as more emotional or rational in the ways he approached defeating injustice through the Civil Rights movement?
 8. “Malcolm X uses _____ as a tool of _____ while King, instead, emphasized _____.”
 9. How are MLK and Malcolm X both rational in the tactics they used?

10. In what ways did Malcolm X and MLK change as they continued their work? How did they complement each other as they both strove to defeat injustice through the Civil Rights Movement?

Discussion and Closing

- When students have finished watching the video and responding to the guided notes, the teacher should facilitate a discussion around the video. Some prompts for discussion may be:
 - Even though they didn't agree on everything, in what ways did the different viewpoints of Malcolm X and MLK propel the Civil Rights movement forward?
 - Are there times when an emotional response (such as anger) can be just as rational as a cool and collected response? How was this seen in the lives of MLK and Malcolm X?
 - At the beginning of the video, the narrator cites W.E.B. Dubois's idea of double consciousness--or having "two strivings." In what way does the different tactics of MLK and Malcolm X show this?
 - After learning more about MLK and Malcolm X, how do you think each would respond to the idea: "We must defeat injustice, not people"?
- To close, students should reflect on this prompt in their Identity Journals: "In the past two lessons, we have explored the statement: 'We need to defeat injustice, not people.' What do you think about this statement? Is it possible to 'fight injustice' without physically confronting people? Use your notes as well as your thoughts, questions, and reflections from your Identity Journal to inform your response."

Assessment Ideas for the Lesson

- Have students choose one of the quotes from the lesson opening. Form "debate teams" based on each quote and facilitate a class debate in response to the question: "What is the best way to defeat injustice?"
- Conduct a "write around." In this activity, each student responds to the question: "Is it possible to defeat injustice and not people?" in a five minute free-write on their own sheet of paper. After five minutes is up, each student passes his/her paper to the left. For the next five minutes, each student reads and responds to the paper he/she received. Continue this activity for at least three rounds. After all responses have been received, each person should receive his/her original paper and be given ten minutes to write a final response.

Assessment Ideas for the Unit

- At the end of the unit, students will be asked to write a letter to another student that takes a clear stand in response to this question: "What is the most important way that we, as a society, can promote change?" Students will be asked to use evidence to support their stance. Evidence should ideally come from the readings/videos provided in each lesson. Thus, students' letters

should begin with something like: “The most important way we can promote peaceful change is...”

Extension Activities:

- At the end of the Martin Luther King/Malcolm X video, the narrator mentions Daniel Kahneman’s ideas in *Thinking Fast and Slow*. Ask students to dig deeper into this idea by watching [“Brain Tricks: This is How Your Brain Works”](#) and reading [“Of Two Minds: How Fast and Slow Thinking Shape Perception and Choice.”](#) Consider asking students to interrogate their own perceptions and choices and reflect on when they may be using their “System 1” or “System 2” brain. How does perception influence the way humans think about things like injustice? Equality? Rights? Morality?