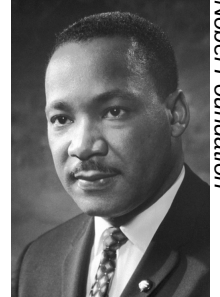




I Believe...

Martin Luther King, Jr. is perhaps best known for his "I have a dream" speech, which was delivered in 1963 during the March on Washington. But in 1964, he gave a pretty impressive acceptance speech for the Nobel Peace Prize, too. MLK Jr. was as much a poet as he was a preacher and a civil rights activist, and you need to read his words a few times—and sometimes look up the tricky words—to understand his meaning. Read this excerpt, and underline the words that you don't understand. Work with a partner to look them up, and then write a simplified version of what he was saying on the line below.



Nobel Foundation

“ I refuse to accept the idea that man is mere flotsom and jetsom in the river of life, unable to influence the unfolding events which surround him.

I refuse to accept the view that mankind is so tragically bound to the starless midnight of racism and war that the bright daybreak of peace and brotherhood can never become a reality.

I refuse to accept the cynical notion that nation after nation must spiral down a militaristic stairway into the hell of thermonuclear destruction.

I believe that unarmed truth and unconditional love will have the final word in reality. This is why right temporarily defeated is stronger than evil triumphant.

I believe that even amid today's mortar bursts and whining bullets, there is still hope for a brighter tomorrow.

I have the audacity to believe that peoples everywhere can have three meals a day for their bodies, education and culture for their minds, and dignity, equality and freedom for their spirits.

I believe that what self-centered men have torn down men other-centered can build up.

I still believe that We Shall overcome!



We Believe...

With a partner, write your own speech. What do you refuse to accept in today's world?
What do you believe can be changed for the better? Practice giving the speech together.

We refuse to accept

We refuse to accept

We refuse to accept

We believe

We believe

We believe
