

# Martin luther king jr.: dream often, dream big, dream change assignment

[History](#)



Dream Often, Dream Big, Dream Change Martin Luther King, Jr. , was one of the most powerful leaders in the civil rights movement, from the bus boycott to his historical speech “ I Have a Dream”. Martin Luther King presented his most inspiring speech on August 28, 1963, and it had a great impact on the United States. In his speech he emphasized phrases by repeating at the beginning of sentences. He also repeated key theme word in his speech including “ freedom”, “ we”, “ our”, “ you”, “ nation”, “ America”, and “ dream”. Martin Luther King, Jr. also utilized appropriate quotations and allusions in his compelling speech. Using biblical verses and references to national documents like the Declaration of Independence. He used specific examples to ground his argument along with making numerous geographic references. His use of metaphors to high light contrasting concepts allowed his audience to associate thoughts with concrete images and emotions. Martin Luther King, Jr. ‘ s, “ I Have a Dream” speech is the most historical speech during the civil rights movement because of the impact it had on America.

First of all, Martin Luther King, Jr. , wrote his speech using anaphora, repeating words at the beginning of neighboring causes. Repeating the words twice sets the pattern, and further repetitions emphasize the pattern and increase the rhetorical effect. “ I have a dream” is repeated in eight successive sentences and is one of the most often cited examples of anaphora in modern rhetoric. He had many key phrases: “ One hundred years later”, “ now is the time”, “ we must”, “ we can never be satisfied”, “ go back to”, “ I have a dream”, “ with this faith” and “ let freedom ring”.

In King's speech he said "one hundred years later" four times in the beginning of his "I have a dream" speech. Even in the absence of the remainder of the speech, these key phrases and by extension make King's story more memorable. The use of anaphora in Martin Luther King's speech added emphasis to catch America's attention. Next Martin Luther King repeated key theme words throughout his speech. "Repetition in forms like anaphora is quite obvious, but there are more subtle ways to use repetition as well." (Dluang) If you were to count the frequency of the words used in King's speech like "I have a dream" you would find that it was repeated seven times (King). "The most commonly used noun is "freedom", which is used 20 times. It makes sense, since freedom is the primary theme in the speech." (Dluang) Other commonly repeated words: "we" repeated 30 times, "our" repeated 17 times, "you" repeated eight times, "nation" repeated ten times, "America" repeated five times, "justice" repeated eight times, "injustice" repeated three times, and "dream" repeated 11 times. The proper usage of repetition of key theme words in his speech brought a greater effect to the audience.

Another powerful speech writing technique used by Martin Luther King, Jr., was how he utilized appropriate quotations and allusions. "Evoking history and literary references is a powerful speech writing technique which can be executed by using direct quotations or an allusion." (Dluang) He refers to Abraham Lincoln's famous Gettysburg Address where he begins "Four score and seven years ago" this allusion is an authentic point given that King was in front of the Lincoln Memorial. "As he began his speech "Five score years ago... implying that the Emancipation Proclamation was signed one

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hundred years ago.” (Dluang) Also in his speech he says “ Life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness,” reference to the United States Declaration of Independence. Along with national documents he referred to numerous biblical allusions to provide a moral basis to his argument. In the second paragraph he says, “ in came as a joyous daybreak to end the long nights of their captivity,” which alludes to Psalms 30: 5 “ for his anger is not but for a moment, his favor is for a lifetime.

Weeping may linger for the night, but joy comes with the morning. ” Many more biblical verses were shared to provide the moral basis in King’s argument. To show that in the bible no matter what color or language you spoke that everyone was created equal and share the earth together so one should not discriminate another because they are different. Also providing specific examples which illustrate his logic and argument helped his speech impact many lives. Martin Luther King, Jr. made numerous specific geographical references throughout his speech including Mississippi, New York, South Carolina, Georgia, Alabama, Louisiana, New Hampshire, Pennsylvania, Colorado, California, and Tennessee. He mentioned Mississippi on four separate occasions in his speech because Mississippi would evoke some of the strongest emotions and images for his audience because that is one of the most prejudice states. He also used generic geographic references like “ slums and ghettos of our northern cities”, “ the South”, “ every mountainside”, and “ from every village and every hamlet”.

Using geographic references gave his audience an image of how life was for the Negro and the harsh injustice that was served. Lastly King’s usage of

metaphors to highlight contrasting thoughts to catch attention to the large audience he was speaking to. To highlight the contrast between two abstract concepts, consider associating them with contrasting concrete metaphors. For example, to contrast segregation with racial justice, King evokes the contrasting metaphor of the dark, desolate valley and the sunlit path, the dark, desolate valley being segregation and the sunlit path being racial justice.

Martin Luther King also said, " Joyous day break to end the long night of their captivity. " Along with that he also said, " The Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. " The usage of metaphors to highlight contrasting concepts allows King to associate his speech concepts with concrete images and emotions that inspire his audience. All in all Martin Luther King's " I Have a Dream" speech is one of the most important speeches ever made during the civil rights movement. He was one of the most influential men to all African Americans.

This speech had a great impact on America because of his emphasized phrases at the beginning of each sentence, his repetition of key theme words throughout his speech, appropriate usage of quotations and allusions, his specific examples that grounded his arguments, and his powerful use of metaphors to highlight contrasting concepts. He used biblical allusions to help his moral basis in his arguments. He also quoted the United States Declaration of Independence to provide reference that all Americans should be free no matter what color they are.