

To: Language Arts / History Teachers

2025

# MARTIN LUTHER KING JR. ESSAY CONTEST

Sponsored by

The Indiana Association of School Principals  
and Ball State University



Each year on the third Monday of January we celebrate *the life* and *the dream* of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. It is a time for the nation to remember the injustices that Dr. King fought. He fought for the freedom, dignity, and equality of all races and peoples.

Students are asked to write their essay based on this MLK quote from February of 1968:

***“We must accept finite disappointment, but never lose infinite hope.”***

Contest parameters include:

- Open to students in grades 6 – 12
- Free for Department of Student Programs member schools; ***\$10 per essay for non-DSP schools***
- Limit of 5 essays per school accepted, with schools completing the initial screening and elimination
- 500 word limit, ***NOT counting the title and inclusion of the quote***
- Essay must be typed into the online submission form found at [www.iasp.org/students/mlk-jr-essay/](http://www.iasp.org/students/mlk-jr-essay/).

Judging parameters include:

- Content/Development: Addresses quote, responds to three stated questions (see below), organization, evidence to support position
- Language & Mechanics: Sentence structure, word choice, grammar

As you write your essay reflect on the following questions:

- How do you feel about this quote?
- What does this quote mean to you?
- How can you use these words to honor Dr. King and the life he lived?

Awards will be presented in two age groups: grades 6 - 8 and grades 9 – 12.

- First place: \$500
- Second place: \$300
- Third place: \$200

Essays must be submitted ***electronically***. The submission link can be found @ [www.iasp.org/students/mlk-jr-essay/](http://www.iasp.org/students/mlk-jr-essay/).

Entry deadline is February 28, 2025.



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