



AMERICAN  
LITERATURE

# Dr. King's road to a Birmingham jail

from the Esri GeoInquiries™ collection for American Literature

Target audience – American literature learners

Time required – 15 minutes

## Activity

Explore the events leading up to and beyond Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s "Letter from Birmingham Jail."

## English Standards

**CCSS: ELA-LITERACY.RI.9-10.9.** Analyze seminal U.S. documents of historical and literary significance (for example, Washington's Farewell Address, the Gettysburg Address, Roosevelt's Four Freedoms speech, and King's "Letter from Birmingham Jail"), including how they address related themes and concepts.

**CCSS: ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.8.** Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (for example, in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy.

## Learning Outcomes

- Students will analyze the impact of Dr. King on the Civil Rights Movement.
- Students will understand how historic events led to the Civil Rights Movement.

Map URL: <http://esriurl.com/litGeoInquiry12>

## ? Ask

### Where did the crusade begin?

- Read aloud: "Between 1525 and 1866, in the entire history of the slave trade to the New World, according to the Trans-Atlantic Slave Trade Database, 12.5 million Africans were shipped to the New World. 10.7 million survived the dreaded Middle Passage, disembarking in North America, the Caribbean, and South America." (Source: PBS)
- Click the link above to launch the map.
- Examine the slave states and the percentage of the population that were enslaved.
- ? What states have the greatest enslaved populations in 1850? [*Mississippi and South Carolina*]

## ! Acquire

### Why the South?

- With the Details button pressed, click the button, Content.
- Click the checkbox to the left of the layer named, Civil War - Greater Than 60% Enslaved Counties.
- ? What is the connection with the counties that have more than 60 percent of the population enslaved? [*They are near historic plantations.*]
- ? What percentage of the population was enslaved in the darkest shaded counties? [*Greater than 80 percent*]
- ? Why are the most enslaved counties in Mississippi and Louisiana? [*The Mississippi River and plantation commerce relied on enslaved population labor.*]

## Explore

### What did not change after slavery was abolished?

- Turn off the two layers prefixed, Civil War.
- Turn on each Jim Crow Laws layer in turn to explore the data.
- Read aloud: "After the Civil War until 1965, Jim Crow Laws enforced segregation in many states, named after a song character. These state laws denied people of color basic rights; separate and unequal access to services."
- ? What southern states had segregated schools? *[All on the map.]*
- ? What states did not segregate circuses, hospitals, or mental hospitals? *[Circuses: Mississippi, Alabama, Georgia, Florida, North Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia; Hospitals: Louisiana, Florida, Georgia, North Carolina, South Carolina, Virginia, and West Virginia; Mental hospitals: Florida]*

## Analyze

### Where did the Civil Rights Movement take place?

- Turn off the Jim Crow Laws layers.
- Read aloud: "Martin Luther King Jr., in all his many actions, was committed to equality for all humans."
- Turn on the layer, Civil Rights Events In Dr. King's Lifetime.
- ? In which states was he most involved with events? *[Alabama, Georgia, Washington, D.C., and New York]*
- Click the button, Bookmarks. Select Dr. King's Lifetime

## Act

### When did things really begin to change?

- Turn on the Dr. King's Lifetime layer.
- Click Play to view his life happen across the map.
- ? How many different U.S. presidents did he meet with in his life? *[Four: Truman, Eisenhower, Kennedy, and Johnson]*
- Pull the time slider to 1964-1968.
- Open the data table and scroll through the events in that period.
- ? How many significant legislative and historic events occurred in that short period?

### USE THE TIME SLIDER

- A time-enabled map layer must be visible.
- Click the lower slider button and stretch it to the end time period that you wish to view.
- Click the Play button (right arrow).
- Click the Configure button (the wrench icon) to change the slider's speed.

### VIEW A TABLE

- Tables are only available for certain map layers.
- In the Contents pane, point to a layer and click the Show Table icon that appears under the layer name.
- Click the field name and choose Sort Ascending or Sort Descending.

## Next Steps

DID YOU KNOW? ArcGIS Online is a mapping platform freely available to U.S. public, private, and home schools as a part of the White House Connected Initiative. A school subscription provides additional security, privacy, and content features. Learn more about ArcGIS Online and how to get a school subscription at <http://connected.esri.com>.

THEN TRY THIS...

- Explore segregated neighborhoods in the following Washington, D.C., story map: <http://esriurl.com/Geo3201>.
- Explore the Demographics And Statistics Atlas story map at <http://esriurl.com/Geo3202>.

## TEXT REFERENCES

This GIS map has been cross-referenced to material in the following letter.

- Letter from Birmingham Jail, Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.