



Comparing African-American Heroes: Maya Angelou and Martin Luther King Jr.

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M.S. in Education

Language Arts
Grades 3-5



Introduction

In this lesson, students will read about and then compare two known African-American heroes: Maya Angelou and Martin Luther King Jr.

Learning Objectives

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.4.2](#). Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly.

Materials Needed

- [Martin Luther King Jr. Facts](#)
- [Maya Angelou Facts](#)
- Venn diagram
- Paper and pencil

Procedure

Activity One: African American Heroes

1. Ask students, “What character traits are important for being considered a hero?”
2. Next, tell students that today they will learn about two important African-American historical heroes: Maya Angelou and Martin Luther King Jr.
3. Tell students that oftentimes heroes share a lot of the same characteristics and today they will be reading about and then comparing and contrasting those two key heroes.
4. Next, as a class read about Maya Angelou and MLK Jr. As you read, stop along the way to point out key similarities and differences between the two heroes.
5. Once you’ve finished reading about the heroes, fill out the Venn diagram together as a class.

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Activity Two: Independent Practice

1. Once students have filled out the Venn diagram, instruct students to write an essay comparing both Maya Angelou and MLK Jr.
 2. Circulate the room as students are working to monitor students are on the right track.
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Evaluation

Assess students' knowledge through the Venn Diagram and comparative essay.