

MLK: "[The American Dream](#)" - 4 July 1965, delivered at Ebenezer Baptist Church in Atlanta, Georgia

About two years ago now, I stood with many of you who stood there in person and all of you who were there in spirit before the Lincoln Monument in Washington. (*Yes*) As I came to the end of my speech there, I tried to tell the nation about a dream I had. I must confess to you this morning that since that sweltering August afternoon in 1963, my dream has often turned into a nightmare; (*Lord*) I've seen it shattered. I saw it shattered one night on Highway 80 in Alabama when Mrs. Viola Liuzzo was shot down. (*Lord, Lord*) I had a nightmare and saw my dream shattered one night in Marion, Alabama, when Jimmie Lee Jackson was shot down. (*Lord*) I saw my dream shattered one night in Selma when Reverend Reeb was clubbed to the ground by a vicious racist and later died. And oh, I continue to see it shattered as I walk through the Harlems of our nation (*Yes*) and see sometimes ten and fifteen Negroes trying to live in one or two rooms. (*Yes*) I've been down to the Delta of Mississippi since then, and I've seen my dream shattered as I met hundreds of people who didn't earn more than six or seven hundred dollars a week. I've seen my dream shattered as I've walked the streets of Chicago (*Make it plain*) and seen Negroes, young men and women, with a sense of utter hopelessness because they can't find any jobs. (249)

Annotations:

3 (*Yes*) – words in brackets are interjections from the listeners
 5 sweltering – extremely hot
 6 nightmare - frightening dream
 11 club - hit someone hard with a heavy object;
 vicious – evil, cruel
 19 utter - complete

Assignments

0) Read the text. (5')

1) Say what the topic of MLK's speech is and put it into the historical context of his most famous speech. (8')

2) Work on the literary devices to prove that MLK was a great orator. (17')

3) How did MLK's speeches help to make America a better place to live for African Americans? (10')

4) Proofread you answers. (5')

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