

Music Mini Unit on Peace and Equality



Unit Overview/ Rationale:

This unit focusses on the themes of peace, love, social equality, and civil rights. Throughout the unit, two songs with signs will be introduced: “Peace like a River” and “Sing about Martin.” A short english lesson will also be carried out in order for students to gain a better understanding of who Martin Luther King Jr. was, why his actions were important, and why it is important to have dreams. The first song, “Peace like a River” will be used to help students practice applying the concept of tempo and to a song. The second song, “Sing about Martin” will be used to help students practice keeping a steady beat while performing the song on pitch with sign language.

This unit would be most effective with a group of grade 4 or 5 students, as there is a significant amount of signing in both songs which would make it more challenging for younger grades. Grade 4 and 5 students would also be better able to talk about and understand the more complex concepts being covered in this unit such as Martin Luther King Jr., social inequality, and world peace.

These lessons in unison are meant to help students develop a more global perspective by considering the importance of peace and equality in our world. Furthermore, in this unit students will be challenged to think about their dreams and why those dreams are important. This unit would connect well with a larger english and social studies project on human rights and social activism.

Lesson 1: Peace like a River

Grades: 4-5

Lesson Concept: Exploring tempo and sign language through the song "Peace like a River."

Form for teaching: This song will be taught at first using rote call-and-response form, with responses identical to the call and then in unison as a class.

Curricular Connections (Arts - Music)

Big Idea: Dance, drama, music, and visual arts are each unique languages for creating and communicating.

Curricular Competencies:

- Explore connections to identity, place, culture, and belonging through creative expression
- Examine relationships between the arts and the wider world

Content Connection: Tempo

Objective/ Actions: Tempo refers to the speed of a piece of music. Students will demonstrate an understanding of tempo by being able to sing and perform the actions of the song at various tempos set by the teacher.

peace like a river

african american spiritual

The musical score is written on three staves in 4/4 time. The melody is simple, using a treble clef and a key signature of one flat (Bb). The lyrics are written below the notes, with three verses of the song. The first verse is the most common, and the second and third verses are variations. The score includes a final double bar line at the end of the third line.

1. I've got peace like a riv - er, I've got peace like a riv - er, I've got peace like a
2. I've got joy like a fount ain, I've got joy like a fount-ain, I've got joy like a
3. I've got love like the oc - ean, I've got love like the oc - ean, I've got love like the

riv - er in my soul. I've got peace like a riv - er, I've got
fount ain in my soul. I've got joy like a fount ain, I've got
oc - ean in my soul. I've got love like the oc - ean, I've got

peace like a riv - er, I've got peace like a riv - er in my soul.
joy like a fount-ain, I've got joy like a fount ain in my soul.
love like the oc - ean, I've got love like the oc - ean in my soul.

Sheet music from: <http://www.bethsnotesplus.com/2013/02/peace-like-river.html>

Youtube version of the song: <https://youtu.be/N2R4D6qhaD8>

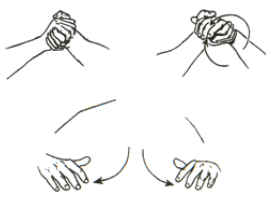
Procedure

Hook: Each student is given a piece of paper that has the word “love”, “joy”, “peace”, “river”, “fountain”, or “ocean”. The students must make up an action for their word, but not tell any of their peers what their word is. Direct students to move around the class and attempt to try and find the 4-5 other people in the class that have the same word as them without talking (only using their made up action).

Development:

1. Have a short class discussion:
 - Ask students why they think “love”, “joy”, “peace” are important in the world.
2. Play “ I’ve Got Peace like a River,” and ask students to try to figure out what peace is described like (i.e. a river) what love is described like (i.e. an ocean) and what joy is described like (i.e. a fountain).
3. Teach the song through rote call and response (one line at a time with lyrics projected).
4. Sing the song once through as a class.
5. Teach the actions that go with each of the keywords “love”, “joy”, “peace”, “river”, “fountain”, “ocean” and “soul”.

Signs to teach:

- 
- a. “Peace”: [hands together, move hands down and out with palms facing down]

- 
- b. “River”: [Move three finger away from the mouth and then move hands side to side and away from the chest in a flowing motion]

- 
- c. “Joy”: [Move both hands towards the chest and then circle them out and repeat]



- d. "Fountain": [move three fingers away from the mouth and then move both hands up and down (with palms facing down) in front of your body]



- e. "caring/loving": [cross your arms in front of your body with your hands in fists]



- f. "Ocean": [Move three fingers away from the mouth and then move hands up and down and away from the chest in a wave like motion]
- g. "Soul": [point at the bottom of your foot (sole)]
6. Sing the song complete with actions (do a few times for practice if needed)
 7. Explain tempo to the students (the speed of the music) in terms of animals (ex: cheetah= fast tempo, snail= slow tempo)
 8. Sing the song a few more times. Each time, have a student pick an animal and its tempo (example: sloth=super slow motion, dog=fast, cheetah=very fast) and do the song at that tempo. This will challenge the students to continue performing the song with the signs at different tempos.

Closure:

Tempo Review Activity:

1. Ask the students to turn to a partner and define tempo in their own words. (Teacher can set up the final activity during this time)
2. Play the first 30 seconds of "Shiny Happy People" by R.E.M.
3. Have students close their eyes as they listen and raise their hands when they hear a fast tempo, put hands straight out when they hear a medium tempo, put hands down when they hear a slow tempo.

Assessment: Teacher should watch for active participation in learning lyrics and actions throughout the entire lesson. Student understanding of tempo can be assessed during the closure activity, whether they raise/lower their hands at the right time will show if they understand the concept or not.

Accommodations:

- The song will be played multiple times to support students who learn aurally.
- The lyrics and/or actions will be projected or posted for students to follow along as the song plays.
- The teacher will perform the actions at the front for students to follow along with.
- Since the closure activity requires students to participate with their eyes closed, it allows the teacher to assess the students' understanding of tempo in a non-intimidating way.
- Call and response form could be continued longer if students are not able to sing along with the teacher.

Extensions/ Co-curricular possibilities:

- Following this lesson you could include a conducting lesson (4 beats- down, left, right, up) in which the students learn to conduct and then watch your conducting and sing at the same tempo at which you are conducting (students could then have turns conducting).
- This music lesson could lead to a social studies lesson about world peace and discussion about United Nations (World Peace Day: Sept 21st) or Children's Rights.

Materials/ Resources needed for this lesson:

- Pieces of paper with 5 copies each of the words "love", "joy", "peace", "river", "fountain", or "ocean" mixed up in a bag
- Lyrics to "I've Got Peace Like a River"
- A way to show the lyrics and actions (printed on chart paper, projected off a computer, or under document camera)
- A way to Play "I've Got Peace Like a River" and "Shiny Happy People" (ex. laptop connected to speakers)
 - Link to "I've Got Peace Like a River": <https://youtu.be/N2R4D6qhaD8>
 - Link to "Shiny Happy People": <https://youtu.be/2kLUaFeWiHA>
- Teaching note: Watch demonstration video of the song being sung with actions before teaching the lesson to familiarize yourself. Be able to confidently demonstrate to the class: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=504GSDI0Yeo> (note: we have chosen not to use the sign for soul - instead we will point to the sole of our foot)

Words to be cut up and put in bag:

Love	Love	Love	Love	Love
Joy	Joy	Joy	Joy	Joy
Peace	Peace	Peace	Peace	Peace
River	River	River	River	River
Fountain	Fountain	Fountain	Fountain	Fountain
Ocean	Ocean	Ocean	Ocean	Ocean

Lyrics to I've Got Peace Like a River

I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul,
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river,
I've got peace like a river in my soul.

I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean in my soul,
I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean,
I've got love like an ocean in my soul.

I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul,
I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain,
I've got joy like a fountain in my soul.

Lesson 2: English/Socials - Writing Lesson

Grades: 4-5

Lesson Concept: Discussion about Martin Luther King Jr. and his influential actions, focusing on his actions related to the civil rights of humans (fight for equality).

Curricular Connections (English and Arts)

Big Ideas:

- Exploring stories helps us understand ourselves and make connections to others and to the world.

Curricular Competencies:

- Use personal experience and knowledge to connect to text (the song) and develop understanding of self, community, and world.
- Transform ideas and information to create original texts.
- Reflect on creative processes as an individual and as a group, and make connections to other experiences.

Content Connection: Speeches are a form of oral text through which oral language strategies can be studied (ex. listening, asking questions, expressing opinions).

Objective/ actions: After exploring Martin Luther King Jr.'s beliefs, actions, and dreams, as a class students will demonstrate their ability to realize their own dreams, express why they are important, and explain how they can achieve them through the completion of an "I have a dream too" worksheet.

Procedure

Hook:

- Hand out a printed version of Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I have a Dream" speech.
- Play a video of his speech and have students listen/watch. Allow them to circle/highlight/underline key words and phrases that stand out to them.

Development:

1. Class discussion: (Allow students to share their thoughts during this time and record their ideas on the board)
 - a. What was King's dream for the country?
 - i. He called for an end to racism in the United States and called for civil and economic rights (equal rights).
 - ii. Fun fact: In the United States, King's efforts in establishing nonviolent activism in the Civil Rights Movement are celebrated each year in January.
 - b. Why might people consider his speech great?
 - i. His speech influenced many to join his fight in the African-American Civil Rights Movement.

- c. Are there any lines you noticed were repeated? Why do you think he repeated these lines? What impact did that have?
 - d. Martin Luther King Jr. made a tremendous impact on the Civil Rights Movement. Are there any Canadians you can think of that also had a dream of creating change which they acted upon?
 - i. Share example of Viola Desmond - An african Canadian woman who was arrested for refusing to leave the “white-only” section of a theater in Nova Scotia and was arrested as a result (note: this happened 9 years before Rosa Parks).
 - e. Discuss your dreams of the future with a partner.
 - f. What’s one thing in the world you wish you could change?
 - g. Why do you think the world would be a better place if that change was made?
2. Allow students to fill out “I have a Dream” worksheet (see worksheets below)

Two versions of a "I have a Dream" worksheet. The left version features a cloud-shaped thought bubble with horizontal lines for writing, and a section below with the text "My dream is important. I can help my dream come true by..." followed by more lines. The right version features a cloud-shaped thought bubble with a small circle at the bottom, and a section below with the text "My dream is important. I can help my dream come true by..." followed by more lines. Both versions have a small URL "http://www.kids.com" at the bottom.

Closure:

- Students share their speeches/ideas in small groups (4-5).
- Ask a few students to share with the class if they wish and if there is time.
- Have the students hand in their “I have a Dream” sheets as a ticket out the door.

Assessment: Teacher will listen for the sharing of ideas throughout the lesson and check for completion of worksheets with well thought out and reasonable responses.

Accommodations:

- Students will be given an excerpt from King’s speech, allowing them to follow along visually as well as aurally.
- If students have difficulty putting their thoughts into words, they can draw what they want to express on the version of the worksheet without lines.

Extensions/ Co-curricular possibilities:

- Students who finish early could complete an additional worksheet or look up some fun facts about Martin Luther King Jr. to share with the class.
- The dream worksheets can be put up to display the class’ dreams.
- The dream worksheets could lead to a humanitarian action project within the school in which students come up with a plan of action to help a humanitarian issue. (Ex: if a student writes something along the lines of “my dream is... living on a clean earth” the students of the class/school can work together to organize an efficient program that will

reduce their carbon footprints, such as a bike to school program, recycling program, or reducing food waste challenge)

- The student's Dream worksheets could be followed up with a speech giving lesson in which students orally express their dreams, why they are important, and how they can achieve them.
- You could read the following books about Martin Luther King Jr:
 - *Happy birthday, Martin Luther King* by J. Marzalo
 - *Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King* by D. Rappaport
- This video Biography of Martin Luther King Jr could be included if there is time, or used for a future social studies lesson: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=k6Au81aHuSg>
- More lessons about Martin Luther King Jr:
http://www.educationworld.com/a_lesson/lesson248.shtml
- You could also extend this into a social studies lesson or unit looking at famous Canadian activists.

Materials/ Resources needed for this lesson:

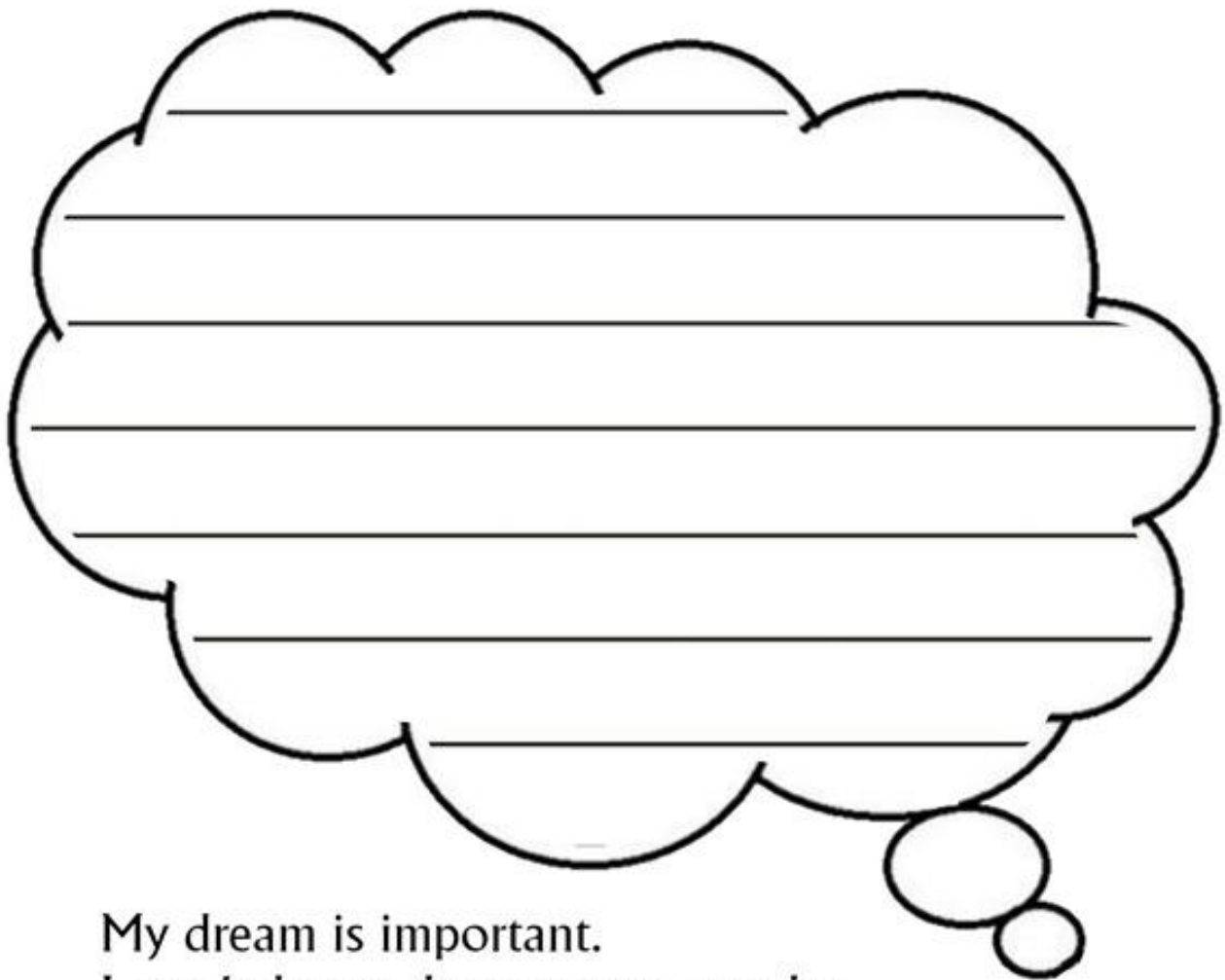
- Projector to play King's speech
- Link to King's Speech: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3vDWWy4CMhE> (0:00-3:17)
- I have a Dream worksheet (with lines and without lines)
- Print out an excerpt from King's speech (1 for each student)

I Have a Dream Worksheet (with lines):

Martin Luther King, Jr. had a dream.

I have a dream, too.

My dream is...

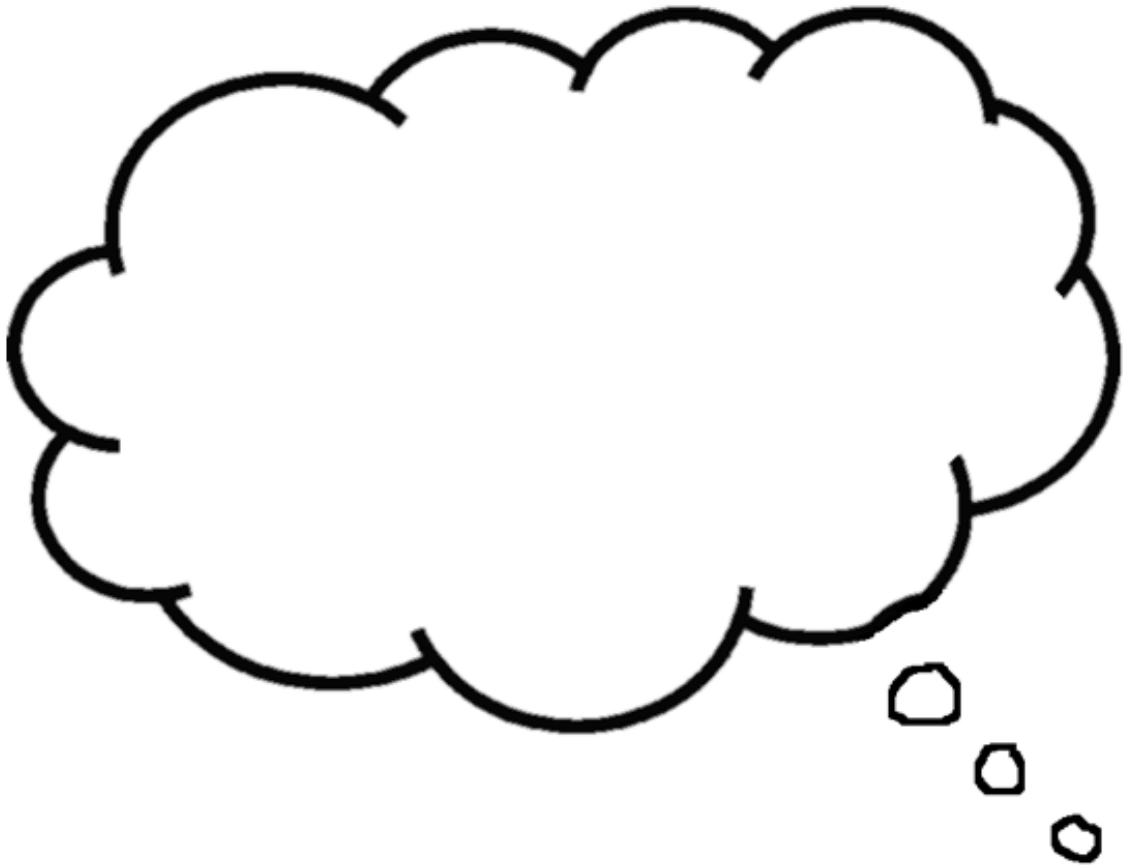


My dream is important.

I can help my dream come true by...

I Have a Dream Worksheet (no lines):

Martin Luther King. Jr. had a dream.
I have a dream, too.
My dream is...



My dream is important.
I can help my dream come try by...

Excerpt of Martin Luther King Jr.'s Speech:

“And so even though we face the difficulties of today and tomorrow, I still have a dream. It is a dream deeply rooted in the American dream. I have a dream that one day this nation will rise up and live out the true meaning of its creed: "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal." I have a dream that one day on the red hills of Georgia, the sons of former slaves and the sons of former slave owners will be able to sit down together at the table of brotherhood. I have a dream that one day even the state of Mississippi, a state sweltering with the heat of injustice, sweltering with the heat of oppression, will be transformed into an oasis of freedom and justice. I have a dream that my four little children will one day live in a nation where they will not be judged by the color of their skin but by the content of their character.

I have a *dream* today!

I have a dream that one day, down in Alabama, with its vicious racists, with its governor having his lips dripping with the words of "interposition" and "nullification" -- one day right there in Alabama little black boys and black girls will be able to join hands with little white boys and white girls as sisters and brothers.

I have a *dream* today!

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exalted, and every hill and mountain shall be made low, the rough places will be made plain, and the crooked places will be made straight; "and the glory of the Lord shall be revealed and all flesh shall see it together." This is our hope, and this is the faith that I go back to the South with. With this faith, we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope. With this faith, we will be able to transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood. With this faith, we will be able to work together, to pray together, to struggle together, to go to jail together, to stand up for freedom together, knowing that we will be free one day.”

-Martin Luther King Jr., 1963

Lesson 3: Sing About Martin

Grades: 4-5

Lesson Concept: Exploring beat, rhythm and pitch through singing and signing “Sing about Martin.”

Form for teaching: This song will be taught using rote call-and-response form, with responses identical to the call.

Curriculum Connections (Arts - Music)

Big Idea:

- Dance, drama, music, and visual arts are each unique languages for creating and communicating.

Curricular Competencies:

- Explore connections to identity place, culture, and belonging through creative expression.
- Examine relationships between the arts and the wider world.

Content Connection: Beat/Pulse, Rhythm and Pitch

Objective/actions: Beat is the part of rhythm which can be considered as the steady heartbeat of the music. Rhythm, as defined by Carolynn A. Lindeman in *Musical Children*, is “the long and short durations of sounds/silences and the organization of these sounds/silences in time”(p.26). Pitch is the highness and lowness of the notes in the music. Students will demonstrate their understanding of beat and rhythm in this lesson through their ability to perform the sign language at the appropriate times according to when the words are sung (on strong beats). Children will demonstrate an understanding of rhythm and pitch by singing the echo lines in “Sing about Martin” identically to the caller (at the right tempo, and correct pitch).

"Sing About Martin!"

CD tracks 32 and 33

"Miss Jackie" Weissman

The musical score is written on four staves in 4/4 time. It features a call-and-response format. The lyrics are: "Sing a-bout Mar-tin, Sing a-bout Mar-tin, Sing a-bout car-ing, Sing a-bout car-ing, Sing a-bout peace, Sing a-bout peace, All a-round the world. All a-round the world. Sing a-bout Mar-tin, Sing a-bout Mar-tin, Sing a-bout lov-ing, Sing a-bout lov-ing, Sing a-bout peace, Sing a-bout peace, All a-round the world. All a-round the world." The score includes musical notation for the melody and chords (F, Bb, Gm7, C7) for the call and response sections.

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Sing about Martin Song: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=dF3-hPT3PDI>

Song with signs: <https://youtu.be/ireaAw7QfLE>

Procedure

Hook:

Demonstrate each sign from the song ("M", "caring/loving", "peace" and "all around the world"). Pause after showing each sign and ask the students what they think the action means and what it makes them think of. Record their thoughts in a brainstorm on the board. (Note: students should recognize a couple of the signs from "I've Got Peace Like a River")

Development:

1. Play "Sing About Martin" from CD and ask students how many times they hear the word "Martin."
2. Split the students into four groups (group by areas of the classroom i.e. clumps or rows) and listen to the song a second time. This time, give each group a specific word or phrase (caring, loving, peace, or all around the world) to listen for, and tell the students to stand up when they hear the word that their group has been assigned.
3. Teach the lyrics via call and response with lyrics projected.
4. Teach the following signs (project on the board)



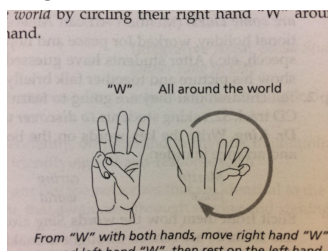
- a. "Martin" (M) : [put thumb across the inside of your hand between pinky and fourth finger, close all other fingers over]



- b. "caring/loving": [cross your arms in front of your body with your hands in fists]



- c. "Peace": [hands together, move hands down and out with palms facing down]



- d. "World": [with three fingers up like a "W", draw a circle in the air]

5. Sing along with the CD (using call and response) and sign keywords (Martin, caring/loving, peace, world)
6. *If there is time*: Sing the song again replacing the keywords with their appropriate signs to help students form internal hearing (like the song BINGO).

Closure:

Signs matching activity - Give each student a signs matching worksheet with all of the signs that they learned in "Peace Like a River" and "Sing about Martin" and have them complete it. Have students show you their favourite sign and hand in their worksheet as a ticket out the door.

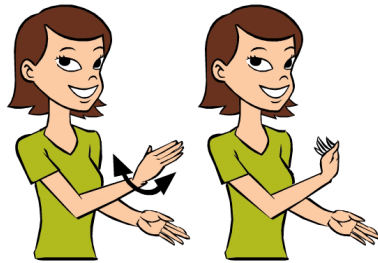
Assessment: Watch for student engagement: following along with song, listening for keywords, and use of signs. Assess student understanding of beat by observing students and ensuring that they are signing the right words at the right times. Listen for singing at correct tempo and pitch when student sing the song. The closure activity will show if the students have learned the signs during the two songs or if they need to continue to be reviewed.

Accommodations:

- Project or put up pictures of each sign.
- Instead of learning all actions at once, learn 1 new action for a word each time you listen. You would have to play the song 5 times to learn all actions.
- Teacher would do the actions in the call and response part for students to mimic.
- Teacher could conduct (show the beat: 4) to help students keep beat, or set a metronome.
- Students could work in pairs to complete the matching worksheet if they are having a hard time. (The teacher may need to show the action if the students are unable to interpret the diagrams)

Extensions/ Co-curricular possibilities:

- Split the class into two groups and have one group sing the first “call” line and the other group sign the “response” line
- Add in the sign for sing:



“Sing”:

- Allow students to continue rehearsing the song and perform to parents, school, another class, etc.

Materials/ Resources needed for this lesson:

- Musical Children CD to play “Sing about Martin” (Track 32-33)
- Lyrics for the song to be projected
- Signs for the song to be projected
- A way to project (i.e. document camera or laptop connected to a projector)
- Sign language matching activity

Lyrics to “Sing about Martin”:

Sing a-bout Mar-tin, *Sing a-bout Mar-tin*,
Sing a-bout car-ing, *Sing a-bout car-ing*,
Sing a-bout peace, *Sing a-bout peace*,
All a-round the world, *all a-round the world*.

Sing a-bout Mar-tin, *Sing a-bout Mar-tin*,
Sing a-bout lov-ing, *Sing a-bout lov-ing*,
Sing a-bout peace, *Sing a-bout peace*,
All a-round the world, *all a-round the world*.

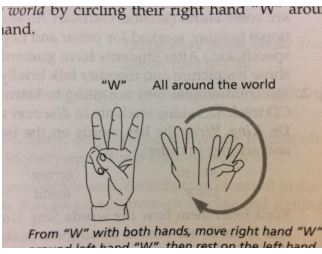
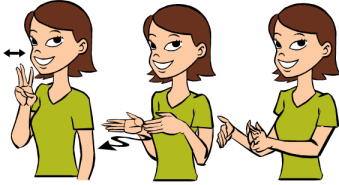
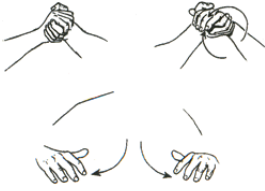
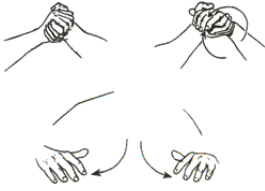
Name: _____

Date: _____

Sign Language Matching Activity

Instructions: Put the word that corresponds with each of the signs in the box beside it. (Note: There is a word bank at the bottom with all of the words you may refer to. Each word is only used once).

Sign	What it means
	
	
	
	
	

Word Bank

Martin (M)	Love/Caring	Peace
World	Peace	River
Joy	Fountain	Ocean