



**Lapsits**  
for Early Literacy

Lapsits for Early Literacy Parent Tip Card  
Ages 3-5 years old



***Martin's Big Words:***  
***The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.***

*written by Doreen Rapaport*  
*illustrated by Bryan Collier; Hyperion books, 2001*

**Note to Parents--**This biography is an overview of Dr. Martin Luther King's life. It tells his life in Dr. King's own words, movingly in passion and peace. Martin's Big Words is a "Read-Aloud-and-Grow-with-Me" Book.

There are many ideas here to discuss with your children. And as your children get older, the book will contain more and more to consider, share, and further explore.

**Sharing with 3 -5 Year Olds--Very Important:** This book has some "heavy" concepts for little ones to grasp. Injustice, boycotting, and death are hard topics to discuss. You may want to simply show the pictures to your child and talk about them in your own words. After sharing, if your child seems worried or fearful, answer her questions and reassure her.

**Before reading:**

**Look at the cover.** Is this man happy or sad? How do you know? Look at the colored windows page—where have you seen windows like that?

**Title Page.** Read the author and illustrator's names. This says: Martin's Big Words: The Life of Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. Why might the word "BIG" be large in the title? (Sometimes authors emphasize ideas with letter size.) Share some BIG ideas with your little one. (Don't steal. Love your family. Be good to one another.) Ask him, "Can you think of an example of a big idea?"

**Picture share or read the book.** Enjoy the art work. Read and move your finger under the words. You may want to tell your child which words are Dr. King's.

**Ask your child to retell the story.** Use the pictures to help. Pause to fill in the gaps for your child.

1. Where did Martin grow up? Why did young Martin feel bad when he read the "white only" signs? How would you feel if there were "white only" signs in our city today?
2. Martin learned from the Bible and from his father who was a minister. What lessons does the Bible teach? (brotherhood, peace, caring). How are these "BIG" words?
3. Teach your child the name Gandhi, the leader who helped the country of India gain freedom.
4. Tell more about Rosa Parks. What does being "arrested" mean? Explain the word "boycott" (to refuse to use or buy) and "protest."
5. Talk about what it means to "stand up for your rights."
6. Look at the cover again. Why, despite all his troubles, is Dr. King happy?

**Book Recommendation:** My Dream of Martin Luther King by Faith Ringgold (Dragonfly Books), ages 4-9  
[www.education-world.com/a\\_lesson/lesson046.shtml](http://www.education-world.com/a_lesson/lesson046.shtml)-- Family activities for grades Pre-K-12. Excellent multiple links about **Dr. King**.

**Among many awards:** Caldecott Honor Book; Coretta Scott King Honor Book ; ALA (American Library Association) Notable Children's Book National Council of Teachers of English, Orbis Pictus Honor Book