

2024-2025 English 9H Summer Assignment

Your summer assignment will focus on poetry and some non-fiction selections to prepare you for important literary themes in English 9H.

POETRY SELECTIONS: You will read poems delivered at presidential inaugural addresses (to date, only four presidents have ever done this¹).

1. "The Hill We Climb" by Amanda Gorman
2. "One Today" by Richard Blanco
3. "On the Pulse of Morning" by Maya Angelou

Complete the following tasks for EACH poem:

1. Annotate each poem using the TPCASTT method explained on the next page.
2. Bring the poems to class on the first day of school. All annotations should be completed by hand.

NON-FICTION SELECTIONS

1. "The Way to Wealth" by Benjamin Franklin
2. Preface from *The Epic of America* by James Truslow Adams
3. "I Have a Dream" by Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.

Complete the following tasks for EACH non-fiction selection:

1. Annotate each text using the process explained in the videos below.
2. Bring the texts to class on the first day of school. All annotations should be completed by hand.

When you annotate a text, you make notes in the margins to help you find patterns in the text worthy of analysis. I will check your annotations on the first day of class (a 40-point assignment). Good annotations focus on patterns (themes, figurative language, imagery, symbolism, etc.), not exclusively summary or unfamiliar vocabulary. They allow you to interact with the text, reacting to the language and preparing to analyze the work. It is perfectly acceptable to include comments in the margins that focus on your reactions to the writers' choices. Be personal! When you make notes on the texts, the amount you annotate will vary, but use your best judgment here. Go beyond summarizing the content or defining words.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=tEMNDdfLWDA>

("How to annotate text: Highlight and Rewrite" by School Habits)

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=w5Mz4nwcIWc>

("How to Annotate a Text While Reading" by School Habits)

Your assignment is due on the first day of class. Here is how it will be graded:

Annotations are worth 40 points. I will collect annotations on the first day of class. Here are the criteria on the rubric:

- Annotations focus on patterns (themes, imagery, figurative language, symbolism, motifs, details, etc.), not exclusively summary or unfamiliar words (20 pts)
- Annotations show the reader's personal interaction with the story. (20 pts)

Please contact teacher Erin Atkinson at erin.atkinson@signature.edu if you have questions.

¹ "Inaugural Poems in History" (<https://poets.org/inaugural-poems-history>)

TPCASTT: An acronym for a process used to read and analyze poetry. Here is a breakdown of the process:

T: Title. Examine the title and make predictions on what you think the poem will cover.

P: Paraphrase. You have some choices here, depending on your comfort with poetry. You can paraphrase line by line or sentence by sentence, especially if the poem confuses you. You might only need to do that detailed of paraphrasing for the parts you find difficult to understand. Given that these poems feature modern language, you may not need to paraphrase much at all. At the very least, I would expect you to write a brief summary of the poem after you finish it. Don't overlook paraphrasing—it helps!

C: Connotation. Words have connotations, or feelings that they evoke. For example, the words *walk*, *lumber*, *shuffle*, and *march* all convey a forward movement, but they all have different connotations. When you annotate for this step, you're looking at the emotional impact the language has. What patterns do you see in the connotations? What words stand out to you?

A: Attitude. This step is about the attitude the writer takes toward the subject, or tone. The tone will not be the same through the whole poem. Make note of the poem's tone(s) as you read.

S: Shifts. Identify places in the poem where the language, content, or attitude shifts. Sometimes it will be obvious, with a word like *but*, *or*, *then*, or something similar. Other times the shifts will be more subtle. These shifts have importance.

T: Title, again. Examine the title again, this time on an interpretive level. A poem's title is always important to its meaning.

T: Theme. Identify the poem's theme, or message.

"The Hill We Climb" by Amanda Gorman (b. 1998)
Read at Joe Biden's presidential inauguration in 2021

When day comes we ask ourselves, 1
where can we find light in this never-ending shade?
The loss we carry,
a sea we must wade.
We've braved the belly of the beast,
We've learned that quiet isn't always peace,
and the norms and notions
of what just is
isn't always just-ice.
And yet the dawn is ours 10
before we knew it.
Somehow we do it.
Somehow we've weathered and witnessed
a nation that isn't broken,
but simply unfinished.
We the successors of a country and a time
where a skinny Black girl
descended from slaves and raised by a single mother
can dream of becoming president
only to find herself reciting for one. 20
And yes we are far from polished.
Far from pristine.
But that doesn't mean we are
striving to form a union that is perfect.
We are striving to forge a union with purpose,
to compose a country committed to all cultures, colors, characters and
conditions of man.
And so we lift our gazes not to what stands between us,
but what stands before us.
We close the divide because we know, to put our future first, 30
we must first put our differences aside.
We lay down our arms
so we can reach out our arms
to one another.
We seek harm to none and harmony for all.
Let the globe, if nothing else, say this is true,
that even as we grieved, we grew,
that even as we hurt, we hoped,
that even as we tired, we tried,
that we'll forever be tied together, victorious. 40
Not because we will never again know defeat,
but because we will never again sow division.
Scripture tells us to envision

that everyone shall sit under their own vine and fig tree
and no one shall make them afraid.
If we're to live up to our own time,
then victory won't lie in the blade.
But in all the bridges we've made,
that is the promise to glade,
the hill we climb. 50
If only we dare.
It's because being American is more than a pride we inherit,
it's the past we step into
and how we repair it.
We've seen a force that would shatter our nation
rather than share it.
Would destroy our country if it meant delaying democracy.
And this effort very nearly succeeded.
But while democracy can be periodically delayed,
it can never be permanently defeated. 60
In this truth,
in this faith we trust.
For while we have our eyes on the future,
history has its eyes on us.
This is the era of just redemption
we feared at its inception.
We did not feel prepared to be the heirs
of such a terrifying hour
but within it we found the power
to author a new chapter. 70
To offer hope and laughter to ourselves.
So while once we asked,
how could we possibly prevail over catastrophe?
Now we assert,
How could catastrophe possibly prevail over us?
We will not march back to what was,
but move to what shall be.
A country that is bruised but whole,
benevolent but bold,
fierce and free. 80
We will not be turned around
or interrupted by intimidation,
because we know our inaction and inertia
will be the inheritance of the next generation.
Our blunders become their burdens.
But one thing is certain,
If we merge mercy with might,
and might with right,
then love becomes our legacy,

and change our children's birthright. 90
So let us leave behind a country
better than the one we were left with.
Every breath from my bronze-pounded chest,
we will raise this wounded world into a wondrous one.
We will rise from the gold-limbed hills of the west.
We will rise from the windswept northeast,
where our forefathers first realized revolution.
We will rise from the lake-rimmed cities of the midwestern states.
We will rise from the sunbaked south.
We will rebuild, reconcile and recover. 100
And every known nook of our nation and
every corner called our country,
our people diverse and beautiful will emerge,
battered and beautiful.
When day comes we step out of the shade,
aflame and unafraid,
the new dawn blooms as we free it.
For there is always light,
if only we're brave enough to see it.
If only we're brave enough to be it. 110

"One Today" by Richard Blanco (b. 1968)
A poem for Barack Obama's presidential inauguration, 2013

One sun rose on us today, kindled over our shores, 1
peeking over the Smokies, greeting the faces
of the Great Lakes, spreading a simple truth
across the Great Plains, then charging across the Rockies.
One light, waking up rooftops, under each one, a story
told by our silent gestures moving behind windows.

My face, your face, millions of faces in morning's mirrors,
each one yawning to life, crescendoing into our day:
pencil-yellow school buses, the rhythm of traffic lights,
fruit stands: apples, limes, and oranges arrayed like rainbows 10
begging our praise. Silver trucks heavy with oil or paper—
bricks or milk, teeming over highways alongside us,
on our way to clean tables, read ledgers, or save lives—
to teach geometry, or ring-up groceries as my mother did
for twenty years, so I could write this poem.

All of us as vital as the one light we move through,
the same light on blackboards with lessons for the day:
equations to solve, history to question, or atoms imagined,
the "I have a dream" we keep dreaming, 20
or the impossible vocabulary of sorrow that won't explain
the empty desks of twenty children marked absent
today, and forever. Many prayers, but one light
breathing color into stained glass windows,
life into the faces of bronze statues, warmth
onto the steps of our museums and park benches
as mothers watch children slide into the day.

One ground. Our ground, rooting us to every stalk
of corn, every head of wheat sown by sweat
and hands, hands gleaning coal or planting windmills 30
in deserts and hilltops that keep us warm, hands
digging trenches, routing pipes and cables, hands
as worn as my father's cutting sugarcane
so my brother and I could have books and shoes.

The dust of farms and deserts, cities and plains
mingled by one wind—our breath. Breathe. Hear it
through the day's gorgeous din of honking cabs,
buses launching down avenues, the symphony
of footsteps, guitars, and screeching subways,
the unexpected song bird on your clothes line.

Hear: squeaky playground swings, trains whistling, 40
or whispers across café tables, Hear: the doors we open
for each other all day, saying: hello / shalom,
buon giorno / howdy / namaste / or buenos días
in the language my mother taught me—in every language
spoken into one wind carrying our lives
without prejudice, as these words break from my lips.

One sky: since the Appalachians and Sierras claimed
their majesty, and the Mississippi and Colorado worked
their way to the sea. Thank the work of our hands:
weaving steel into bridges, finishing one more report 50
for the boss on time, stitching another wound
or uniform, the first brush stroke on a portrait,
or the last floor on the Freedom Tower
jutting into a sky that yields to our resilience.

One sky, toward which we sometimes lift our eyes
tired from work: some days guessing at the weather
of our lives, some days giving thanks for a love
that loves you back, sometimes praising a mother
who knew how to give, or forgiving a father
who couldn't give what you wanted. 60

We head home: through the gloss of rain or weight
of snow, or the plum blush of dusk, but always—home,
always under one sky, our sky. And always one moon
like a silent drum tapping on every rooftop
and every window, of one country—all of us—
facing the stars
hope—a new constellation
waiting for us to map it,
waiting for us to name it—together.

“On the Pulse of Morning” by Maya Angelou (1928–2014)
A poem for Bill Clinton’s presidential inauguration, 1993

A Rock, A River, A Tree 1
Hosts to species long since departed,
Marked the mastodon,
The dinosaur, who left dried tokens
Of their sojourn here
On our planet floor,
Any broad alarm of their hastening doom
Is lost in the gloom of dust and ages.

But today, the Rock cries out to us, clearly, forcefully, 10
Come, you may stand upon my
Back and face your distant destiny,
But seek no haven in my shadow.
I will give you no hiding place down here.

You, created only a little lower than
The angels, have crouched too long in
The bruising darkness
Have lain too long
Face down in ignorance.
Your mouths spilling words

Armed for slaughter. 20
The Rock cries out to us today, you may stand upon me,
But do not hide your face.
Across the wall of the world,
A River sings a beautiful song. It says,
Come, rest here by my side.

Each of you, a bordered country,
Delicate and strangely made proud,
Yet thrusting perpetually under siege.
Your armed struggles for profit
Have left collars of waste upon 30
My shore, currents of debris upon my breast.
Yet today I call you to my riverside,
If you will study war no more. Come,
Clad in peace, and I will sing the songs
The Creator gave to me when I and the
Tree and the rock were one.

Before cynicism was a bloody sear across your
Brow and when you yet knew you still
Knew nothing.
The River sang and sings on. 40

There is a true yearning to respond to
The singing River and the wise Rock.
So say the Asian, the Hispanic, the Jew
The African, the Native American, the Sioux,
The Catholic, the Muslim, the French, the Greek
The Irish, the Rabbi, the Priest, the Sheik,
The Gay, the Straight, the Preacher,
The privileged, the homeless, the Teacher.
They hear. They all hear
The speaking of the Tree. 50

They hear the first and last of every Tree
Speak to humankind today. Come to me, here beside the River.
Plant yourself beside the River.

Each of you, descendant of some passed
On traveller, has been paid for.
You, who gave me my first name, you,
Pawnee, Apache, Seneca, you
Cherokee Nation, who rested with me, then
Forced on bloody feet,
Left me to the employment of 60
Other seekers—desperate for gain,
Starving for gold.

You, the Turk, the Arab, the Swede, the German, the Eskimo, the Scot,
You the Ashanti, the Yoruba, the Kru, bought,
Sold, stolen, arriving on the nightmare
Praying for a dream.
Here, root yourselves beside me.
I am that Tree planted by the River,
Which will not be moved.

I, the Rock, I the River, I the Tree 70
I am yours—your passages have been paid.
Lift up your faces, you have a piercing need
For this bright morning dawning for you.
History, despite its wrenching pain
Cannot be unlived, but if faced
With courage, need not be lived again.

Lift up your eyes upon
This day breaking for you.
Give birth again
To the dream. 80

Women, children, men,
Take it into the palms of your hands,
Mold it into the shape of your most
Private need. Sculpt it into
The image of your most public self.
Lift up your hearts
Each new hour holds new chances
For a new beginning.
Do not be wedded forever
To fear, yoked eternally 90
To brutishness.

The horizon leans forward,
Offering you space to place new steps of change.
Here, on the pulse of this fine day
You may have the courage
To look up and out and upon me, the
Rock, the River, the Tree, your country.
No less to Midas than the mendicant.
No less to you now than the mastodon then.

Here, on the pulse of this new day 100
You may have the grace to look up and out
And into your sister's eyes, and into
Your brother's face, your country
And say simply
Very simply
With hope—
Good morning.

THE WAY TO WEALTH by Benjamin Franklin

(From "Father Abraham's Speech," forming the preface to *Poor Richard's Almanac* for 1758.)

It would be thought a hard Government that should tax its People one-tenth Part of their *Time*, to be employed in its Service. But *Idleness* taxes many of us much more, if we reckon all that is spent in absolute *Sloth*, or doing of nothing, with that which is spent in idle Employments or Amusements, that amount to nothing. *Sloth*, by bringing on Diseases, absolutely shortens Life. *Sloth, like Rust, consumes faster than Labor wears; while the used key is always bright, as Poor Richard says. But dost thou love Life, then do not squander Time, for that's the stuff Life is made of, as Poor Richard says.* How much more than is necessary do we spend in sleep, forgetting that *The sleeping Fox catches no Poultry*, and that *There will be sleeping enough in the Grave*, as *Poor Richard* says.

If Time be of all Things the most precious, wasting Time must be, as Poor Richard says, the greatest Prodigality; since, as he elsewhere tells us, Lost Time is never found again; and what we call Time enough, always proves little enough: Let us then up and be doing, and doing to the Purpose; so by Diligence shall we do more with less Perplexity. Sloth makes all Things difficult, but Industry all easy, as Poor Richard says; and He that riseth late must trot all Day, and shall scarce overtake his Business at Night; while Laziness travels so slowly, that Poverty soon overtakes him, as we read in Poor Richard, who adds, Drive thy Business, let not that drive thee; and Early to Bed, and early to rise, makes a Man healthy, wealthy, and wise.

Industry need not wish, and he that lives upon Hope will die fasting.

There are no Gains without Pains.

He that hath a Trade hath an Estate; and he that hath a Calling, hath an Office of Profit and Honor; but then the Trade must be worked at, and the Calling well followed, or neither the Estate nor the Office will enable us to pay our Taxes.

What though you have found no Treasure, nor has any rich Relation left you a Legacy, *Diligence is the Mother of Good-luck*, as *Poor Richard* says, and *God gives all Things to Industry.*

One To-day is worth two To-morrows, and farther, Have you somewhat to do To-morrow, do it To-day.

If you were a Servant, would you not be ashamed that a good Master should catch you idle? Are you then your own Master, *be ashamed to catch yourself idle.*

Stick to it steadily; and you will see great Effects, for *Constant Dropping wears away Stones*, and by *Diligence and Patience the Mouse ate in two the Cable*; and *Little Strokes fell great Oaks.*

Methinks I hear some of you say, *Must a Man afford himself no Leisure?* I will tell thee, my friend, what *Poor Richard* says, *Employ thy Time well, if thou meanest to gain Leisure; and, since thou art not sure of a Minute, throw not away an Hour.* Leisure, is Time for doing something useful; this Leisure the diligent Man will obtain, but the lazy Man never; so that, as *Poor Richard* says, *A Life of Leisure and a Life of Laziness are two things.*

Keep thy Shop, and thy Shop will keep thee; and again, *If you would have your business done, go; if not, send.*

If you would have a faithful Servant, and one that you like, serve yourself.

A little Neglect may breed great Mischief: adding, *for want of a Nail the Shoe was lost; for want of a Shoe the Horse was lost; and for want of a Horse the Rider was lost, being overtaken and slain by the Enemy; all for the want of Care about a Horse-shoe Nail.*

So much for Industry, my Friends, and Attention to one's own Business; but to these we must add *Frugality.*

What maintains one Vice, would bring up two Children. You may think perhaps, that a *little* Tea, or a *little* Punch now and then, Diet a *little* more costly, Clothes a *little* finer, and a *little* Entertainment now and then, can be no *great* Matter; but remember what *Poor Richard* says, *Many a Little makes a Mickle.*

Beware of little expenses; A small Leak will sink a great Ship; and again, *Who Dainties love, shall Beggars prove;* and moreover, *Fools make Feasts, and wise Men eat them.*

Buy what thou hast no Need of, and ere long thou shalt sell thy Necessaries.

If you would know the Value of Money, go and try to borrow some; for, he that goes a borrowing goes a sorrowing.

The second Vice is Lying, the first is running in Debt.

Lying rides upon Debt's Back.

Poverty often deprives a Man of all Spirit and Virtue: *'Tis hard for an empty Bag to stand upright.*

And now to conclude, *Experience keeps a dear School, but Fools will learn in no other, and scarce in that;* for it is true, *we may give Advice, but we cannot give Conduct,* as *Poor Richard* says: However, remember this, *They that won't be counseled, can't be helped,* as *Poor Richard* says: and farther, *That if you will not hear Reason, she'll surely rap your Knuckles.*

The following is the preface from the 1931 book *The Epic of America* by James Truslow Adams (1878-1949), an American writer and historian known for popularizing the phrase The American Dream.

PREFACE

There is no lack of excellent one-volume narrative histories of the United States, in which the political, military, diplomatic, social, and economic strands have been skillfully interwoven. The author has had no wish to work in that somewhat crowded field in writing the volume now offered. He has desired rather to paint a picture, with broad strokes of the brush, of the variegated past which has made our national story, and at the same time to try to discover for himself and others how the ordinary American, under which category most of us come, has become what he is to-day in outlook, character, and opinion.

His own ancestors, in one line, came from Spain to settle in South America in 1558; in another line, that of his name, from England to settle in Virginia in 1658. He himself was Northern in birth and upbringing. He has spent, in the aggregate, a fair number of years in residence in lands other than his own. His family have played their parts in the settlement and development of the two continents of the New World; and he himself has lived enough in the Old to be able to realize the differences which now divide the citizens of the one from the other. Conscious, on the one hand, of no sectional prejudices, but only of being an American, on the other he has grown increasingly conscious of how different an American now is from the man or woman of any other nation. He has been equally interested in the whole colorful pageant of the great epic which is our history, and in trying to discover how we became what we have become. This book was written from these two stand-points. He has endeavored in particular to trace the beginnings at their several points of entry of such American concepts as "bigger and better," of our attitude toward business, of many characteristics which are generally considered as being "typically American," and, in especial, of that American dream of a better, richer, and happier life for all our citizens of every rank which is the greatest contribution we have as yet made to the thought and welfare of the world. That dream or hope has been present from the start. Ever since we became an independent nation, each generation has seen an uprising of the ordinary Americans to save that dream from the forces which appeared to be overwhelming and dispelling it. Possibly the greatest of these struggles lies just ahead of us at this present time—not a struggle of revolutionists against established order, but of the ordinary man to hold fast to those rights to "life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness" which were vouchsafed to us in the past in vision and on parchment...

"I Have a Dream" on Aug. 28, 1963, on the steps of the Lincoln Memorial
The Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr (1929-1968)

Rev. Martin Luther King Jr.: Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

But 100 years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself in exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition. In a sense we've come to our nation's capital to cash a check.

When the architects of our republic wrote the magnificent words of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence, they were signing a promissory note to which every American was to fall heir. This note was a promise that all men — yes, Black men as well as white men — would be guaranteed the unalienable rights of life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness.

It is obvious today that America has defaulted on this promissory note insofar as her citizens of color are concerned. Instead of honoring this sacred obligation, America has given the Negro people a bad check, a check which has come back marked insufficient funds.

But we refuse to believe that the bank of justice is bankrupt.

We refuse to believe that there are insufficient funds in the great vaults of opportunity of this nation. And so we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.

We have also come to this hallowed spot to remind America of the fierce urgency of now. This is no time to engage in the luxury of cooling off or to take the tranquilizing drug of gradualism.

Now is the time to make real the promises of democracy. Now is the time to rise from the dark and desolate valley of segregation to the sunlit path of racial justice. Now is the time to lift our nation from the quick sands of racial injustice to the solid rock of brotherhood. Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God's children.

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro's legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. 1963 is not an end, but a beginning. Those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual.

There will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

But there is something that I must say to my people who stand on the warm threshold which leads into the palace of justice. In the process of gaining our rightful place, we must not be guilty of wrongful deeds. Let us not seek to satisfy our thirst for freedom by drinking from the cup of bitterness and hatred.

We must forever conduct our struggle on the high plane of dignity and discipline. We must not allow our creative protest to degenerate into physical violence. Again and again, we must rise to the majestic heights of meeting physical force with soul force. The marvelous new militancy which has engulfed the Negro community must not lead us to a distrust of all white people, for many of our white brothers, as evidenced by their presence here today, have come to realize that their destiny is tied up with our destiny.

And they have come to realize that their freedom is inextricably bound to our freedom. We cannot walk alone. And as we walk, we must make the pledge that we shall always march ahead. We cannot turn back.

There are those who are asking the devotees of civil rights, when will you be satisfied? We can never be satisfied as long as the Negro is the victim of the unspeakable horrors of police brutality. We can never be satisfied as long as our bodies, heavy with the fatigue of travel, cannot gain lodging in the motels of the highways and the hotels of the cities.

We cannot be satisfied as long as the Negro's basic mobility is from a smaller ghetto to a larger one. We can never be satisfied as long as our children are stripped of their selfhood and robbed of their dignity by signs stating: for whites only.

We cannot be satisfied as long as a Negro in Mississippi cannot vote and a Negro in New York believes he has nothing for which to vote.

No, no, we are not satisfied, and we will not be satisfied until justice rolls down like waters, and righteousness like a mighty stream.

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. Some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our Northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.

Let us not wallow in the valley of despair, I say to you today, my friends. 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 down 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, 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. 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.

This will be the day when all of God's children will be able to sing with new meaning: My country, 'tis of thee, sweet land of liberty, of thee I sing. Land where my fathers died, land of the pilgrims' pride, from every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And if America is to be a great nation, this must become true. And so let freedom ring from the prodigious hilltops of New Hampshire. Let freedom ring from the mighty mountains of New York. Let freedom ring from the heightening Alleghenies of Pennsylvania. Let freedom ring from the snowcapped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that, let freedom ring from Stone Mountain of Georgia. Let freedom ring from Lookout Mountain of Tennessee. Let freedom ring from every hill and molehill of Mississippi. From every mountainside, let freedom ring.

And when this happens, and when we allow freedom ring, when we let it ring from every village and every hamlet, from every state and every city, we will be able to speed up that day when all of God's children, Black men and white men, Jews and Gentiles, Protestants and Catholics, will be able to join hands and sing in the words of the old Negro spiritual: Free at last. Free at last. Thank God almighty, we are free at last.