**12th Form National Poetry Recitation Contest**

**Title of Speech**: I Have A Dream  
**Speaker**: Martin Luther King Jr.  
**Link**: http://www.let.rug.nl/usa/documents/1951-/martin-luther-kings-i-have-a-dream-speech-august-28-1963.php

**Audio**: http://okra.stanford.edu/media/audio/630828000.mp3



**About the Speaker**:  
Martin Luther King Jr., years (adapted from: wikipedia.org)  
Martin Luther King Jr. was an American Baptist minister and activist who became the most visible spokesperson and leader in the Civil Rights Movement from 1954 until his death in 1968. Born in Atlanta, King is best known for advancing civil rights through non-violent protests and marches. Martin Luther King Jr. won the 1964 Nobel Peace Prize for his non-violent leadership during the Civil Rights Movement.

**Excerpt:**

I have a dream today.

I have a dream that one day every valley shall be exhalted, 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 will 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. 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 snow-capped Rockies of Colorado. Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California. But not only that; let freedom ring from the 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!"

**Pre-Reading**:  
Martin Luther King Jr. gave his “I Have a Dream” speech on August 28, 1963 in Washington D.C. at an event called the “March on Washington.” More than 200,000 people gathered together for the March and listened to this speech. The March on Washington was part of the Civil Rights Movement in the United States, a time when African-Americans were trying to gain equal rights. Before the Civil Rights Movement, African-Americans were not allowed to go to the same schools as white Americans, were not allowed to vote, and did not have the same opportunities as white Americans to get good jobs or good housing. In the “I Have a Dream” speech, King talks about his hopes for the future of America. He states, “I have a dream that my four little chi1dren 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.” His dream is that people will get to know his children and like them for being good people, instead of disliking them only because they are black.  
  
**Vocabulary**:  
**vicious** – mean, violent

**racists** – people who show or feel dislike or prejudice against people of other races, or who believe that a particular race is superior to another  
**interposition** – when something comes between two things

**nullification** – canceling or ending something  
**exalted** – on a high or powerful level  
**jangling discords** - unpleasant noises

**Post-Reading Questions:**  
How does reading this speech make you feel? Why?  
Do you think this speech does a good job of conveying its message? Why or why not?  
After reading this speech, how would you describe Martin Luther King Jr.?  
What are your dreams for the future of Armenia or the future of the world?