

US History
An Age of Civil Disobedience

Learning Target:

I can identify why MLK Jr was in Memphis and examine the immediate impact his death had on the country.

10. The Assassination of Martin Luther King Jr.

Location & Time –

- Memphis, Tennessee
- Room 306 of the Lorraine Motel
- April 4, 1968 – 6:00 PM
- Pronounced dead at 7:05 PM

The Sanitation Workers' Strike –

- Was in Memphis to help support a sanitation workers strike
- The garbage men of Memphis were mostly black
- Had been on strike for two months with little progress

The Assassination –

- Had been in his hotel room for much of the day
- Came out his door to talk to Jesse Jackson and to be introduced to a musician from Chicago, Ben Branch, who was to play at the rally that night
- A single bullet hit King in the neck as he bent over
- Severed his spinal cord and he died an hour later

The Assassin –

- James Early Ray
- Caught 2 months later in London
- No trial because he pleaded guilty and was sentenced to 99 years in jail