

TITLE: THIRTY-NINE YEARS - TOO SHORT - TOO LONG –  
LONG ENOUGH

BOOK: A 2<sup>nd</sup> Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul

PAGE: 257

TIME READ: 6 minutes

TOPICS: **Making a Difference**  
Changing the world  
History - Martin Luther King, Jr.

AGE LEVEL: Grades 9 to12

SYNOPSIS: This poetic piece captures the life of Martin Luther King, Jr.,  
and how he changed the world in his 39 years.

NOTES TO TEACHER:

This is a wonderful piece to accompany a history unit on the Civil Rights  
Movements.

*A 2<sup>nd</sup> Helping of Chicken Soup for the Soul*  
Thirty-Nine Years – Too Short – Too Long – Long Enough

HIGH SCHOOL:

PRE-QUESTIONS:

Share what you already know about Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Make a list of the things you hope to do with your life before age 39.

**Read Story**

POST-QUESTIONS:

What did you learn about Martin Luther King, Jr. in hearing this piece?

What did you *feel* as you listened to this prose?

Martin Luther King's life was cut in half.

- Make a list of things Dr. King might have accomplished had he lived to be age 80,
- Make a list of things you hope to do with *your life* after age 39.

STUDENT ACTIVITIES:

Write a “too short – too long – long enough” piece about another famous person.

- You could also choose to do this about a close friend or relative who has died.
- Create a piece of artwork that reflects this piece of writing.
- Write a Gospel song that reflects this writing.
- Choreograph a dance routine to go with the song.
- Perform the original song and dance for other classes.

There are many schools named after Dr. King (predominately African-American).

- Select one and start a “pen pal” relationship with a class there.
- Share pointed and thought-provoking letters about what Dr. King means to each of you.