

## **Gandhi**

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi, known as "Mahatma" (Great-Soul) was born in 1869 in India. His family were Hindu, In 1893 he went to work in South Africa. Gandhi was shocked by the treatment of Indian immigrants there. He protested but he never used violence. However, he was arrested many times during his 20 years in South Africa. Back in India, which was part of the British Empire,

Gandhi's idea of peaceful non co-operation with the British attracted millions of followers. They boycotted British goods and institutions, and thousands were arrested. At Amritsar in 1919 British troops opened fire, killing hundreds of peaceful Indian protestors.

In 1922, Gandhi was arrested and spent two years in prison. He continued to have enormous influence over the people. In 1930 he led a "March to the Sea", also called the "Salt March", when the thousands of participants walked 300km to the coast and symbolically made their own salt from seawater in a peaceful protest against British taxes on salt.

For Gandhi, spiritual wealth was more important than material wealth. He lived a frugal life. He ate a simple diet of rice and vegetables and he slept on a mat on the ground. In 1931, Gandhi went to London to press for the independence of India. Instead of staying in an expensive West End

hotel, he lived in an East London community centre where he slept on the floor. He had no clothes except a simple garment that he made himself and a pair of sandals. He even wore this when he went to 10, Downing Street, and when he had tea with King George VI.

Gandhi worked for peaceful coexistence between Hindus and Muslims. In 1945, Britain gave independence to India and formed two new independent states: India and Pakistan. India was predominantly Hindu while Pakistan was Muslim. This was called "partition". Gandhi was opposed to this partition, and he fasted in an attempt to stop the violence in Calcutta and Delhi.

On 30 January 1948 Gandhi was assassinated in Delhi by a Hindu.

**Answer these questions.**

1. When was Gandhi born?
2. What was he known as?
3. Why was Gandhi shocked in South Africa?
4. What kind of protest did he organise?
5. How did Gandhi's followers show their discontent with British rule?
6. What happened at Amritsar?
7. Why did thousands of people walk to the sea in 1930?
8. What kind of things did Gandhi eat?
9. Why did Gandhi go to London?
10. Did he stay in a hotel?
11. What kind of clothes did he wear?
12. When did India get independence from Britain?
13. What was "partition"?
14. How did Gandhi die?
15. Gandhi was a hero during his life. Can you think of another person you consider a hero? What did he or she do? Speak a little about his or her life.

**Write a summary of the passage.**

**Talk for a few minutes in your own words about the life of Gandhi.**