

Transcript from BrainPop episode on Ghandi.

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was a political and spiritual leader of India during the first half of the 20th century.

One of Ghandi's most useful teachings was "satyagraha" the use of non-violent protest to fight oppression. He was concerned with racial discrimination, unfair taxation, and colonial rule.

Ghandi was born in city of Porbandar, India, in 1869. His parents were devoted followers of religion Hinduism, and taught it to Ghandi, that later became his trademarks. These included vegetarianism, non-violence toward other living beings, fasting for spiritual purification, and tolerance for people of different backgrounds and beliefs.

Age 18, Ghandi went to school in England to become a barrister (lawyer) but could not find work when he went back to India so in 1893 accepted a job in Natal, South Africa. This is where Ghandi got his first real taste of racism. South Africa had huge Indian population that was treated unfairly by the white ruling class. Ghandi spent the next 21 years leading peaceful Indian protests against the government's attacks on their civil rights. These tactics landed thousands of Indians, including Ghandi, in jail. But they also won widespread support and they eventually lead to limited rights for Indians in South Africa.

Ghandi returns to India in 1915 and becomes the face of the Indian Independence Movement, a prolonged struggle for freedom from the British Empire. At that time India was a British colony. Most Indians were landless farmers or laborers living under the harsh reality of class discrimination. Ghandi went to work organizing strikes against British landowners, drawing up petitions, and directing efforts to clean up India's villages. When police through Ghandi in jail thousands protested. It worked. Ghandi was released and the British signed an agreement to repeal some taxes they imposed during the middle of a food shortage. The British also promised more rights and wages for Indian

workers. This victory made Ghandi even more popular. People started calling him Bapu, which means "father" and Mahatma which means "Great Soul."

But India remained under British control and the oppression continued. Ghandi eventually decided that complete independence from foreign rule was the only solution.

Rejecting western clothing he began dressing in a dhoti, simple cloth wraps worn by the poorest Indians.

In 1921 he was given leadership of the Indian National Congress. Over the next 27 years he lead various campaigns against British rule. One of these was the policy of boycotting foreign made goods. Another was the famous salt march of 1930 to protest a British tax on salt. Ghandi lead thousands of Indians on a 23 day 400 kilometer walk to the coast where they made their own salt from seawater.

Then there was his 21 day fast in 1933 (when he was 63) to protest the unfair treatment of untouchables, a class of Indians segregated from the rest of society because they were considered spiritually impure.

1942 Ghandi launched the Quit India Movement in which indians refused to support the British war effort during World War 2. This was the biggest act of defiance so far. British responded with mass arrests. Ghandi locked up for two years.

But they gave in at the end of the war and on Aug. 15, 1947 India became independent nation. Two calm tensions between Muslims and Hindus the Indian National Congress divided the country. A large section broke off to become the Islamic State of Pakistan.

Less than six months later Ghandi was assassinated by a Hindu extremist who was unhappy with the settlement terms negotiated with Pakistan.

Ghandi's legacy lives on. He is officially remembered as the father of the nation. His principals of nonviolence went on to inspire Martin Luther King Jr. the American Civil Rights Movement and others around the world.

1. Which of the following events took place during Gandhi's time as a political and spiritual leader?
 - A. The American Revolution
 - B. The Vietnam War
 - C. World War II
 - D. The American Civil War
2. What can you infer about Gandhi from the fact that he practiced the Hindu religion?
 - A. He didn't eat meat
 - B. He had little tolerance for other religions
 - C. He did not believe in a god or gods
 - D. He was happy when World War I broke out
3. During Gandhi's youth, what did South Africa and India have in common?
 - A. They were both controlled by the government of France
 - B. They fought against each other during World War I
 - C. Racism and discrimination against Indian people existed in both places
 - D. Indian people were not allowed to hold jobs in either place
4. What term best describes Gandhi's recommended style of fighting against oppression?
 - A. Imperialist
 - B. Disorganized
 - C. Bloody, if necessary
 - D. Nonviolent
5. Why was Gandhi given the name "Mahatma?"
 - A. It was his father's first name
 - B. It reflected his status as an honored spiritual leader
 - C. It was originally an insult applied to him by the British government
 - D. It meant, literally, "Father of the Nation"
6. Which of the following historical decisions sounds most like something Gandhi might do?
 - A. Martin Luther King, Jr. organizes a peaceful bus boycott in Montgomery, Alabama
 - B. The American colonists take up arms to fight against British rule
 - C. The U.S. invades Cuba to liberate it from an oppressive government

- D. The people of Russia overthrow and kill the Czar, an autocratic monarch
7. What was the main reason why Gandhi began dressing in a dhoti?
 - A. To focus international attention on India's struggle
 - B. As a gesture of unity with poorer Indians
 - C. To show that Indians were capable of making their own clothing
 - D. He was required to do so by the British government
8. What was the immediate cause of the Salt March of 1930?
 - A. A salt shortage in the poorest areas of India
 - B. A British tax on salt
 - C. A British ban on marching
 - D. A lack of salt in the Indian Ocean
9. Why was Gandhi murdered?
 - A. His murderer was mentally disturbed
 - B. He was killed by agents from the British government
 - C. He was killed by someone who thought that members of the "untouchable" class should have no rights
 - D. His killer disliked India's agreement with the new nation of Pakistan
10. Which word describes how most Indians lived before their nation became independent?
 - A. Landowners
 - B. Peasants
 - C. Slaves
 - D. Unemployed

Answer the following questions in complete sentences.

1. Cite textual evidence explaining why Gandhi was considered the "Face of the Indian Independence Movement."
2. Cite textual evidence explaining two examples of the effectiveness of non-violent protest.
3. Cite textual evidence explaining two examples of Gandhi's non-violent protest.
4. Cite textual evidence explaining what satyagraha means.
5. Cite textual evidence explaining how Gandhi is remembered and who he inspired.