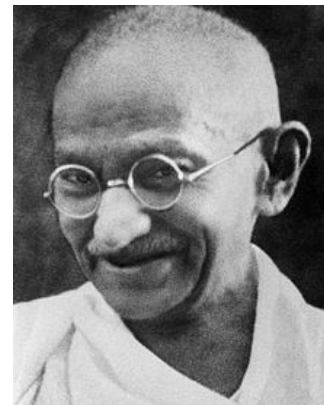


Mahatma Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2nd October 1869. He was born in Porbander, Gujarat, North West India. His father was the Chief Minister of Porbander and his mother was very religious. She worshipped the God Vishnu, but also believed Jain teachings, which taught people about not causing injury to living things. Gandhi had a good education.



The Young Man

He began studying at a college in the University of Bombay although Gandhi was not very happy at college, so when he was offered the chance to study law in London, he took it. He worked hard and began to study all religions. Until this time, he had never really been interested in religion. When he returned to India, he found it hard to find work, so eventually took a job in South Africa for a year.

Gandhi was upset at the way people that were not white were treated. Once, Gandhi was removed from a train even though he had a valid ticket because he was not white. Another time, he was asked to take off his turban in court. He refused and left the courtroom. Situations like this were part of apartheid.



Did you know?

Apartheid is an Afrikaans word that means “status of being apart”. In real life terms, it meant that white people were treated a lot better than black or Asian people. There were even shops that “non-whites” weren’t allowed to go in!

Gandhi and the People

Gandhi knew he needed to do something about the unfairness of apartheid. He believed in non-violent political protests. A protest is when someone stands up against something they do not agree with and brings attention to it so that others might get involved. This



Photo courtesy of (Raymond June@flickr.com) - granted under creative commons licence - attribution

meant that he would encourage protesting in a peaceful, safe way. He did not want people to get hurt, he just wanted the authorities to take notice of what life was like for people who were not white.

He returned to India and was horrified to find how badly treated the Indian people of Bihar were, by the white British masters. He began to encourage people to stand up for themselves and their rights in peaceful protests and strikes. The people were grateful somebody was trying to help them and he became known as Mahatma – Great Soul.

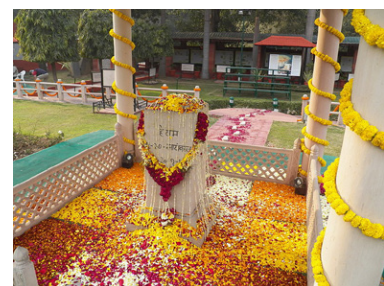
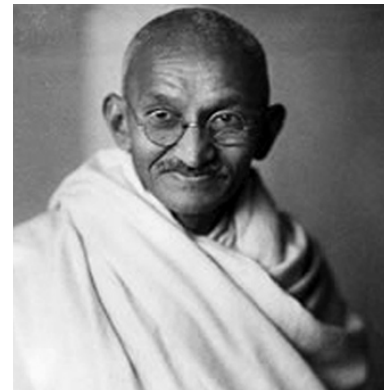
Famous Gandhi

Gandhi's fame began to spread. Indian people saw him as their voice for freedom and fairness. He started a boycott of buying British goods. This meant he encouraged people not to buy British goods. This led to his first arrest, and on 2nd March 1922, he was put into prison for two years. Gandhi went on many hunger strikes to bring attention to the unfair treatment of people at the hands of the British. When he was released, he began to try to end the British rule over Indian people.

The British began to realise that a lot of people agreed with Gandhi and they were worried there could be a war, so they agreed to make some changes and improve the lives of some of the poorer people.

Gandhi was arrested a number of times because he encouraged people to stand up to the government. Some people also tried to kill him. One man in particular tried and eventually succeeded: Nathuram Godse.

Gandhi died on his way to a prayer meeting on 30th January 1948. He was shot three times in the chest.



Mahatma Gandhi Questions

1. What area of India was Gandhi born?

2. Describe which two events made Gandhi realise that he was being treated differently in South Africa.

3. What do you think it was like for non-white people living in South Africa?

4. What sort of protests did Gandhi believe in?

5. Why did the people call Gandhi 'Mahatma'?

6. What were the British masters afraid of? Explain your reasons.

7. What changed as a result of Gandhi's protests?

8. Who killed Gandhi?

Mahatma Gandhi Answers

1. What area of India was Gandhi born?

Gandhi was born in the Gujarat area of North West India.

2. Describe which two events made Gandhi realise that he was being treated differently in South Africa.

Once, Gandhi was removed from a train because he was not white. Another time, he was asked to take off his turban in court. He refused and left the courtroom.

3. What do you think it was like for non-white people living in South Africa?

Accept reasonable answers e.g. I think it would have been very hard for non-white people living in South Africa because they were not allowed to go in some shops. This was because they were not white and they were kept apart from white people.

4. What sort of protests did Gandhi believe in?

Gandhi believed in non- violent political protests.

5. Why did the people call Gandhi 'Mahatma'?

Accept similar answers: The people called Gandhi 'Mahatma' because he encouraged people to stand up for themselves and their rights, and they were grateful that he was trying to help them / They saw him as a voice for freedom and fairness.

6. What were the British masters afraid of? Explain your reasons.

Accept similar answers: The British masters were afraid that there could be a war because Gandhi was becoming famous and there were so many people who agreed with him.

7. What changed as a result of Gandhi's protests?

The British masters made some changes improving the lives of some of the poorer people.

8. Who killed Gandhi?

Nathuram Godse killed Gandhi.