

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 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. Gandhi was not very happy at college, so when he was given the chance to study law in London, he took it.

He worked hard and began to study all religions. When he returned to India, he found it hard to find work, so he took a job in South Africa for a year.

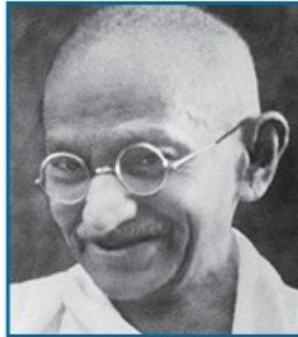
While in South Africa, Gandhi was a victim of racism. Once, Gandhi was told to get off a train, even though he had a ticket, because he was not white. Another time, he was asked to take off his turban in court. He refused and left the courtroom.

Despite being a victim of racism, letters Gandhi wrote at the time suggest that he didn't support the rights of Black people. He didn't approve of Black people living near Indian people, saying he felt 'most strongly' about it.

In 1905, the city of Durban was struck by a serious disease called plague. Gandhi wrote that the illness would continue to spread as long as Indian people had to go to the same hospital as Black people.

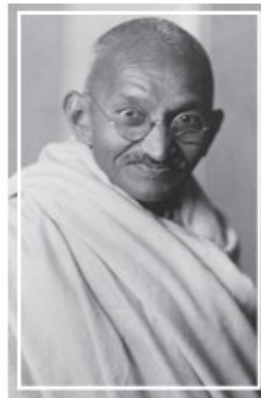
Gandhi and the People

Gandhi believed in non-violent 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.



Did You Know...?

In 1948, racism in South Africa would become part of South African law and the country ran on a system called apartheid. Apartheid is an Afrikaans word that means 'status of being apart'. It meant that White people were treated a lot better than Black or Asian people.



This meant that he would encourage people to protest in a peaceful, safe way. He did not want people to get hurt; he just wanted the authorities to take notice of how unfair life was for some people.

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

Famous Gandhi

Gandhi became famous. 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 him being arrested 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.



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 did not agree with him though and they 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.