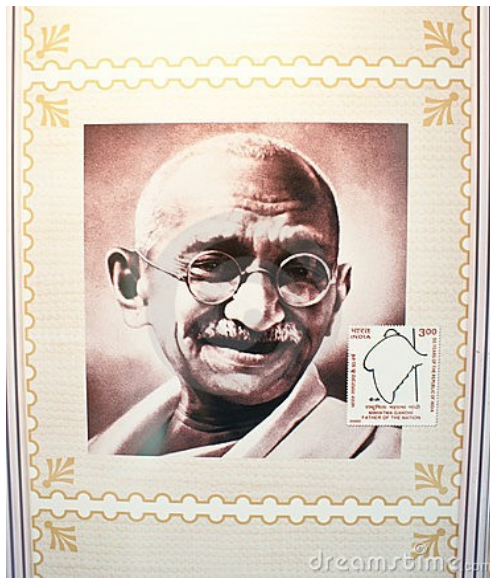# Mahatma Gandhi

"Non-violence is not a weapon of the weak.
It is a weapon of the strongest and the bravest." ~ Mahatma Gandhi

Reading

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi believed that the way people behave is more important than what they accomplish. Gandhi studied law but became known for social action. He practiced non–violence to help India achieve independence from Britain.

In 1947, India was granted independence, but the country was broken into two states – India and Pakistan – and fighting between Hindus and Muslims began. But Gandhi believed in an India where Hindus and Muslims could live together in peace. On January 13, 1948, at the age of 78, Gandhi began a fast, not anything for days, with the purpose of stopping the war. After five days, the opposing leaders said they would stop the fighting and Gandhi broke his fast and started eating again.

Sadly, twelve days later Gandhi was assassinated by a Hindu fanatic who strongly opposed his vision of an India for both Hindus and Muslims. The Indian people called Gandhi "Mahatma," meaning "Great Soul."

Vocabulary

- accomplish
- independence
- granted
- fast
- opposing
- assassinated

Comprehension Check

1. What is Mahatma Gandhi's real name?
2. Why is he called "Mahatma"? What does it mean?
3. What did he do to help India achieve independence from Britain?
4. What happened after India was granted independence?
5. What did he do to stop the war between Hindus and Muslims?
6. At what age did Mahatma Gandhi begin a fast?
7. Who assassinated him?

Let's Talk!

1. Why do you think Mahatma Gandhi is internationally known?
2. Can you consider Mahatma Gandhi a hero?
3. Can you name some great humanitarians – people who have made or who are making an important difference in the world?
4. Would you ever do a selfless act to make a difference in the world?

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