Mahatma Gandhi

Mohandas Karamchand Gandhi was born on 2nd October 1869. He was born in Porbandar, Gujarat, in North West India. Gandhi's father was the chief minister of Porbandar. His mother was highly religious. She worshipped the God Vishnu but also believed Jain teachings, which taught people about not causing injury to living things. Gandhi was part of the privileged caste and he received a good education.
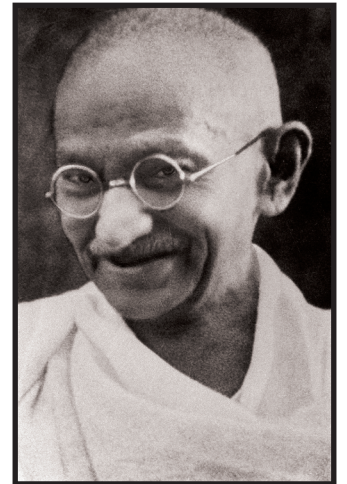
Gandhi went to university in India but was not particularly happy there, so he went to study law in London and it was here that he began to study all religions. When he returned to India, he found it hard to find work so he took a job in South Africa for a year.

While Gandhi worked in South Africa, he was a victim of racism. On one occasion, he was told to get off a train even though he had a ticket because he was not White. Another time, he was asked to remove his turban in court. He refused and left the courtroom. Situations like this would eventually lead to the country being run on a system called **apartheid**.

apartheid – An Afrikaans word meaning 'being apart', apartheid was a policy of segregation and discrimination towards non-White people.

Gandhi returned to India and saw how badly treated the Indian people of Bihar were, by the British rulers. He started a political movement called the Natal Indian Congress. Gandhi 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 meant that he encouraged protesting in a peaceful, safe way. He did not want people to get hurt, he just wanted the authorities to take notice about what life was like for Indian people.

Gandhi was arrested several times because he encouraged people to stand up to the government. Some people also tried to kill him, including one particular man who tried and failed but then 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.

1. **Find** and **copy** the word that tells you that Gandhi grew up in a wealthy community.

   _____

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

   _____

   _____

3. Why did Gandhi set up the Natal Indian Congress?

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4. Why do you think Gandhi was so upset about the way Indian people were treated?

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Mahatma Gandhi Answers

1. Find and copy the word that tells you that Gandhi grew up in a wealthy community.
   privileged

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

   Once Gandhi was told to get off a train because he was not White. Another time, he was asked to remove his turban in court.

3. Why did Gandhi set up the Natal Indian Congress?

   Accept reference to demonstrating peacefully to the government about what life was like for Indian people and that the congress did not think it was fair that Indian people were treated differently. Gandhi, and the Natal Indian Congress, wanted the authorities to take notice.

4. Why do you think Gandhi was so upset about the way Indian people were treated?

   Accept reference to:

   • he was being treated differently for being Indian;

   • the unfairness of having different rules based on skin colour or religion.

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