

## DVD LESSON PLAN: *GANDHI*

**DVD Title:** *Gandhi*

**Content:** Directed by Richard Attenborough. Ben Kingsley’s Academy Award–winning portrayal of Gandhi becomes the heart and soul of this epic covering over 50 years of the Mahatma’s life. We watch Gandhi’s youthful conflicts with apartheid in South Africa, his struggle to free India from colonial rule, and his grief over the tragic religious wars that erupted after independence. Color. Total time: 200 minutes. Columbia

**Special Features of this DVD:**

Audio-English, French & Spanish

Subtitles-English, French, Spanish, Portuguese, Chinese, Korean, & Thai.

Original newsreel footage of Gandhi going to England, a farewell talk in Europe, beginning a death fast, first official interview.

The words of Gandhi

The making of Gandhi

Kingly talking about Gandhi

Weblink to Gandhi Web site?

**Suggested Grade Level:** 7-12

**Time:** A movie of this length is difficult to show in its entirety unless done outside class time. However valuable insights can be gained by showing selected segments of this DVD version. The lesson below could be done in approximately 60 minutes.

**Outcomes:**

Students will:

-understand the concept of satyagraha

-speculate on what made Gandhi successful in confronting the British

**Prior Knowledge Required:** Students should have studied the impact of imperialism and colonialism, and be familiar with 20th century independence movements in Africa and Asia.

**Lesson format/ strategies:**

1. Opening question: “Throughout world history, countries have gained their independence from other countries. For example, the U.S. became independent by successfully revolting against Great Britain. By what other means has independence been gained? Or is it possible to become independent from a colonial power without using war or violence? Can important changes be made using nonviolent techniques?”

2. Using the DVD:

Go to Menu and select Special features, then “The Words of Mahatma Gandhi”. Begin to play from 1:00:00 to 1:00:08 and pause to enable students to read the quotation. “Nonviolence is the greatest force at the disposal of mankind. It is mightier than the mightiest weapon of destruction devised by the ingenuity of man.” Ask students to make inferences about what he means.

3. Go to menu and select Newsreel footage, "Gandhi Talks: First Talking Picture Ever Made by India's famous Leader".

Play the entire segment and have students answer the questions on **Newsreel Analysis Sheet**. (Time: 4 minutes)

**Note: it is recommended that you enable the English subtitle function to assure that students follow the questions and answers of the interview.**

Teacher note: The issue of Gandhi's clothing is raised by the reporter, and comes up in the movie. Gandhi wanted to identify himself with the common people, just as they were. This was the reason why he wore only a loincloth. Since millions of Indians could afford nothing but loincloth, Gandhi thought that he would also wear loincloth so that he could truly identify himself with the masses that he wanted to serve and represent.

4. Go to menu and select “Scene Selections”. Choose Chapter 8 “He is Coming” Play from 8:1:03:08 to 10:1:22:06. (Time: 14 minutes)

Have students complete **Film Analysis Guide Sheet** as they view the segment.

5. Use the questions as a basis for debriefing what the students watched and as a platform for discussing nonviolence as a technique for attaining a political goal.

6. If time permits, a second segment could be shown. This is the re-enactment of the famous “Salt March”. Go to menu and select “Scene Selections”. Choose #18, “The march”. Play from 18:2:05 to 18:21:40. (Time: 17 minutes)

The segment begins with Gandhi in conversation with the American journalist Walker.

Have students complete **Film Analysis Guide Sheet 2**.

## NEWSREEL ANALYSIS SHEET

1. How does the journalist describe Gandhi?  
(Difficult to interview, feeble voice, prejudice against being photographed)
2. What is your first impression of Gandhi?  
(Answers will vary)
3. How do his responses to the questions reflect his attitude of nonviolence?  
(Use of civil disobedience, Satyagraha)
4. Why would the interviewer ask about Gandhi's choice of clothing? Does it reflect a colonial versus indigenous attitude?

FILM ANALYSIS GUIDE SHEET–*GANDHI*

1. Describe the situation when Gandhi arrives.
2. Why do the British soldiers confront him?
3. What is the situation that Gandhi is trying to resolve in this village?
4. Why is Gandhi arrested? Why did it appear that he was prepared to be arrested?
5. Once in jail, what reason does he give for changing his mode of dress? How does this reflect his attitude? Does this raise any questions for you about why the real journalist asked his question in the newsreel?
6. Why does he want his British friend to leave the country?
7. At the hearing, what is he charged with? How does he respond to judge? How do Gandhi's actions reflect a nonviolent technique?
8. At the Lieutenant Governor's residence (10:1:14:44), the results of Gandhi's campaign are reviewed by two officials. According to them, what were some of the "abuses" of the British landlords and what did Gandhi accomplish in his effort to help the villagers? Would you consider the campaign to have been effective?
9. What kind of resistance does Gandhi propose on a national basis?
10. How does Gandhi then intend to apply his method nation-wide?
11. Assess how successful this was.

FILM ANALYSIS GUIDE SHEET 2–*GANDHI*

1. Gandhi states, “I am going to prove the King’s .....no longer runs in India”. What do you think he means?
2. Once the British authorities find out the plan for the march, what do they decide to do? What is their rationale?
3. According to Gandhi, what is the function of a civil resister? (to provoke a response)
4. How do crowds react to him as he passes on the march? How would you explain this?
5. Assess the significance of Gandhi’s remarks after he has made the salt.
6. What is the British reaction to Indians making their own salt? Does this indicate Gandhi succeeded in his goal?
7. What point are the resisters making at the salt works? Are they successful?
8. The segment ends with Gandhi being told by the Viceroy that he is invited to go to England to discuss the independence of India. Does this indicate that his non-violent methods have achieved their goal?